



New Hampshire Veterans Home

139 Winter St.
Tilton, NH 03276



Bradford "Brad" York

Resident Spotlight - January 2020

Bradford Hatch York, known by most as Brad, has been a resident of the New Hampshire Veterans Home since February of 2016. He enjoys chapel bible studies and chess games on the 'Vet cave' computer. Brad was born in the fall of 1930 at a birthing room in the small Maine town of Lamoine. In addition to his excited parents, three-year old sister Elizabeth welcomed him into the world. Brad spent his first two years there, moving to Ellsworth for a time and later to E. Sullivan, Maine, to a home built by his Grandfather, for his Mother. He remembers the well-constructed house, absent running water, electricity and plumbing, sparking memories of a bygone era. Elizabeth and Brad would fetch water daily from across the street, amongst other chores, instilling the New England work ethic essential for life in that era. Brad has fond memories of his youth, particularly times in the barn, imagination running wild on Grandfather's Model T. or the sleigh that beckoned him as well.

Grandfather held a special place in Brad's heart, as one who led by example, seeing a need and meeting it. Recruited to extend the U.S. Mail service in that area, he answered the call, becoming the very first R.F.D. carrier in East Sullivan - by way of horse and buggy. That winter the buggy exchanged its wheels for skis, which may have contributed to the Nor' Easter postal creed: "Through Maine, sleet and snow, the East Sullivan mail must go!" Grandfather's dedication garnered correspondence from Washington, D.C., Brad recalls with pride, acknowledging his years of service to the Town of East Sullivan. Brad played violin and guitar in his formative years, eventually graduating high school in Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

The year 1953 proved to be pivotal for Brad, as he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Selected for designation in a Medical Battalion, completing basic training at Camp Pickett in Blackstone, Virginia. During field exercises, one sight he will never forget was of 200 soldiers traversing the wooded landscape. Another story, he recalls with a blush, was finding a nestling spot in the ground that beckoned a nap while on maneuvers. Intending to catnap, he instead pulled a Rip Van Winkle, waking up in the dark some hours later! He might have garnered consideration for espionage duty had his superiors known he navigated back into ranks undetected.

Brad was assigned to the Army's 7th Infantry Division as a Field Medic and set sail for Korea. He recalls treacherously high seas, able to peer over the bow from the stern on the pitching deck, Flying Fish as a backdrop. He found a measure of mercy, not succumbing to seasickness like many of his colleagues.

Korea made an indelible impression on Brad. He sensed a tangible difference in social consciousness of Koreans from that of Americans. Outside a church, he found rows of rubber slippers with parishioners squatting on the floor inside, separated male and female, by a line down the middle. Furniture was a rare sight in Korean homes, as well he observed.



At one point Brad was assigned as a Dental Assistant. He soon realized nobody had perfect teeth amongst his G.I. buddies, himself included he'll confess, but they were commonplace on Korean passersby. After achieving medals for Good Conduct and Korean Service, Brad was discharged in April of '55.

Upon his return stateside, Brad utilized the G.I. Bill, earning a Bachelor's degree in history from Barrington and Providence Bible College. He would later receive a Masters in Theology at Eastern Nazarene. College brought a lot into Brad's life, including his future wife Barbara, whom he met in Providence and married in '59. Remaining in Providence, they started their family with baby girls. Katherine, their eldest was sadly lost to cancer while very young, a test of faith for the couple, to be sure. Naming their next daughter Faith, who blossomed, they moved on, watching their own faith blossom as well. They resettled their homestead in Rochester, N.H., adding two sons to the fold. Bradford Jr. began walking in his father's footsteps followed by little brother Peter, who became somewhat of a world traveler, finding success in the financial world. Brad is married to Martha, his wife of 36 years; his extended family includes her son and two daughters.

Brad's passion for teaching was realized in Groveton, N.H., a small school setting, proceeding as a teaching/principle. There he split duties between 6th grade classrooms and administrative oversight. His next educational endeavor was at the Middle School in Milton, N.H., another small school where everyone knew each other. Brad held other jobs through the years such as, school bus driver in R.I., gas station manager in Dover and security guard. Pinkerton Agency gave him one memorable post: Boston City Hall's construction site, where he leashed a German Shepard of impressive intelligence.

If Brad penned a book, "Travelling Mercies" would clearly be one chapter's title. Receiving a scholarship, he trekked to Oklahoma, after which he bought a motorcycle with the intention of returning to New England. Brad had every intention of the return trip. Unfortunately, his bike did not, so he pulled out his reliable thumb. Hitchhiking was a necessity at times in those days, one memorable journey to Florida for family visits stood out. He had a very eventful trip back to New Hampshire from South Carolina's Bob Jones University, he retells. On that trip, he hopped into the back of a pick-up truck with another lad, rekindling his inner Rip Van Winkle, took a four-hour snooze. After unloading in Richmond for lunch, he grabbed another ride, continuing north. They happened upon an accident scene involving his previous ride, which had run off the road, expelling its remaining rider. Now THAT was a timely meal.

Admittedly, a bit of a lead foot when behind the wheel, Brad drew the attention of a North Carolina officer who flashed lights wanting to discuss the matter in further, ticket book in hand. Devine intervention was the only explanation, as the exact moment Tar Heel Trooper exited his cruiser, torrential rains flooded the sky chasing him back to his dry car. As he pulled away, Brad recalls breaking into a chorus of, "Showers of Blessing," an old hymn favorite. Another blessing, we'd all agree: Brad York is a valued member of our New Hampshire Veterans Home family.

*We are thankful you chose the New Hampshire Veterans Home
as your home, Brad.*

