

Pearl Harbor That Sunday morning I awoke about 7 a.m. and got dressed in fatigues to clean my equipment. First I went to the quadrangle for breakfast; entering the kitchen, I picked up a tray and received two eggs (sunny-side up, just the way I like them), toast, milk, fruit, and then went into the dining room.

I had just set my tray on the table when all hell broke loose. Planes were heard flying about, and noises like explosions. Me and a couple soldiers went out the back of the barracks; we noticed planes flying over Wheeler Field—the fighter base—and saw explosions.

Just then, a two-seater plane rounded the barracks not more than 50 feet above the ground. It was so close I could see the eyes of the pilot, the rear gunner firing his machine gun at the third floor of our barracks just above my head. I noticed the big red insignia on the wings and fuselage; I knew these were Japanese planes and that we were at war.

I ran up the stairs to my third-floor billet area and started to change into my khaki field uniform. As I was dressing, the CQ (Charge of Quarters), a corporal, came by and told me to get my weapon from the gun rack and my ammunition down at the supply room. I was about the third soldier in line at the supply room door;

the supply sergeant had me sign for 20 rounds of ammunition, and I moved across the hall to start loading my clips. Just then, the first sergeant came on the scene, and seeing the growing line told the supply ser-

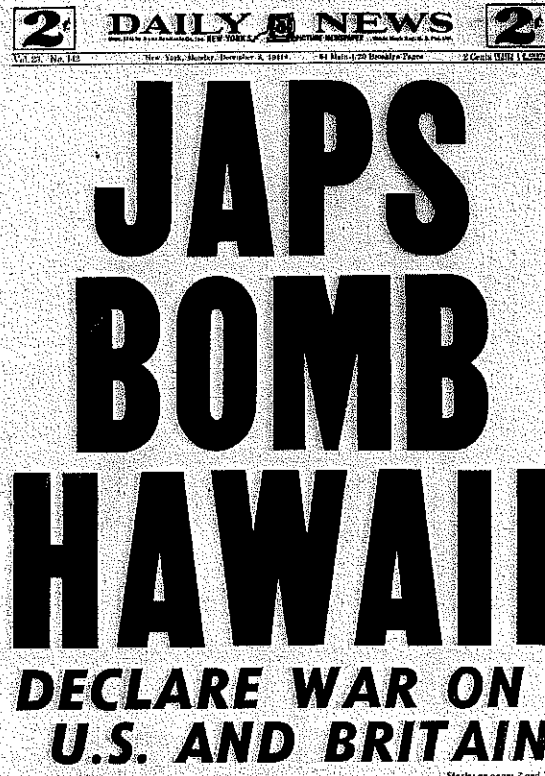
geant in no uncertain terms to throw the box of ammo out into the hall and forget about signatures.

Our section drove on to our assigned position, but it was occupied by another gun battery. We continued north along a dirt road leading up into the mountains. On reaching the assigned point we stopped, unhitched the guns, and set them up to fire on the Kahuku area. Our gun's range was about 4,800 yards, but we realized Kahuku town was about 5,000 yards. To get additional range, we dug holes to elevate the muzzles but still there was no ammunition. Finally, the ammo truck arrived after Lt. Duke had gone to get shells; he could not persuade the officer at the ammunition drop to release ammo without the necessary forms. Duke responded, "There's my

requisitions," pointing to the Japanese planes in the sky. Then it started to rain as we waited for the invasion. I don't remember eating.

Alfred N. Poirier *San Christobal, N.M.*

Submitted by Gerald Poirier, brother of Alfred, who died in April 2007.



The attack on Pearl Harbor prompted the U.S. to declare war on Japan.

In Service On the home front, mothers, wives, sweethearts, and the children of the U.S. had to adapt to a new way of life. This was indeed all-out war—the whole nation bled in unison. The women filled the many jobs left vacant when the men were inducted into the armed forces. On both the East and West coasts, there were strict blackout requirements to prevent possible shoreline penetration from enemy submarines at night. Many foods such as sugar, coffee, and canned goods were rationed, as well as gasoline and pleasure travel.

Each and every American was affected by World War II. In many homes across our nation, gold stars would appear in windows to signify another family member lost in battle. Military and civilian alike were shoulder-to-shoulder in a shared passion to win the war and save the country.

In June 1944, I was inducted into the U.S. Navy, and ironically for me, in early 1945, was sent to a duty station at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard. This is where it all started a long hard three years earlier. My last duty as a Navy petty officer was guarding Japanese prisoners of war captured in the last battles of the Pacific war. **Edwin Roseberry** *Charlottesville, Va.*

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DAVID J. & JANICE L. FREYER COLLECTION / CORBIS; BETTMANN / CORBIS

At Home I was nearly 10, living in Fort Wayne, Ind. My father was a World War I Army veteran who had been deactivated from the Army Military Intelligence in 1919, but maintained a military status in the inactive reserve. He was commander of a CCC camp but was reactivated into the Army as a public relations officer for the new air base—Baer Field—outside Fort Wayne. On Dec. 6, 1941, a squadron of Bell P-39 aircraft landed as the initial aircraft assignment.

On most Sundays, my father and mother would take me to the officers club on the base for dinner. Following dinner I would bide my time while my parents played nickel/dime poker with other officers. On Dec. 7, we enjoyed the usual meal and my parents were happily enjoying the

poker game when an enlisted man stormed through the front door yelling: "Quick, turn on the radio. We've been attacked in Hawaii." The immediate response in the room was, "We'll whip those Japs in a week." The P-39s immediately flew to the West Coast on Dec. 8.

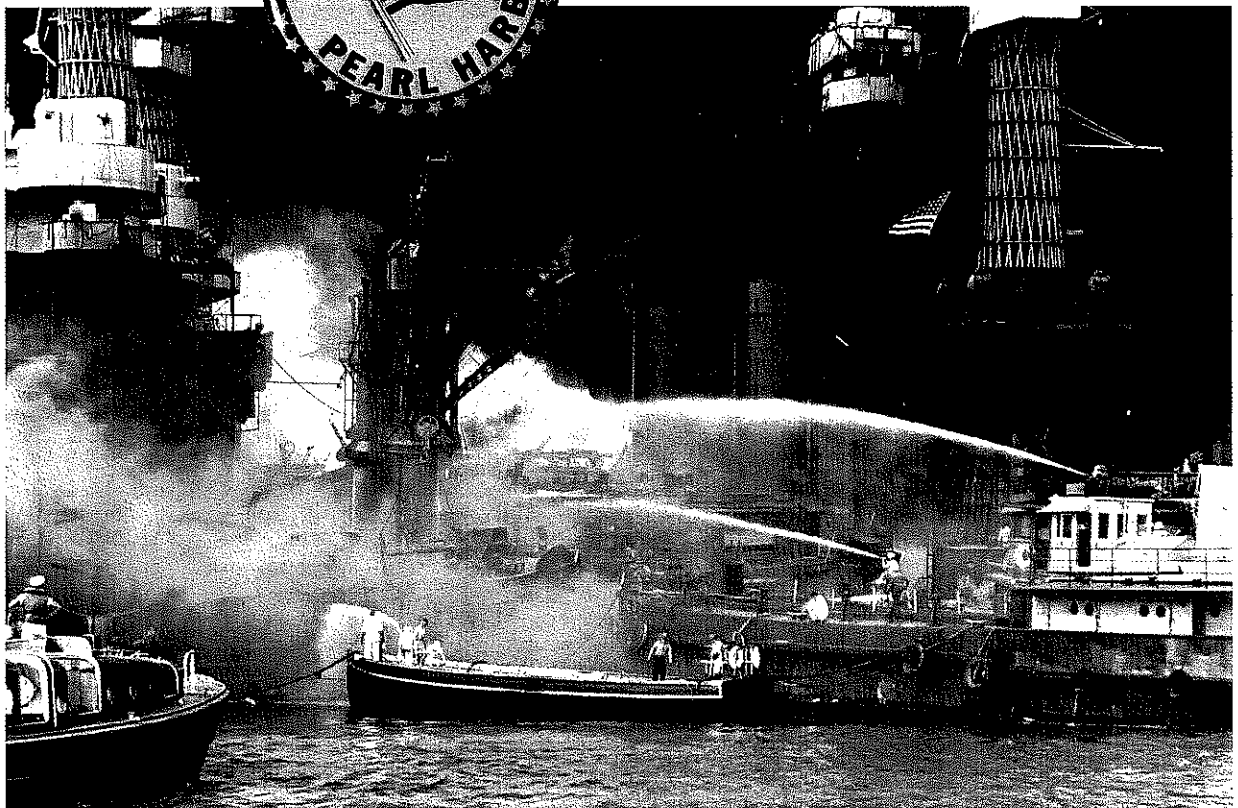
The nation pulled together. I remember defense stamps, war bonds, scrap metal drives, and rationing. I remember small banners in house windows with blue and gold stars on them indicating the number from that household in military service and those who had died. I find it sad to contemplate that perhaps only an event that imperils our national existence can bring back a unity of purpose in our nation. If so, what a price to pay.

Thomas W. Olcott
Fayetteville, N.C.

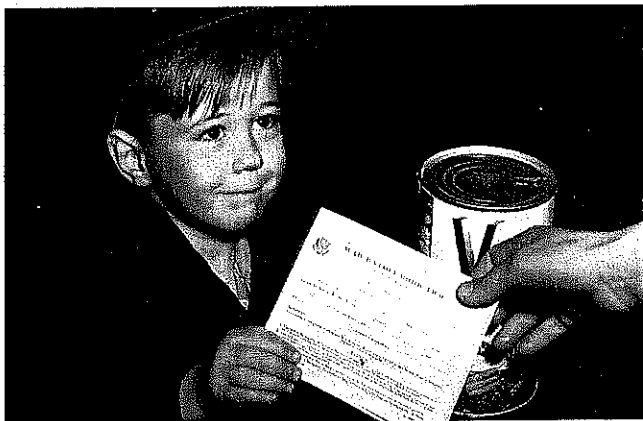
In Service In December 1941, I was located at Camp Barkley, Texas. I was a 19-year corporal in the battalion intelligence section with the field duty of carrying the telephone and the situation map for the battalion commander. On Dec. 7 I had the weekend charge signing for the mail and answering the phone in the duty room.

A little after noon, a very excited Pvt. Racheal came in screaming that Pearl Harbor was being attacked and that we were at war. My response was to eject him forcibly. A few minutes later Racheal returned with a radio and plugged it in (with a few choice remarks about my intelligence). We both concluded that we would be in the Army for a very long time.

Jack D. Slater Lexington, Ky.



After sustaining seven Japanese torpedo hits, the USS *West Virginia* was abandoned; the battleship was later refloated after fires onboard were extinguished.



An eager schoolboy gets his first experience in using War Ration Book Two.

At Home Because of the war, neighbors and relatives of ours in a 20-square-mile rural area had to give up their homes and farms. They were paid, but forced to move, so that the Kingsbury Ordinance Plant could be built. We were just outside the area in LaPorte County, Indiana, but hundreds of people were forced to move and their homes were leveled.

Rationing definitely changed our lives. We could only buy a new pair of shoes when a ration stamp was declared valid. Red stamps in ration books were for meat and green ones for canned goods. Sugar rationing limited the amount of canning we could do. (Strawberries, peaches, apples, jelly, jam, and pickles all take sugar.) Gasoline was also rationed and limited our travel. Farmers got additional gas for tractors. Even city folks were encouraged to raise food in "victory gardens."

Jean Neke North Manchester, Ind.

At Home I was only 4 years and 7 months old, but the circumstances of that day I will always remember. My parents, older brother, and I were driving back home in Brackenridge, Pa., after having visited my mom's parents, when the news flash of the attack came over the radio of our 1941 Oldsmobile. My father's reaction was, "Now they've done it!" But my mother's became forever etched into my memory. She went into a profane tirade, using language that I never heard her use again. I'm sure that what set her off was that my oldest brother was draft eligible.

When we arrived home mom was in a near hysterical rage and headed toward the china cabinet vowing to smash every piece of our Noritake china (which had been made in Japan). My dad and my older brother had to physically restrain her; subdued, she sat on the sofa crying.

The Noritake china set and my brothers both survived. And, thankfully, our nation did as well.

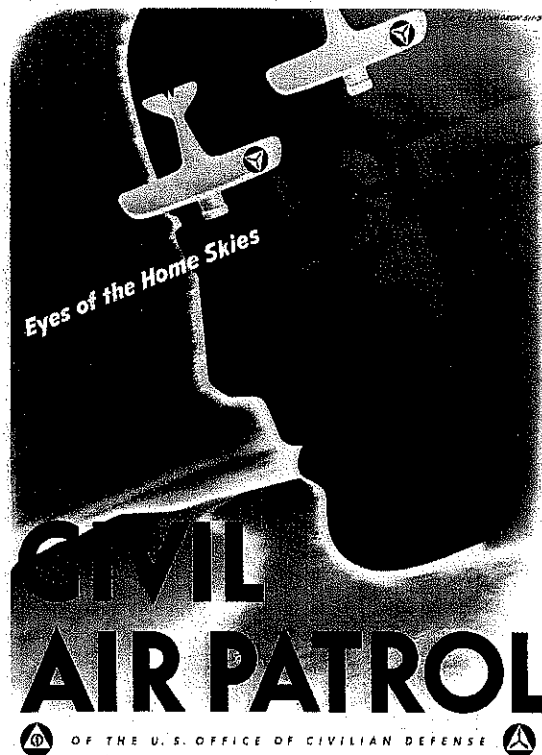
Walter Scheid Hermitage, Pa.

At Home I lived in the Brewerytown section of Philadelphia; my age was 12. My mom, stepdad, and I went to 11:30 a.m. Mass, then to an aunt's house for coffee and pastries. Her husband was a baker. We turned on the radio for the football game out of New York to listen to the Giants. Shortly after the game started, the station announcer broke into the broadcast to announce a special bulletin. "The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor! Japanese bombers have dropped bombs on our naval base."

There was a lot of confusion that day. We went outside to find that other neighbors were also outside. People began clustering in small groups. Most didn't know where Pearl Harbor was. I remember one man saying, "It's on the other side of Cincinnati."

My mother had a large number of family members living within a few blocks of our house. That evening many of the neighborhood's young men, including a few of my older cousins, walked around saying goodbye to their families because they were planning to enlist the following morning. In 1942 I volunteered to be a junior air-raid warden for our block.

Bob Culp Montgomery County, Pa.



In WWII, the Civil Air Patrol sighted 173 enemy subs and sank two.

At Home I was 9 and living in Indianapolis. My father cried out to my mother that our naval base at Pearl Harbor had been attacked by the Japanese. I had no idea where Pearl Harbor was at the time, but I became very interested in following the progress of our involvement in World War II through radio reports and news coverage in our three local newspapers. On Dec. 8, 1941, I began clipping anything pertaining to the war for the next four years, and by Sept. 2, 1945, I had compiled eight scrapbooks. I like to refer to them as "World War II through the eyes of a Hoosier boy." Because my mother never threw anything away, I still have these items, along with many other World War II memorabilia books, magazines, and picture cards.

Richard M. Campbell Oshkosh, Wis.

Pearl Harbor I had just showered and returned to my room in my barracks when I heard the sound of several loud explosions and screaming planes. I looked out my window and saw Pearl Harbor engulfed in heavy black smoke, explosions, and gunfire.

As an airplane mechanic, I raced to a hanger, surviving a strafing attack by a Japanese pilot. I was determined to do what I could to ready our planes for combat. While there the hanger was bombed. Most of the planes, certainly those on the outside ramps, were destroyed or heavily damaged. Although the attack was relatively brief in duration, it seemed like an eternity.

After the attack, I used a tug to transport a seriously wounded friend to the base hospital. I was then called up for guard duty. There was great concern that the Japanese would launch a ground invasion after the air attack. And, what were we to defend our base with? Shotguns! We were each issued one shotgun and approximately fifteen shells. We knew that the shotguns and a few shells would never stop an invading army with automatic weapons. Had the Japanese invaded Pearl Harbor with ground troops, I certainly would not be here today to reflect upon "the date which will live in infamy."

Donald E. Conner Allensville, Pa.

At Home If my body English could have helped the situation, Roy Rogers and Trigger were sure to get to the ranch on time. I twisted in my seat to help them save Dale Evans' Uncle Abe. I was completely absorbed in the movie when a message flashed on the screen, "Capt. William Reed report to the commanding office at Moffat Field." Something bad was going on.

I left the Peninsula Theater in downtown Burlingame, Calif. A headline that read "WAR!" on the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* caught my eye. In smaller type it read: "Japs bomb Pearl Harbor. Ships Sunk. Many Dead. California on Alert." At age 11 I wasn't sure where Pearl Harbor was, but I knew that Japan was just off the coast from where we lived. I imagined bombers on their way to my street and feared that they would get there before I could get home.

Barbara D. Conrad Murphys, Calif.



President Franklin Roosevelt declares a state of war against Japan on Dec. 8, 1941.

At Home I was 6 years old, and my family had moved to a dairy farm in the city of present-day Coos Bay, Ore. On Dec. 7 we were heading to the beach and stopped at a service station for gas. Waiting for some time (in those days, station attendants pumped the gas), my dad went inside to see what was going on. He returned to tell us that Pearl Harbor was being attacked. His manner, and the look on his face, impressed on me that this was really serious.

We covered the windows on the farm with tar paper, as we were just a few miles from the ocean. We later combed the woods for anything made of rubber and found a number of discarded tires that we sold for spending money.

Bill Hopper Newberg, Ore.

BETTMANN / CORBIS

At Home It was a typical Sunday at our house on Dec. 7, 1941. We already had been to Mass earlier in the day. That particular fall season was mild, and the beef cattle herd was still on pasture in the far field along Hunter's Run. The cattle had all they needed except for salt. My dad would take the salt to the field in a Model A Ford pickup.

I heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor on the radio a few minutes after 1 p.m. President Roosevelt would later call it a "Day of Infamy." I ran out of the house as fast as a 12-year-old could run as soon as I heard the news to find my dad. He was returning from the pasture, and I waited for him and hailed him to a stop just as he turned into the driveway to the barn. I jumped on the running board and gave him the news report.

I thought his reaction would be entirely different from what happened next. He was completely silent. He just sat there, looking straight ahead. I stayed for a few moments and then walked back into the house. I glanced over my shoulder as I walked away. He was still there staring ahead, motionless. The world stood still.

Francis E. Joos Pickerington, Ohio



During World War II, the American public faced numerous challenges such as rationing. Here, civilians line up to collect their allotment of sugar.

At Home I was 12 years old, sitting in the back room of our ground-floor flat in a two-family house in Linden, N.J. I was ostensibly doing homework. I had lost the first month of my seventh-grade school year because of a bout with rheumatic fever, so I was still playing catch-up on that Sunday afternoon—instead of playing with my friends in our backyard. Actually I was listening to a radio broadcast of a NFL game between the New York Giants and the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Suddenly, an announcer broke in to announce that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. I ran to our front room to tell my parents. Unlike many Americans that day, we knew exactly where Pearl Harbor was located.

My older half-brother had been in the U.S. Navy since 1936, and had been at Pearl Harbor during his first enlistment. My father, whose boyhood hero had been Teddy Roosevelt, immediately turned the air blue with his opinions of the Japanese, and bemoaned the fact that "the wrong Roosevelt" was in the White House. My mother immediately began weeping, fearful for her sailor son, even though he was now in the Atlantic Fleet. I returned to the back room, threw open the window, and informed my friends in the backyard. They received the news with almost joy, because after years of Saturday matinee war movies, the real thing had arrived.

Harvey A. Thorn Jr. Linden, N.J.

SHOOT TO KILL!



At Home I was 12 years old. It was a Sunday, and my sister and I were talking to our mother in the kitchen of our home. We had just come home from church and were busy helping our mother with the breakfast dishes when my father hollered from the den—"Ann, Marion, Nan! Listen to this news report!"

We couldn't believe what we were hearing. My mother turned to us girls and said, "Go up and put your good dresses on; we are going back to church to pray." With that, my uncle who lived with us came downstairs from his bedroom and wanted to know what was going on. We told him, much to his surprise seeing as he had just gotten home from a stint in the Air Force. He looked at us and said, "I'm going down to the draft board tomorrow to reenlist." He gave me his typewriter—an old Royal—and told me he wanted me to learn to use it and to write to him. I ended up writing to not only him, but to about 12 other boys in the service; hometown boys who had enlisted.

Mom and Dad worked day and night to keep our taxi business running, meeting the last train from Philadelphia to Bethlehem routinely to pick up servicemen coming home from abroad.

All the above came swirling back to me at the age of 72 on Sept. 11, 2001. And once again I stood and stared at the radio, not believing what I was hearing.

Nanette Yost Fluck Fort Washington, Pa.

At Home My father had left the home, and my mother, a teacher, was faced with becoming the breadwinner for herself and her two daughters, ages 10 and 12. Teaching jobs were not plentiful, but she was offered a job teaching high school mathematics at the Japanese Relocation Center in Manzanar, Calif. She had to leave her home and sell or store most of our possessions. Even so, she had a wonderful, positive attitude. We were simply off on an adventure. "Off to Manzanar," we were all shouting as we said goodbye to our friends.

When we arrived at the camp, we saw rows and rows of barracks. Barbed wire fences surrounded the camp, and guard towers were at the corners. Military police were in the towers as well as at the entrance of the camp. Some soldiers emerged to greet us.

In our first few months we experienced the "Manzanar Riot," a conflict between hostile Japanese Americans and the camp police. My mother, my sister, and I were evacuated to the women's section of the county jail in Independence, Calif.—an incredible experience for a 10 year old!

Shirley Davalle Meeder Ventura, Calif.

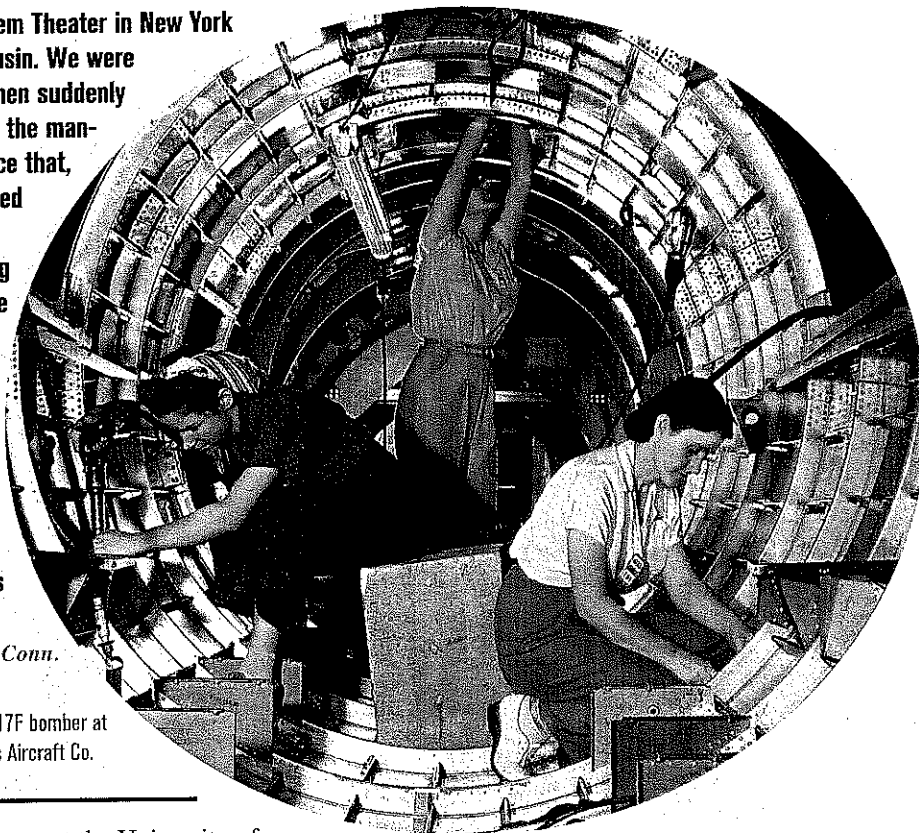


Young Japanese-American evacuees await their turn for baggage inspection upon arrival at a relocation center in Turlock, Calif., on May 2, 1942.

At Home I was at the Gem Theater in New York City with my brother and a cousin. We were watching *A Yank in the RAF* when suddenly the theater lights went on and the manager went on stage to announce that, "Pearl Harbor has been attacked and the U.S. is at war."

At home, my aunt was crying because her oldest son said he was joining the Army—which he did. My younger cousin said when he finished high school he would join the Navy—and he did.

Memorable posters began cropping up: "Slip of the lip could sink a ship," "Kilroy was here," and "Uncle Sam wants you." *Vasil Batsu Bridgeport, Conn.*



Women workers install fixtures to a B-17F bomber at the Long Beach, Calif., plant of Douglas Aircraft Co.

At Home I was a freshman at the University of Iowa living in a "co-operative dormitory" (an old house with about 20 male students). We had just begun our Sunday noon dinner and were listening to a radio playing a music program by Sammy Kaye. As a music major, I really didn't care for it, and I remember saying, "Will somebody turn that guy off!" Just then, the program was interrupted by an announcement that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. Nobody was quite sure where Pearl Harbor was, but we knew that this was an event that would profoundly change our lives.

I stayed at Iowa until early 1943 when I was called up. I was rejected by the military because, in 1940, polio had left me with a right arm that "could not salute an officer properly," as they told me.

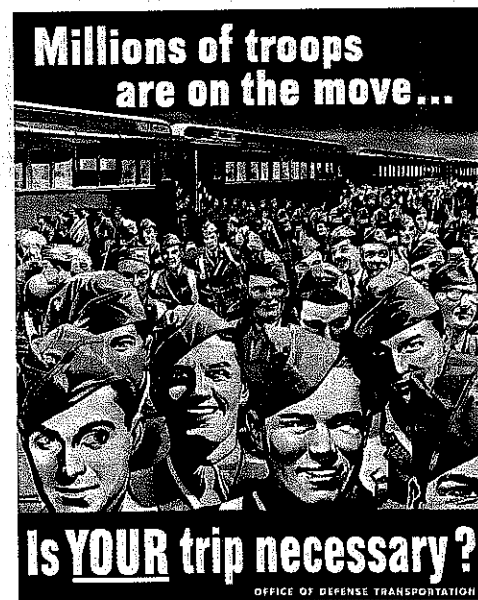
Greatly disappointed, I went to California where I spent the war years working at the North American Aviation plant in Inglewood, which produced the P-51D Mustang Fighter, the B-25 Mitchell Bomber, and the AT-6 Advanced Trainer.

Jack Knowles Rapid City, S.D.

At Home As a third grader, my geography of Hawaii was limited. What I knew of Hawaii was C&H Sugar, pineapple juice, and hula girls. On that day I remember my family gathered around the radio. Also present was a neighbor woman, crying uncontrollably, who told everyone that her homeland had been violated. She told us that her family and many other Portuguese people had been taken to Hawaii in the 1890s by American planters to work in the sugar cane and pineapple fields.

Perhaps this event shaped my interest in history, leading me to a teaching career in American history.

*Edward J. Vierra
San Jose, Calif.*



In Service It's rather sad that the date of Dec. 7, 1941, is only a footnote in the annals of history to most people. To us old codgers, it brings back memories of our youth and how our lives were affected by events that occurred that fateful morning.

Japanese Gen. Yamamoto was correct when he expressed the opinion he feared they had awakened a sleeping tiger by bombing Pearl Harbor.

It seems rather strange that I have a difficult time remembering what I did yesterday, but have a vivid memory of where I was on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941. I had proposed to my lovely wife and we were married on Dec. 30, 1939, and I took my discharge from the Army in early 1940. If she had replied in the negative to my proposal, I had made up my mind that I would reenlist if I could go to Hawaii. As a result, my wife saved me from the day of infamy and the ordeal of what would become World War II. I was

finally a grown man of 21, with previous military service, plus a wife and a home, sitting at a late breakfast table when the news came out over the radio.

Oh yes, I returned to service, but I would never see Hawaii until many years later under more pleasant circumstances. Due to my previous service, the Army, in its wisdom, decided my services were needed in the States to train new recruits, which I turned down, insisting I wanted to go overseas. I was eventually shipped to the European Theater of operations and spent several months in England prior to the D-Day landing on Utah Beach with the 4th Infantry Division. Our unit was on the front line 299 days out of a possible 335 days before Germany officially surrendered. In retrospect, I'm officially a D-Day survivor, as well as an unofficial Pearl Harbor survivor, thanks to my wife Gwen.

Cartyle Coleman Bullhead City, Ariz.



At Home I was 8 at the time. It was a typical Sunday in Nashville, Tenn.—Sunday school, church, fried chicken, and playing with the neighborhood children—until everyone gathered around the radio to hear the news.

As most of the men and older boys were volunteering or being drafted, we had much work to do for the next four years. We spent our after school hours collecting scrap metal and aluminum, newspapers, tin cans, empty toothpaste tubes, and bacon fat for the war effort. We mowed yards, ran errands, and delivered groceries on our bicycles or with our Red Coaster wagons. We saved our money and bought stamps at school which later converted to war bonds when you filled a book. We also spent time raising victory gardens.

William Nicks Daniel Bowling Green, Ky.

At Home I'm 77 today, but was just 11 on that day of infamy. We had returned from 8 a.m. Mass when my father, Francis, turned on our floor-style radio and we heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor, which didn't mean much to me at that time.

Across the street from our home was a vacant lot, which sometime in 1942 became a center for the collection of scrap iron for the war effort. I decided to melt down my lead soldiers and give the chunk of lead to my country. I used a five-cent matchbox and poured the lead into it after it cooled. I asked the local grocery clerk to weigh it; it weighed four pounds. I threw it over the fence in with the other contributions. My love for the U.S. has never diminished and since I am older, and hopefully wiser, I love it even more.

Leonard J. McNierney Allison Park, Pa.

At Home We moved from Kennett, Mo., to St. Louis and my mother and sister Eileen went to work in a war factory making planes. In late August we moved back to Kennett for school. We did this every summer until the end of the war.

Because of the war there was a shortage of workers to harvest the cotton and soybean crops. The U.S. government built an Italian prisoner of war camp at the edge of town; these men became the harvesters.

In the evening, after work, the prisoners would sit around camp fires playing guitars and singing. Local kids were fascinated with the foreigners and used to hang out at the wire fence trying to talk with them. We established a communication of sorts and exchanged candy bars for "real" Italian souvenirs.

Mari L. Collins Twin Peaks, Calif.

In Service It was cool as I walked into the cold storage unit at my brother-in-law's house. Sunday or no Sunday, our truck had to be loaded with 200 bushels of apples for the Monday morning Bronx Terminal Market in New York City. While loading we had the radio playing on the loading dock. The radio was tuned to a popular New York station when suddenly the program was interrupted for a news bulletin: "The Japanese have just bombed Pearl Harbor."

None of us knew where Pearl Harbor was, but my brother-in-law's father thought it might be in the Pacific and said, "They caught Rosey with her pants down." At high school on Monday morning my friends and I talked about going into the Navy. We were only 16, but when we turned 17 we left high school and joined the Navy. I was the only one of the four of us that became a dry land sailor, but desperately wanted to get aboard a P.T. boat. I kept volunteering, but the answer was always the same, "We need your right where you are."

To this day, I feel cheated. Whenever asked what kind of ship I served on, I'm always embarrassed to say I was a dry land sailor.

Anthony Ignosher Mooresville, N.C.

Pearl Harbor I was a 19-year-old seaman aboard the USS *Case*, a Mahan Class Destroyer DD-370. A few weeks prior to the attack we had sailed south toward New Zealand, then north again, crossing back and forth over the international dateline. We made it back to Pearl Harbor and were scheduled for dry-dock but were told that we had to moor in a destroyer slot next to the USS *Whitney* (a destroyer tender). We had been told that the USS *Shaw* collided with another ship so it took our spot at the dry-dock. We had broken down the main guns and proceeded to perform general maintenance. This was the condition of the ship when the Japanese showed up.

I was lying in my bunk reading and looking forward to a nice breakfast and a quiet Sunday. Then I heard an explosion, and then several others. I wondered who the heck was taking target practice on a Sunday; then one of my crewmates ran in and yelled, "Stef, get out of bed, the Japs are here!" I was getting ready to tell him that he was crazy when general quarters sounded.

During the attack a number of the crew were busy

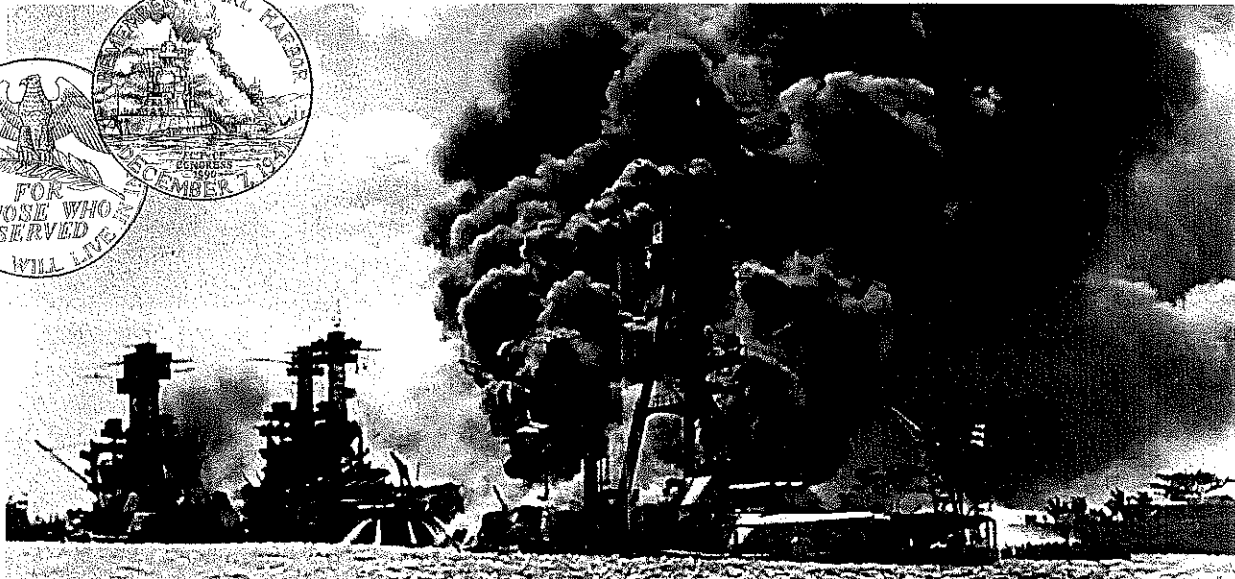


putting our main guns back together. Many of our crew was trying to catch rides back to the ship on small transports and others chose to swim. We managed to down a few of the Japanese planes but not before they had inflicted heavy damage on the battleships.

After the attack was over, we threw all nonessential items overboard and took on fuel, food, water, and ammunition. When we got underway, we cleared the harbor and depth charged an enemy submarine. Later we heard that the USS *Shaw* had taken a direct hit and I couldn't help but think that it could have been us.

When night fell, we darkened the ship and patrolled around Ford Island, waiting for the Japanese to return. That night was one of the scariest of my life. The only lights in the harbor were the fires and we could see bodies floating in the water. At times we could hear screams of wounded men trapped in the wreckage. There was smoke and debris everywhere. The only sound we could hear was the ship steaming in the harbor.

Victor E. Steff Farmington Hills, Mich.



The surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought about the destruction of five U.S. Navy battleships, 188 aircraft, one mineslayer, and three destroyers. The Pearl Harbor Commemorative Medal (inset) was given to veterans present at Pearl Harbor during the attack. (Left, reverse side; Right, obverse side.)

In Service I was 16 and a junior in high school. I lived on a farm in western Michigan. We were a family of nine (six boys, three girls) and our mother had died in 1937. On that infamous day, my older brother had recently graduated from Michigan State and entered the Army as a second lieutenant and was stationed at Fort Custer in Battle Creek, Mich. The next two older were enrolled at Michigan State and both were in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Our oldest sister was enrolled in nurses training at St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Rapids, Mich.

The rest of us were home with Dad. I graduated from high school in June 1943 at the age of 17 and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Navy Seabees. I left home in late July to enter boot camp at Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Va. I returned home for a brief 10-day leave after boot camp in September 1943, not realizing I would not be home again until December 1945.

When the war ended in the Pacific on Aug. 14, 1945, I was 19. I had spent the war as a teenager. I returned to San Francisco in 1945. I was discharged from the Navy on March 16, 1946. I spent 22 more years in the Navy Reserves and am now a retired lieutenant commander.

Ken Kelly *Spring Lake, Mich.*

Pearl Harbor I couldn't believe what I was hearing while shaving at the Army-Navy "Y" in Honolulu, Hawaii, Dec. 7, 1941. "All military personnel report to your units immediately!"

I had a pass to go to Honolulu on Saturday, Dec. 6, to buy instruments for our proposed drum and bugle corps. Dressing quickly, I went across from the "Y" to the Black Cat Café for a quick cup of coffee and a pastry before heading back. When we reached Pearl Harbor, we all went into shock. All hell was breaking loose; the harbor was a massive, burning inferno. Ships were blowing up and burning; parts of ships were flying through the air, landing on other ships in the harbor. The injured and mangled were trying to swim ashore through burning oil. The Japanese were strafing any moving object; they flew so low that you could see their faces.

Just then the battleship *Arizona* was hit by a 500-pound armor-piercing bomb that penetrated six decks, hitting 1 million pounds of powder, ammunition, and fuel. The explosion lifted the ship out of the water and almost knocked us off our feet. In total, 1,177 sailors and Marines lost their lives in that instant. The *Oklahoma* was torpedoed and approximately 500 lost their lives. The *Utah* was torpedoed and rolled over so fast that 57 sailors went down with the ship.

The evening of Dec. 6, I had attended a dance band contest of all the battleships at the "Y." The *Pennsylvania* band won first place, the *Arizona* second; as a reward they were able to sleep in later. When the attack started the next day, the band members rushed to their battle stations. All perished with their ship. When I saw the dreadful holocaust happening before me, I knew my life would never be the same. What a tragic day. Rest in peace, my beloved comrades and shipmates.

Allen Bodenlos *San Diego, Calif.* ■



Visit history.com/broadband to watch real footage of the Day of Infamy.