

Duffle Bag Opens Memories of D-Day

Tampa, FL – What you're about to read is the story of a duffle bag. It is also a story of ours...specifically Leo E. Ours. This man carried that duffle bag on June 6, 1944; D-Day.

"My father told us little about his participation in the war with the 662nd Medical Clearing Company following Patton's 3rd Army across Europe," reveals Leo Ours, Jr., author of the new book, "Hospital on Wheels: World War II MASH." Ours Jr. says his father would occasionally speak about humorous memories of the war then the laughter would fade, the mood would grow somber and his father would drift into quiet. Like many veterans he did not want to talk about his days at war.

That is until the duffle bag began speaking for him.

54-years after Leo E. Ours' duffle bag safely saw him home at the end of the war; it was re-discovered in a friend's attic. After the duffle bag returned to the father's hands, fond memories returned to his voice.

"My father started telling all the stories," says Ours Jr. "He told me of the day he and his duffle bag boarded the S.S. Eugene E. O'Lennell. He thought, 'this is it, there is no turning back now,' and, 'my god, we are going to Normandy and the war.'"

Leo's father served as a medical and surgical technician in World War II. He is one of the 3.5 million living World War II veterans. Many have spoken publicly about their experiences, but many more have not. Time is running out for this sect of 'The Greatest Generation.' The youngest of the men who were at Normandy 64 years ago are turning 82-years-old this year.

"Americans cannot forget the heroes who died on the battlefields so we must gather the spoken history of our service people and their families to fully document the details of our history," says Ours' Jr. "I was so moved and intrigued by his stories that I felt compelled to write this book detailing my father's service to our country."

Ours Jr. realizes many men who were at D-Day don't feel comfortable talking about their experiences. Some are scared by the experiences or worried they'll sound like they're bragging. He feels that all veterans should try to tell their stories. All Americans should encourage WWII veterans to unzip their memories and share their oral pieces of history.

Leo motivationally declares, "They did their duty. Now we must do ours and help to fill-in the historical gaps; even if it means retelling history one veteran at a time."

When his father's military duffle bag showed up, amazingly so did his father. The result? Our's Jr's new book "Hospital on Wheels: World War II MASH."

He doesn't want a story of our men and our nation to be lost to time. Normandy now looks like a random beach where children play in the sand, women sunbathe and men swim. The soldiers who were at D-Day and those who loved them are graying and dying with each passing year. The only things not lost yet are the stories and the duffle bag that brought them back to America.

About the Author

Leo E. Ours, Jr. is the author of "Hospital on Wheels: World War II MASH," which is the true story of his father's travels as a medical technician with the 662nd Medical Clearing Company during WWII. The native of West Virginia attended Glenville State College where he received his Bachelor's degree. As an information technology manager, Leo led project teams in developing multiple State of Florida technology projects. He has prepared countless software application manuals, professional association articles and studies. Leo currently lives in Tampa, Florida, and he maintains WWII photos and ideas on getting veterans to share their stories at www.HospitalOnWheels.com.

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