

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

TRACIE HUNTER/WWII BEYOND THE CALL

World War II veteran
Jack Hamlin.



The Lucky Life of Jack Hamlin

D-Day veteran,
French Legion of Honor
recipient discusses
his lucky century

DUSTIN BASS

Luck has seemed to follow Jack Hamlin like a shadow. He was born on Oct. 15, 1921, in Springfield, Missouri. Over the past 100 years, his life has been full of providential moments, even when it seemed otherwise at the time.

Hamlin is a product of interesting and tumultuous times for the nation and the world, having grown up as a child in the Roaring '20s and becoming a teenager during the Depression years. Just as he exited his teenage years, he enlisted in the military, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

But before the war, Hamlin's focus was on two things: girls and baseball.

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COURTESY OF JACK HAMLIN



Hamlin in his cutter.

Finding the Good in Every Day

Virginia man, now 16 years past Alzheimer's diagnosis, celebrates 35th anniversary to loving wife

LOUISE CHAMBERS

A happily-married Virginia man diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at the age of 41 was given four to five years to "get his affairs in order." Yet, bolstered by his wife's love and support, their faith, and their deep mutual understanding, he has lived 16 years past his diagnosis and celebrated his 35th wedding anniversary to the woman he loves.

Don Talbott, 57, lives in Gloucester, Virginia, with his wife, Christy Talbott, 55.

The couple first met when Christy was still in high school, working at a Hillside Cinema movie theater in her small Virginia hometown, Gloucester. Don was a regular visitor but never approached her. He moved to Idaho with his family after graduation. It wasn't until two years later that he returned and rode past the cinema on his motorbike, catching Christy's attention.

"He came up and started talking to me, and we just became friends," Christy told *The Epoch Times*. After eight months, they tied the knot on May 2, 1987, when Don was 22, and Christy was 21.

As it turned out, Don had a crush on Christy since the beginning.

"I told my buddies, 'I'm gonna marry her when I get back,'" he recalled. "My first impression of her was there's no way a girl like that would even talk to me ... it just so happened that my family had moved away, but she never moved away from inside my mind."

Christy wanted light, laughter, and God in her life, and Don provided all that to her. They welcomed a son in 1989, who grew up to become a school teacher in the STEM program. "We're very proud of him," said Don.

Christy has battled multiple sclerosis (MS) since her late teenage years. Her official diagnosis came right after she married Don. With no drug-altering medications yet on the market, she got involved in medical trials and was placed on the very first MS medication, Betaseron.

"Sometimes, God wants you to build your character, or learn lessons," she said. "But I now know that everything I went through, my experiences, were so that when Don was diagnosed I could act quickly."

At the age of 38, Don was in a high-responsibility job that he loved as supervisor of a construction crew for Verizon telephone company.

But when Christy began getting reports from some of Don's men that he was locking himself out of his office and car several times a day, falling asleep at work, and making out-of-character statements, alarm bells rang.

Additionally, Christy started noticing that Don, who'd always been musical and played bass guitar for the church band, local orchestras, and community theaters, was "messing his music up." At this time, she suspected he was having seizures, and took him to see her neurologist, who agreed with her.

Diagnosis

They soon moved him to the University of Virginia's teaching hospital. Don was put on a seizure study for a week where his brain was monitored. There, they realized he wasn't having seizures, but confirmed there was something definitely wrong with his brain. The long process of diagnosis began.

"It took two years to get a definite diagnosis of Alzheimer's," Christy said. "They told us, because he was so young, just 41, that the disease would go quickly; he probably had four or five years to live at home and get our affairs in order."

After receiving the shocking diagnosis, the



Married for 35 years, the Talbotts share many memories together.



Christy Talbott has battled with multiple sclerosis since her late teens.

ing out here ... she literally is my anchor," he said. "I'm on a little raft, and that's the only thing that keeps me from floating away in the wind. I know all I have to do is grab that rope and pull a little bit, and she's right there. We know that about each other. I just happen to be the one that's at the mercy of the wind."

Christy explained that patients with Alzheimer's usually lose their filters a lot of times and say things that they usually wouldn't say. Nevertheless, she has understood Don really well and knows that he would never say things to hurt her or anyone else, and thus even if he says something, she knows it's not him but the disease talking, so she doesn't expect an apology from him.

Christy has also encouraged her husband to continue being an active member of society. In the early days, they were still able to go out with friends and attend church, but as his disease progressed, his capacity for social interaction shrank. Don claims it's "like you start off with an onion, and then little by little, over time, the layers start to peel back."

As a caregiver, however, Christy still tries to make each day successful. She explains that, on certain days, they still go out for lunch, but on other days, they stay at home. The couple also takes each day as it comes despite how Don wakes up every morning.

Moreover, Don's condition hasn't eradicated the romance in his and Christy's relationship.

"Every day, I get to love the same woman; because of my illness, she has to learn to love someone different every day," Don said. The couple also shares innumerable fond memories of their 35 years together, including a funny memory from the day they tied the knot.

Christy regaled: "Our family had gotten us a limo ... we'd never been in a limo. We got in and I'm sitting in the back, here [Don] comes, he sits in the back, and the limo driver puts the glass down. "I'm thinking we're gonna hold hands and maybe kiss, and just talk about what a wonderful day it is," she continued. "I had expectations. Right expectations? Wrong! My new husband moves up to the front of the limo, right next to the glass, and the entire hour to get to our hotel he talks to the limo driver!"

Indignant at the time, Christy now laughs whenever she recalls the farcical moment. Over the years, Don has recorded many of his most profound feelings on paper. In 2019, he published a book, including poems he wrote about his wife, which Christy holds dear.

Besides his poems, the 57-year-old's romantic gestures are often less traditional than chocolates and flowers. "If I have a good day, and I get up, move the furniture out, and vacuum the whole house, she would rather have that," he explained.

"So many people want that quick feeling of excitement. To me, that's cut flowers," Christy agreed. "What you need to build is that foundation of faith and friendship and laughter; build that base, and let the relationship mature. To me, our relationship is more like a potted plant."

"It's all about letting go of expectations and trying to do a little better than yesterday, every single day. It also helps to remember the 'special things,'" said Christy, who hasn't lost sight of why she fell in love with Don in the first place.

"I've lived most of my life with him, versus the other way around," she said. "The one thing we always know is that no matter what, we're there for one another."

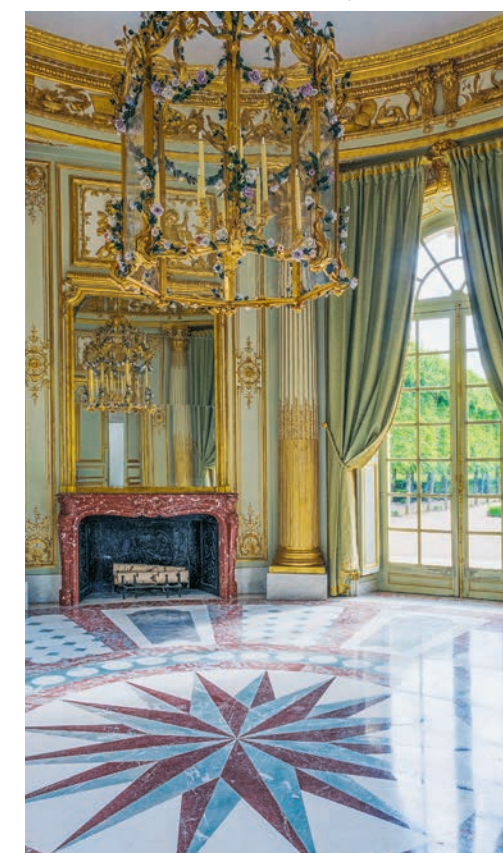
"No matter what I need, no matter what I ask for, no matter what I'm thinking," he explained, "I can come to her with the most illogical conversations and she'll sort through it."

"The Alzheimer's has me kind of just float-

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The linear approach leads to, frames, and presents both the French Pavilion (the small building in the center foreground) and the Petit Trianon's elegant west façade (the building in the middle ground). The domed Love Pavilion can be seen here in the background, set on the same axis and amid the English landscape garden.



The main octagonal reception room of the French Pavilion where summer luncheons and royal feasts would occur. The bas-relief ornamentation above the columns represents a variety of fruit and vegetables grown in the estate. A view from the reception room through to one of the wings in the French Pavilion reveals the refined gold leaf plaster work and subtle green and pink hues of the marble, which draw on colors found in the surrounding garden.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

The Remote Gardens and Pavilions of VERSAILLES

JAMES HOWARD SMITH

Set far back in the grounds of Versailles are the refined gardens and pavilions of the Petit Trianon. Together, they show how European garden design transitioned in the 1700s with two contrasting styles: On the west side, there's a calm yet uplifting formal French garden, and on the east side, a romantic and picturesque English landscape.

The French garden style was originally inspired by the classical harmony and order of the Italian Renaissance. The Petit

Trianon Garden displays this in the calm horizontal lines of the Linden trees as the rhythm of their trunks provides a sense of stability, while the geometry of the pavilions, the linear promenade, and circular ponds create order.

The colorful, aromatic flower beds nourish that inner realm. The linear approach frames and presents both the French Pavilion and the Petit Trianon's elegant west façade. Both buildings were designed by Ange Jacques-Gabrielle in a simple classical style that would later be known as Neoclassical.

Louis the XVI ascended the throne in 1774; he soon married the young Marie Antoinette and gifted her with the Petit Trianon. Marie was instrumental in the design of the English gardens and pavilions. This style was based on recreating an idyllic and pastoral landscape similar to those depicted in English and French landscape paintings.

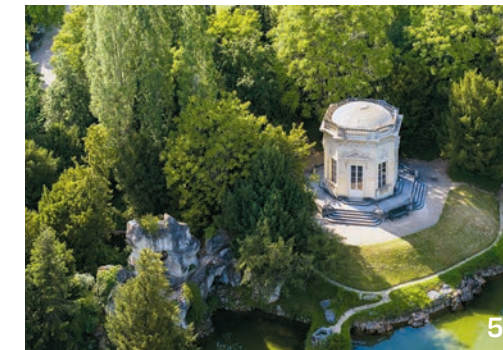
This romanticized view of nature was in effect a gentle revolt against the calm order of the formal garden. The English garden also combined components imported from China.

Louis XV's large botanical gardens that stood on the grounds were removed to make way for the new garden design. Marie and her official architect, Richard Mique, developed two pavilions, the Love Pavilion and the Belvedere. Although the two garden styles greatly differ, they inspire awe in their respective domains and create a harmonious setting for those who visit.

James Howard Smith, an architectural photographer, designer, and founder of *Cartio*, aims to inspire an appreciation of classic architecture.



T. GARNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



T. GARNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES

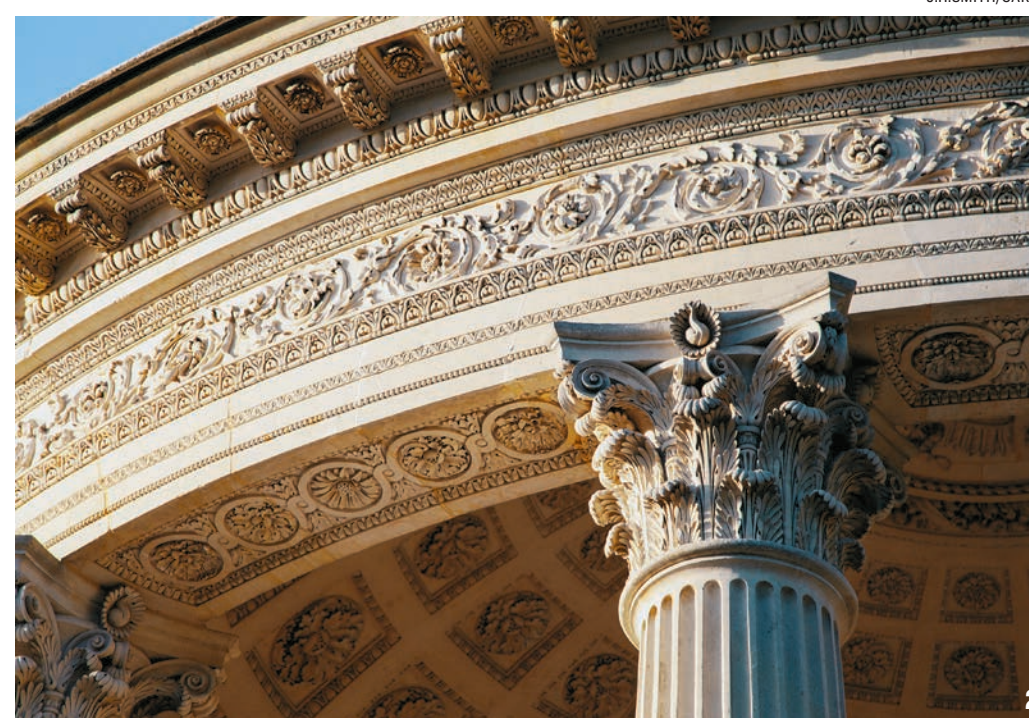
1. The French formal garden was thought of as a place where the sovereigns could occasionally entertain, or just enjoy walks in the refined setting. In 1749, King Louis XV directed architect Ange Jacques-Gabrielle to create the French Pavilion in the garden as a dining room; it was built in the reserved classical style from 1749 to 1750.

2. Ornamentation above the columns enjoys a similar exquisite treatment with the Petit Trianon as it is adorned with rosettes and Arabesque scrolls. The rosettes can also be seen here on the interior ceiling.

3. Royal architect Ange Jacques-Gabrielle designed the French Pavilion as a vast rotunda supported by four small wings. The four façades represent and depict the four seasons. The façade is topped with a balustrade, sculptures of children, and flower-filled vases.

4. The Love Pavilion was also designed by Richard Mique, and is set on an island amid the picturesque garden, and it aligns with the Petit Trianon and French Pavilion beyond. Marie Antoinette enjoyed a direct view of the Pavilion from her apartment on the second floor of the Petit Trianon.

5. The Belvedere is the name of this pavilion and also a term to describe a place that offers a view of the surrounding landscape. The pavilion's timeless classical architecture combined with the weathered grotto in the lower left are set in a mature natural landscape to create an ancient atmosphere. It was positioned offering views out over the pond and the landscape beyond.



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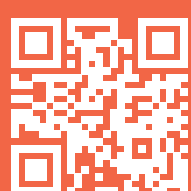
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