

## War Era Story Project 2012

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We were returning home from visiting friends, and the newsies from the *Toledo Blade* were on the streets announcing the attack on Pearl Harbor. Everyone was in shock. The next day on the school p.a. system we heard President Roosevelt give his "Day of Infamy" and declaration of war address. I was only 12, but noted how quickly our nation responded. Friends relatives and neighbors rushed to enlist. The Draft was in effect .

My uncle, Bob Luff, was an army medic during the Italian Campaign. We communicated via VMail. My Uncle Bill, a plumber, went to work at the Naval Shipyards in Philadelphia. Dad left his job as Manager of Tiedtkes Delicatessen to work as a machinist at the Toledo Electric Autolite.

The music was patriotic, such as the Andrews Sisters' "The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B," "The White Cliffs of Dover," Spike Jones' "In Der Fuehrers Face," etc. Posters were everywhere: Uncle Sam("I Want you!"), "Remember Pearl Harbor," "Loose Lips Sink Ships," "Buy Bonds," "Rosie the Riveter."

I recall buying bond stamps, which we turned in for a real bond when we finished the book. Windows had star banners signifying one in service: occasionally, a Gold Star for a hero killed in action. Our former paper boy, Jack Conn, gave his life for his country. Rationing was in effect. We saved our tinfoil for the war effort. Remember Lucky Strike Green has Gone to war. Movies were all about the war, and we were updated on the war by Movie Tone News at the theater .

We went to Glenwood Grade School near the Ordinance Depot, which served as a Prisoner of War Camp. We would observe our GIs marching Italian POWs down the road. Gas Rationing was in effect and there were "A" stamps on windshields. We visited dad's folks in Pa and we traveled with two five-gallon cans of gas in our trunk and very worn tires. We were nervous about being rear ended.

Today the bad news of deaths and casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan is heart rending. In WWII, the numbers were immense and often involved invasions. Dick Rigg, our next door neighbor, was a pilot of a Bomber and I recall him once buzzing his folks' home next door. He flew many combat missions. I recall returning from Cedar Point on the passenger ship from Put In Bay and approaching the Toledo Dock. Throngs of people were about and shouting, hugging and kissing. The war had ended.

I recall the devastation of Japanese cities by powerful A-bombs and VJ Day. As a veteran of the Korean War, I recall seeing the sunken Battleship Arizona in Pearl Harbor enroute to Korea. WW11 was a period of the greatness of patriotism, sacrifice and our Great American Spirit which remains strong and dedicated in today's trying times. Thank your Veterans and the generations of all wars. God Bless Americ