

Brooks E. Kleber Memorial Lecture in Military History

14th Annual Lecture Series

The Winter Fortress The Epic Mission to Sabotage Hitler's Atomic Bomb

Neal Bascomb

Author

Midway through the largest war the world had ever seen, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler lacked a single component to harness nuclear energy and surpass the Allies in creating the atomic bomb. The missing link was water chemically laden with the hydrogen isotope deuterium, also known as "heavy water." Heavy water was only produced in a solitary plant near Rjukan, Norway, known as Vemork and established by Norwegian professor of chemistry, Leif Tronstad. When British intelligence learned about the Führer's plans, they joined forces with the intrepid chemist, who had escaped Nazi control, to prevent the plant from completing Hitler's atomic bomb. On Thursday, November 2, 2017, Author Neal Bascomb will bring a talk to the United States Army Heritage and Education Center about the Allies' harrowing, last-minute attempt to destroy the Vemork plant in 1942.

Bascomb's lecture will provide further depth to the intense historical and scientific research he used to shape his book, *The Winter Fortress: The Epic Mission to Sabotage Hitler's Atomic Bomb*. Bascomb will breathe life into the fascinating characters at the center of the real-life drama to stop Hitler's most strategic weapon plans. Using untapped primary source material to tell the stories of the soldiers, scientists, and citizens involved with the episode, he will including his own expedition to Norway, where he retraced the steps of the Norwegian saboteurs scaling their way up the 600-foot snow covered cliff to Vemork in the Østlandet Region of Norway.

Upon graduating from Miami University with a dual degree in Economics and English Literature, Bascomb spent several years in Europe as a journalist. With the experience gained in Europe, he worked as an editor for St. Martin's Press before beginning to write full time. Some of his other noted literary works are *The Perfect Mile* (*New York Times* best seller), *Hunting Eichmann* (international bestseller), *Red Mutiny* (won the United States Maritime Literature Award), *The New Cool* (optioned by major producer Scott Rudin for film), *Higher* (featured in a History Channel documentary), and *One More Step* (*New York Times* bestseller). Bascomb's works maintain a common theme of bringing voices to ordinary individuals, who happened to engage and act in something extraordinary.

DATE: Thursday, November 2, 2017

TIME: Doors open at 6:30 PM and the talk begins at 7:15 PM. The question period concludes around 8:30 PM.

PLACE: USAHEC, Visitor and Education Center, Multipurpose Rooms

For more information and any last-minute changes in meeting times/places, please check the USAHEC website: www.USAHEC.org or call the Information Desk: (717) 245-3972.