



## FEATURE ARTICLE FROM ALWAYS BEST CARE

### World War II Veteran Recalls His Service

By Stacey Hibpshman

One year after the United States was drawn into the second world war in 1942, Clifford “Cliff” Hibpshman received a surprising, although not unexpected, notice from the president of the United States. The notice was an Order to Report for Induction, and just like that, at 23 years old, Cliff was drafted into the U.S. Army.

In 1944, Cliff and his platoon were sent to France, sailing across the Atlantic on the RMS Aquitania. His job in the 9th Replacement Depot was to drive the fresh young recruits, along with weapons and supplies, to the front lines of battle. Cliff recalls driving the 6X6 army trucks loaded with armed young soldiers along the Red Bull Highway, the headlights modified to a one-inch slit, to avoid being seen by the German airplanes flying over the famous road.

Cliff recalls watching fearfully from the deck of a ship sitting on the English Channel as hundreds of brave soldiers fought their way through the beaches at Normandy. Cliff recollects waiting in silence until the smoke cleared and they received the order that the beach was secure.

They marched forward into the town of Saint-Lo. He had “never seen a town so tore up as St. Lo,” with only a part of a lone building standing among the rubble and destruction. As if it only happened yesterday, Cliff describes velvet chairs hooked together, dangling from one of the two balconies left barely clinging to what was left of the brick wall of a theater.

Today, inside Cliff’s neatly organized apartment in Colorado, hanging on a plain white wall is a lone framed shadowbox, where he has displayed rank stripes, service pins and several medallions. Cliff carefully removes one particular piece—the Battle Star Medal. “This medal,” he proudly explains, “was earned in the battle at the Chateau of Fontainebleau.” He stares at the medal for a moment. “We kicked those Germans right out of there.” Without another word, he places the medal back in the case.

In 1946, Cliff returned home to Colorado and shortly afterward married his longtime sweetheart, Lily. Together they raised two boys, while he worked in construction, a skill he adopted while in the military. Although he was not a carpenter by trade, he spent much of his active duty term as the company carpenter, and it turned out he was very good at it. Now at 95 years old and a widower, Cliff proudly displays photos of his grandkids and great-grandkids. His oldest son and two grandsons followed in his footsteps, proudly serving our country in the Navy, Army and Air Force.



In May of 2014, Cliff was one of 25 World War II veterans chosen by the Honor Flight Network to participate in an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to visit the World War II memorial, completed in 2004. The four-day trip was filled with amazing sights and powerful feelings. Cliff felt a wave of emotion after seeing the memorial firsthand, recalling a statement a stranger made to him the day he came home in 1946. The woman embraced him, looked him straight in the eyes, and said, “You guys have changed the world.”

The Honor Flight Tour makes several trips a year, escorting World War II veterans from all over the country to the World War II memorial, at no cost to the veterans. Hundreds of volunteers and fundraising events make these trips possible for veterans who may never get to see the memorial otherwise.

For more information on the Honor Flight Network go to its [website](#).

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