



## DUCKS WIN CELEBRATED STATUS IN WWII

Out of the strife of World War II emerged America's Greatest Generation – heroes on the front line and on the home front who endured the historic era. It was during this time, too, that amphibious vehicles called “Ducks” made their mark.

Despite their celebrated status for their ability to cross both land and water, Ducks almost didn't make it into action. With our nation at peace, the idea of developing amphibious vehicles was met with skepticism. As America catapulted into war and the Duck proved itself in a high-seas rescue at home, top U.S. leaders gave the program a nod and General Motors began rolling Ducks off the assembly line.

The unique vehicles are officially called D.U.K.W.s – which is a military code representing characteristics of the vehicle. (D = 1942, U = amphibian, K = front-wheel drive, W = rear-wheel drive). Nevertheless, American GIs decided the name “Duck” was a perfect fit.

Ducks have an impressive wartime record participating in large amphibious operations in both Europe and the Pacific during World War II and the Korean War. Their finest moment was D-Day, June 6, 1944, when more than 2,000 Ducks were used to transport troops and supplies at Normandy. It was touted as the greatest amphibious operation in history as Ducks allowed the Allies to make a beachhead on the rugged shores of northern France under heavy enemy resistance.

In the days following D-Day, three world leaders were brought ashore at Normandy onto newly liberated French soil using Ducks. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Britain's King George VI and the then soon-to-be French President Charles De Gaulle were all ferried to land using Ducks. The lumbering Ducks, whose effectiveness was at first doubted, became an unlikely success story of the war.

Today Original Wisconsin Ducks actively preserve these unique craft by searching the world over for Ducks. While they look nostalgic, Original Wisconsin Ducks are like new again after a rigorous refurbishing process to prepare the vehicle for its new tour of duty hauling vacationers over the beautiful terrain of Wisconsin Dells.