Welcome to the first March meeting of the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Round Table. Tonight’s speaker is a familiar one, Douglas Waller, who previously spoke to the Round Table about his monograph *Wild Bill Donovan*. This evening he will discuss his follow up work entitled *Disciples: The World War II missions of the CIA Directors who fought for Wild Bill Donovan*. These “disciples” are men whose names are well known to those of us “of a certain age”: Allan Dulles, Richard Helms, William Colby, and William Casey.

General William Donovan’s intimate friendship with President Franklin Roosevelt led to the creation of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), his sheer force of will was its driving force, and he provided much of the inspiration for those who would follow him. The four “disciples,” who would subsequently become CIA directors, “worshipped” their former boss. Even though they came from different backgrounds, they believed in Donovan’s vision of a “league of gentlemen,” the “best and brightest” that America had to offer, focused on intelligence gathering. After World War I, Secretary of State Henry Stimson shut down State’s code-breakers, saying “gentlemen do not read each other’s mail.” Intelligence and “spying” was considered unseemly activity by the national leadership. Fortunately, as the threats posed by the Third Reich and the Japanese Empire became more glaringly obvious, Franklin Roosevelt began to indulge his curiosity in the capabilities and intentions of other nations by hiring Donovan to lead the Office of the Coordinator of Information – the forerunner of the OSS.

Unlike William Donovan, Allan Dulles had diplomacy in his blood; his maternal grandfather was John Foster, who was a Secretary of State under Benjamin Harrison, and an uncle through marriage was Robert Lansing, Secretary of State in the Wilson Administration. Dulles traveled extensively as a youth, graduated from Princeton, and was teaching English at a missionary school in India at the start of the Great War. When he returned to the United States, his grandfather and uncle urged him to take the Foreign Service exam; having passed, he joined the State Department. Along with his older brother John Foster Dulles (a future secretary of state under Eisenhower), Allan joined the American Delegation at the Versailles Conference, and stayed on with the State Department until he joined the OSS in 1942. He ran OSS operations in Switzerland throughout the war.

William Casey’s background was most like William Donovan’s. A poor Irish Catholic raised in New York City, Casey attended Fordham University and at first aspired to be a social worker, but found casework dull. He then attended law school at St. John’s Law School in Brooklyn and briefly practiced law before going to work for the Research Institute of America where he made reports for businessmen on how to land contracts for New...
Deal programs. Casey gained a reputation as an organizational genius, and when the war started came to the attention of William Donovan, who brought him into the OSS.

Of the four, Richard Helms seemed to be destined to be a spy. His father was a mechanical engineer who moved the family around a lot, which meant that his eldest son developed into a good looking, charming, but quiet man with few deep friendships. Like the others, Helms was well educated, but instead of going into the law, he turned to journalism and reported from Berlin during part of the 1930s. Like Dulles, Helms had met Adolf Hitler. He would become part of the OSS through the Navy, because of his ability to speak German.

William Colby, spent his childhood as Helms had, moving from place to place with his family. His father Elbridge, was an Army officer. When it was time for college, his father insisted on Princeton as a second choice, Colby had graduated high school at sixteen, but he was rejected by his first choice, West Point, because he was too nearsighted. After Princeton, he started Columbia Law School, but quit after a year to join the Army. He found his way to the OSS when the organization began scouring Army camps for men who could speak French. Colby was arguably the most daring of the four disciples; he served as a Jedburgh.

The men, who found their way to the OSS were intelligent, adventuresome, doers who did not want to spend the Second World War sitting on the sidelines. They wanted to engage in activities that would give the United States an advantage in the war

**Further Readings:**


**Announcements:**
Fort Snelling Civil War Symposium, 2 Apr. 2016, info@tccwrt.com
Twin Cities Civil War Round Table - Mar. 15, 2016 – *Westward Expansion and War* - www.tccwrt.com - info@tccwrt.com
St Croix Valley Civil War Round Table - Mar. 28, 2016 – *Three Paths to Glory* - 715-386-1268 – rossandhaines@comcast.net
Honor Flight - Jerry Kyser - crazyjerry45@hotmail - 651-338-2717
CAF - Commemorative Air Force - www.cafmn.org 651-455-6942
8th Air Force Historical Association - 8thmn.org - 952-797-2783
Minnesota Air Guard Museum - www.mnangmuseum.org 612-713-2523
Friends of Ft. Snelling, www.fortsnelling.org
Airshow - Eden Prairie - 16-17 July 2016 www.wotn.org 952-746-6100

We need volunteers to drive our veterans to and from meetings. Please contact Don Patton at cell 612-867-5144 or coldpatton@yahoo.com

**Round Table Schedule 2016**
24 Mar. Birth of New Age of War
14 Apr. Operation Dragoon/Anvil
28 Apr. OSS Maritime Units — First SEALS

See our programs on YouTube at http://youtube.com/ww2hrt