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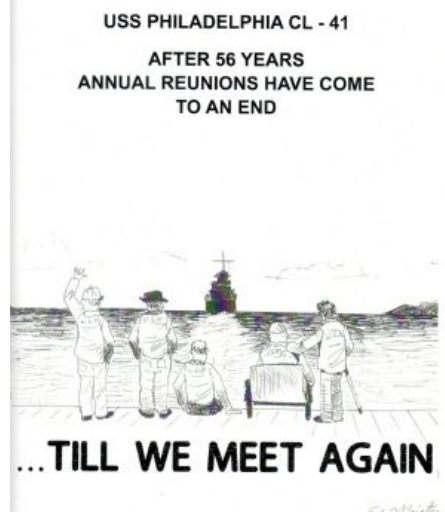
Once ordinary men left their ordinary lives,

Friday, November 06, 2020

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went off to save the world and returned to their ordinary lives.
Their journey has finally come to an end

I knew this had to happen but the arrival of the final reunion booklet hit me hard.
The crew of my Dad's WWII ship, The USS Philadelphia, met annually after the war from 1964 until 2019.



My parents were married 77 years ago today - November 6, 1943
My Dad had a 3 day pass before shipping out overseas.

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He returned exactly 1 year later when his ship docked in Norfolk, VA
They celebrated their 1st anniversary and back to the war he went.

The USS Philadelphia (CL41) crew held reunions for 56 years meeting at locations all over the US.
Children and grandchildren grew up with the organization and heard the stories of the "Gallopig Ghost."
The title was earned because the ship was reported damaged multiple times and even sunk by the Nazis.
But each morning she "sailed out of the fog to fight another day."

In 2007 I created a website as a Tribute to those who served on "The Philly"
It began with only my Dad's album and diary and then grew and grew as others submitted photos,
documents and artifacts.

[www.brigs.us/Phila/index
.htm](http://www.brigs.us/Phila/index.htm)

As the number of crew members dwindled over the years, I wondered how long they would vote to
continue reunions. My belief was that each old sailor wanted to be the "last man standing."

This was the photo of their 50th reunion with the commander of the Norfolk base.



Last year only one sailor was able to attend. He is 3rd from the left slightly behind the others
and now 100 years old. All others in that picture are gone.

I've blogged often about the travels of my husband and me.
One goal of our trips to Europe is to visit the places my Dad wrote about in his diary and recreate the
photos he took.

This was Antwerp, Belgium in July 1945.
The Philadelphia escorted President Truman to the Potsdam Conference to meet with Churchill and
Stalin.
(Thanks Dad for dating your pictures)



Below is our cruise ship docked in the same place 72 years later (June 2017)



Even though there was no bridge, I knew how to get across the river to recreate Dad's picture. Dad wrote in his diary that there was a tunnel deep under the river. It is still there and well used by pedestrians and cyclists.

Another trip took us to Normandy where we spent 4 days walking the 50 miles of the 5 D-Day beaches (except where dangerous cliffs sent us back to the car for a go-around)
It was a very intense experience as others will attest.

One of Dad's brothers came ashore at Omaha Beach but fortunately not in the 1st devastating wave.

Still, I had an additional destination in mind – the nearby city of Le Havre

Once the war in Europe was over, Dad's ship was refitted as a troop carrier to bring the boys home.

Here is a photo from Dad's album



Below I located the site of their embarkation.

It is now memorialized by this plaque to "Operation Magic Carpet"



The reunions are over but thanks to the Internet the Philadelphia will sail on in cyberspace forever.

Note: Dad was the youngest of 4 brothers to serve in WWII

Very different experiences.

The oldest was assigned stateside.

The next fought in Europe, including Normandy.

Number 3 was in the Pacific Island campaign.

My Dad, the youngest, joined the Navy. That's why I have so many photos.

The Philadelphia earned 5 "Battle Stars" in battles where many sailors on other ships lost their lives.

However, by the time the sailors went ashore, no one was shooting at them.

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Jericho1991

My dad was an airplane mechanic in Europe during WWII and went to some reunions also.
Thanks for sharing. What a great tribute.
206 days ago



CD4114015

Thank you for sharing your memories! I love them ALL And the wedding dress is breathtaking!



210 days ago



YNNIGNNA

Thank you for your story and tribute to your dad. My dad came home from LaHavre after the war! I don't know which ship he was on. Perhaps your dad's! What a chunk of history they wrote. Dad was a medical supply sergeant with the 1st Army. Bless all their memories!
211 days ago



1CRAZYDOG

Thank you for sharing this! Dad was in the Navy and always had stories to tell about his experiences.

HUGS

211 days ago



PRIMEOFMYLIFE



Lovely story. Thanks for sharing.
212 days ago



**LIVINGLOVINLIFE**

Thank you for this beautiful tribute to your father and our elder solders who fought for America and freedom. Every year there are fewer military men from our past wars. I was brought up in a military family. I was taught the importance of standing up for America and the freedoms she



promises. I remain a patriot today.
212 days ago

**JOYNEW**

What an amazing story and tribute! Thank you for sharing!
212 days ago

**MARTHA324**

Your story gives me chills! Thank you for sharing and for keeping the stories of these brave men alive.

My Dad served in the Army in Iran and had no good memories, although he could relate some funny stories. He was always able to see the humor in things.
212 days ago

**NOTALOSER1**

Great memories of your dad. Mine was a Sergeant in the the Army and gave his arms and a chunk of leg during the Battle of the Bulge and I lost him at the age of 8. Veterans Day is Wednesday. Let us all do something, albeit how small to remember the service and sacrifice of those who served our country to provide us the freedoms we enjoy today. If these brave men and women can put their lives in the hands of a total stranger then surely we can co exist with each other. Peace.
212 days ago

**TABITHAKNITS**

My father-in-law served in the south Pacific. He and my mother-in-law got married on one of his leaves. They went town to town to find a justice of the peace to marry them.

Thank you for sharing.
212 days ago

**CORRIEC2**

Thank you for sharing
212 days ago

**GETULLY**

Wow! What a service you gave all those families. My dad was a conscience objector and spent a number of years working as an orderly in a hospital in Colorado.
212 days ago

**DONNA_CPS2**

Thank you. What a tribute to these wonderful people.
212 days ago

**VERNAJ3**

Great blog and timely. You have many mementos, thank you for sharing so we can all appreciate the hardships the Heroes of the wars endured for us. Wonderful that there were all those reunions which I'm certain meant so very much to those that attended.
212 days ago

**ALIHIKES**

Thank you for the photos. My dad was a naval officer during WWII, but he did not take photos. I have always wanted to visit many of the places where he served, including the Pearl Harbor memorial. He did not want to visit on our one trip to Hawaii; he was there when the island with bombed and it was a horrific experience.

I am really glad that the reunions continued for so long.
212 days ago

**JPPERSELL**

I love the pics and the memories you shared. I love the fact that you go to these places to recreate where your dad had been.
212 days ago

**LSIG14**

Military people and their families build such an amazing bond that lasts through the ages - and it is so very sad when the last of a unit is gone and the reunions end. I believe there are only 2



survivors left from the USS Arizona now. The memories live on through pictures and stories passed on to family and friends. Thanks so much for sharing your Dad's memories and keeping that story alive!

212 days ago



OHMEMEME

Great share! Thank you
213 days ago

v



THOMS1

Thanks for those wonderful memories.
213 days ago



v



SLENDERELLA61

Great blog! Fascinating. So glad you did that trip. So glad you shared it.

My dad was in the Army Air Corps, a radio mechanic, stationed in Italy in WWII. I have a book of his, a combo scrapbook and history book that his father gave him, called "GI Get Around", showing him with the pyramids in Egypt and the Arch de Triumph in Paris and so many places. The history of the war with maps is there. No, I've never been to most of those places. You make me wonder if I should go, once Covid is gone, of course.

I did a "sentimental journey" with my mom. Before she went to assisted living we went 1000 miles from where I live to see the farm she grew up on, the schools she attended, looked up some old friends, saw where her mom grew up, as well as various uncles and aunts and cousins. I saw the house my parents were living in when I was born and where I went to Kindergarten, my first church, my first library. I was really glad we did that when she was still able to tell me family history.

Good job on this blog!!
213 days ago

v



BESSHAILE

Oh my - how very special this blog is. Thank you.

My dad was a tank driver in the European Theater - 12 armored division - one of the sole survivors of Herrlisheim. Powerful memories.
213 days ago

v



DONNALEE-53

213 days ago

AWESOME

v



DEEGIRL50

Thank you for this beautiful tribute and sharing your dad's memories with the world. I just finished reading Dear Selma a World War Two Love Letter Romance by Bernard D. Brown. The World War II Veteran and his daughter were on Good Morning America and he's 96 years old. I think you'd like reading their story.
213 days ago

v



THINCPL2004

Wow, that was amazing, thank you so much for sharing your Dad's story. I love to read and look at the pictures about the greatest generation. 👍👍👍
213 days ago

v



RACHNACH

213 days ago

AWESOME

v



BEESHELL8

wow amazing. And your mom's wedding dress was beautiful!
213 days ago

v



ELSCO55

Great
213 days ago

v



CD4114015

WAY TO GO
THANK YOU!
I LIKE IT!
👍

v

Love all your blogs!
213 days ago



REGILIEH




AWESOME AWESOME AWESOME
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

213 days ago



MARKSMOM3



THANK YOU! 

This was an awesome post!
My husband is a Navy Veteran, and I am going to share this with him.
213 days ago



WATERMELLEN



It's just so wonderful that you initiated your commemorative project when you did. Such a tribute to your father and to all those who served with him. And: love your parents' wedding picture! Such a pretty dress.
213 days ago



AZMOMXTWO




what a beautiful tribute thank you for sharing this with us
214 days ago



CD26054030



Thanks for sharing your dad's story. 

214 days ago



NYLAURA1



Thank you for sharing.
214 days ago



KELLIEBEAN




This is beautiful! I remember looking at your website a couple of years ago. Such a treasure!

214 days ago



YELLOW09RED



 Eileen,
this is so great to read and see. I'm glad you have the pictures. Thank you for sharing your dad with us.

Blessings for your Saturday.
Hugs,
Debbie



214 days ago



RUTHIEBEAR



WOW! What a fantastic tribute to those sailors and your Dad!
214 days ago



GRAMDEB16



Thanks for your blog and how great that your dad took so many pictures and kept a diary!
214 days ago



BONIFIANT



What a wonderful tribute to some great men. Thank you for this slice of history.
214 days ago

HOLLYM48



What an amazing tribute and journey for both of you. Absolutely amazing that you have been able to visit the same spots your father did during the war. Thanks for sharing this beautiful blog with all of us!



214 days ago



UPTOIT59

Thank you for sharing - our youngest daughter is serving as a LT. in the Coast Guard right now



and it is nice to think she will have this as part of her history.

214 days ago



BABSAWRITER

This story was lovely--and I'm actually sitting here crying. So many people willing to sacrifice so much for the good of humanity. May we all find that spirit within us today.



214 days ago



MSLZZY

A wonderful story to share with us all. Thank you!



214 days ago



PATTYSPENCER

Thank you to everyone who serves our country - whether they serve in the skys or on the water or on the land or on our city streets! My father who passed away at age 91 back in 1998 always said he had been too young to join WWI and too old to join WWII



214 days ago



BALLYMORE

Thank you for sharing. God bless our military members and thank them for serving. Thank a Vet today, and everyday.



214 days ago



COOKIE_AT_51

Thank you so much for sharing this...what a great tribute to your father and all the men and



women who served.



214 days ago



BELLAMEMAW

God Bless your Dad, and all our military men and women, for serving this great country of



ours!

214 days ago



PLCHAPPELL

What a legacy



214 days ago



LIS193

Wonderful family history and lovely memories



214 days ago

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