

Press Release

For Immediate Release

UMass Amherst Alumni Association Announces Free Public Premiere of New Klekowski Production, *Yanks Fight the Kaiser: A National Guard Division in WWI*

May 13, 2010: Amherst, MA – Saturday, May 22nd, the UMass Amherst Alumni Association is sponsoring a premiere showing of ***Yanks Fight the Kaiser: A National Guard Division in WWI***. Produced by Ed and Libby Klekowski and WGBY, the video is being shown on the UMass Amherst campus in Flavin Auditorium in the Isenberg School of Management building from 2:00 – 3:30pm, and is free and open to the general public. The premiere is being shown in association with Reunion Weekend, hosted by the UMass Amherst Alumni Association.

The hour-long historical documentary covers the 26th or Yankee Division (YD), made up of the National Guards of New England sent to France as a single regional division during World War I. Using old memoirs and maps, the Klekowskis were able to record the remains of trenches, fortifications and field hospitals used by the New Englanders. Viewers take a tour of the extensive cave system used by the YD, and see inscriptions left on the walls by these soldiers. Also seen is Apremont-la-Forêt, a small village where the YD fought its first battle against the Imperial German Army. The central square in the village was renamed “Place Holyoke” and a monument and fountain to the men of Holyoke stands there, placed by Holyoke citizens who raised money to rebuild the village. Remains of trenches, barbed wire, rusty equipment and unexploded shells are also shown, still visible in the trenches near the village that was the focus of the American attack.

Ed Klekowski, professor emeritus at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is well known for his documentaries focusing on Western Massachusetts, which include *Under Quabbin*, *The Great Flood of 1936* (nominated for an Emmy Award), and *Dynamite, Whiskey and Wood – the Connecticut River Log Drives 1870-1915*. His last production, *Model-Ts to War*, sponsored by the UMass Amherst Alumni Association and produced in association with WGBY, has also been nominated for an Emmy Award.

For more information on this event, call Andrea Robbins at 413.545.5540.

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The University of Massachusetts Amherst Alumni Association represents over 220,000 alumni around the globe, and provides programs and services to enlighten, strengthen and develop students and alumni. For more information, go to UMassAlumni.com.

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