

The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous

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JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS PRESENTS SHORT DOCUMENTARY ON HEROISM OF U.S. SOLDIER DURING WORLD WAR II

ABC NEWS' TED KOPPEL NARRATES "FOOTSTEPS OF MY FATHER" & THE HEROISM OF MASTER SGT. RODDIE EDMONDS

NEW YORK— The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) will debut its short documentary titled "Footsteps of My Father," exploring the heroism of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds in saving the lives of 200 Jewish American soldiers during the Second World War. The narrative, told through the lens of Edmond's son, Pastor Chris Edmonds, and several American Jewish POWs, was directed by Paul Allman, and produced by JFR Executive Vice President Stanlee Stahl and Dean Beals who has co-produced JFR documentaries for many years. Ted Koppel, of ABC News' Nightline, provided the historical narration for the film.

The film will debut on Friday, June 8, at 12:20 p.m., at the IFC Theatre, located at 323 Avenue of the Americas in Manhattan, and will run through Thursday, June 14. The first showing will include a question and answer session with the film's producers, director. The film has been submitted for an Academy Award in the Best Documentary Short Subject category.

Master Sgt. Edmonds was captured during the Battle of the Bulge by the German Army on December 19, 1944. As the highest-ranking officer in the Stalag IXA, a prisoner of war camp, Edmonds was responsible for the camp's 1,292 American POWs. The camp's commandant ordered Edmonds to identify the Jewish soldiers in order to separate them from the other prisoners. Instead, Edmonds refused, and when the German commandant placed his pistol against Edmonds' head, demanding that he identify the Jewish soldiers, Edmonds responded "We are all Jews here," refusing to identify the Jewish soldiers thereby saving their lives.

FOOTSTEPS OF MY FATHER

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Edmonds survived 100 days of captivity, and returned home after the war, but never spoke of his actions. Edmonds passed away in 1985, and only long after did his son, Pastor Chris Edmonds begin to put together the story of his father's heroism during the war. Posthumously, Edmond's actions have been recognized by Yad Vashem and The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous. The narrative of film follows the younger Edmond's exploration of the episode during the war.

"Master Sgt. Edmonds's story, one not only of heroism but also one of humility, provides an incredible role model to today's leaders and to so many others. During his lifetime, he chose not to publicize his actions, and the story of his son's discovery of them provides an incredible window into the Greatest Generation," said Stahl. "We are pleased to share his story with an even wider audience through this film."

In 2016, the JFR produced a shorter version of the documentary on Master Sgt. Edmonds, which was shown at the Chattanooga Jewish Film Festival on May 9, 2018 and will show at the March 2019 Baton Rouge and Palm Springs Jewish film festivals. This expanded version of the film will show at the Portland Jewish Film Festival on Tuesday, June 19, 2018.

The JFR continues its work of providing monthly financial assistance to some 350 aged and needy Righteous Gentiles, living in 20 countries. Since its founding, the JFR has provided more than \$39 million to aged and needy rescuers – helping to repay a debt of gratitude on behalf of the Jewish people to these noble men and women. Its Holocaust teacher education program has become a standard for teaching the history of the Holocaust and educating teachers and students about the significance of the Righteous as moral and ethical exemplars. For more information, visit <https://jfr.org/>.