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Following in Dad's Footsteps - Choices, Past and Present

Sunday, June 25, 2017



In WWII my Dad served on a "cruiser" the USS Philadelphia 72 years later, I am "cruising" in the same waters.

He didn't have a choice as to his destination, but because he and his generation served, I do have a choice

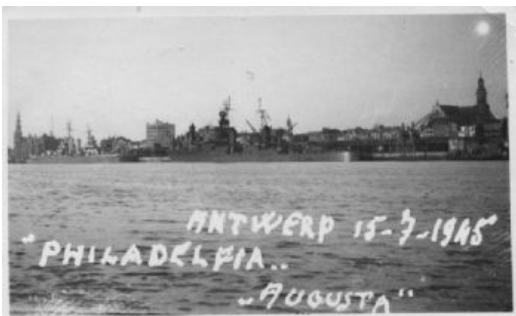
This trip will include 5 countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Switzerland)

Dad kept a diary and took carefully selected pictures
I write an occasional blog and take hundreds of pictures

In my blog earlier this month I described how Joe & I celebrated our 50th Anniversary by visiting the sites of our youth in NYC and recreating important photos.

This week I was able to fulfill another goal and recreate a scene from my Dad's youth.

July 15, 1945 the USS Philadelphia sailed to Antwerp, Belgium escorting President Truman to the Potsdam conference where he would meet with Stalin and Churchill. In his diary Dad described how Belgians lined both banks of the river cheering the ship's arrival and waving to the President standing on deck.



Earlier this week I took a photo from the same spot except that's our cruise ship (River Rhapsody) not a warship

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I found the exact spot because in his diary Dad wrote how he walked through a tunnel under the river



I found the tunnel and walked in his footsteps. It is 4/10 of a mile long and accessible by escalators down deep under the river.

They were built in 1933 and now are the oldest wooden escalators in the world.

Dad would have used them in order to reach the opposite bank and take his picture.

Here is one section



The tunnel is heavily used by pedestrians and bicyclists. I had to wait a long time for a break in the traffic so you could see the scope of both.

Vacations present both opportunities and challenges

I've been in maintenance for 7 years.

I know how to make good choices in a familiar environment I can control

I want to experience different cultures and still not undo my hard work

River cruising is different than the big ocean going cruise ships.

We have 120 passengers divided into 3 groups, each with our own program director.

Can I continue my morning run?

If we are docked when I wake up, YES I CAN.

In fact every town or city has had a paved trail along the river with beautiful views.

Like this



or this



Each stop includes a walking tour of the town/city or a short bus ride to some unique site
Mileage indeed but at a leisurely pace with multiple stops for commentary and photos
There is also ample free time to explore on our own.

Some mornings I awake to find we are still sailing and will dock during breakfast
Oh yes, food choices throughout the day require planning
More about those options at a later time

If you have read this far, thank you. Staying connected here, even minimally, is a helpful reminder to
enjoy this experience without abandoning my goals

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BOREDA

As you say, even on vacation and in unfamiliar surroundings it is possible to find room for walking or a bit of exercise in some other form -- plus experiencing another destination. Good for you!

1314 days ago



AMBER461

Thanks very much for sharing, very interested blog.

1359 days ago



KAT7777

Thanks for sharing.



1386 days ago



MLAREDO

Beautiful post, about your dad. You know, these are the things that give our ancestres eternal life and peace

1413 days ago



TOMATOCAFEGAL

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SHARING.

1426 days ago





CD3409143

AWESOME

1426 days ago



PROVERBS31JULIA

What a wonderful trip!!

1426 days ago



AKROXIE

Have a wonderful trip!

1434 days ago



KACEYSW

This is just awesome!

1435 days ago



ARTJAC

AWESOME

1438 days ago



CATS_MEOW_0911

Thank you for sharing your dad's story, glad you got to walk in his footsteps!

1439 days ago



WHYTEBROWN

AWESOME

1439 days ago



JUNEAU2010

I have tears in my eyes! I can imagine how _____ (I can't even think of the right word!) it would be to follow in your dad's footsteps, especially steps of a member of the Greatest Generation, (but more especially, your dad's). Wow! What a great idea to take those pictures and to document the journey.

So poignant!

A very powerful blog and I am grateful to get the chance to read it!

1439 days ago



BUTTAMA

I recognize the Kinderdijk in Holland! I hope you have a wonderful trip!

1440 days ago



BUTTAMA

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1440 days ago



PSYCHMASTER

What an awesome experience! Enjoy!!!

1441 days ago



FITNIK2020

I enjoyed reading this and will stay connected for certain.

1442 days ago



STEVIEBEE569

AWESOME

1442 days ago





EMGERBER



1442 days ago



1958TMC

I would have loved to follow my dad's footsteps on the USS PRINCETON. What a memorable journey you are on.

1442 days ago



TOMATOCAFEGAL

WOW.AWESOME

1442 days ago



BLUEFOO



Beautiful picture and a great memoir this trip will be for you. Enjoy your trip and



I loved the journey you shared with us.



1442 days ago



CD11519434



1442 days ago



CD11519434



1442 days ago



CD11519434



1442 days ago



JEANNETTE59

I'm so happy you had an opportunity to fulfill your dream and honoring your dad in such a remarkable way.



1443 days ago



MARGIEB221



1443 days ago



CAROLCRC

We are doing a river cruise in September. Nice to know about the paths. Looks like you are having a great trip!

1443 days ago



BLUEJEAN99

how wonderful you are able to do this! thx for sharing the story of your dad and the pix. My grandfather and my husband's grandfather were also both in WW2.

1443 days ago



IDICEM

How wonderful that you have the opportunity to follow in your father's footsteps as close as you are. Fabulous trip. Thank you for sharing with us.

1443 days ago



ROCKYCPA

Thank you for sharing - enjoy your trip!

1443 days ago





SUNNYBEACHGIRL

Have a great trip
1443 days ago



KJWITT

Thank you for sharing. Very interesting
1443 days ago



LINDA

What an honor to be escorting the president! How wonderful your Father kept detailed records and photos so you had no trouble finding the same place! Its always an experience visiting places of historical significance, but even more so when you had a relative there living it! So glad you can do this :-)

Good on you for making every effort to maintain your healthy lifestyle! I can imagine how difficult the food might have been if what you hear about those cruise ships are true. Love seeing travel photos. I wish more people would share more of their lives like you and your daughter do.

As far as I know I had no relatives in the military, but then both grandfathers died long before I was born. My Mom disowned her British born father as he never married her mother, but instead, at the same time married another woman who he had a legitimate child with, same age as my Mom. So I know little of my ancestor's history other than my Cree Grandmother was related to Sitting Bull.

Mom grew up on a trap line in the far north. Would love to write her history. Such a different and raw experience compared to what most on here have in their backgrounds, Canada being such a young country..

1443 days ago



NUMD97

Very nice juxtaposition of your trip with that of your dad's. My father did not keep a diary, but he did take a 16-mm movie camera with him, and we have ginormous reels of film that hopefully are still intact. We really should do a transfer of all the old movies to discs. I never fully appreciated his WWII European movies (he was a physician attached to the American army), so, except for time, they should still be intact.

I always hoped to see Europe through my mother's eyes. Would be nice to go over and see the "old country". From what I have seen it is a beautiful country. "Someday".

Glad you're having a great time. And, B_B, thanks for sharing both your dad's adventure as well as your own.

1443 days ago

Comment edited on: 6/26/2017 9:04:02 PM



PATRICIAANN46

What a wonderful tribute to your father and his time in the Navy. My father was also in the Navy during WWII and served as a radioman on a destroyer. He often talked about all of the countries that he was privileged to visit (even though the visits were short). I wish that I could do what you are doing and walk in his footsteps. He was so young when he joined the Navy (17) and lost his brother during the siege of Pearl Harbor.

Enjoy the rest of your trip. What beautiful countries you have chosen to visit. I hope to see lots of photos in your blogs when you return.



1443 days ago



MARYJEANSL

What a wonderful trip! My dad, also a WWII hero, didn't keep a diary. What little I know of his experience of the war comes from a history of his division (the 101st Airborne Division - he was a jumpmaster on D-Day) and from one story my mother told me that he told her. You are so very fortunate to know so much

about your father's experiences. My dad died when I was only 13, so even my memories are few.

1443 days ago



JUNETTA2002

Awesome blog thank you for sharing your adventure
1443 days ago



KRISSY82

Wow, what an amazing experience!
1443 days ago



HEALTHYANDFIT27

What lovely and loving tribute to your father! Enjoy every moment! Cheers to you for maintaining a healthy lifestyle as you travel!

1443 days ago





KOHINOOR2

What a great adventure! Hope you have a fantastic vacation. for sharing.

1443 days ago



Thank you



SWEETMAGNOLIA2

How wonderful you were able to follow so closely in your father's footsteps! It is doubly good that it was at a momentous time for him and now for you!

1443 days ago



NONNAOF2

How wonderful to be able to follow in your father's footsteps! Thank you for sharing, it must of been a wonderful feeling to see where you father had been! It sounds as if you are having a wonderful time and keeping on track with your health, too! :-)

1443 days ago



LINDAK25

Fantastic!

1443 days ago



COURTENAYE

Bravo!

1443 days ago



ITSAPROCESS

Thanks for sharing your journey and your father's footsteps. What an amazing thing.

1443 days ago



HARRIETT14

How wonderful that you were able to walk in your father's footsteps. Not everyone has that opportunity.

1443 days ago



DGRIFFITH51

What a wonderful trip! Thanks for sharing!



1443 days ago



SHARONCAPPS

Great experience and pictures. Thanks for sharing.

1444 days ago



HARROWJET

How exciting to be able to re-trace your father's steps and see what he saw. Enjoy every minute. Thank you for sharing your adventure with us.

1444 days ago



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