



FLOTILLA



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HONORING THE MEN WHO SERVED ON THE LANDING CRAFT OF THE U.S. AMPHIBIOUS FORCES

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REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR

Sixty years ago this month the Japanese Imperial Fleet attacked our Naval forces at Pearl Harbor killing nearly 2,400 in the unsuspecting ranks. And now we are once again at war owing to another surprise attack--the terrorist assaults on the Twin Trade Towers and the Pentagon. As we watch the developments on television of the war in Afghanistan and the pursuit of terrorist cells here at home, it is probably difficult for most younger Americans to realize the sacrifices made by an older generation on that fateful Sunday morning in 1941.

It was the day before a naval inspection, just before 8 a.m. More than 130 vessels of the Pacific Fleet were anchored in Pearl: battleships, destroyers, cruisers and others. Some men were on duty. Some were getting ready for church. Some were finishing breakfast amid the crackle of frying bacon. Some slept.

Sweeping in from ships positioned north of Oahu, 183 Japanese fighter planes, bombers and torpedo planes attacked on land and water with well-planned fury. Another wave of 167 aircraft arrived a half-hour later.

By 10 a.m. the attack was over. Twelve U.S. vessels were sunk or beached, and nine were damaged. The dead numbered 2,388; the wounded 1,178. The Japanese lost 29 planes, 55 airmen and nine submariners.

Today, only 54 survivors of the battleship U.S.S. Arizona remain. They are among the approximately 8,000 left of the 90,000 military men and women who served on Oahu during the attack. Many of the Pearl Harbor vets consider the 60th anniversary as

one of their last, with their ranks thinning by about 50 a month.

"We must never forget we are the beneficiaries of what this country accomplished during World War II," Admiral Thomas Fargo said during Memorial Day services at Pearl Harbor in May. "America is strong, peaceful and prosperous because of the sacrifices of a generation of men and women to defend freedom."

A New Movie

Released on Memorial Day this year, the film, "Pearl Harbor" with all its special effects, introduced a young generation of Americans to the events that launched us into WWII. My high school history teacher, Edwin Nakasone, was a young boy eating his cornflakes at home in Oahu when the attack began. Of Hawaiian and Japanese ancestry, Ed recalls seeing a plane fly directly over his house and seeing the pilot with goggles on, a leather helmet and his scarf blowing in the breeze.

Nakasone, commenting for a local newspaper, thought the new movie spent too much time on romance, but overall he recommended it despite several inaccurate historical details. One such discrepancy shows a hospital being bombed although no hospitals were actually targeted.

For Japanese and German audiences, minor changes were made to the dialogue reflecting a sensitivity to how the film would be perceived in these countries. Sources would not disclose the nature of these changes. Overseas markets are

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