



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## Preserving History

Thursday, November 28, 2013

On Thanksgiving Day 1997 I found a big box of photos in my parents' house. I sat with my Dad for hours while he told me about each one and I wrote the names, place and date on the back of each. Eventually, I included these photos on my website. Two weeks later Dad contracted an antibiotic resistant infection and died just before Christmas.

This is one of the photos we discussed on that last holiday together.



During the depression many families maintained "bootleg" coal mines. Yes it was illegal, but with the low wages paid by the mining companies, it was the only way to keep their families from freezing during the winter. One of the men in the photo was killed at age 21 as a paratrooper in WWII. His grandniece found my photo online. This was the only photo she had ever seen of her uncle.

Many of you have read and commented on my blog about my website documenting my Dad's WWII ship. Since the latest massive redesign and update, I've been contacted by many families searching for information about their own sailor veteran. Some have found images and references in the photos and documents and provided further identification for me to include.

This is a plea/suggestion to all who have memorabilia of any type in their possession or discover it among the keepsakes of older relatives. Before you toss it out, consider who else might be interested in seeing it. Also, if you can, include captions on photos. I know this takes time whether on a physical picture or a digital version. Someday though, a great grandchild may appreciate your effort.

The depression and the stories of those who lived through it are now but a distant memory in the minds of a dwindling number of survivors. The USS Philadelphia was but one ship manned by a crew representing a tiny percentage of servicemen at that time.

However, history should not be told only by famous and powerful leaders. History is a tapestry woven by

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the threads of individual lives. Their stories and contributions count too. If possible, take a moment to document yours.

Happy Thanksgiving to all my fellow Sparkers.

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**MJZHERE**

My mom was in the first women marines. My dad was also a marine. There are many photos - and lots of them plastered on my daughter's walls. I made a photobook at Shutterfly years ago captioning everything and gave them to all her children. The grandchildren especially appreciate them.

2744 days ago



**CD13099273**

Great photo and Blog - at that time in Life many did what they had to survive . My grandfather ran a Speakeasy in Chicago called Two Ton Hanks - I adore hearing the stories from my Father and Uncle and Treasure the Photos as I will pass down to my granddaughters. I do know the History of all my Families WWI and II experiences my Mom and her family (except my grandfather on mothers side was shot in the woods) were in Two Death Camp one Russian and the other German. The Nuns and Priest helped my Family escape they literally walked through five Continents before arriving in America - I am a Catholic but I do know that I had a Rabi as a great uncle in Poland? I also know that my Uncle was a High Ranker on The USS Pitkin during the Korean War - - Thanks for taking me back down Memory lane - Hugs Karen - Hope your Thanksgiving was well.

2753 days ago



Comment edited on: 11/29/2013 3:07:45 PM



**DR1939**

We've tried to do videos of older adults in order to capture some of those memories. I used this as an assignment in a class on Psychology of Aging and the students often reported it as the most memorable event of the class. Two months before my mom died my youngest daughter and I visited her. My oldest daughter lived nearby. We had a "slumber party" at my mom's and the next day visited a place where we had all had good memories. As we were taking pictures a young man stopped and offered to take a group picture. It is, of course, a treasure.

2753 days ago



**MERRYMARY42**

THERE YOU GO AGAIN, always making me wish that I was better than I am, My father-in-law, was raised in the hills of Tennessee, and he had so many stories, it was like he was 40 or 50 years older than he was, not sure if it was stories he remembered or just the way he was raised with less modern things, but he was born in 1913 so it was not real modern, anyway, I have wished so many times that I had recorded some of his stories, wrote it down or something, because now it is lost. I have a lot of old pictures, and I work on them often, but, really never seem to get any where

2754 days ago



**PHOENIX1949**

Ah, the ripple effect of sharing old photos and stories! I've gotten much enjoyment from being a conduit by sharing my ancestors' stockpiles of 'stuff.'

Happy Thanksgiving!

2754 days ago



**CD12146214**

All the memorabilia related to my Dad rescuing fellow sailors when his ship exploded, we gave to the Permanent Memorial. Pictures, newspaper clippings, letters etc. The museum was very happy to have such up close and personal information.

2754 days ago



**CD13758606**

What a memorable moment with your father! It is very touching that you preserve history from this time period. It is an influential era on our nation. The backbone of our freedom.

Near the end of my father's life, I read him "Flags of our Father." It took months, but the time we spent talking in between chapters, and remembering his Navy days, explaining stories in the book that I did not understand. It was so powerful to know a part of my father from his early years. I still remember how eager my dad was every time I asked him if he wanted me to read him more.

Thank you for blogging this and the work you do.



2754 days ago



**GINIEMIE**

Happy Thanksgiving. How remarkable that you and your dad went through his pictures in the nick of time. I love your blog site and forwarded the co-ordinates to a former Navy person. I'll ask him next week if he's been to it yet.

You are right, when I went to Belgium about 10 years ago, I took old pictures with me and had surviving family members try to identify the people in the pictures, of course some were just my mom's friends and since her best friend had Alzheimer we were stumped. We ended up getting rid of a few. I need to go through mine and make sure they are identified. Thanks for the timely reminder.



2754 days ago



**MARYJEANSL**

What a huge blessing that you and your father were able to do that, so shortly before he died! I agree with you totally about keeping family memorabilia. In the summer of 2012, after the wedding of my cousin's daughter, we had a mini-family reunion. One of my more distant relatives...let me see...my mother's cousin's son...had a large photo album, full of old family photos, some labeled, some not. He said he had rescued it from another relative who was about to throw it away. But he wasn't exactly keeping it, either. He offered pictures from it to relatives, and then I think he planned to throw the remaining album away. Though I'm not sure if he actually did. I didn't think I was a close enough relative to merit any pictures, but I saw one of my mother's two aunts, whom she had talked about a lot when I was younger, so I asked for a copy. He tore it from the album and gave it to me. I wanted that album SO badly. But at least I have a picture of Aunt Mary and Aunt Minnie. I had copies made (not terribly good quality) to give to my mother, brother, sister, and aunt. Sadly, with her Alzheimer's, my mom wasn't sure who they were.

2754 days ago



**SLIMMERJESSE**

I love your blogs. Happy Thanksgiving.

2754 days ago



**CD14034154**

Brooklyn,

You're so right about not throwing ANYTHING out, as it can be so precious to somebody. I was adopted when I was 2, by a wonderful man, who married my mom. However, I didn't know anything about my biological father, except a little snippet that my mom told me when I was 16. That's when I found out that I had been adopted. When I became very sick and disabled, my doctor said that I needed to do something to find out about his medical history, so he could know how to treat me. I contacted an agency, that did some leg work for me, and they gave me 3 pages of people, address, and phone numbers to start calling. Needless to say, when I did find the right names, on that list, they were forthcoming with some information, before I heard somebody in the background telling my Aunt to hang up the phone, as they wanted nothing to do with me. I received very little information from them, but it was enough for the doctors to do a BRAC test on me, and some other things. I'll get the results next week at the Central GA Cancer Center!

Have a WONDERFUL THANKSGIVING!!!

Be blessed,

- Nancy Jean -  
GA

2755 days ago



**SUZYMOBILE**

Happy Thanksgiving to you, Eileen! I have so many family photos, with no clue who is in them. I wish someone in our family were still alive to identify them or had done what you have.

2755 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**

Have a great holiday. Preserving history is so important. It is the little people and their stories that matter.

2755 days ago



**SWEETNEEY**

This is amazing and your admonishment to us to preserve our history is really good. Where I live a lot of history has been lost because we did not write it or recount it through the ages. We are just now in the 20th century trying to log our history.

2755 days ago



**TERI-RIFIC**



So true.It's wonderful that you've done all that work in preserving history.  
2755 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**



I am so grateful that I have a sister who is better about this kind of preservation than I am.  
Hope we find someone in the next generation to carry it on.

I totally agree that the "little people" sharing stories enriches history!

Happy Thanksgiving!  
2755 days ago

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