

# WORLD WAR II ON TWO FRONTS

1941	Dec. 7:	Japanese attack U.S. Naval Base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
	Dec. 8:	U.S. declares war against Japan
	Dec. 11:	Hitler declares war against U.S.
1942	Jan. 13:	The Japanese in America moved to relocation centers
	June:	Mass incineration of Jews begins in Germany
	Aug. 17:	First All-American air attack in Europe
1943	Jan. 7:	First bomb raid by America on Germany
1945	May 8:	Victory in Europe Day
	Aug. 6:	Atom bombs dropped on Japan by the United States
	Aug. 14:	Japan's unconditional surrender

1941-1945 Soldiers were called Dog Faces (as in having taken a lot of abuse), Leathernecks, or Jerines. The average man who fought in WWII was 26 years of age.

—Capt. Marshall Anson, USNR (Ret) & Capt. Scott Beaton, Statistical Source.

“Surely a live dog  
Is better than a dead lion.”

—King Solomon, Ecclesiastes 9:4b KJV.

“WWII: 16 million Americans served. 400,000 died. Our memory is a holy ground.”

—Charlie Derney, Jr., Actor; Omaha Beach First Wave, 3 Purple Hearts, Bronze Star, Silver Star. Speech recorded for National Memorial Day Concert, 5/27/2013.  
[http://www.pbs.org/memorial\\_concert](http://www.pbs.org/memorial_concert)



Basic Training:

“I’ve got a 3-hour date with a Big Green Tick”, eventually shortened to ‘BGT’”. (Translation: “I have a 12-mile road march with a fully-loaded army-issue Alice pack.”)



## 2.2 WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

### PART A: PACIFIC THEATER

**Sunday, December 7, 1941 –Washington D.C.–** The last part of a 14-part coded Japanese message stating that diplomatic relations with the U.S. are to be broken off reaches Washington in the morning and is decoded at approximately 9 am. About an hour later, another Japanese message is intercepted. It instructs the Japanese embassy to deliver the main message to the Americans at 1 pm. The Americans realize this time corresponds with early morning in Pearl Harbor. The U.S. War Department then sends out an alert but uses a commercial telegraph because radio contact with Hawaii is temporarily broken. Delays prevent the alert from arriving in Oahu until Pacific noontime, four hours after the attack has already begun. — <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/pearl.html>

#### Sunday Morning Comin' Down

Blazed into collective memory,  
Where you were, who you were  
When you heard the news,

Sticks still. I was a young boy in Pico, CA  
Celebrating my golden birthday, December 7.  
Everyone left my cake and turned up the radio.

Being on the coast, we watched the sky for years.  
I felt very vulnerable, afraid to go outside  
Until Dad said armistice papers were signed.

—Pastor Harold Biederman

#### Sunday Morning, December 7

There was terrible loss of life that fateful day,  
But it could have been much, much worse.  
The majority of island service personnel  
Were in church that morning,  
As was their habit, and the national pastime.

No churches were bombed in the raid,  
The only targets were threatening military accoutrements.

Those stationed at the repair shipyard didn't suffer a scratch.  
There was even a specialty ship almost too conveniently docked  
Right there to re-right harbor tangle and  
Clear the channel's throat. The Japanese  
Percussed enough to make history  
But not enough to change it.

—Connie S.

### Innocence Abroad

We rather reluctantly  
Fought in uniform on not 1, but 2 fronts,  
Yet most of America  
Had no electricity until 1947<sup>1</sup>  
Still used outhouses and hand pumps.  
We had no computers  
Yet through reliance on God  
Organized intricate battle plans  
And kept them completely secret.



Flashlight with several inter-changeable colored disks to reveal hidden features on battle plan maps.

—Jack Albinson, former Staff Sergeant, national speaker on WWII history, and writer of Bonhoeffer and the German Resistance.

<sup>1</sup>The Rural Electrification Act and the Rural Electrical Cooperative Movement of the 1940s were chronicled by Stephen Keillor in Cooperative Commonwealth: Co-ops in Rural Minnesota, 1859-1939, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2000.

### Comin' In On a Wing and a Prayer

Comin' in on a wing and a prayer  
Comin' in on a wing and a prayer  
With our full crew on board  
And our *thrust* from the Lord<sup>1</sup>  
We're comin' in on a wing and a prayer.



—Chorus to song of the same title by Harold Adamson and Jimmy McHugh.  
[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/r/ry+cooder/comin'+in+on+a+wing+and+a+prayer\\_20171102](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/r/ry+cooder/comin'+in+on+a+wing+and+a+prayer_20171102)

<sup>1</sup>Poetic license by author; original words are “trust in the Lord”.

## Three Pilots from Minnesota

Betty Wahl flew in WWII as a winged WASP.<sup>1</sup>  
She wasn't allowed in combat, so was assigned  
An even more dangerous mission:  
Pulling targets, so males could practice turret use,  
Giving Betty's bi-plane many boo-Boops,  
“Friendly” freckles.

In military-speak, she could *privately* “number oversights lodged in her fuselage”,  
But couldn't take bragging rights (protocol lodging in her throat), or get hazard pay  
(Icicles hanging from her words), because they were pocks from *practice* drills,  
And the CO didn't want it getting out that  
Turret gunners weren't born perfect shots.

Pilot Tom Dougherty of Hibbing  
Was the first American fired upon in the European Theatre,  
Then flew ahead of battleships in the Pacific  
To help aim the 16” guns, test their 16-mile range—  
If not over the rainbow, certainly past the horizon.  
A pilot had to have 6, 10, 20, finally, by the end of the war,  
65 missions to be rotated home. Even at that, some re-upped.

Norm Steerie got 3 Navy Crosses  
Flying the last torpedo bomber in WWII.  
It was a 100-mph airplane in a 300-mph war.  
It didn't last much longer. *He did.*

“I started writing war stories  
To make people read the newspaper,  
And got caught  
In the overwhelming humanity of it.”

—Al Zdon, 10/15/2011, author of War Stories I, War Stories II, One Step Forward: The Life of Ken Dahlberg. All proceeds from his books go to the



Case for a 105mm Howitzer  
artillery round.



Aviation engine cover used  
during repairs.

American Legion and the Minnesota War Memorial at the Capitol.

<sup>1</sup>WASP: Women's Air Service Personnel

## Braid and Clusters

A Captain of an LST<sup>1</sup> and  
Temporary Commander of a flotilla of five  
Comes upon a kitchen scullery scene:  
KPs throwing raw meat at a bull's-eye,  
Chuckling,

"This one's for the Commander, that Anchor Clanker!"  
I've a choice: to grille them good  
Or realize they're letting off steam,  
Tenderizing between battles.  
I decide to let it slide:

With all at sudden attention  
(Sweat galore! Knowing I heard that succulent tidbit!)  
I bend my brass, pick my next meal off the floor,  
Sawdust clinging to the steak;  
With just a sprinkle of a twinkle  
Say, "Is *that* how you boys get them so tender here?!"

3 years ago,  
I was young myself.  
It seems a lifetime since.  
Though guns rage and radar ranges,  
Nary a man has been lost  
While on my watch,

The men  
So smooth a team  
Perhaps because we've set  
So many childhoods adrift.

The sadness is,  
As a farm boy by birth  
(And humble handyman at aged death,)



Uncle Ken skippered his LST  
in the Pacific during WWII.

Never will anyone respect me again  
As much as they do this instant.

—In memory of Skipper C. Kenneth Carroll (1908-2001).

<sup>1</sup>LST: Landing Ship, Tank is the military designation for naval vessels created during WWII to support amphibious operations by carrying vehicles, cargo, and troops directly onto a beach.

## Fruits of Labor

Stationed as a medic in Saipan  
At an evac hospital  
He went about his duties  
Then stepped into the mess hall,  
Picked up his armored cow<sup>1</sup>  
And asked the organ grinder<sup>2</sup>  
For his ration of liver and onions.



Fortunately he liked liver, and that was a good thing;  
They served it up for the patients 4x per week  
Hoping to give them a better chance at recovery,  
And thought the medics should have the same fare.  
Since all the staff gave blood four times a fortnight  
To keep up with the staggering demand,  
It wasn't a bad idea.



Still, tired of all that *and* Army strawberries,<sup>3</sup> staff  
Eyed the unusual fruit manifesting itself in the surrounding trees,  
Counted the days, and just when it could be ripe by morning—  
Imagining<sup>4</sup> the sticky sweet juice, salivating for the treat—  
Instead of humans, a tree snail the size of your forearm  
Had stealthed in the middle of the night  
And bled it dry.

—In memory of Medic John D. Hunt's service at a Saipan field hospital.

<sup>1</sup>Armored cow: canned milk

<sup>2</sup>Organ grinder: cook

<sup>3</sup>Army strawberries: prunes

<sup>4</sup>In the 2 years he was stationed on Saipan, (between Iwo Jima and Guam) there was curiosity and much speculation about what possible delights—or poisonous imposters—were developing in the tropical vegetation, but *not once* did any of them actually beat a snail to the finish line for wild local produce.

## Bed-Check, Mate. Bed Checkmate

360 Tents, government issue  
1 Typhoon, relentless  
8 Bunkmates, assorted  
1 Idea: collapse the cots, implode the tent, lie low.  
5 Days, excruciating  
1 Sun, drying out camp  
359 Canvasses, destroyed  
2872 Beds, wrecked  
1 Tent, re-pitched  
8 bunkmates, triumphant!

—In memory of John D. Hunt and his British-American ingenuity.

MN Service in Pacific Patch: Arrow: The MN Battalion went toward the north in the Saipan campaign. The island chain is depicted on the patch as the stars of the large and small dippers, which can be combined to show the date: 12/7/41, a reminder of “The Day of Infamy” (the day Japan bombed Pearl Harbor). —John Hunt, St. Paul, MN



## Unarmed, Unharmmed

The order was to clear an occupied Japanese island.  
On one lonely beach was a sole native fisherman.  
He saw me coming to strafe the shore,  
Realized he could not run for the forest fast enough  
And decided to stand facing me  
His arms stretched wide, void of strife,  
Fully accepting his imminent death.



He was so completely disarming  
I could not bear to shoot.  
That's once I did something right, alright.

—Of a mission recorded in *The Wartime Journals of Charles Lindbergh*, 1970. Charles was against the war his Senator father reluctantly voted to declare, but volunteered anyway and flew some 50 missions. *The author with her parents, siblings and grandparents made the trip to his Little Falls, MN, home in 1962.*

## Furlough

It was unbelievably great to be quiet.  
No mud, dust, shell holes, noise, smells, confusion.  
It was good merely to know you were alive;  
Good to shower, eat, sleep. Especially sleep.



—Sgt. Max Reiger, of furlough, AMVETS National Service Foundation World War II 50th Year of Victory Calendar, Feb. 1995.

## Home on Leave

They never seemed addlebrained or moonstruck:  
Don and Dottie Lou were best friends.  
When Don came home on leave,  
They met as before in a coffee shop in facing booth seats.  
In the middle of the jocularity he said, "Marry me." She said, "Great!"  
Then they moved on to another engaging subject.

—In memory of Don and Dottie Lou, who shared 42 laughter-filled years together. Aitkin, MN.

## Cut From Whole Cloth at the Rumor Mill

There was a rumor the Japanese coated their bullets with poison.  
I don't know, maybe it was started by Tokyo Rose.<sup>1</sup>  
It turned out to be purely manufactured buzz.  
Still, it put a knot in us.

—Based on Harold’s recollections, Love Stories of World War II, compiled by Larry King, Crown Publishers. “Harold & Adelle”, p. 180.

<sup>1</sup>“Tokyo Rose” was a propaganda tactic by the Japanese involving a sultry American-accented radio personality announcing fake news stories meant to demoralize U.S. troops.

## No More Innings

Top of the ninth,  
Best glove in town  
Three balls, one strike,  
Just two to count down.



1940s Kid's baseball glove.

Staff Car at the diamond.  
Little Glove off the mound.  
“Your dad is gone, son,  
Won't be back around.”

—With Staff Sergeant Jack Albinson

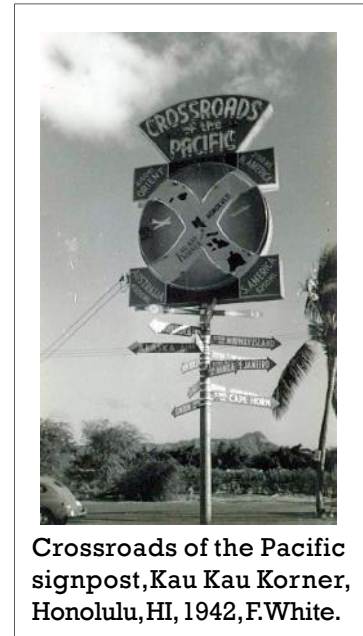
## Fright on the Half-Shell

Shells that had not been loaded with enough powder  
Fell short of the intended inland Philippine target,  
Skipped playfully on the water  
Toward our beachhead and tents  
As foreboding friendly fire.

—Felix W.

## Paid It Forward

“We were the first ship in Subic Bay.<sup>1</sup>  
We saw heavy action right away...  
All we ever talked about was the war, and  
“What’s it gonna be like when it’s over?”  
I felt that if some guy ten years from now



Crossroads of the Pacific signpost, Kau Kau Korner, Honolulu, HI, 1942, F. White.



Honolulu's Kau Kau Korner Restaurant (as it looked in 1935-1960) where generations of U.S. servicemen have stopped on the way to their bases in the Pacific. [http://www.downwindproductions.com/kau\\_kau\\_corner1.html](http://www.downwindproductions.com/kau_kau_corner1.html) Photo by Felix White, 1942.

Is livin' pretty good,  
Well,  
I had somethin' to do with it."

—Seaman Fred Sevigny, AMVETS National Service Foundation World War II 50th Year of Victory Calendar, November 1995.

<sup>1</sup>Subic Bay is on the west coast of the island of Luzon in Zambales, Philippines, about 62 miles northwest of Manila Bay.

## Metallic Taste in the Mouth

I was a Master Supply Sergeant in Honolulu.  
After the war was settled—  
In order to avoid another Depression—  
They took out and scuttled shiploads of copper  
I had painstakingly counted, organized  
And guarded with my life.

—In memory of Master Sergeant  
Felix W. (1918-2002)



Felix W. (on left) and friends outside their barracks in Honolulu. 1942 photo from Felix W.'s family archives.

## Trickling Home

My dad got R&R inadvertently.  
His mine sweeper<sup>1</sup> hit a booby-trapped buoy  
Just under the surface of the water.  
He was knocked rotten,<sup>2</sup>  
Torched over 30% of his body  
And narrowly overlooked in the burning water  
By the Japanese. 'Twas a nice day for it.<sup>3</sup>

An Australian fishing trawler spotted him.  
Those six-bob-a-day tourists<sup>4</sup> took the bait, scooped him out.  
The excruciating saltwater rinsed off him,  
En-zedda<sup>5</sup> cooled down with cold fish,  
He was chugged to their north coast  
Given hospital care with 'opes  
He could be transported to a stateside burn unit.

—With B.

Soldier slang from The Digger's Dictionary by Walter Hubert Downing, Victoria, Australia 1919:

<sup>1</sup>Mine sweepers were made of wood with stainless steel engines so they wouldn't be attracted by magnetic mines.

<sup>2</sup>Unconscious.

<sup>3</sup>Sardonic phrase applied to the overly unpleasant.

<sup>4</sup>Modestly paid soldiers/sailors from Australia.

<sup>5</sup>A wound that would take him home.

## Bataan Death March

So you are dead.  
Those lifeless eyes see only loss.  
This hunger, thirst, fatigue,  
Combine to drain  
All feeling from a man.  
The endless glare of ocean, brutal heat,  
Have fried the mind.

There is no mourning pall.  
I helped you; now my load is gone.  
A suffering column urged along,  
Tallied by bayonet;  
Its ciphers fewer now.  
So you are dead.  
One more corpse beside the road.

—Abbreviated from “Death March” by Lt. Henry G. Lee from Forged by War: A Daughter Shaped by a WWII POW Story by Candie Blankman., 2011. p 77.

## On a Wing and a Prayer II

After the Bataan Death March and hard labor  
In Japanese coal mines, POWs would eat anything.  
My father told of a locust swarm overtaking one of the camps.  
It shut down all the work details. Guards disappeared  
For shelter from insect pelting.  
For the workers, it was manna from heaven.  
Besides respite from backbreaking labor,  
They ate all the locusts they could capture.

My father understood what it meant to be starving.  
He enlisted at 165 pounds and was rescued at 90 pounds.<sup>1</sup>  
His faith that God would see him through kept him alive.

—Based on Forged by War: A Daughter Shaped by a WWII POW Story by Candie Blankman, p. 22. Ms Blankman grew up in northern MN, taught history in Richfield, MN, and is now a Presbyterian Pastor in California. <http://www.ocregister.com/2015/11/09/pows-daughter-salutes-veterans-by-telling-her-dads-story/>

<sup>1</sup>This soldier was diverted to and kept in a prison camp at a coal field not on American Intelligence radar (mined also by Japan's own political prisoners), so it was miraculous this man was discovered and rescued after the armistice was signed.

## Prisoner of War, Individual of Peace

Folded hands. Age 83.

"I long ago forgave the Japanese for what they did to me on Kwajalein, The beatings, the hate-black hot box. Torture in the night. It's just that I never wanted EVER to come back, and now I'm here.<sup>1</sup> Can I *really* shake off the past to see Kwajalein and my captors in a different light?"

—Louis Zamperini, author of Devil at My Heels: A World War II Hero's Epic Saga of Torment, Survival, and Forgiveness, with David Rensin, 2003, p. 285.

<sup>1</sup>Years after his capture, Louis had penned a letter to his most brutal torturer, a vicious Japanese war criminal nicknamed "The Bird": "The post-war nightmares had caused my life to crumble," Louis wrote, "but thanks to a confrontation with God...I committed my life to Christ. Love replaced the hate I had for you." Former POW Zamperini was invited and attended a prison camp memorial ceremony, greeted his captors who were serving time for war crimes, and spoke at a commemorative service hosted by by the Japanese government for healing from war memories. "The Bird", however, refused to meet with him.

Sources: the book Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand; a movie by the same name; Flier #GTS-506, Gospel Tract Society, Inc, Box 1118, Independence, MO 64051.

Note: "Those who have been confined in concentration camps and then are unexpectedly released have profound alternations of shame, self-loathing, and a sense of failure." Escape from Camp 14 by Shin, p.179.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great price hidden in the field,  
which a man found and hid: and...he goes and sells all that he has,  
and buys that field.” —Matthew 13:45, 46.

## Pick Up the Pearl

Go to the field  
Back where it all happened.  
Gather your courage, resources.  
Buy that field back from the enemy.  
Even if your enemy is *you*.  
Now pick up that pearl.



Commodore Matthew Perry opened Japan in 1854. In 1860 the Treaty of Amity and Commerce was signed between the first Japan Embassy and U.S. President James Buchanan. On May 27, 1912, Japan sent a gift of cherry trees to

Washington, D.C. Fortunately, the long-standing friendship was healed and restored after WWII.

*“Many men have said, ‘Yeah, I was in Pearl...’ meaning they were stationed in Honolulu when the attack came. In Matthew 13:44-46 (discussing a hidden treasure/pearl, found...,) it seems the Lord counsels: ‘There is something of value hidden in those memories, do some digging, invest in your healing. Tuck it away to remind yourself you survived for a purpose. The lesson is a pearl to be passed on to the next generation.’”*

## Jump Ship if You Have To, but Jump Back on the Bandwagon ASAP

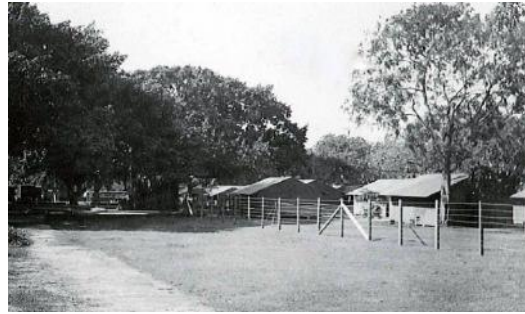
I prepped torpedo bombers on aircraft carriers.  
For every 4 sent out to fly, only one would make it back.  
4 carriers I served on were sunk by dive-bombers.

The thing that made a difference for me when I came back  
Was I could work anywhere, I just needed to stay busy  
And get the feeling “I’m still worth something.”

I gave programs at church, taught courses,  
Volunteered to speak in schools, worked in food service.  
Tried to keep a smile on my face so they’d want me around.  
Minimum wage saved my life.

—Supply Sergeant, First Class Donald Barkony, who is still volunteering at the Chaska Police Department at age 87.





Fenced-in barracks, 1942, Felix White.

## Japanese Internment Camp: Stateside: West Coast

“It was an extreme difficulty to see placards posted on our businesses so no one should patronize them. It was an insult that our hard work had to be disposed, liquidated; our family history stored with acquaintances, or left to looters.

In less than a week after the order came to go to the relocation camps, our lives were put on hold indefinitely, our honor suspect. Some of the young men were offered opportunity to fight in Europe to redeem family honor and display their loyalty to our new homeland. Many took that offer rather than to sit idly, but some had already become bitter and disillusioned. After our release, several returned home to Japan to rebuild that nation and never came back. What a loss for America and our relocated families!

It helped to get a formal apology from the American government,<sup>1</sup> but it came too late for our fathers—who eventually died recalling lost livelihoods, property, health and dignity. Still, the years become good teachers: had the soldiers not brought us to camps, human hysteria being what it is, we might have been murdered in our own beds, even though we loved the hope of this new land as much as did our would-be “murderers”.

Being taken away from our new lives forced us into a community of tight mutual support we could not have relied on otherwise—for fear of being suspected of holding clandestine meetings. The concern, of course, was that we would become spies for Japan, be coerced, or unwittingly provide information to infiltrators who wanted to know the details of American harbors and factories. Like it or not, the government needed to know which of us were citizens, and/or who was here on subversive assignment, up to no good.

As unlikely as it seemed, it was for *our* security, too, that we were locked behind fences; there we had no potential for (or interest in) committing crimes against the state; our records were—and remained—clean. We made the best of a rough situation; there our allegiance could remain without a mark: either retaliatory, or placed there by someone else wishing to implicate us. We had ‘airtight alibis’.

There was some bigotry after the war, of course—it was sad to see our decorated European war heroes come home to racial slurs—but no one could argue we had been disloyal during the war: our internment papers showed otherwise. And while we were there, our elders reinforced a desire for peace.

No one wants to live captive in a camp, but we were fed, got news, mail was delivered, there were simple opportunities for recreation, a garden to grow our own vegetables. Most importantly, families stayed together. Marriages were arranged and consummated. Daughters married Japanese-American husbands, which was a joy and relief to fathers. I grew from a boy to a man there. It turned out well for me, a groom, too!”

—Japanese-American elder, Chaska, MN, with additional information from Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford; The Journey: Japanese Americans, Racism, and Renewal by Sheila Hamanaka; and The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese-American Internment Camp by Michael O. Tunnell.

<sup>1</sup>In 1988, President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act which offered a formal apology and \$20,000 to each of the surviving 100,000+ Japanese-Americans held in internment camps during World War II. — <http://www.npr.org/selections/codeswitch/2013/08/09/210138278/japanese-internment-redress>

**“The Japanese didn’t hate individual Americans or America,  
but elders who have gone through WWII are against war.”**

—Dan O.

### ABS: Almost Blew Strategy

“My father was president of the American Bible Society during WWII. When the war ended, a diplomatic office was immediately re-established in Japan. Their emperor presented himself to our envoy, bowed and said he submitted himself to our President and also presented himself and his people to our God. Unfortunately ABS was unprepared for such a statement and did not have a scripture translation fully completed in Japanese. We missed an incredible opportunity to share our faith, answer questions about it. By the time the translation was ready and published, the Japanese government had basically assumed the free enterprise system was our god and set to emulating corporate wealth...”

—Bill