



OBJECT ID	2015.14.1
OBJECT NAME	Plaque
OBJECT COLLECTION	Helias Doundoulakis Collection (is part of)
DATE CREATED	2008
EVENT	2008 OSS Award Ceremony
MATERIAL	Metal; Wood
OBJECT ENTITIES	Doundoulakis, Helias (is related to)
RELATED ITEMS	Portrait, 2021.24.1
ACCESS POINTS	astoria award ceremony New York Oss Radio SI branch spy Thessaliniki World War, 1939-1945 World War II

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

A wood and metal commemorative plaque. Brassy metal border on the long edges. Top center inside a raised circle are the letters OSS in white with a gold border on a maroon background. The border of the circle is white and gold. Below the circle is a metal plate that reads in black print: "Helias Doundoulakis/OSS - SI Branch/The only OSS Spy to Operate a radio transmitter in Thessaloniki, Greece/March-September 1944 / 2008 OSS Award Ceremony/ Astoria, N.Y. On the back is a metal hanging fixture.

ORIGIN

Helias Doundoulakis (born July 12, 1923) is a Greek American scientific innovator who patented the suspension system for the largest radio telescope in the world, and served in the United States Army as a spy for the Office of Strategic Services. He has written three books, "I was Trained to be a Spy", books I and II, "My Unique Lifetime Association with Patrick Leigh Fermor", and "Trained to be an OSS Spy."

Before World War II, intelligence activities in the United States were mostly carried out by the Department of State, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), and the War Department's Military Intelligence Division (MID). Hoping for greater coordination of intelligence activities, as well as a more strategic approach to intelligence gathering and operations; on July 11, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt appointed William J. Donovan to head a new civilian office attached to the White House, the Coordinator of Information (COI). The COI was charged with collecting and analyzing information which may have had bearing upon national security, correlating such information and data, and making this information available to the President, authorized departments, and authorized officials of the government. The COI operations duplicated, but did not necessarily replace, functions carried out by the State Department, ONI, and MID.

National Archives Identifier 595660 Photograph of a Drawing of Virginia Hall, 1944

After the start of World War II, Donovan worked with the newly created Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to place the COI under JCS control; while preserving COI autonomy, and gaining access to military support and resources. On June 13, 1942, the COI became the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The OSS gathered intelligence information about practically every country in existence, but was not allowed to conduct operations in the Pacific Theater, which General Douglas MacArthur claimed as his own. J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Nelson Rockefeller, the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, insisted that the OSS should not operate in the Western hemisphere. For these reasons, the records of OSS covert operations are almost entirely confined to Europe, Asia, and North Africa. The OSS established more than 40 overseas offices during World War II, extending from Casablanca to Shanghai, and from Stockholm to Pretoria.

National Archives Identifier 540071 Row boat and rifle left on the beach of Cap Bon by the Germans. Tunisia, circa May 1943., 1943 - 1944

After the OSS was terminated on September 20, 1945, by Executive Order; most records were eventually transferred to two agencies of the Federal government. Approximately 1,700 cubic feet of Research and Analysis Branch records ended up at the Department of State, while more than 6,000 cubic feet of operational records were transferred to what was to become the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Note that the CIA was not created until July 26, 1947.

CITATION

Plaque, 2008, Helias Doundoulakis Collection, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 03/29/24.
