



SECRETS & SPIES RESEARCH PROJECT

MUSEUM
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM

• **HEDDY LAMARR**
ACTRESS & SPY

• **MOE BERG**
BASEBALL & ESPIONAGE

Blog by Academy of the Canyons, California, USA

Academy of the Canyons is a small, 400 student, middle college high school located in the southern California city of Santa Clarita (just a few miles north of Los Angeles). Because of our small student body and our school's zeal for interesting academic ventures, our classes, and projects for that matter, tend to be focused and energized. Moreover, our school's population is rich with diverse and talented students who each bring a unique perspective and skillset to each group effort, so most of what our school produces is exceptional. All this mixed with a rich, thought provoking prompt from the Australian Maritime Museum was the perfect recipe for an exciting semester.

When our class first received the prompt, we broke up into small groups and conducted some preliminary research into different topics to decide upon which would become our class's collective focus. Finally after some disagreement (some students were very passionate about the USS O'Bannon), our class voted both to research Morris Moe Berg and Hedy Lamarr, two US spies during WWII, and to create a mock televised University discussion as our final product. To be more effective, half our class (about 17) was tasked with researching Ms. Lamar and the other half to Mr. Berg. Once our groups were set, each group selected a point person to create subgroups and delegate research topics to each of them.

After the research was completed, a few script writers per team consolidated that teams research into an interview between a University president, Harold Peters, and Moe/Hedy respectively, the idea being that the two spies would be interviewed in the same televised discussion, but separately. Once the script was completed, our school rented a university lecture hall, selected which students would be Peters, Berg, and Lamar, (the rest of the students made up the audience) and finally used 1 class period to do rehearsals and the next to film. This product (a televised interview) ended up being the best fit for our class because we had some students who wanted to act, some who wanted to simply research, some who wanted to write the script and a few others who wanted to film and edit. In the end, our class was able to effectively come together, strategize, and create an informative and entertaining final product.

