



Wheeler Talk: Leonard “Bud” Lomell, Local World War II Hero, Part 2

Transcript:

00;00;04;07 - 00;01;24;06

Voiceover 1

[VOICEOVER 1] Are you a student in 8th through 12th grade? Are you looking for a dress for your junior or senior prom? Or perhaps a spring formal or eighth grade dance? Then keep these dates in mind: this March and April, the Ocean County Library is returning with the 17th annual Prom Dress Giveaway. The Prom Dress Giveaway allows you to take home the dress of your dreams for free. Simply come to one of our participating branches. Find a dress and take it home. The giveaways will be from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Toms River Branch on Monday, March 17th, Tuesday, March 18th and Wednesday, March 19th. The Little Egg Harbor Branch on Tuesday, March 25th and Wednesday, March 26th. And finally the Jackson Branch on Tuesday, April 1st and Wednesday, April 2nd. For more details, check out our website at theoceancountylibrary.org, visit your local branch, or call us at 732-349-6200. We look forward to seeing you then.

00;01;24;09 - 00;02;17;16

Allison

[ALLISON] Welcome back to Wheeler Talk: the History of Ocean County. I'm your host, Allison, and I'm here to bring the magic of the Hugh B. Wheeler Room directly to you. Wheeler is a treasure trove of genealogy and local history resources and home to many cherished one of a kind artifacts. Wheeler is a great place to sit and read or conduct research. To help with your research, Wheeler has rare books, historic pamphlets and magazines, old city directories and phone books, yearbooks from Ocean County schools, maps, analysis, and much, much more. Each episode of Wheeler Talk will focus on a historic event in Ocean County, as well as highlight some relevant artifacts in Wheeler's own collection. Now onto today's episode. Part two of Leonard “Bud” Lomell, Local World War II hero.

00;02;17;19 - 00;02;52;25

Allison

[ALLISON] As I understand it, when your dad arrived back home, he reconnected with your mother, Charlotte, who he had dated prior to his draft and whom he had periodically seen during leave. I read that despite his deep feelings for her prior to shipping off to war, he intentionally held back from becoming too serious because he was worried he would return carrying the burden of terrible war

injuries. It seems your dad had a habit of putting everyone before himself, both at war and at home. Did you have a hard time letting others do things for him? I'm wondering what he was like when he was sick.

00;02;52;28 - 00;03;52;08

Renee

[RENEE] As a leader, dad was able to delegate. In other situations, he did have a hard time letting others do things for him, but within each he was certainly appreciative of help. Dad felt the first heart attack came to the wrong address. His second heart attack got his attention, but it didn't slow him down. He still had a lot he wanted to do. He did have to give up the trial work he loved, so he focused on other areas of the law. He survived another 45 years and a variety of health issues. Because of medical advances, his optimism and goals, and most of all, as he would say, because of mom. She'd been a public health nurse when they married. So as soon as dad had his heart attack, she changed to the new heart healthy diet, kept track of his meds, his appointments, spoke with doctors, etc. She handled the details and was always by his side.

00;03;52;11 - 00;04;16;19

Allison

[ALLISON] I really love the story of your parents wedding. From what I read, your dad proposed to your mom in the parking lot of a church before services, and they were married in a small ceremony on June 6th, 1946, which he jokingly said was chosen purposefully so he would never forget his wedding anniversary. Was it pure coincidence that your parents married on the anniversary of D-Day?

00;04;16;21 - 00;04;35;16

Renee

[RENEE] No. Dad knew he would always remember these two important events. Fortunately, it fell at the end of the week. So they were able to honeymoon at Niagara Falls before dad's new job started on Monday. As the first director of the Ocean County Veterans Service Bureau.

00;04;35;18 - 00;05;11;13

Allison

[ALLISON] I also love the fact that your dad was late to his own wedding because he was painting the house he'd been fixing up for the two of them to live in. Today you see these \$50,000 weddings and extravagant photographed proposals, but it seems like their love was just simply real. Nothing was for show. They just wanted to be together. In fact, I remember reading that your dad used to say to you and your sisters that if you can be half the woman your mother is, you would make him very proud. Renee, if you're comfortable sharing, I'd love to hear some of your favorite memories of your parents lives together.

00;05;11;16 - 00;06;04;19

Renee

[RENEE] As an adult, looking back on my childhood, I am in awe of all they did. They made it look so easy. Dad and mom were great partners, building their lives together, working together for the family and for the community. They understood each other and appreciated each other. Dad had no interest in antiques, but if he saw an antique store, he pulled over so mom could check it out. Mom was always

ready to put another plate on the table when dad would arrive home with an unexpected dinner guest. They always had fun together. Mom and dad loved to dance, and it was a joy to see them dancing to big band music. In the last few years, when he didn't have the strength to make it all the way through a song, dad would take her in his arms and dance as long as he could.

00;06;04;22 - 00;06;36;21

Allison

[ALLISON] I've read that it was common for your dad to use dinner time to impart moral lessons and critical thinking skills. I read he would always have a copy of the local newspaper and the New York Times on the table, and he would ask your opinions on current events. Both you and your sisters and later also his grandchildren, and have you back up your opinions with facts. As a librarian, I can't help but respect this. Why do you think it was so important for your dad to base his opinions on facts, rather than hearsay, or perhaps less reliable resources?

00;06;36;23 - 00;07;14;25

Renee

[RENEE] Hearsay and unreliable sources have always been around, but were not like today's internet deluge. My parents generation would have a hard time with your question. Telling the truth was the right thing to do. Facts matter. In wartime, facts can be the difference between life and death situations. In the legal profession, hearsay is inadmissible and your experts need to be credible. Facts are evidence that validate an opinion. And my folks were not interested in gossip.

00;07;14;28 - 00;08;03;21

Allison

[ALLISON] I've also read that around the dinner table, when your dad would ask what you or your sisters learned on a given day, he would impose those same critical thinking skills by making you dive a little deeper to explain what it was exactly you learned by having you put it in context. Your sister Georgine is quoted as having said that she believes this was because your dad was preparing you girls for a world where and women have a harder time being heard and getting ahead, a world that treats women as second class citizens. In fact, your dad would go as far as to fire lawyers at his firm, no matter how talented they were, if they were in any way involved in sexual harassment. It seems he was always very aware of the struggles women faced. So I have to ask, what do you think your dad's opinion would be on how women are treated in today's society?

00;08;03;24 - 00;08;33;08

Renee

[RENEE] Dad admired strong, capable, intelligent women like his mother, his sisters and my mom. He also recognized how the laws and cultures of the world treated them as second class citizens. I think he would be pleased with the advances that have been made, but still recognize more needs to be done, particularly with wage parity. He would be shocked by the disrespect that women are still facing.

00;08;33;10 - 00;09;43;20

Allison

[ALLISON] I can't help but see your dad as a marvelous bridge between two generations. Your dad's grandson, your nephew Hank, described him as being, quote, "semi-woke," meaning he was always aware of injustices even before that term existed in our society, even before many others were aware of such truths. Your dad apparently wasn't afraid to speak his mind when it came to these injustices either, including when he defended a talented fellow attorney who has denied acceptance into the Ocean County Lawyers Club simply because he was Jewish. I believe I read that your dad said, quote, "I didn't fight Nazis in Europe to come home and find anti-Semitism in my backyard." End quote. He certainly practiced what he preached, not only by speaking up, but with his actions, such as refusing to be a member of the local country club or yacht club because they discriminated against African Americans and those of Jewish descent. He is quoted as having said, "Prejudice is a part of human nature, but you must always fight it within yourself." Renee, do you think your dad would agree with the idea that if history isn't remembered, it is doomed to be repeated?

00;09;43;22 - 00;09;56;24

Renee

[RENEE] Yes. But he was concerned that the history be accurate, and he had experience with how errors can be repeated and how the truth can be distorted, particularly in the age of the internet.

00;09;56;26 - 00;10;09;09

Allison

[ALLISON] So, Renee, I have some final questions for you and I hope they're not too silly. The first one might be, but I think everyone is curious. What was your dad's favorite food?

00;10;09;12 - 00;10;14;09

Renee

[RENEE] Any kind of seafood. But peanut butter was a comfort food.

00;10;14;11 - 00;10;18;11

Allison

[ALLISON] If you could describe your dad in three words, what would they be?

00;10;18;13 - 00;10;23;04

Renee

[RENEE] Loving. Honorable. Generous.

00;10;23;06 - 00;10;27;10

Allison

[ALLISON] Have you ever visited Pointe du Hoc or Hill 400?

00;10;27;12 - 00;10;42;23

Renee

[RENEE] I have visited Pointe du Hoc on Ranger trips in 1967, 1994, and 2004, and then individually with mom in 2012. That was after dad died. I have never visited Hill 400.

00;10;42;25 - 00;10;55;28

Allison

[ALLISON] In honor of your dad, who made sure to recognize the achievements of other Rangers rather than allowing the attention to rest solely on him. Are there any Rangers who you want to acknowledge in this podcast?

00;10;56;00 - 00;12;58;13

Renee

[RENEE] Dad would be very appreciative of the excellent book sections which have been written about World War II Rangers by Ron Lane, Stephen Ambrose, Robert Black, Patrick O'Donnell, Douglas Brinkley, Steven M. Gillon, Tom Brokaw, Drury N. Chaffin, Joanna MacDonald, Ron Drez, and others. He would be appreciative that the work of the Ranger Battalion Association to tell the stories of the World War II Rangers has been carried on by their descendants. If you Google "descendants of World War II Rangers," you will find the website WWIIRangers.org. In 2022, the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award given by the United States Congress, was awarded to the World War II Rangers through the efforts of the descendants under the guidance of Ron Hudnell, whose father was Second Battalion, D company. Dad would also want the people of Normandy, France to be remembered. Starting in 1945, Mr. Robert Ravaway spearheaded the preservation of Pointe du Hoc to preserve the memory of the Rangers on D-Day. This culminated in 1979, when the French transferred the Pointe du Hoc Ranger Memorial to the American Battle Monuments Commission. Dad worked for many years with the French Committee of Pointe du Hoc and the Rangers to establish a Ranger museum at Grandcamp-Maisy. It opened in 1989. It closed in 2012 since the point now had the Welcome Center through the American Battle Monuments Commission. The people of Grandcamp-Maisy and Creekville, and Mayor Jean-Marc Lefranc opened their homes and their hearts to the Ranger families starting in 1967, and continue to do so to this day.

00;12;58;16 - 00;13;06;16

Allison

[ALLISON] Renee, I have one last question for you. What do you want others to remember most about your dad?

00;13;06;19 - 00;13;24;10

Renee

[RENEE] He wanted to be remembered as a good son, a good husband, and a good father. I believe the words of the highest praise are that he was a good man, and he was that. He stood up for what he believed and he helped those in need.

00;13;24;13 - 00;13;28;06

Allison

[ALLISON] Renee, thank you so much for agreeing to be on this podcast.

00;13;28;07 - 00;13;32;10

Renee

[RENEE] Thank you, Allie, for honoring my father with this podcast.

00;13;32;12 - 00;13;33;00

Allison

[ALLISON] It's truly my pleasure.

00;13;33;04 - 00;13;35;29

Renee

[RENEE] I appreciate that, and I speak for the family.

00;13;36;02 - 00;13;43;18

Allison

[ALLISON] Thank you. That means a lot to me.

00;13;43;20 - 00;14;38;03

Allison

[ALLISON] This marks the end of part two. Stay tuned for part three. Wherein nephews of Bud Lomell's, Michael de Corsia and Harry de Corsia, will share a special reading of a document Bud Lomell himself wrote detailing his experience during the war. Michael de Corsia is a Vietnam veteran who served with the 82nd Airborne from 1968 to 1971. Harry de Corsia is a retired Point Pleasant Beach police detective who has recently retired from teaching criminal justice and homeland security classes at both Ocean County College and Thomas Edison State College. Harry also served on the 1999 Point Pleasant Beach Bud Lomell Monument Committee. See you next time for part three.

00;14;38;06 - 00;15;08;13

Voiceover 2

[VOICEOVER 2] Hello, adventurers! If you enjoyed this content, please take a look at the Ocean County Library's new podcast called Forge Your Imagination: A Guide to Immersive World Building. This new podcast is dedicated to helping creative individuals design their own expertly crafted worlds for books, games, Dungeons and Dragons, and more. Tune in on the first Wednesday morning of every month to learn more. Thanks for listening and safe travels, adventures.