

# Meet the Author

## Hugh Brewster

Hugh Brewster is an award-winning author of numerous books and performances. His works vividly depict true-life, unforgettable stories from history, including Canadians at war, the Titanic, and other historical events which have fascinated him over time.

Among Brewster's fiction and non-fiction awards are the 2012 Hackmatack Children's Choice Award for English Fiction for *I Am Canada: Prisoner of Dieppe*, the Information Book Award in 2005 for the non-fiction *On Juno Beach: Canada's D-Day Heroes*, and the 2008 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's non-fiction for *At Vimy Ridge: Canada's Greatest World War I Victory*.



**TingL:** What led to your interest in writing both historical and war-themed fiction and non-fiction?

H.B.: I have always loved history. Old houses, old buildings, old things have always fascinated me. As a child, visiting a historic site, like Fort George in Niagara, was always a big thrill. I'd imagine what had happened in that place and what it was like to be alive then. And I devoured historical fiction though I was never a war buff. Growing up in the 1950s, World War II was in quite recent memory and some boys could talk passionately about Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulf fighter planes and the difference between a Sten and a Bren gun, but I was never one of those boys. Interest in the Canadians in World War I and II came later, when I realized that a large part of our history had not been written about for young readers.

**Your award-winning books like *On Juno Beach*, *At Vimy Ridge*, *Dieppe*, and *From Vimy to Victory* are so beautifully presented. How do works like that come together, in terms of the process of writing, collaborating, and coordinating illustrations and archival photographs?**

Well, unlike most authors, I actually "package" those books, doing all the photo research, coming up with the layouts for each spread and supervising the design with a designer I've worked with frequently. This is through my company Whitfield Editions. I was a publisher and book packager for many years before becoming a full-time writer in 2004, so I have considerable experience at creating illustrated books. I then present the publisher with a finished disk from which they