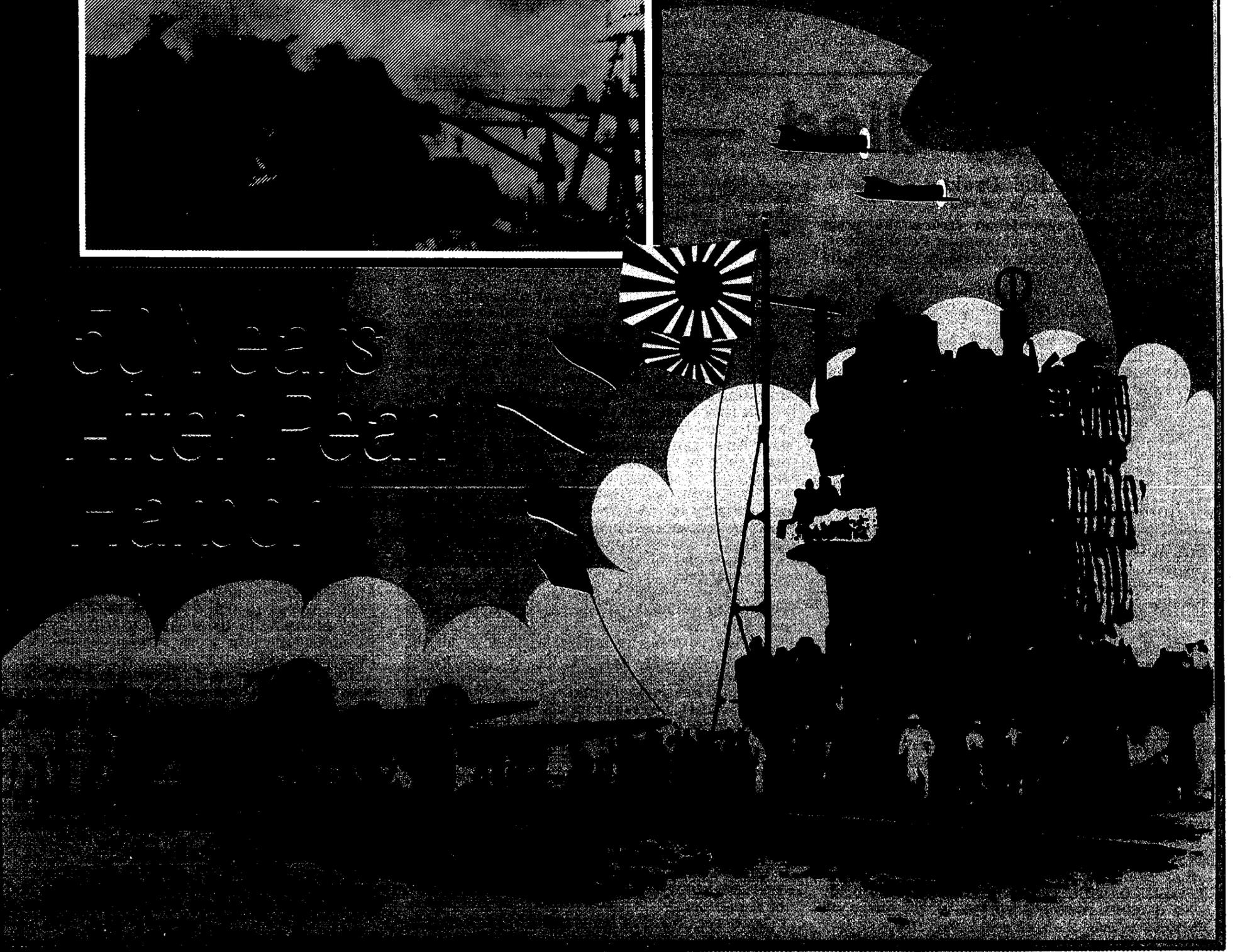
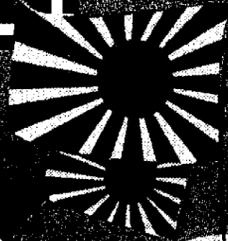


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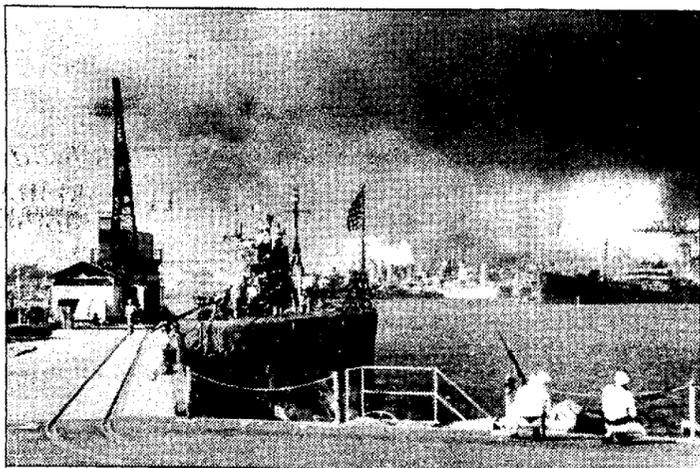
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50 Years
After Pearl
Harbor



PACIFIC SUNDAY



50 years later Feelings and perspectives of survivors

Inside

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Coming next week



The natives call it "Druk Yul" — or land of the dragon. Nestled between Nepal and northern India, the tiny country of Bhutan remains a preserved region of the Himalayas. Photo by Barbara McCall

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Cover: On December 7, 1941, pilots of Japanese warplanes launched an attack on Hawaii's Pearl Harbor. The events that followed shaped the history of the world. Design by Bill Belford

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Pacific Stars and Stripes



A fleet died — so did a delusion

By Hal Drake
 Stripes Senior Staff Writer

Fifty years ago, Japan struck the great American fleet anchorage at Pearl Harbor, blackening an azure Hawaiian sky with the blood of blasted battleships.

In little more than two and a half hours, it was over — the death of a fleet, the demise of a delusion.

Six battleships were sunk and two others, along with three cruisers and a like number of destroyers, were damaged. Ashore, at Hickam Field and other bases, about 180 planes had been destroyed and almost as many riddled by strafers and holed by bomb fragments.

Sorrowfully counting nearly 3,600 dead and wounded, 1,500 of these slain aboard the shattered Arizona, Americans learned at last that they were not protected by power and distance. Their most important Pacific outpost had been sought out and assaulted by a distant enemy.

It was Sunday morning and the United States had been at prayerful peace, there and everywhere.

It would turn the lives of all who dropped a bomb or fired a shot — all who attacked or defended.

Hirata Matsumura, Zenji Abe and Yoshio Shiga would survive and remember — the Japanese in a thinning rank of veterans. Sharing memories, they would also reflect that Japan, rising above ruinous defeat, had attained more in peace than it could have hoped to gain in war. Fifty years after a reveille of thunderous explosions, Japan and the United States would be treaty partners and trade rivals. Japan would be accused of depressing the American economy, flooding the United States with Japanese goods and closing its own market to American products.

Brig. Gen. Kenneth Taylor, long retired, would never forget the morning he and one other pilot flew the only fighters to oppose the Japanese assault. Taylor would relate it to all who listened, warning always of the price of unpreparedness.

— Richard Fiske would live to tell of a gallant officer's death, watching the wounded captain of the West Virginia shout his last orders with his last breath.

All who survived that battle and many that followed would witness a time of cast-of-die change.

The United States, jolted out of isolationism, was forced to fight for its life — and to abandon forever the notion that there could be a Fortress America, with Americans living in safe and cushy comfort behind the walls. In postwar times, America would assume world leadership, thrusting power all over Asia and Europe.

But first there was that disruptive ordeal that lasted a few months short of four bitter years, with Americans unanimously unified in a way that would be unimaginable in the wars of future years.

The Pacific War broke out after one power made a gain-for-pain move to seize natural resources and another held up an arresting hand, the United States denying Japan the iron and fuel it needed to roll its war machine across Southeast Asia.

In Japan, arrogantly confident militarists answered to nobody, silencing dissidents with sword or gavel.

On the pathway to conquest, they suddenly found themselves answerable to a crippled statesman.

No, said President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in early 1941 — Japan could not move into French Indochina, seizing control from a weak colonial government. Japan had flexed its arms far enough, endangering order and balance in an area important to strategy and trade.

No oil sold to Japan, Washington told Tokyo — and no scrap to be smelted in Kawasaki and Yawata, then pounded into steel for tanks and warships. Japanese assets in the United States were frozen.

Japan would pull its troops and warships out of Saigon and Haiphong — or face the ruinous consequences.

Japan continued to move southward. America

prepared, straining to equip troops that used wooden howitzers in field maneuvers and to, at the same time, give Britain the goods to hold an anti-German front that extended from the English Channel to the Sahara.

America wasn't ready. A drowsy public, sedated by two and a half decades of peace, had no use for foreign trouble and felt secure, shielded by thousands of miles of Atlantic and Pacific moat.

War was an ordeal that had touched America lightly in this century. In World War I, far fewer Americans were killed in France than those lost in postwar traffic accidents.

What was there to fear from Japan, a hardly-larger-than-California country whose forces were stalled in China? America had Pearl Harbor, the naval Maginot — the mid-Pacific gatekeeper that any intruder would have to pass.

In bars and grocery stores, signs were posted with comforting words, often under an archway of flags: It Can't Happen Here.

Such confidence was native to the American soul.

In "Babes in Arms," a 1940 film musical, Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland joined other young voices to trill a tribute to "God's Country," granted the divine right to live in isolationist splendor, safe from foreign dictators and faraway trouble.

In Tokyo, strategists knew that going to war with the United States was buying on margin, an all-out gamble of resources Japan did not yet have in hand — the oil wells and refineries of Java, the ports and airfields that would be a fortress against counterattack.

The core of American strength in the Pacific was that strong fleet, and the Japanese knew it. But one well-invested stroke would smash a chain of naval power and allow Japan to easily seize what it wanted.

One strike on Pearl Harbor.

And so, on Nov. 26, 1941, 23 warships — six carriers — sailed from Hitokappu Bay on Etorofu Island in the Kurils. They carefully threaded

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The calm before the storm

By Jim Lea

Stripes Staff Writer

Everyone who recalls it says Dec. 6, 1941, was a tourist agent's dream of a day in Honolulu.

It was warm and the tradewinds were perfumed. The crests of the Koolau range that forms Oahu's spine were outlined crisply against clouds that billowed high and bright, powder blue sky.

And life was good.

The sugar and pineapple industries were booming, and Honolulu was living up to its name — "safe haven," in Hawaiian — as far as tourism was concerned. War in Europe and an uncertain situation in the Far East had made the islands "the" place to visit.

Thousands of tourists had been drawn by ads declaring they would "be able to realize the real pleasures of a crossing on world-famous ships, Hawaii bound, over peaceful seas."

Among civilians, there was some concern over news stories speculating on what Japan was up to in the western Pacific. A headline bannered across page one of the previous Sunday's Honolulu Advertiser had briefly quickened a few pulses:

"Japanese May Strike Over Weekend!"

Heartbeats returned to normal when subscribers read that the "strike" was expected in the Western Pacific.

"Nobody really expected anything to happen in Hawaii," recalls Warren E. Verhoff, then a radioman aboard the auxiliary tug USS Keosauqua at Pearl Harbor. "We thought maybe something would happen in Guam or the Philippines, but not Pearl."

Newspapers daily carried stories about the worsening situation in the Pacific, but most people suspected the press was suffering from an attack of "barking dog syndrome."

War talk didn't occupy as many civilian conversations as did a city plan to make some downtown streets one way and talk of the upward spiral in rents attributed to a flood of defense industry workers from the mainland.

Japan's intentions were not as much a bother to some people as was the off-duty conduct of



Flowers adorn the grave of a Pearl Harbor victim.

Stripes, Lem Robson

some of the more than 80,000 soldiers, sailors and Marines on the island.

They were rowdy, ill-mannered, social misfits, many members of polite society groused — the same "Tommy this an' Tommy that . . . An' throw 'im out, th' brute" civilian complaints heard then and now around just about every military basetown in peacetime.

Other Honolulu residents welcomed the troops, opening their homes to them, inviting them to Sunday dinner and picnics and luaus to make them feel at home.

Opinions of Hawaii among the men in uniform were equally divided. Some found it rotten duty — not much to do, too expensive and fun too

restricted by far too many "blue laws," like the one that closed down nightspots at midnight.

To others — like Verhoff, Bob Kinzler, Richard Fiske and Bob May — it was great duty.

"We didn't have much money," Kinzler said, then assigned to Headquarters Company of the 27th Infantry "Wolfhounds" at Schofield Barracks.

"I got \$21 a month as a private and they took out 25 cents of that for the Old Soldiers Home. After you paid off the quartermaster laundry and your PX and movie checks, there wasn't much left.

"But you could borrow \$5 for \$7, and there

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Fleet, From Page 2

their way through dead-of-night fog. Close to Russian waters, they avoided contact with Soviet ships, not wanting a chance sighting to turn into an intelligence leak.

In the last, risk-of-war extremity, any Russian ship encountered would be sunk. Better that than the Soviets sighting the clandestine task force and telling the world.

But the Soviets knew. Before his arrest in Tokyo the month before, spy Richard Sorge had assured Red Army intelligence that the Japanese would not launch an assault on the Soviet Far East. They planned to attack Hawaii, followed by a general offensive on British, Dutch and American possessions.

Well informed, the Soviets rushed their Siberian garrison westward and smashed a German drive on Moscow. Another country was kept in the dark.

(Sorge, hanged in 1944, would be given knighthood status as a Hero of the Soviet Union — the man whose timely information saved the Soviet capital and turned the course of World War II).

Now, what the United States did not know would hurt it gravely.

America slept. Japan moved.

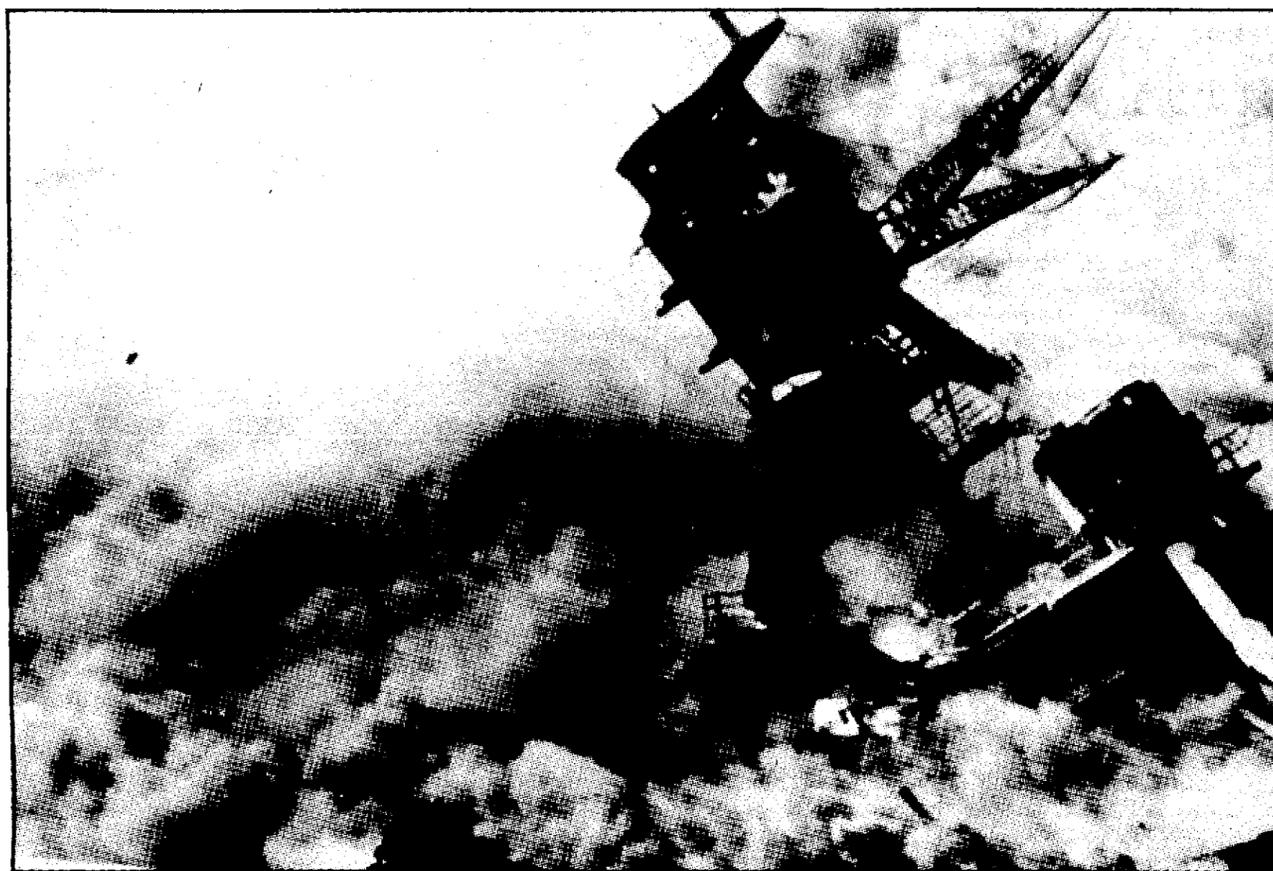
In hour-before-dawn darkness, 353 aircraft soared off the Akagi, Kaga, Hiryu, Soryu, Shokaku and Zuikaku, savaging a groggy garrison and sleeping fleet.

Sorting through wreckage, helping limping wounded and lifting away dead, Americans now knew it could happen here.

The Japanese counted fractional losses for large gain — 29 planes and 55 pilots or crewmen, five two-man submarines.

The next day, Roosevelt called Sunday, Dec. 7, "a date that will live in infamy" and asked that war be answered with war. Congress and the entire country responded with a unified resolve.

Recruiting stations could not handle the on-



The battleship USS Arizona is a ball of fire and smoke.

File photo

rush, handing volunteers order-of-priority numbers and telling them to stand in long lines. No signs were carried to protest the war or the draft. Anybody who resisted a summons faced the disdain of his neighbors and the wrath of the Justice Department.

Americans were enraged at the Japanese assault, launched as Ambassador Kichisaburo No-

mura and special envoy Saburo Kurusu prepared to deliver a final message to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, telling him that further negotiations were fruitless.

It was called a "sneak attack" — a stab in the back from a country that had been backward and isolated until an American admiral forcibly

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CALM, From Page 3

were some good all-night poker games. There were no enlisted clubs, but each regiment had a beer hall. And \$2 went a long way in town.

"It was good duty."

To May, a 19-year-old private with the 5th Bomb Group at Hickam when he arrived in Hawaii in April 1941, it was "paradise."

"I played on the baseball team and in a band combo before the war screwed that up," he recalls. "We went downtown a lot just to go downtown. We went to the beach at Waikiki. I remember a hamburger was 15 cents."

"I met the manager of a movie house called the Liliha Theater. It's gone now. He gave me free passes and told me to bring my friends. I did and we all got in free."

Fiske, then a Marine bugler aboard the battleship USS West Virginia, also recalls Hawaii as "a fun place."

"Everything was easy going," he recalls. "A cab was only 25 cents from Pearl to the Army-Navy YMCA downtown." The same cab ride today is more than \$20.

"If you were going up to Schofield, it was \$1, but the driver stopped halfway there and gave you a shot of okolehao (a local liquor)."

Prices, he recalls, "were unbelievable" in comparison to Hawaii today.

"You could get a 16-ounce T-bone steak for a buck. Sirloin was a little cheaper, 90 cents.

"Hot turkey sandwiches had to be served on a platter because they wouldn't fit on a plate. With it you got a pound-and-a-half of mashed potatoes, salad and coffee. That was 45 cents."

In grocery stores, 9 cents bought a quart of milk or a pound of hamburger and bread was 7 cents a loaf.

Beer was 35 cents in expensive restaurants, 25 cents in neighborhood bars and 10 cents on base.

"There was a place (for GIs) at Waikiki called 'The Breakers' where you bought 12 tickets for a dollar and each ticket was worth a beer," he said.

But, there was even less expensive beer available.

"You could go to the Royal Brewery on Queen Street and have pretzels and beer, as much as you wanted, free."

A movie at the Princess Theater in Honolulu was 25 cents, a bit higher at the theater in Waikiki. That included, Fiske recalls, "two features, a cartoon, newsreel and shorts."

The Moana, Halekulani and Royal Hawaiian — now all but hidden in a forest of high-rise hotels — were the only hotels in Waikiki, then. The Royal, many GIs and sailors of the era say, discouraged patronage by enlisted men.

"It was 'officers country,'" one former sailor who was there then recalls. "They didn't like whitehats."

Ironically, when war was declared, the Royal became a Navy billet, serving officer and enlisted alike at far-below-reasonable prices.

"Everytime we Marines came back from an operation, we'd stay at the Royal," Fiske recalls. "We paid \$1.25 for a week including meals. The buck-twenty-five was for laundry."

But not many people in Honolulu were thinking about war that first Saturday in December 1941.

A week earlier, colored lights had been strung over Fort Street in the center of the downtown mercantile district.

Department stores were filled with yuletide goodies and many people planned shopping trips. Christmas 1941 promised to be Honolulu's "merriest on record," the press observed.

There was early, non-Christmas-related activity in the tenderloin district that Saturday. With 103 Pacific Fleet ships docked or at anchor in Pearl Harbor, more than had been there at one time since July, businesses along Hotel and Riv-

er Streets, Kukui and Nuuanu were preparing for the merriest weekend in months.

Employees at Bill Leader's, the Mint and Two Jacks bars laid in extra supplies of Primo beer and 5 Islands gin and okolehao. The girls at the Rex and Ritz and Anchor hotels slept in, resting up for the Saturday night rush.

Sailors aboard ship and at the Navy bases at Pearl, Barbers Point and Kaneohe and soldiers at Hickam, Wheeler and Bellows Fields, Schofield Barracks, and at forts Armstrong and Schafter, racks made plans for a payday weekend off.

Many would catch the 10-cent bus or 25-cent taxis or free cattle-car trucks into town, some to take in the "Tantalizing Tootsies" review at the Princess Theater. Some would Christmas shop, picking up a hula-skirted doll for Sis or a satin pillow cover with gold fringe and a "hand-painted" image of Diamond Head and Waikiki for Mom.



Japanese tourists view diagrams at the Arizona Memorial. File photo

Some would fall into temporary love at the New Senator Hotel or Mamie Stover's, others would be drawn into Hatfield and McCoy-like rival unit fights.

Some planned to take in the annual Shrine football game, that year pitting the University of Hawaii Rainbows against the Willamette University Bearcats from Oregon at Honolulu Stadium.

A lot of military people planned to do what soldiers and sailors far from home have always done — just walk around downtown with nothing to do . . . but happy to have the chance to do it out of earshot and eyeball range of first shirts and masters-at-arms.

But, there was some military work to be done first. The brass was more concerned than civilians and rank-and-file GIs and whitehats with whatever it was the Japanese were up to.

Ten days earlier, Washington had sent a war

warning to both Fleet Commander Adm. Husband Kimmel and his Army counterpart, Lt. Gen. Walter Short, commander of the Hawaiian Department.

War was almost a certainty, Washington felt, but a Japanese attack on Hawaii was unthinkable. Fifth columnist activity from the some 150,000 Japanese in the islands was considered likely, however.

Short, who was responsible for the defense of Pearl Harbor and the rest of the island, ordered all aircraft parked close together on landing strips so they could be protected.

He informed Washington of his actions, and received no indication in return that he might have underestimated the situation.

Short also reiterated his requests for more guns to protect the harbor.

Kimmel stepped-up anti-submarine patrols outside the harbor. The additional manpower he had been pleading for to bring his ships up to strength was beginning to arrive and training schedules were revised to get them into shape as quickly as possible.

On Ford Island, in the center of Pearl Harbor, training was under way at 2 a.m., Dec. 6. The air station commander set off air raid sirens to see how quickly his men responded.

At 6:30 a.m., the destroyer USS Ward moved toward the entrance to relieve another destroyer on patrol duty outside.

At 6:53 a.m., a harbor pilot began directing the oiler USS Neosho, just arrived from San Pedro with a load of aviation fuel, to mooring near Hickam Field.

Kimmel was at his desk at 8 a.m. A short time later, he was interviewed by the Christian Science Monitor's Joseph C. Harsch, who asked if there would be war in the Pacific.

Kimmel said he didn't think so.

The interview finished, the admiral turned to his morning intelligence briefing. He was told that Japan's aircraft carriers had disappeared for the 12th time in six months and that Japanese diplomats were burning papers in the yard of their consulate in Honolulu.

The carriers' whereabouts was not of great concern. Every U.S. intelligence estimate was that Hawaii had nothing to fear from those ships. And the smoke of burning papers had wafted above the Japanese consulate grounds several times over the past year.

A report from the U.S. Asiatic Fleet in the southwest Pacific that Japanese ships were moving in that direction was of concern, however. Kimmel dispatched his intelligence officer to the battleship USS California to discuss the report with Vice Adm. William S. Pye, the Fleet Battle Force commander, who would have to lead American ships into combat if combat developed.

Pye dismissed the report. He felt the Japanese would not tangle with "too big, too powerful and too strong" America.

Through the rest of the morning at Pearl, skippers held personnel and living compartment inspections, emergency battle drills, and sailors on the battleship USS Oklahoma prepared for an admiral's inspection to be held the following Monday.

The skipper of the repair ship USS Vestal, moored outboard of the USS Arizona in Battleship Row, discussed pending repairs with Capt. Franklin Van Valkenburg and Rear Adm. Issac C. Kidd. Van Valkenburg was the Arizona's commander and his ship was Kidd's 1st Battleship Division flagship.

Capt. Mervyn Bennion of the West Virginia held an Annual Military Inspection aboard the battleship USS Maryland.

At Kaneohe Naval Air Station (now a Marine Corps air station) on the opposite side of Oahu from Pearl, Cmdr. Harold M. Martin passed out the darkest warning of the day, telling his men at

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Battleship bugler abandons ship

Richard I. Fiske was a 19-year-old Marine bugler aboard the battleship USS West Virginia. The morning of the Japanese attack on Hawaii, his ship was moored about 50 feet behind the Oklahoma and was the same distance in front of the Arizona.

For him, the attack was something of a family affair. His father, a chief commissaryman, was a crew-

man on the seaplane tender USS Tangier — moored on the opposite side of Ford Island Naval Air Station from the West Virginia — and his brother, an Army medic, was assigned to Schofield Barracks. This is his story.

— Jim Lea

I had just come off watch (when the attack began). I sounded chow call, and after we ate I went up to the quarterdeck and was going to help the sailor bugler sound colors.

We sounded First Call at five minutes before eight o'clock.

Then we saw some airplanes come in. They circled around in a big group coming from Schofield (Barracks, 10 miles northwest of Pearl).

There was no drill planned, but we'd been having them maybe twice a month.

There were four or five torpedo planes coming right down the channel about 15 feet off the deck. We still thought it was a drill, then.

When the torpedoes dropped, a guy who was with me named Stanley said, "We're gonna hear a thud, then we better get to our battle stations."

The next thing I remember is this hellacious loud noise and a tremendous wave came over the side of the ship and washed us to the other side. The West Virginia was 118 feet wide.

It couldn't have been more than two or three minutes later and our first sergeant came up from his office on the second deck, soaking wet. The explosion had blown him completely out of his office.

He said, "Get your asses to your battle stations. We're under attack by the Japs."

I immediately went to the bridge, my battle station. I was going to grab my bugle, but I don't know what the hell happened. I got up there and didn't have a bugle.

Capt. Bennion was there giving orders. There wasn't any power and he was shouting over the rail of the bridge.

About 8:10, we saw three bombs dropping toward our fantail (stern) but none of them hit us or the Arizona.

The fourth one hit just forward of the number two gun turret on the Arizona and the next thing we heard was this hellacious noise and we saw a big fireball. The bow of the Arizona came completely out of the water. She settled down and was one tremendous ball of fire. I never saw so much fire in my life.

The concussion blew us against the forward part of the bridge, but Capt. Bennion kept barking orders. Maybe five or six minutes later, we saw some more bombs coming down and we hit the deck. I was trying to dig a hole, but you can't do that in steel with your fingers.

The bomb hit the number two gun turret. Capt. Bennion, who had been standing up giving orders, let out a yell.

He was lying on his back and there was a tremendous hole in him. We picked him up and put him in a wire stretcher and four sailors took him down to transfer him to the Tennessee (moored inboard of the West Virginia).

The Oklahoma was right in front of us and by 8:10 she was completely over on her side.

She rolled over so slow, so very slow. And you could see the men running up and over the hull. Then the mast hit the water. Everything was in slow motion. It was the damndest thing I ever saw in my life.

I still dream about that.

About 9:30 the exec ordered, "All unnecessary personnel abandon ship." At that particular time, I considered myself the most unnecessary guy aboard. You didn't have to tell me twice. I hit it.

Ford Island was only 50 or 60 yards away, but there was so much burning oil on the water. I think I made it in between four and five seconds.

On Ford Island we started to run across the runway to get away from all the stuff going on

'There were four or five torpedo planes coming right down the channel about 15 feet off the deck'



Stripes, Lem Robson

Richard Fiske recalls his days at Pearl.

(at Battleship Row). This airplane came down on us and you could hear this "chi-chi-chi-chi" (of strafing fire). The plane must have been doing 250 mph. We were doing about 255.

As soon as we got to the other side, an ensign told us to go back to help the people on Battleship Row, so we ran back across the runway.

There were guys swimming around in circles by the Arizona. Their eyes were so full of oil they couldn't see what they were doing.

Twenty-five or 30 of us dove in and got most the guys who were still alive out. We went back later in the morning and pulled some of the dead up on shore.

About 1 p.m., they gave us West Virginia Marines machine guns and took us by truck over to the admiral's house to guard it.

Sometime that night, our gunnery sergeant came by and told us to be on the lookout because the Japanese had landed at Barbers Point (Naval Air Station, about 6 miles west of Pearl) and at Waikiki. (Editor's note: Both rumors were

widespread, but false.)

Two days later we had services for our captain and I had the privilege of sounding Taps. That was the most beautiful Taps I ever sounded in my life.

My dad and I went up to Schofield about the 22nd or 23rd to find out what happened to my brother. He was okay, but that was the only time he ever talked about the war.

He said he worked over 72 hours straight and never saw so many wounded in his life. He finally collapsed going into one of the operating rooms to help out. He was lying in a hallway and a couple of corpsmen thought he was dead. They picked him up and moved him into the morgue.

He said he slept about 24 hours and it was the best rest he ever got. Nobody bothered him. The only thing was when he woke up he was real cold.

Most of the West Virginia Marines stayed with the ship. We stood our watches but had to work, too, removing bodies and helping to raise the ship. Even though most of the ship was under water, our galley was operating and we were eating corn bread and beans and stuff like that.

We finally got all the bodies removed with the exception of three. We got them out when we went into dry dock. We knew they were aboard.

From Dec. 7 until the 23rd we could hear them tapping every night, but we couldn't get to them. At night when we'd stand perimeter guard it was awful. Nobody wanted to get the post between the admiral's house and the administration building (on Ford Island) because you'd have to pass by the ship and hear the "tap . . . tap . . . tap."

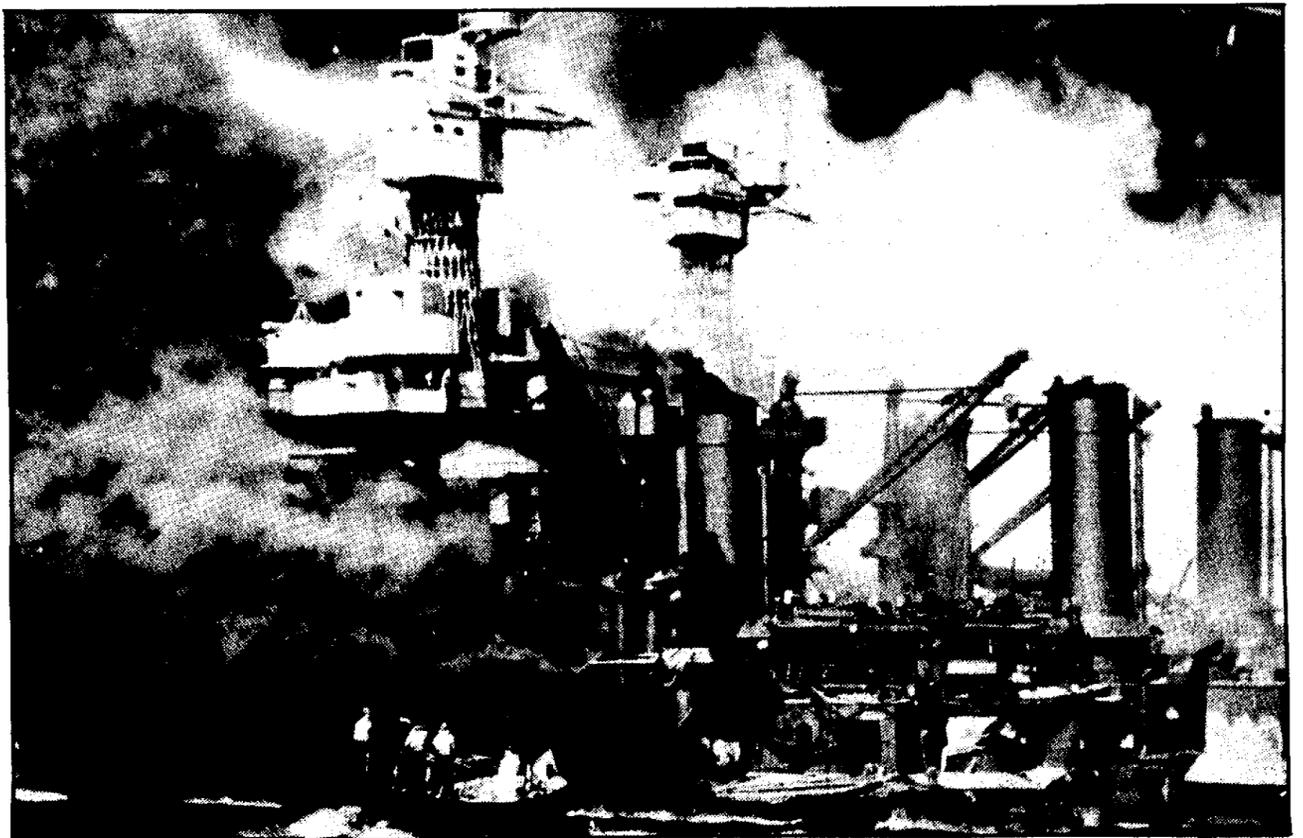
It ended just before Christmas.

We got the ship into dry dock June 13, 1942, and drained the water out. About 4:30 p.m., we opened up the last watertight compartment, six decks down. The forward pump room.

We found them by the forward generator. Three sailors. They'd written on the bulkhead that they'd lived until the 23rd of December.

That's another thing I can't forget.

Sometimes, when I've been out (at the Arizona Memorial Visitors Center) and there've been too many memories, I'll go home and I can still hear that "tap . . . tap . . . tap."



The USS West Virginia burns after the attack by Japanese warplanes.

File photo

Dawns the day of no return

'If my plane was damaged, I would crash it into an American ship'

Lifting his torpedo bomber off the deck of the carrier Hiryu before sunrise, Lt. Cmdr. Hirata Matsumura was certain he would never see dusk.

Matsumura led a skytrain of nine warplanes toward the American anchorage in the natural basin called Pearl Harbor, surrounded by 20 others who carried shafts of oxygen-propelled explosives off the Soryu and Akagi. He was fronted by high-level bombers and covered by a droning flock of darting Zero fighters.

Dawn sunlight flashed off his wing tips as he moved along, a sight Matsumura assured himself he would never savor again.

It was Dec. 7, 1941 on American calendars, but Dec. 8 in Japan. Back at Yokosuka, Matsumura had left his wife and infant daughter fingernail clippings and a lock of his hair. These were mementoes that would be placed beside his portrait in a family shrine.

With both dedication and indifference, Matsumura was willing to die.

"I was determined I would never come back. If my plane was damaged, I would crash it into an American ship."

But Matsumura would live to embrace grandchildren. He would exult in life and yet feel guilt because his ashes were not beside those of classmates and comrades.

Ahead of Matsumura that morning, Lt. Yoshio Shiga exulted in the response of the peerless Zero, which could fly lightly over 1,000 miles, fight for 38 minutes and fly back easily with fuel to spare.

Without armor, it was light and fast. Later in a long war, firepower tore easily through the Zero, transforming it from soaring silver into dead, falling iron.

But this did not matter to Shiga, a warrior committed to mission, commanding the entire wave of first-strike fighters off the carrier Akagi.

He and his fellow pilots saw themselves as knights without armor.

Shiga discarded any thought of life or death.

"I did not care. My concern was to win or lose the war. I would just fight."

Purge a pathway for the bombers, he had been told. Formidably outnumbered, Shiga would lead his Zeroes in a talons-spread assault on Hickam and Bellows Field, blasting grounded American fighters before pilots could sprint to cockpits. All would depend on the element of easy surprise.

Shiga thought of other lives, not his — those who flew the torpedo planes and slow bombers. If he failed, they would be picked off like game birds.

Shiga neither failed nor died, surviving with Matsumura to become a swivel-chair elder and grieve for the young lives that never grew old — as would Zenji Abe, who would come out of war as a reflective historian.

"How foolish of Japan to fight a war and be defeated, and to lose so much life. Look at all we have gained in peace," he said.

An Imperial Navy Academy alumnus like Matsumura and Shiga, Abe gave no thought to peace as he was roused at midnight from his bunk on the Akagi to man a Type 97 bomber that carried one bomb — a single 500-pound pod of explosive.

Around him, 59 other aircraft were being stocked with explosives. There was no excitement or song, as would be shown in fanciful films that recreated the attack. Abe felt only a sense-of-duty response.

"I wasn't sure I would return alive, but I felt no fear."

Abe thought little of death because he had lived close to it for months, watching five out of 24 young pilots killed as they practiced torpedo runs in Japan's Inland Sea. He knew it was the fatigue of constant training, much of this in foul weather that would have grounded commercial aircraft — no rest and few navigational aids. Survivors flew only on instinct and judgment, with the skill of experience.

It was all for something, Abe told himself. In a few hours, jubilant master planners in Tokyo would lift toasts, then proceed with the well-plotted seizure of oil fields in the Dutch East Indies and the wealth on other ground.

Japan would no longer suffer a poverty of natural resources, compelled to accept a thin and insulting dole from America and Britain. No punitive embargoes would choke Japan's industries or stall her southward advance.

The disabled U.S. Navy would not thrust in an interfering hand.

Taking off, Abe weighed chances of one-blow success, wondering how much one bomb would buy. He led the second echelon of 9 high-level bombers and knew the well-practiced drill — the torpedo bombers would attack first, breaking the hulls of American battleships anchored along Ford Island, followed by the bombers that would amputate the superstructures.

Five two-man submarines, little more than glorified suicide craft, would do the piecemeal on any remains.

But ahead of the battleships, there was another priority target — the carriers believed to be on the other side of the island. Japanese planners were about to prove, far ahead of Americans, that naval aviation would win maritime battles — not the ponderous warships that turned broadside to batter each other with big guns.

Beneath all three officers and many others, dense ocean gave way to lapping surf and white beach, then green coastal hills and the long channel into the harbor.

Passing the landmark called Diamond Head, Matsumura felt a stir of nostalgia and

pushed it away.

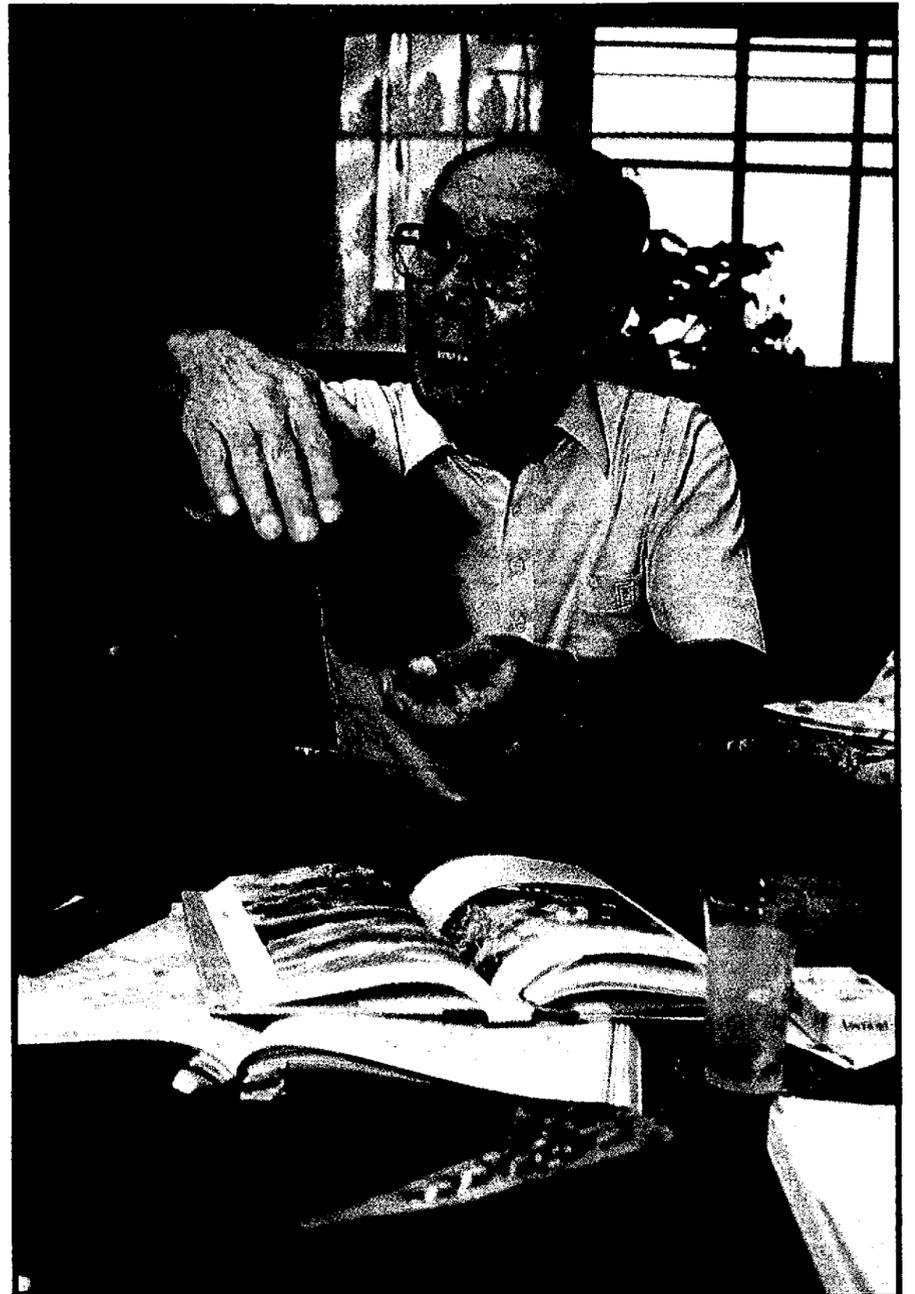
There had been that wonderful world trip in 1936, just after his graduation, when the cruiser Yagumo stopped in Baltimore and New York. Matsumura had traveled to Washington, savoring the gift-from-Japan cherry trees along the Tidal Basin.

"America was wonderful and I liked Americans — friendly, open-hearted and very frank. I never thought or imagined we would go to war." On the way back, there had been Hawaii. Diamond Head had been magnificent then. Now it was only a far-below milestone on the route to a war.

Shiga looked down and saw parked American fighters, as helpless as nesting sparrows, about to be savaged by descending hawks.

"Hickam Field was sleeping calmly. It was very peaceful."

All three were gravely disappointed to find no



Japanese bomber pilot Zenji Abe describes the attack.

Stripes, Lem Robson

carriers among the behemoths below.

There wasn't a visible enemy fighter or a puff of anti-aircraft fire. Nothing — total surprise.

Cmdr. Mitsuo Fuchida, leading the overall mission, fired a flare to signal other aircraft to proceed with the layered attack plan. When the plane closest to his didn't waggle its wings in response, the flustered Fuchida assumed his flare hadn't been seen and fired another — a signal misread by the whole assault group. Two flares meant the Americans were alert and ready by their guns. Forget the slow master plan and descend en masse, attacking as a combined force.

Shiga's strafers struck hard, raking the long expanse of airfield and taxiway, blowing away a few fighters that tried to struggle up and B-17 bombers that were roosting outside hangars. He flew into the glittering teeth of ground fire, knowing that American sparrows would turn into falcons if they got at slower planes in the assault force.

"I prayed the torpedo bombers would quickly shoot their torpedoes. Those planes were very slow. I prayed quick, quick, quick."

Shiga was astonished by the fast response of American gunners, many of whom fought in their underwear. Tracers streaked at the attackers and Shiga saw one, a dive bomber over the harbor, stung by fatal fire. It crashed into a moored warship — the first loss in a long war, Shiga noted.

"I cried in my mind."

But he need not have worried about the bombers and torpedo planes, which had the sky to themselves and easily unloaded their explosive freight.

The line of warships was sundered by leaping flame and black smoke flowed in a southward drift.

The strike that was supposed to be launched

See NO RETURN, Page 7

Diamond Head was a far-below milestone on the route to war.

NO RETURN, From Page 6

in neat phases was a tangle of aircraft — dive bombers mixed with torpedo planes and the slow, exacting Type 97s towed by Abe.

Denied a carrier, Matsumura had doubled back over the channel, expecting intense fire from both ships and gun pits ashore. But if any was aimed at him, he failed to notice. Intent only on toggling his torpedo at a target, he selected a "large, Maryland-class battleship," dropping to 65 feet to give his projectile careful purchase and soften the impact that could sink it.

Would long months of costly experiment pay off? As Japan and the United States moved into close-to-war crisis and the Pearl Harbor strike was planned, there was open doubt that torpedoes would run through the shallows off Ford Island.

Researchers at the Yokosuka base had fitted them with fins like those on a tarpon, hoping to steady the propelled explosive on a straight course.

Around Matsumura, torpedoes were exploding down the anchored line of outer battleships, the Oklahoma and West Virginia, before others that were shielded from torpedoes but blazing from bomb hits. Matsumura felt his torpedo drop loose and kept his eyes on a straight, true wake as it sped toward the broad hull.

Then he was high and turning eastward and his navigator, Takeo Shiro, told him he had scored a dead-center hit. Matsumura saw the geyser that was like dark blood from a ruptured artery.

This was the West Virginia, whose captain had been wounded by bomb fragments and was dying on his bridge.

Abe, turning over the inner line of battleships, was well aware that he was being shot at. Gusts of impact rocked his bomber. He has no orderly memory of what happened, yet recalls being coldly exact as he chose a large iron nugget for himself — the bridge of what he thought was the Arizona.

Abe felt his plane lighten as his single bomb fell free.

Was his the bomb that shattered boiler and magazine, raising the spectacular splash of smoke seen in grainy newsreels? Abe, on a never-look-back mission, heard only the ecstatic, single-word testimony of backseater Chiaki Saito: "Hit!"

Avoiding the sudden pullup that could blacken his senses and cause him to crash, Abe kept on his straight-ahead course. When the dark carnage was far behind him, he collected his follow-along flight. One plane was missing.

Shiga's war was over in 20 minutes, but he

sorrowfully counted two missing lives. The pilot of one Zero had been clawed down by ground fire, crashing his crippled aircraft into a hangar. Another collided with an American plane trying to take off from Bellows Field.

Matsumura lost nobody, but felt helpless as his flight swung over the outer mouth of the basin. American destroyers were vengefully savaging the miniature submarines and Matsumura had nothing, neither bomb nor torpedo, to help them.

He could only lift a sad salute and fly back to the Hiryu.

Matsumura was both chagrined and grateful for the feel of life, pledging to die another day.

Abe and his comrades returned to the Akagi, somber because lives close to theirs had been forfeited. No more would die that day.

Higher heads, cautious because American carriers were loose, ruled out a second strike.

Shiga never saw another day of combat. Posted back at Yokosuka, he tested improved models of the Zero and helped develop the sophisticated Raiden and Shiden fighters, late-in-the-war entries that failed to stop the American bomber offensive on Japan. Now 77, he is president of a firm that manufactures police gear.

Abe fared far worse, losing nine pilots during a sham assault on the Aleutians that was meant to lure Americans away from an attack on Midway. It did not. The Japanese lost four carriers at Midway and Abe counted far fewer classmates and career-long friends after the battle.

He was captured by U.S. Marines and im-

prisoned on Guam until after the war. Abe would later lose a young son to cancer and a wife who died of illness and grief.

Matsumura's life was saved by a killing disease.

On Rabaul, a Japanese base in the Bismarck Archipelago, he fell sick with what he thought was a chest cold. Doctors in Japan told him he had tuberculosis, confining him to a hospital until 1948.

Had he stayed in the war, Matsumura reflects, he would have been compelled to join Squadron 653, which flew Zeroes stripped of guns and loaded with explosive — motor-powered bombs built to crash the long decks of American carriers. Not a man in the unit survived.

When Matsumura came out of the hospital, still weak and sick, he saw a city full of foreign uniforms. He again felt overdrawn on life.

"I wanted to die then, as I should have before."

But he went to work



Shiga commanded the entire first-wave strike off the Akagi.

Stripes, Lem Robson

for the Japan Public Housing Corporation, helping to rebuild his conquered and destitute country.

Shiga and Matsumura will stay in Japan as veterans of both nationalities gather at Pearl Harbor to mark the fifth decade since the first shots. Abe leaves in late November, first to be filmed by NBC for the "Today" show, then to meet Dec. 6 with veterans and historians. One, Walter Lord, wrote "Day of Infamy," considered by many the definitive work on the Pearl Harbor attack.

Abe may or may not go to the Dec. 7 ceremony at the Arizona Memorial, in company with President Bush. And, he has nothing to say about the feelings of Honolulu Mayor Frank Fasi, who said the Japanese should stay home unless they publicly apologize for the long-ago assault.

Traveling to Texas last year for the opening of Nimitz Memorial Hall, Abe met retired Brig. Gen. Kenneth Taylor, one of two pilots who managed to get into the air to oppose the raid. Between them, they dropped seven Japanese planes — possibly the one missing from Abe's flight.

Color prints of blazing planes falling before Taylor's guns were thrust at Abe. At Taylor's side, he signed them all, buying a square meter of Stonewall, Texas and a certificate naming him an Honorary Longhorn.

The 75-year-old Abe thinks often of that turn-of-history day, but doesn't dwell on it.

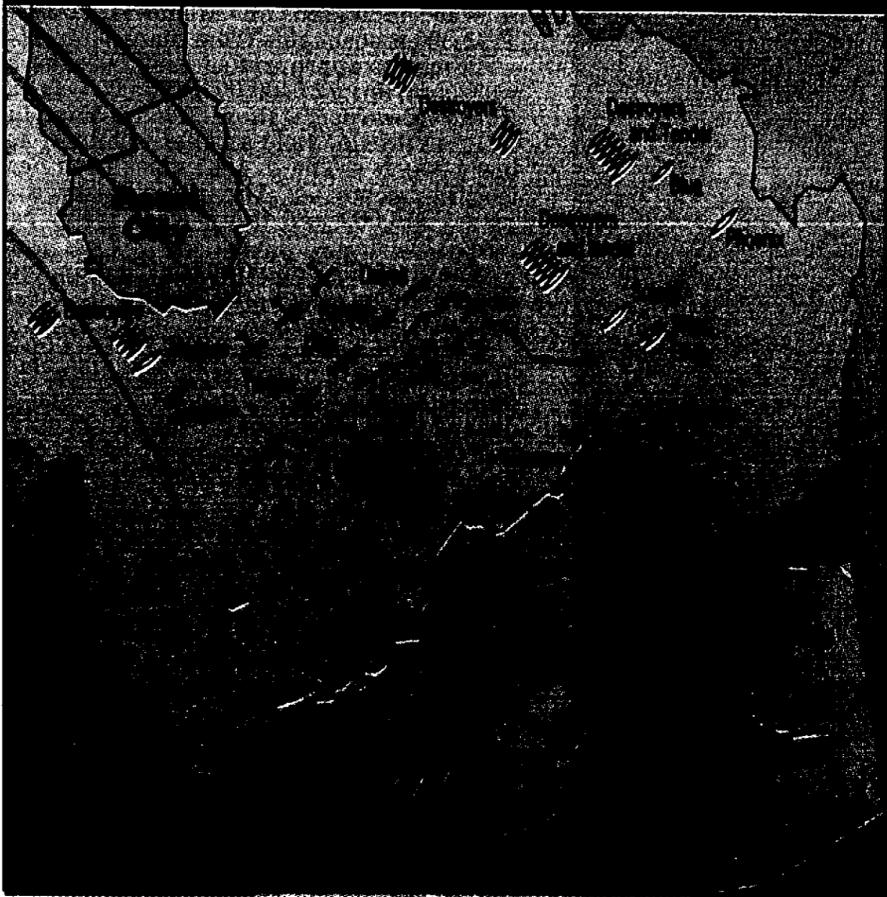
"It was only a rapidly turned page in my life, with darker chapters to follow."

On Pearl Harbor Day as on all days, Matsumura will ponder painful memories.

"I feel sorry now to have lived to the age of 78. This was an unthinkable thing. I feel sorrow for those who died."

— Hal Drake

THE ATTACK



Source: 'U.S. Navy in WWII'

Stripes, Misao Mikami

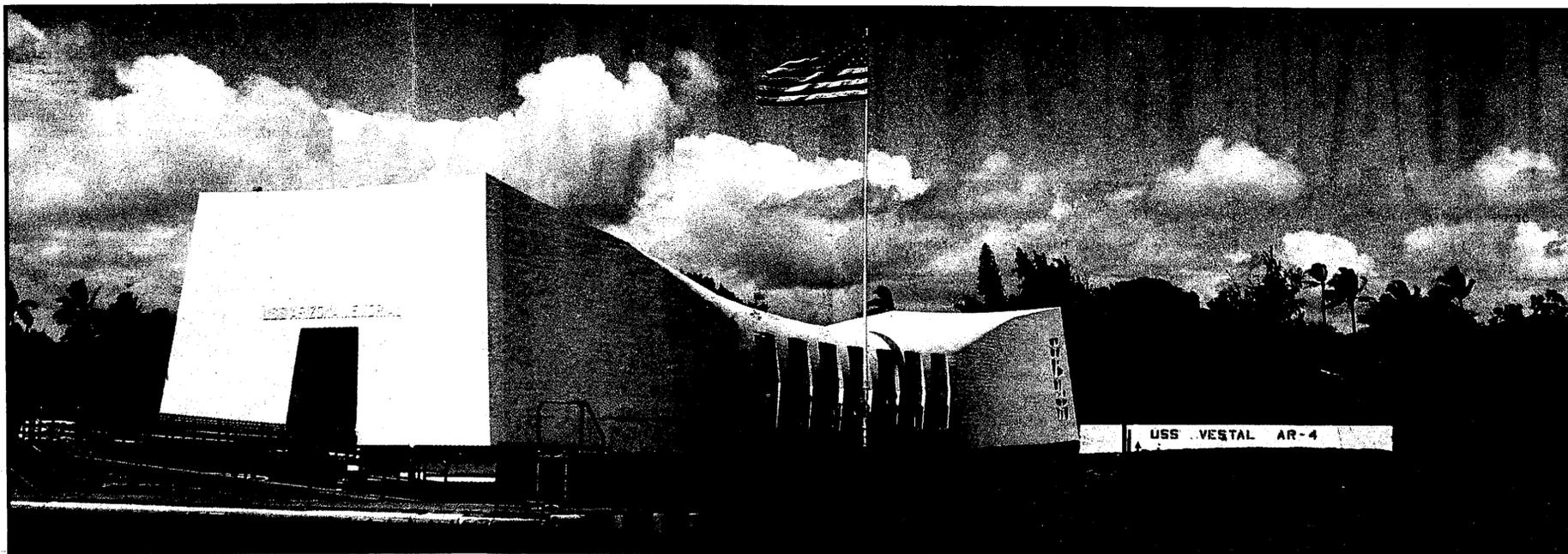
In memory . . .

Near the east corner of Ford Island, a glistening white memorial stands as a permanent reminder of a slogan that helped spur Ameri-

ca to victory in the Pacific war — "Remember Pearl Harbor." It spans the rusting, barnacle-encrusted hull of



An orchid lei adorns a rusted hull in Pearl Harbor.



Photos by Lem Robson

The Arizona Memorial stands in tribute to victims of the Pearl Harbor raid.

the battleship USS Arizona. The morning of Dec. 7, 1941, she took several Japanese torpedoes and eight bombs. One drove through her deck and exploded in her forward magazine seconds after 8:10 a.m.

A blaze from bow to stern, she slowly settled into the mud of the harbor bottom and, at 10:32 a.m., was given up for lost.

The story that she still is in commission survives in many recountings of the Pearl Harbor attack. She is not, but she still is manned. Some 1,177 crewmen went down with her. Only 75 bodies were recovered; her hulk entombs the remaining 1,102.

The ashes of six Arizona crewmen who survived the attack and lived to die of natural causes have been interred aboard the ship in the past few years.

Ships passing the memorial still render honors, and globules of oil still bubble to the surface from her fuel tanks.

In the shrine room of the memorial, the names of all Arizona crewmen who died Dec. 7 are inscribed in Italian marble. Among them are her skipper, Capt. Franklin Van Valkenburgh, and Rear Adm. Issac C. Kidd, Battleship Division One commander whose flagship she was. Both were awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

Construction of the memorial began in 1960 and it was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1962. The \$532,000 it cost came from many sources.

Congress appropriated \$150,000; the state of Hawaii contributed \$100,000; \$95,000 was raised by the Ralph Edwards TV show "This is Your Life."

Elvis Presley held a benefit concert at Pearl Harbor's Bloch Arena in 1961 and raised nearly \$65,000 for the memorial. The Fleet Reserve Association raised \$40,000 and there were many private donations.

The AMVETS donated the carillon and the Italian marble upon which the names of the battleship's dead are inscribed.

From 1963, the 14th Naval District operated hourly shuttle boats to and from the memorial as well as three to four one-hour tours of Pearl Harbor. A decade later, more than 1 million people were visiting the memorial every year, and a campaign was begun to build a visitor center to handle the increasing crowds.

The \$5 million center — \$2 million came from Congress and most of the rest was raised by Pearl Harbor Branch 46 of the Fleet Reserve Association — was opened Oct. 10, 1980, and is operated by the National Park Service.

About 1.5 million people a year visit the center and take 30 Navy-operated shuttle boats a day from it to the memorial.

The center includes a theater where visitors see a movie describing the attack and the memorial. There's a bookstore offering a plethora of books, photographs, posters, audio and video tapes and souvenirs.

Pearl Harbor survivors volunteer as guides at the center, answering questions about the Arizona, the attack and their involvement in it. Some of those

questions border on the inane, and some visitors are a bit unusual.

"Some ask if we moved the ship under the memorial after it was built," one volunteer said. Others, after seeing oil still leaking from the ship's fuel tanks bubbling to the surface, ask, "Do you turn off the oil at night?"

"One guy came in one day and announced he was 'the reincarnation of Gen. MacArthur.'"

Many visitors are Japanese tourists. "The older Japanese are much more respectful than the younger ones," said Bob Kinzler, a survivor of the Hawaii attack and a visitor center volunteer.

The same can be said of American visitors — the older ones are more respectful than the younger.

Pearl Harbor was 50 years ago. Many of the people who visit today — American and Japanese — were not alive then and know of it only what they learned in high school history classes.

Some American visitors voice mild objection to seeing Japanese at the center.

"It just gives you a funny feeling to come here and see so many Japanese," said Lester Carver, a visitor from Amarillo, Texas. "I wonder what they're thinking."

Masao Nishida, from Nagoya — who said he was a soldier in the war and who brought his wife, daughter and son-in-law to Pearl Harbor — had an answer.

"It was a tragedy," he said. "Both America and Japan lost people here. It was a mistake because it cost us all so much. But that was a different time and people thought differently then."

Kinzler said one thing that concerns him is what Japanese-speaking tour guides are telling their charges.

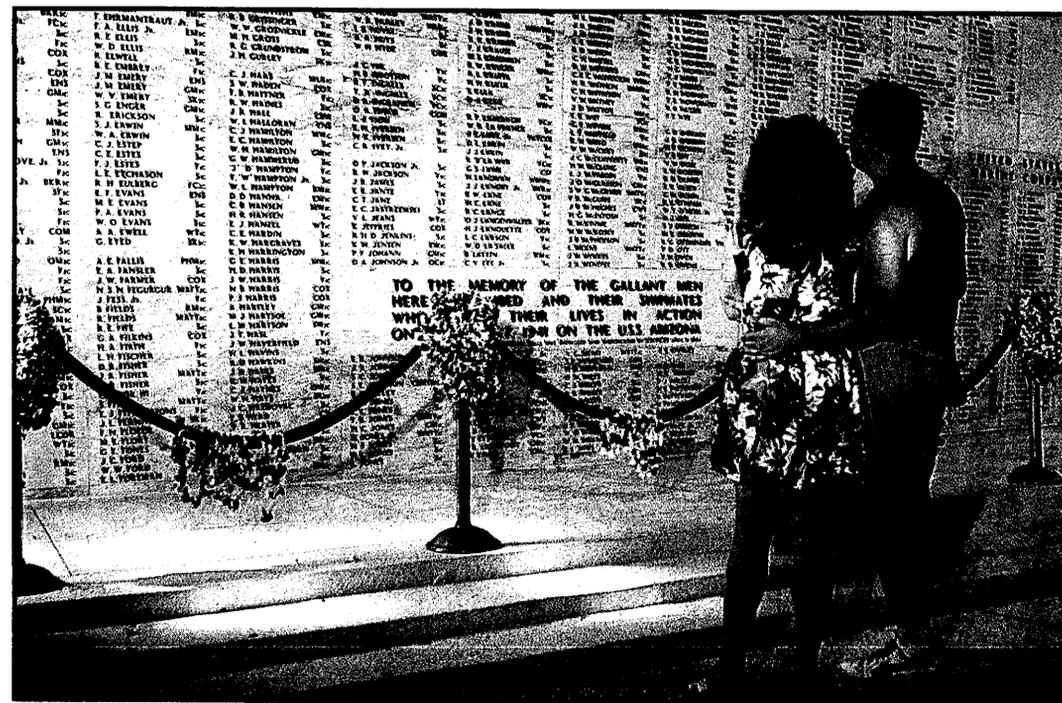
"I wonder if they're accurate," he mused.

As he spoke, a tour guide nearby was giving four young women from Tokyo only trivia, explaining that the visitor center's ladies room "has twice as many facilities as the men's," and asking if anyone knew why Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto's name "is written with the characters for '56'."

None of the four, all of whom were born long after Yamamoto — who envisioned the Pearl Harbor attack and who was shot down in the South Pacific — did.

"Because he was born on his father's 56th birthday," the guide said.

The center also contains a small museum. It and the film visitors see before traveling to the memorial has sparked complaints from some Pearl Harbor survivors. They say the film contains inaccuracies



A wall of names is all that remains of much of the Arizona's crew.

and the museum is too small and does not have enough exhibits.

Blanca Stransky, National Park Service public affairs specialist at the center, says both those things are being worked on.

"We're in the process of producing a new film that will correct inaccuracies and add some recently discovered historical information," she said.

The museum, she says, was designed by the Navy and the Fleet Reserve Association and, at the time, "no one realized how many people were going to visit and how big the museum needed to be."

"Unfortunately, the walls can only contain so much."

More artifacts cannot be included until environmentally-controlled display cases are available. Without them, the artifacts will deteriorate.

Those cases are, she said, "very, very expensive."

Part of the money that goes into donation boxes set up at the center by the Arizona Memorial Museum Association and all money put in a special dona-

tion box during the 50th anniversary observance will go toward improving the museum, she said.

Artifacts in storage now are kept in special containers in an environmentally-controlled area to protect them, she said.

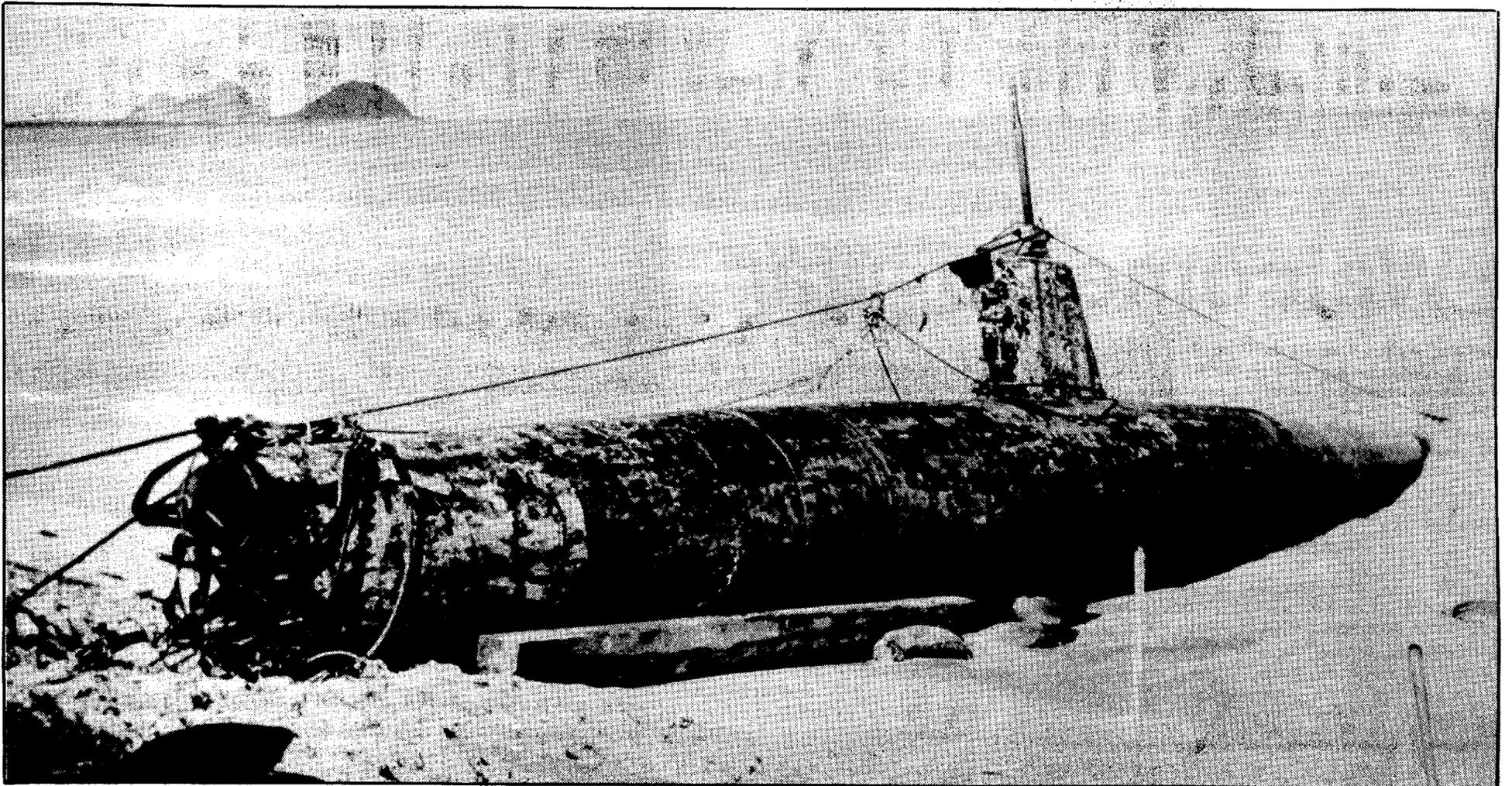
A new reminder of Pearl Harbor will be added to the visitor center late this year — a concrete and metal relief map of Oahu highlighting military bases that were on the island in 1941.

It will be surrounded by plaques bearing the names of servicemen who died elsewhere than the Arizona.

"Until now, the only names you could find were those on the Arizona," said Richard I. Fiske — a Marine bugler on the battleship USS West Virginia — a prime mover behind the new memorial.

"Now, you'll be able to find the names of all the dead. That's something we've needed for a long time."

— Jim Lea



This Japanese midget submarine at Bellows was salvaged by a Navy crew.

File photo

Battle plan complexity

The Japanese attack on Hawaii was perhaps one of the most successful surprise attacks in history.

In just over two hours, 183 U.S. Army and Navy aircraft were destroyed — five other carrier-based Navy planes were shot down by friendly fire when they tried to land at Ford Island Naval Air Station at dusk, Dec. 7, and more than 2,300 sailors, Marines and soldiers were killed.

At least 57 civilians were killed and another 300 wounded in Honolulu and elsewhere on the island — many from stray anti-aircraft rounds.

The Pacific Fleet suffered 19 ships sunk or heavily damaged, including eight of its nine battleships. All but three of those ships — the battleship Arizona and destroyers Cassin and Downes — were repaired and took part in battles later in the war.

All 45 of the Japanese ships that took part in the assault were sunk by the end of the war.

U.S. military officials must accept partial responsibility for the success of the attack.

Adm. Husband Kimmel, Pacific Fleet commander at Pearl, and Lt. Gen. Walter Short, commander of the Hawaiian Department as the Army establishment in the islands then was called, were kept in the dark by Washington as to Japanese activities beyond a few vague "war warnings."

Short, responsible for the defense of Pearl Harbor and the rest of the island, sharpened his defenses against sabotage. Kimmel, responsible for long-range reconnaissance stepped up anti-submarine patrols.

Neither was told they should do anything more, and both shared Washington's view that the Japanese would not launch an attack against the islands — certainly not an air attack.

American electronic surveillance experts had cracked the Japanese codes weeks before and were monitoring messages from the Japanese consulate in Honolulu to Tokyo, messages in which the Japanese Navy's only spy, Takeo Yoshikawa, reported frequently on ships in the harbor and U.S. defense preparations.

Washington gave low priority to decoding and translating those messages and never informed Kimmel or Short of their content.

One crucial message monitored Dec. 3, from the consulate to Tokyo that described signals that would be used to make contact with Japanese warships offshore — wasn't translated until Dec. 6.

Hawaii wasn't the only focus of Japan's target and threat analysis

The translator's supervisor thought it unimportant and told her it could wait.

After the attack, Army and Navy officials in Hawaii moaned that if they had known of that message, they would have been ready for the Japanese planes.

Washington's defense was that if Hawaii had been informed of Yoshikawa's dispatches, the Japanese would have known their codes had been broken.

But, Hawaii was not the only target. The Philippines was attacked and eventually occupied. Guam, the tiny U.S. territory in the south-central Pacific "where America's day begins," also began its long, dark years of occupation.

Guam then had a population of just over 21,000. Its defense force — armed with only .45-cal. pistols and a few 30-cal. machine guns — consisted of about 430 sailors and Marines and a militia of some 250 Guamanians.

While few Guamanians had expected to see war with the Japanese, the military was not so certain. Japanese-occupied Saipan was only 80 miles north, and the Japanese were becoming increasingly bold in the Western Pacific.

The uncertain situation led the Navy to order all military dependents evacuated from the island in October 1941.

Guam historians say the Navy never informed island officials how serious the situation was and what they were doing to prepare for war.

Guam's peace was not broken Dec. 7. But oldtimers say the sunset was disconcerting. The sky turned blood red as the sun descended into the sea, a sure sign of some evil to come.

Dec. 8, 1941, Guam's naval governor, Capt. George McMillin, received word of the Pearl Harbor attack just before dawn. He sent couriers to notify civilian authorities, and in little more than an hour the news had streaked

through every village.

Most people were more concerned with carrying out a Catholic duty, however. It was the day of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and the faithful filed into churches early for Mass.

Moments after 8 a.m., nine Japanese planes appeared from the direction of Saipan. The first bombs fell at 8:27 a.m. on the Marine barracks at Sumay. Rumors blossomed that more planes were headed for Agana.

Though those rumors proved false, scores of people jammed roads leading out of Agana, seeking refuge in the jungle and hills beyond.

Only one bomb fell in Agana that day, historians record. A few more fell the following day.

Dec. 10 was Guam's day to remember. Japanese forces landed north of Agana before dawn. McMillan was notified by residents and ordered his force to its defensive positions.

Militiamen gathered at the Plaza de Espana in the center of the city and, when the Japanese reached the area about 5 a.m., opened fire.

They beat back the initial assault, but McMillin saw resistance was hopeless. He ordered his troops to cease fire at 5:45 a.m., and he was taken prisoner shortly after 6 a.m.

Guam found two heroes that day. Two militiamen — Angel Leon Guerrero Flores and Vincent C. Chargualaf — had been ordered to keep the Stars and Stripes flying in the Plaza. As surrender talks were going on, a Japanese officer ordered them to haul down the American flag and raise the Japanese banner.

They refused. The Japanese repeated the order several times, and each time Flores and Chargualaf refused — remaining at attention at the flagpole.

The officer angrily swung at Flores with his sword, and a Japanese enlisted man darted forward and bayoneted the courageous Guamanian in the chest. Chargualaf also was bayoneted.

As the two lay dying at the base of the flagpole, the American flag was pulled down and the rising sun was raised.

Island historians say both Flores and Chargualaf were buried secretly by the Japanese in unmarked graves.

Their location still is unknown. Guam would endure an often brutal Japanese occupation until July 21, 1944, when American troops landed to liberate the island.

— Jim Lea

Welcome to war

'Get out of the barracks! The Japanese are attacking'

Bob May was a 19-year-old private from Van Buren, Ohio, assigned to the 5th Bomb Group at Hickam Field on Dec. 7, 1941.

At the time of the attack, he was going to radio school and was living in a huge new barracks called Hale Makai, the "inn by the sea." It housed about 3,200 men.

He spent the first few minutes of the attack hiding. First he hid behind a wooden enlisted club Hickam airmen called the "Snake Ranch" across the parade field from Hale Makai, and later in a Honolulu Electric Co. manhole.

He was outside Hale Makai when a Japanese bomb went through the roof and exploded in the building's mess hall, killing 35 men. A friend of his, a baker, had sought refuge inside the mess hall's huge walk-in cooler when the attack began and was killed by the concussion from the explosion.

May transferred to the 11th Bomb Group in 1942 and served with the unit in Hawaii and elsewhere in the Pacific throughout the war. He was discharged in 1945 and went home to Ohio. He now lives in Florida and is secretary-treasurer of the 11th Bombardment Group Association.

May was one of several people instrumental in erecting an 11th Bomb Group memorial that will be dedicated at Hickam Dec. 7. This is his story.

— Jim Lea

I woke up at a little after 7 a.m. My buddy came in off guard duty and I was still in bed. He said, "May, let's go to chow."

I said I didn't want to, but he kept after me and I finally said, "Roy, go back and read your damned comic books. I want to sleep in."

There was a lot of noise outside and we went to the window to see what it was. I saw this plane dart past, but he was so fast I couldn't tell who it was, but I thought they were coming awful close to the building.

Somebody came running in shouting, "Get out of the barracks! The Japanese are attacking."

I looked out the window again and saw this plane coming down between two wings. I saw it

release something, and I turned around to run. I got about 10 feet from the window when (a bomb) went off.

I was on the second floor. If I'd been on the first floor I probably wouldn't be here today.

I got a pair of pants — no shoes, no socks, no belt — and ran out the door with my buddy Roy and across the parade ground to the Snake Ranch. There were planes diving all over the place and I don't know how in the hell we kept from being hit.

Roy had a .45, but I was just standing there trying to hold up my britches. He told me to keep watch for a plane coming by.

I looked out and said, "Here comes one! About 50 feet off the ground!"

He said, "Boy oh boy!" and fired his .45. Boom! A puff of smoke came out (of the plane). I yelled, "My God, you hit him, Roy!"

The (plane) went over the water tower and down he went.

I guess probably 7,000 guys fired at that plane and all of them think today they shot it down.

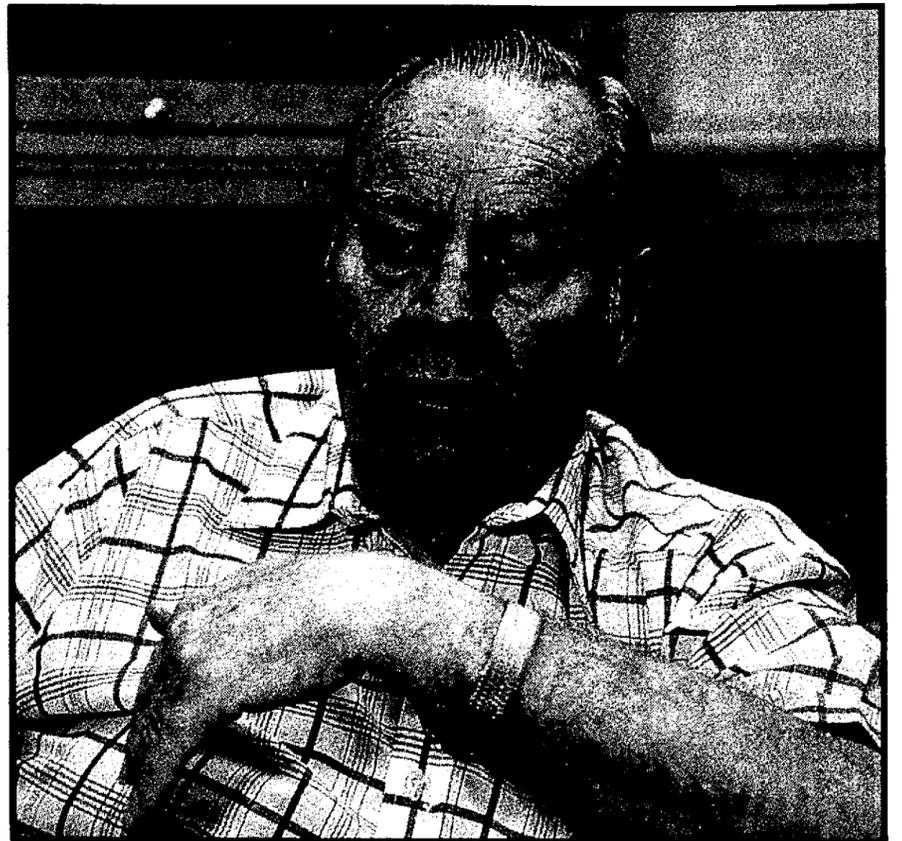
We decided that we weren't in a very safe place, so we ran back toward the parade ground. Three guys were setting up a water-cooled .30-cal. machine gun. All of a sudden a bomb hit and there was nothing but a big hole in the ground.

We didn't even stop, just kept running. Everybody who worked on the (flight) line had to go there (the flight line). Since I was in radio school, I didn't have anyplace to go.

I was getting dressed when somebody came in and said we had to get out of the barracks.

I went downstairs and there were about six of us together and this captain said he'd lead us out of the building. Just as we got out the door, a plane started strafing.

"Back! Back! Back!" the captain yelled and



Stripes, Lem Robson

Bob May recalls his Pearl Harbor experience.

we ran back inside. I had been the last one out, so I was the first one back in.

A bomb went off and we slid across the floor. The only one hurt was the captain who got a little piece of shrapnel in his butt.

He started yelling, "I got the Purple Heart! I got the Purple Heart!"

We got out safely, but it took me a long time after that to prove to people that I went where I said I went.

I went across the street to where there was a great big (manhole) over a Honolulu Electric (underground) facility.

I tried to open the lid but it was really heavy. I looked around for somebody to help, but there was nobody there.

Finally I got the damned thing off and looked around. Still nobody around. I went down inside and within a few minutes people started coming in on top of me.

There wasn't anybody around when I was trying to open the lid, but all of a sudden I was in the middle of 12 guys.

(May has spent months trying to verify names of 11th Bomb Group people missing or killed in the attack. The names will be inscribed on the memorial dedicated this year.)

(He has been unable to verify two names. Witnesses say they were killed in the attack, but the names appear in no records reviewed so far.)

(One was a fireman named Fredrich Malarsie who was seen slumped dead over the wheel of his fire truck during the day. Circumstances surrounding the death of the second man — two witnesses have attested they saw him dead in bed — are unusual.)

A man by the name of Max Butterfield told me he had a friend named Charlie Judd with the 17th Air Base Group. They were like brothers, he said.

He said he went up to Charlie's (that morning) and said, "Let's go to chow."

Charlie said, "No, I'm gonna finish this book."

"What's it about?" Butterfield asked.

"It tells all about the piss-poor Japanese air force."

Butterfield said he was going out to see what all the noise was about. When he saw the planes strafing, he ran back inside shouting, "Come out and see this damned poor Japanese air force, Charlie! They're beating the hell out of us!"

Charlie didn't move. There was a hole in the middle of his forehead. One of the strafing rounds got him.

(May believes information on Malarsie and Judd may be found in records kept in 11 cartons the military is holding in Washington and refuses to allow examination of. He wants to examine them under a Freedom of Information Act request, but says that takes money that isn't available.)



File photo

A hastily-made gun emplacement in front of Hangar 5 was manned shortly after the attack.

Massacre in Manila

By Tim Hanson
Stripes Staff Writer

MANILA — Ensign Conrad Geeslin rapped on the thick wooden door of Adm. Thomas C. Hart's suite at the Manila Hotel. It was somewhere around 3:30 a.m. on Dec. 8, 1941. Geeslin, the admiral's coding officer, was carrying a message from Washington which he had decoded only minutes before: the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor and American losses were thought to be significant.

Geeslin had walked down the stairs of the four-story Marsman Building, where the headquarters of America's Asiatic Fleet was located, and was driven by a staff chauffeur to the nearby Manila Hotel where Hart was staying.

Ho, the admiral's Chinese orderly who usually slept on the floor of the suite's main room, awakened and opened the door to usher the young ensign inside.

"I have a message for Adm. Hart," Geeslin said. Ho, a big man who never seemed to talk much but who was a most efficient aide, disappeared into the admiral's bedroom and moments later a sleepy-eyed Hart appeared in his robe. Geeslin handed him the message and the admiral quietly read the dispatch.

"Thank you Geeslin," Hart said. "I'll be over in a few minutes."

For Hart, a distinguished Naval officer who once served as superintendent of the Naval Academy and who was the senior admiral afloat in the world at the time, was not surprised.

A few days before, Hart sent a message to Adm. Husband E. Kimmell, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet in Hawaii, alerting him to increased Japanese military activity in the Pacific and uncannily predicted that the United States would be at war with Japan within three days.

Some months earlier — believing he could better direct his fleet from land in the event of an attack on the Philippines — Hart moved his operations from the heavy cruiser USS Houston to Manila. He then dispersed virtually all of his ships and submarines throughout the Philippine Islands as a precautionary measure.

It wasn't much of a fleet really. There were several ships — the most modern of which was the USS Houston — and 29 submarines. But their torpedoes never worked properly, thereby dramatically reducing their usefulness.

Hart dressed and was driven to his headquarters where he drafted a message to Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the former Chief of Staff who was then in charge of the Manila-based U.S. Armed Forces Far East.

Within hours, Japanese bombers and fighters crossed into Philippine territory from their base in southern Formosa, some 500 miles to the north. At 12:15 p.m., they attacked Clark Field north of Manila, dropping their ordnance from about 25,000 feet. Fourteen B-17 bombers and 32 P-40 fighters were destroyed during the attack.

The total number of U.S. aircraft lost was more than 100, virtually wiping out American air power in the Philippines.

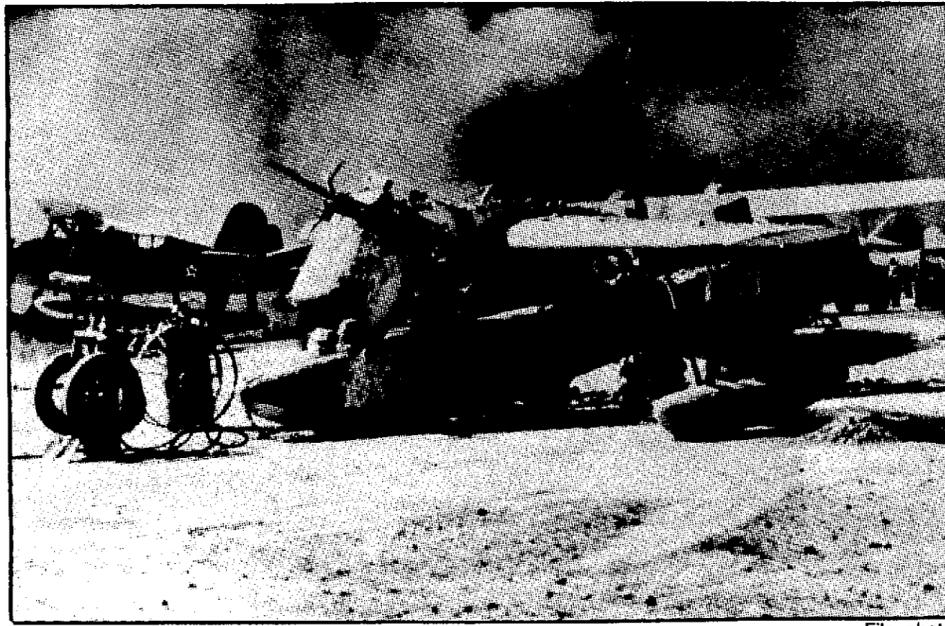
Bombed also — with startling precision — was the U.S. Navy base at Sangley Point in Cavite. Geeslin remembers standing on the roof of the Marsman Building watching the attack.

"The planes looked like they were not over six inches long they were flying so damn high," said Geeslin, now 76. "As I recall only two bombs fell outside of the Navy yard. It was the most accurate bombing you can imagine. Of course the rumor was that they had German pilots that led them in and led the bombing. Whether it was true or not I don't know. But it devastated the place. Killed hundreds of people. It was a real massacre."

In the days that followed, the Japanese bombed Manila repeatedly. On one occasion, two bombs landed so close to the Marsman Building they actually threw the building askew.

"The doors that were open you couldn't

With their air power gone, the American and Filipino fighters were outmatched from the beginning



File photo
One of 80 Navy aircraft lies destroyed by the Japanese attack.

close," Geeslin recalled. "And all the doors that were closed you couldn't open. It just sprung the whole building."

As the bombing of Manila continued, thousands of Japanese troops advanced from the north where they landed at Vigan and on the beaches of the Lingayen Gulf.

MacArthur had about 120,000 men to oppose the invaders, but most of them were inexperienced Filipino soldiers. A number of the 23,000 American officers and enlisted men were equally unskilled.

With their air power gone, the American and the Filipino fighters were outmatched from the beginning. So to spare the citizens of Manila, MacArthur declared it an "open city" and announced that all military forces would evacuate the Philippine capital by Christmas Day.

On Dec. 24, MacArthur moved his operations to the tadpole-shaped island fortress of Corregidor, strategically located at the

mouth of Manila Bay. About the same time, he ordered some 80,000 troops to retreat from various locations in the country to the Bataan Peninsula, the long finger of land just south of today's Subic Bay Naval Station and across the bay from Manila.

MacArthur remained on Corregidor until he was ordered to leave by President Franklin Roosevelt. On March 11, 1942, he and his family boarded a patrol boat which took them to the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. From there, they flew to Australia.

Less than one month later, on April 9, Gen. Edward P. King, Jr., surrendered, and some 78,000 Filipino and American soldiers were taken prisoner by the Japanese Army. Their forced march — during which many men died or were killed by their captors — from Bataan north along the peninsula to prisoner of war camps was to become known as the infamous "Bataan Death March."

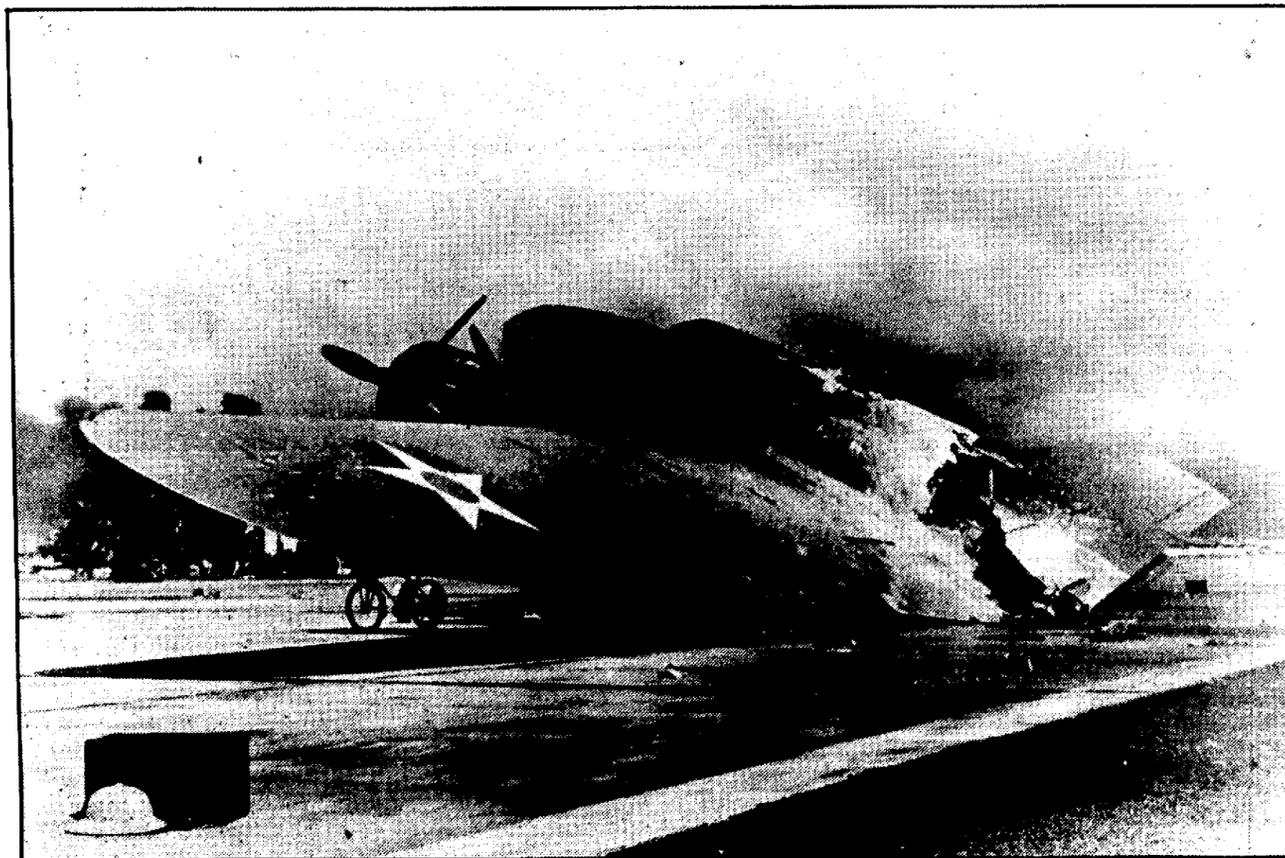
Corregidor was excluded from the surrender terms and fought on under the command of Gen. Jonathan Wainwright.

But the bombing of Corregidor was intense and continued around the clock. Finally, on May 6, Wainwright surrendered to the Japanese.

The Japanese hold on the Philippines was relatively secure until MacArthur and an American invasion force returned Oct. 19, 1944. The battle to recapture the Philippines continued for the next several months. American troops entered Manila in early February and eventually ended all Japanese resistance there after heavy fighting that left thousands dead.

Fierce battles continued throughout many other parts of the country until August when Japanese leaders — following the atomic bombings of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — were ordered to surrender to the American forces in the Philippines.

Today, visitors can see ruins caused by the war on Corregidor. Children scamper about, selling old bullet casings and rusting defused hand grenades. And many of the huge guns that helped defend the island during the war are still standing.



File photo
A burned B-17C rests near Hangar 5 at Hickam Field following the attack.

Casualty convoy improvisation

'The rounds were exploding in our motorpool'

Ray Perry was an Army private on Dec. 7, 1941. Assigned then as driver for the Hawaii Department Quartermaster at Fort Armstrong in Honolulu, he spent the day helping move wounded men at Hickam Field to the base hospital.

Perry retired from the Army in 1960 and worked for a time with Air America in Southeast Asia. He went to work as a fire inspector at Hickam Air Force Base and now has retired a second time. This is his story. — Jim Lea

That Sunday morning I went to the colonel's quarters at Fort Armstrong to pick him up, but he said he was taking the car himself to Fort Shafter.

I was running around trying to get out of the way because the anti-aircraft guns we had at Armstrong were shooting (rounds with) contact fuses. The rounds had to hit something before they went off.

They were going up and coming back down and exploding in our motorpool.

I went over to our first sergeant and said, "I'm volunteering."

He said, "You don't even know what I want volunteers for."

I said, "I don't care. I just want to get out of here."

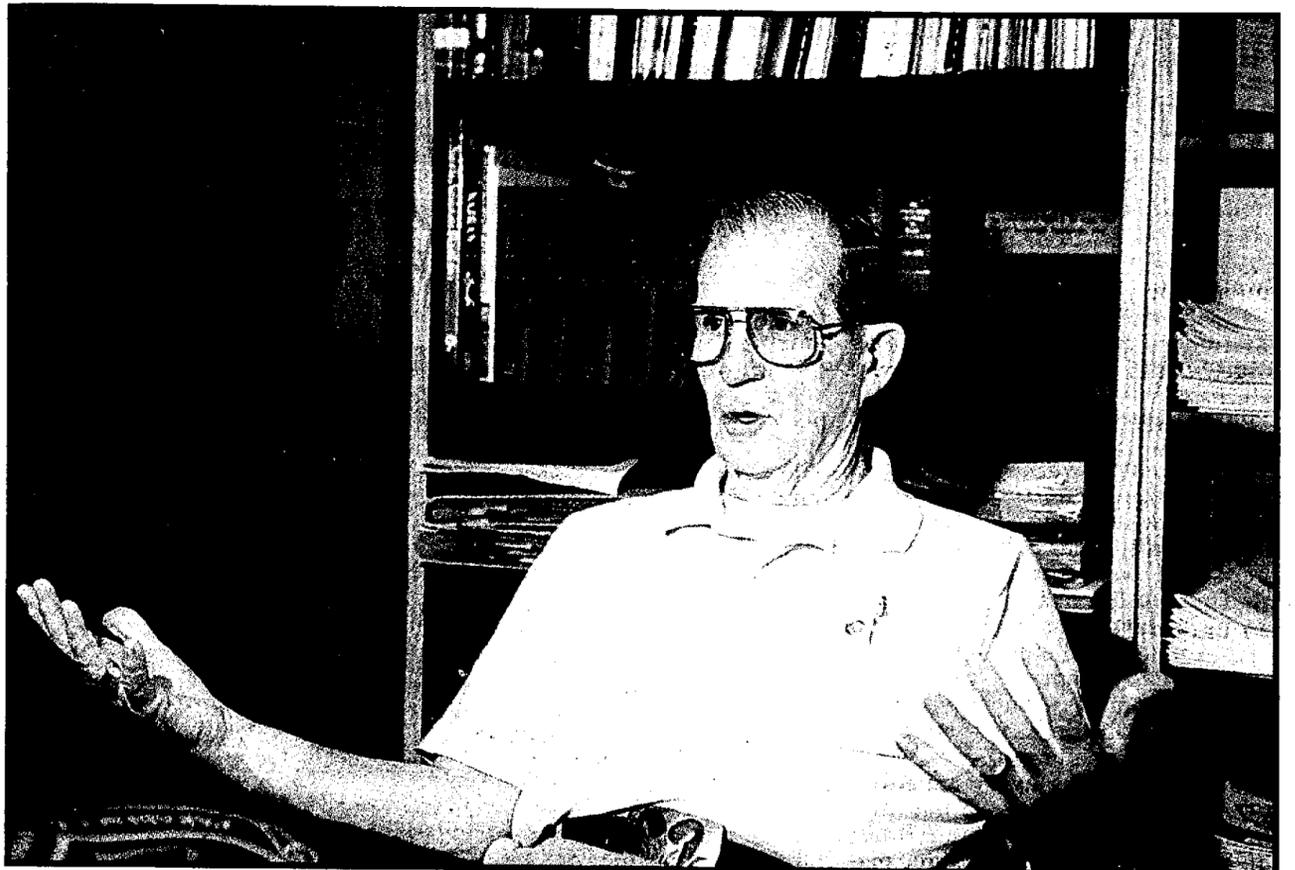
He said Hickam had asked volunteers to help pick up wounded and get them to the hospital.

Hickam had a clinic of only about 14 beds. Most of the wounded were being taken to Tripler (Army hospital), which was 14 or 15 buildings across the street from Fort Shafter.

Five drivers volunteered. We got into trucks and went out the gate but got only as far as the power plant (about ¾ mile) when the traffic jammed up.

An MP told us the only way we could get out to Hickam was to drive down the railroad tracks, so that's what we did.

When we got to the spur leading off to Hickam we could see all the smoke and fire. That



Ray Perry painfully recalls that December day in '41.

Stripes, Lem Robson

was the Hawaiian Air Department burning. The barracks (Hale Makai) didn't get hit until later, close to 10 a.m.

We drove down Hangar Avenue, dodging debris, then pulled in and circled our trucks like we were protecting ourselves from Indians.

There were a lot of wounded waiting. One guy had one arm blown off at the elbow and his other hand blown off.

We were getting about 12 wounded into each truck and then about 8:35 or 8:40 a.m. somebody shouted, "Here they come again!"

I saw that somebody had made up a big red

cross with mecuricrome on a sheet or something. That just made us a better target.

The trucks were destroyed. We lost about 13 of those guys.

We then tried to commandeer a flatbed truck to carry a couple more of the guys to the hospital, but the driver said he couldn't leave.

One of the guys pulled out his pistol and pointed it at him and said, "What do you mean you can't go?"

(The driver) decided he could take them to the hospital.

CALM, From Page 4

personnel inspection that they were closer to war than they would ever be "without actually being in it."

But he was referring to sabotage, not an air attack.

At Hickam Field, Col. William F. Farthing, the base commander, called a meeting of officers also to reiterate warnings of possible sabotage.

At Schofield, Maj. Gen. Maxwell Murray, 25th Division commander, was thinking past that. Considering a Japanese invasion by sea a possibility, he ordered all ammunition but high explosives to be stored in barracks where it would be close at hand if such an attack did come.

By noon, most of the activity died down and people who had liberty cards or passes began moving toward the gates of their bases, headed downtown.

Kimmel went over war plans with his staff until about 3 p.m., then went home and prepared for a dinner party to be hosted that night by a fellow admiral at the Halekulani Hotel in Waikiki.

About the time he left his office, Japanese consulate chancellor "Tadashi Morimura" took a taxi from Honolulu to Aiea Heights where he could look down on the entire fleet at Pearl Harbor. He counted ships, then went to Pearl City to confirm his count from the harbor shore.

American officials would not discover until after the war that Morimura, who arrived in Honolulu in March of 1941, was actually Ensign Takeo Yoshikawa.

He had been medically retired shortly after his graduation from the Japanese naval academy, then had been told the Navy still could use him. Over four years, he perfected his English and became an expert on the American fleet and bases at Pearl Harbor, Guam and the Philippines.

After arriving in Hawaii, he made frequent trips to Pearl and the surrounding area, usually dressed in green slacks and a gaudy aloha shirt. Once or twice he gained entry to the base by posing as a Filipino. He often hired light planes for tourist flights around the island — and an

Pye felt the Japanese would not tangle with 'too big, too powerful and too strong' America.

unrestricted, birds-eye view of the harbor.

His reports to Tokyo were made in diplomatic codes — messages that Kimmel and Short were not apprised of. Washington considered them unimportant since Japanese consulates and embassies throughout the Pacific and along the U.S. West Coast had been sending similar messages for months.

Yoshikawa returned to the consulate and encoded a message for Tokyo:

"The following ships were observed (in Pearl Harbor) on the 6th: 9 battleships, 3 light cruisers, 3 submarine tenders, 17 destroyers, and in addition there were 4 light cruisers and 2 destroyers lying at docks (the heavy cruisers and airplane carriers have all left). It appears that no

air reconnaissance is being conducted by the fleet air arm."

He sent that by commercial telegraph just after 6 p.m. and spent the rest of the evening relaxing in his cottage on the consulate grounds.

Off-duty fleet and shore sailors at Pearl who decided not to go to town began filling up the newly-opened Bloch Arena recreation center. It offered pool, bowling and beer and the major attraction of the evening would be a "Battle of Music" to pick the best band in the fleet.

Some survivors swear the Arizona band won — but historians record that it already had been eliminated and the battleship USS Pennsylvania took the crown.

Many people at Hickam Field who decided to spend a quiet evening at the base lined up at the base theater to see "Honky Tonk," a western starring Clark Gable and Lana Turner.

It turned out to be a quiet night in Honolulu in spite of the crowds of soldiers and sailors filling the streets and bars and brothels.

Kimmel went to the dinner party and was home in bed by 10 p.m. He and Short had planned a Sunday morning round of golf.

Fiske was back aboard the West Virginia before midnight to catch a few winks before his 4 to 8 a.m. watch. He also had a date in town the next day.

Short and his wife left the Schofield club about 11 p.m. and, as they drove down the hill toward Fort Shafter, looked out over Pearl Harbor, ablaze with lights.

"What a beautiful sight," Short observed.

He paused reflectively, then added, "And what a target that would make."

FLEET, From Page 3

opened it in the last century. Japan was defamed in cartoons as a leering, treacherous troll that owed its status as a modern power to American largess and had ungratefully turned on its provider.

Racial anger was turned on Americans of Japanese descent. Their homes, stores and farms were taken as they were deported en masse to "relocation camps" in bleak places like Manzanar, Ariz.

Signs hung in bars offered "Japs" a free Mickey Finn — a drink spiked with an evacuant that caused severe diarrhea and was served to troublesome drunks.

Barber shops were willing to give Japanese-Americans free haircuts — "not responsible for sudden death while in chair," smaller letters on a sign said.

Public anger intensified when a Japanese submarine surfaced near Ellwood, Calif., and shelled an oil field. Other Americans of Asian ancestry wore buttons identifying them as Chinese, Filipino or whatever.

Xenophobic war films flooded American screens. In "Air Force," bombers landed in Hawaii as Pearl Harbor was attacked, with crewmen under fire from disloyal Japanese farmers as they came down.

"Salute to the Marines" cast Wallace Beery as a retired Leatherneck who rallied his neighbors to quell a Nisei (Japanese-American) uprising in Hawaii. "Little Tokyo, U.S.A." justified the deportations, showing every Nisei flower shop and grocery store to be a nest of subversives.

There was never a proven case of disloyalty, sabotage or espionage against any of those deprived of freedom and property.

All over the United States, there was an overnight change in national attitude. Being American was now a responsibility, not a privilege. Every patriotic hand would be turned toward winning the war.

American factories threw away the 5 o'clock whistle, working at all hours. There were no more refrigerators, new cars or luxury items —

only tanks, guns and warplanes.

The United States also declared war on Germany and Italy, Japan's partners in the triad called the Axis.

In Tokyo, a wise and rueful few wished they had been listened to.

Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, commander of the Japanese Combined Fleet, hadn't wanted war. He feared the "invisible army" behind the American military — the work force that was armed with wrench and rivet gun and would soon have warships back in the water.

And so it was.

When male hands were pulled away from American assembly lines, boys as young as 16 replaced them — and women. Rosie the Riveter, first extolled in a popular song, became a war-time legend — the swing-shift worker in jeans or coveralls, her hair done up to keep it from snagging in a machine.

The war went badly at first.

The Japanese took the Philippines, Hong Kong, Wake Island, the Malay Peninsula, Guam and the Dutch East Indies.

Such losses only fueled American determination, doubling workshifts, tripling sales of Defense Stamps and Bonds. Schoolchildren collected pots, pans and other aluminum scrap that would go into the fuselages of fighter planes. In Los Angeles, students at Ralph Waldo Emerson Junior High School raised enough money in bond and stamp purchases to pay for a P-51 fighter, christened on the playground as "Walloping Waldo."

No popular song could be successful unless the lyrics nodded to the war effort — campy classics like "Johnny Zero" and "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," in which a cripple pleaded with a recruiting sergeant: "Do not judge my courage by my twisted leg. Let me show my Uncle Sam what I can do, sir, let me help and take the Axis down a peg."

A country song proclaimed to the Japanese: "We didn't invite you over, but we're gonna repay the call."

The rattle of rivet gun, the glare of welding torch was evident at all hours. Every American

of any class or calling was in the war up to his or her neck — the housewife who worked in a defense plant and the farm boy whose enlistment marked his first trip beyond a rural mailbox.

Clark Gable enlisted and so did James Stewart. Actor Lew Ayres, declaring himself a pacifist who would serve only as a disarmed medic, suffered crippling career damage. Ayres' movies were shelved and his role in the popular Dr. Kildare series was passed to Van Johnson, who had been declared 4-F (physically unfit) and never served a day.

What Yamamoto feared was coming to pass. Military goods poured from an industrial cornucopia. The Japanese found themselves facing firepower afloat and in the air.

Not one of the carriers that launched the Pearl Harbor strike survived the war. Four were lost in the turn-of-tide battle at Midway.

In a slow, island-crawling campaign, the Allies regained all they had lost.

Her fleet demolished, most of her aircraft gone, Japan watched doorstep territory on Okinawa taken and stood besieged. Last-stand defenses were dug, with high-school girls taught to stab Americans with sharpened bamboo poles.

The Pacific War would end with a modern and terrible Tale of Two Cities — 247,000 killed in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and 73,884 at Nagasaki, not counting those who later died of radiation infirmities.

As a crippled diplomat limped aboard an American battleship to sign a surrender document, the final toll was 2 million Japanese dead, taking in civilian bombing casualties as well as battle losses.

On the American mainland, the toll of civilian casualties was six. A woman and five children were killed when they tampered with a strange object that had fallen in an Oregon woods — one of the explosive-laden balloons the Japanese had launched at the American West Coast. This was a last desperate effort to reach a distant enemy whose long reach had already devastated cities in Japan.

America, losing 295,904 on all fronts, had learned a hard-way lesson.



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