

# CAPTURING OSWALD

## *Letter from the Producer*



*From Family Story to Film:* “You know,” my Grandma said as we sat on the couch, “I am from the North Star State, and Grandpa is from the Lone Star State, and somehow our stars aligned.”

Her love for my Grandpa is never far from her thoughts. As we chat, my Grandpa takes a pile of clean, folded clothes and puts them in the dryer for a ten-minute spin. The buzzer sounds, surprising my Grandma. She instinctively retrieves them. I watch as she unknowingly folds the same clean pile of slightly heated clothes for the third time that day.

“It gives her something to do,” said Grandpa, acknowledging that the activity keeps her from focusing on the pounding headaches inflicted by dementia. The laundry makes Grandma feel useful and that’s important to her husband of 71 years.

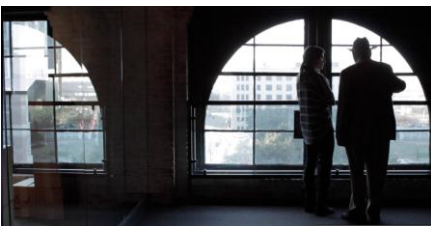
My Grandpa was injured after the attack on Pearl Harbor and was transferred to Corona Naval Hospital, a converted luxury hotel in California, where he met the fiery redhead nurse Taimi Trast. She would nurse him back to health and eventually become his wife. Grandma spent 50 years nursing the wounded, the ill, the deranged and the desperate. Grandpa served in the Civilian Conservation Corp, the Navy, and the Dallas Police Department. Combined, they have given the country a century’s worth of civil service.



My Grandpa is James R. Leavelle, the Dallas homicide detective handcuffed to Lee Harvey Oswald when Jack Ruby gunned down President Kennedy’s alleged assassin, a moment captured by Bob Jackson’s iconic photograph. Every year of elementary school, my Grandpa was my show and tell. Though he always drew a crowd, I didn’t fully appreciate his place in history.

But as I got older, I began to learn the deeper story - an untold story. In August 2010, I moved back home with my parents and invested my savings into making a documentary about my Grandpa and the Dallas Police Department. Every decision I made, any money I spent, was weighed against the furthering of this documentary. I’m proof that such single-minded focus, while often necessary, can be lonely and isolating.

All of that changed in January of this year when Discovery Studios embraced my idea and helped bring together an incredibly talented team to start production on *Capturing Oswald*. None of this would be possible without the Military Channel, Discovery Studios, and our director and writer, Alan Martin. Just as the show became much bigger than a story about my Grandpa, so is the effort behind it. Together we turned a family story into a film and gave justice to a great moment in American history that needed to be told. While I have no doubt that my Grandpa’s historical connection will be his legacy, I prefer to think of his life’s accomplishments as a response to JFK’s most famous exhortation: Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.



*Capturing Oswald* is about the men who were on the front lines, charged with catching the president’s assassin. The Dallas Police Department’s brilliant work to capture Oswald in less than 90 minutes is often over-shadowed by conspiracy theories. For the first time, these retired officers speak out about what it took to solve the crime of the century and how their experiences built a bond between them and forever changed the media.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of President Kennedy’s assassination, and I’m honored that the Military Channel will air *Capturing Oswald*. This is nothing short of a dream come true for me, but I didn’t get here on my own. I share this dream and accomplishment with my family and friends, my colleagues, and the men who have trusted me with their story. These detectives, local reporters and other witnesses to history have welcomed me into their homes and vouched for me among their peers. They are gentle giants and I hope to make them proud.