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"War Letters" Author To Lecture On Campus Of EIU

Jan-20-2006

Andrew Carroll hated the thought of old war letters - eyewitness accounts of portions of our country's history - being lost or destroyed.

His commitment to saving those letters led to the 1998 founding of the Legacy Project, a national, all-volunteer, preservation effort. And at 7 p.m. Thursday (Jan. 26), Carroll will be on the campus of Eastern Illinois University to discuss "The Legacy Project: Writing the Wartime Experience."

Admission to the event, scheduled to take place in Lumpkin Hall 2030, is free and open to the public.

The Legacy Project began as an effort to preserve the written word, and blossomed into the best-selling book, "War Letters," a precursor to the PBS documentary of the same name. The book features 200 previously unpublished letters from the Civil War, World War I and II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Somalia and Bosnia .

Historian/journalist Studs Terkel said of the collection, "These war letters are deeply moving, more revelatory and more powerful than any dispatch from the front. It's the truly felt history of what war is all about."

Carroll earlier wrote another national bestseller, "Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters," featuring letters from both historically known figures and ordinary citizens.

And in 1993, Carroll and the late Nobel Laureate Joseph Brodsky co-founded the American Poetry & Literacy Project, a non-profit organization that distributes hundreds of thousands of free poetry books throughout the country to promote literacy.

Carroll's appearance on Eastern's campus is being co-sponsored by the Illinois Humanities Council and the EIU history department.