

We Want Red Hook's Stories of Service

Historic Red Hook is documenting and highlighting stories of service in our community, especially from those who have been in the military and those of their family members and friends. Ideally we would like these narratives to become part of the community's historic archives and for them to be published via Historic Red Hook's social media and other sites. You can help us gather this information by either sharing with us your own story or interviewing someone else for theirs.

- The questions at the end of this packet are ones you can pick and choose from to interview someone you know who has served in the military or is a friend or family member of a veteran. The questions are taken from the website of StoryCorps, which is an excellent resource explaining why others' stories are important to all of us. It also gives guidance of how to approach a service member to share their experiences. You can access their site at StoryCorps.org.
- You can select any of these questions or use them as a starting point for a conversation. A good final question is to ask if there is anything not already covered that they would like to discuss or is important to know about their service or experiences.
- As always, please be sure you accurately convey what the person you are interviewing is telling you. Be sure to double-check the spelling of names, and you should attempt to elicit as to the best of their memory dates and locations of events.
- If you can obtain images, those go a long way to bring a story to life. Those items are precious and care should be taken with them. Taking a picture of a picture is an option. Also, Historic Red Hook has scanning equipment and an appointment can be made with the archives staff to copy the images.
- Remember, these experiences may be traumatic or raise difficult emotions. Please be respectful and sympathetic about the topics discussed, and if someone does not want to talk about particular events, be sensitive to that.

- Historic Red Hook would like to use your information for publication on our website and in our various media outlets. If your interviewee gives permission, please fill out the attached release form. Even if they are not comfortable with their information being public, perhaps they will consider allowing it to become part of our archives. Please be sure to thank the person for their time. Their stories are valuable to our community.

Submissions can be write-ups, photos with captions, TikTok or other video formats, or other genres. Historic Red Hook is here to help you with suggestions or support. Please send any questions and your submissions to Historic Red Hook at info@historicrodhook.org

Historic Red Hook thanks StoryCorps for these questions taken from its website. StoryCorps is an amazing resource for anyone interested in the narratives around them.

Starting a Conversation

[StoryCorps](#), an organization whose mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories, has put together a list of great questions that you can ask a veteran or someone who has lost a loved one in combat.

We hope you will use these questions with your family members who have served, your neighbors, or in your senior care communities to create meaningful conversations with those who have bravely served their country and with those who may want to remember a special person today.

MILITARY

- When were you drafted or when did you enlist?
- What do you remember about the day you enlisted?
- How did you tell your family and friends that you were joining the military? Are there any conversations that stand out from that time?
- If you enlisted, what were some of the reasons that you joined the military? How did you choose your branch of service?
- How did you imagine military life before you joined? How did your perceptions change after serving?
- What was basic training like?
- Can you describe a funny moment from boot camp?
- What are some of the things you remember about adapting to military life?
- Where did you serve during the war?
- If you deployed overseas, how did you tell your loved ones you were being deployed?
- How did you stay in touch with family and friends back home?
- What are some things you remember most about your deployment?

- If you saw multiple deployments, how did they differ from each other? How did you change?
- Can you describe how you felt coming home from combat?
- Was there anything you especially missed about civilian life?
- Is there someone you served with that you remember fondly? Can you tell me about him/her?
- What are some fun things you and your friends did together while you were deployed?
- Did any of your military friends play pranks on each other? Can you describe a funny one?
- Did you ever get caught breaking any rules? Did you ever get away with something you weren't supposed to do?
- Did you ever learn something about a fellow service member that surprised you?
- When did you leave the military? What was that process like?
- What were your first few months out of the service like?
- Was there anything or anyone that helped you during the transition from military to civilian life?
- Do you have advice for others transitioning out of the military?
- How do you think your time in the military affected you?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What are some of your hopes for the future?
- What phrase or word will never be the same now that you served?
- When you were first discharged, what are some things about civilians that were difficult for you to deal with?
- Is there anything you wish civilians understood about military service?
- What are some habits you developed in the service that you like? What are some that you dislike?
- What are some things you miss about being in the service? What are some you are glad to have left behind?
- What has been difficult to communicate to family and friends about your military service?
- Do you have advice for other military couples?
- If you have children, what do you want them to know about your military service?

REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

- Remembering the fallen: What was your relationship to _____?
- Remembering the Fallen: Tell me about _____.
- Remembering the Fallen: What did _____ look like?
- Remembering the Fallen: What is one of your favorite memories of _____?
- Remembering the Fallen: How did you find out about _____'s death?
- Remembering the Fallen: What has helped you most in your grief?
- Remembering the Fallen: Do you have any traditions to honor _____?
- Remembering the Fallen: Do you have any funny stories about the two of you together?

REMEMBERING A LOVED ONE

- What was your relationship to _____?
- Tell me about _____.
- What is your first memory of _____?
- What is your best memory of _____?
- What is your most vivid memory of _____?
- What did _____ mean to you?
- Are you comfortable/ can you talk about _____'s death?
How did _____ die?
- What has been the hardest thing about losing _____?
- What would you ask _____ if _____ were here today?
- What do you miss most about _____?
- How do you think _____ would want to be remembered?
- Can you talk about the biggest obstacles _____ overcame in life?
- Was there anything you and _____ disagreed about, fought over, or experienced some conflict around?
- What about _____ makes you smile?
- What was your relationship like?
- What did _____ look like?
- Did you have any favorite jokes _____ used to tell?
- Do you have any stories you want to share about _____?
- What were _____'s hopes and dreams for the future?

- Is there something about _____ that you think no one else knows?
- How are you different now than you were before you lost _____?
- What is the image of _____ that persists?
- Do you have any traditions to honor _____?
- What has helped you the most in your grief?
- What are the hardest times?

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Interview and Media Release Form

I, _____, hereby give to Historic Red Hook, all intellectual property rights which I may have in an interview (and any related material) submitted on _____ (date) as part of the Historic Red Hook Stories of Service project.

This material will be housed in the archives as part of the Stories of Service collection, to be available for public access. Historic Red Hook shall also have the right to use, edit, reproduce, exhibit, or publish this material. It is understood that this agreement covers original writing, recordings, images, and any transcript or other reproduction of the originals made by the Historic Red Hook.

This agreement does not preclude any use I may want to make of the information in the recording itself.

By signing below, I acknowledge I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this release form and I understand it.

This agreement may be revised or amended by mutual consent of the parties undersigned.
Accepted by:

_____ Date _____
(Interviewer signature)

_____ Date _____
(Interviewee signature)