

Curt Schilling

An interview with the Major League Baseball star who is also a board member of the National World War II Museum.

Boston Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling redefined the term “warrior” in the lexicon of American sports history when he won his two famous “Bloody Sock” games in the 2004 postseason, which propelled the team to its first world championship in 86 years and broke “The Curse.” Curt’s warrior mentality may have stemmed from his upbringing in a military family. Certainly, that has led to his passionate interest in military history. *Armchair General* correspondent John Ingoldsby, who resides in the same suburban Boston town of Medfield, Massachusetts, as Curt does, caught up with the World Series hero to learn more about his ardent interest in World War II.

ACG Your father served in the military, which helped generate your own interest in military history. Can you tell ACG readers about his career?

SCHILLING: My dad was in the 101st Airborne, and from what I understand, he was being shipped out to Korea when the conflict ended (in 1953).

ACG What were your experiences growing up in a military family?

SCHILLING: I was an Army brat, and we lived everywhere – from Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to Arizona and even Alaska.

ACG Why and how is your specific expertise in military history centered on World War II in Europe?

SCHILLING: I think it is because it was the first and last real conventional war with repeat-firing weapons. Before World War II, armor came into vogue. After World War II, it was rockets and jets. It may be the last world war of human beings (fighting) face-to-face and eye-to-eye. There will be no more dog-fights or battles like Kursk (Russia, 1943) be-

cause of technology. Lastly, I also have a big interest in the trio of legendary generals – Patton, Montgomery and Rommel.

ACG A television interview once featured your extensive World War II memorabilia collection. Can you describe it?

SCHILLING: I have a very large collection of all types of World War II memorabilia, which includes 4,000 to 5,000 military books. I am also a wargamer and am fascinated with how you can tactically simulate and replicate battles on a game board.



The National World War II Museum in New Orleans features hundreds of exhibits dedicated to the courage and sacrifice of the men and women who won the Second World War.

ACG Your interest in World War II military history is so strong that you even have a dog named Patton. What breed of dog is it, and why did you choose that name?

SCHILLING: You are correct; my dog’s name is Patton. He is a rottweiler, and I chose his name since I thought he reflected the general’s strong personality.

ACG Have you visited Europe to see the famous battleground sites, such as Normandy or Bastogne? If not, do you have plans to do so?

SCHILLING: No, I have not visited Europe yet. I am only waiting since my wife, Shonda, and I want to take our four kids to all experience it for the first time together.

ACG How was the event you attended in November at the Museum of World War II in Massachusetts? (Visit museumofworldwarii.com for information on exhibits, etc.)

SCHILLING: It was a wonderful event, mixing with people interested in World War II. The place is breathtaking, and the uniforms and rest of the collection in the museum are incredible.

ACG Would you care to share your thoughts on the current War on Terrorism?

SCHILLING: First of all, my thoughts and prayers are with the Soldiers and their families. I also thank God daily to be in a country that produces these men and women who are willing to risk their lives to free people they do not even know. I am offended by people who are using the war as a political platform or have an agenda. I do not want (American troops) to have to go back there (Middle East). And I do not want them (the terrorists) to come here.

ACG What is your affiliation with the National World War II Museum in New Orleans? (Visit ddaymuseum.org for more information.)

SCHILLING: I am on the Board of Trustees. I had heard about the museum about two years ago, and my affiliation with them grew out of my interest in the war.

ACG Are you involved in any museum activities?

SCHILLING: I hope to be a speaker at their “When Baseball Went to War” event during Veterans Day weekend in November. (See *Dispatches*, November 2007 ACG.) ★

John Ingoldsby conducted this interview. He is a free-lance writer and former newspaper reporter who has written for numerous publications, including “Military History” magazine. John was also the first New England media representative chosen by the Pentagon to cover NATO wargames in Europe.

SCHILLING IN ACTION.
Boston Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling attributes his keen interest in World War II to his military upbringing. Schilling's father served in the famed 101st Airborne Division.

