

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

VETERAN: ANN PATNEY

BRANCH OF SERVICE: CIVILIAN SERVICE

INTERVIEWER(S): REBECCA PATEY AND VAL CEWINSKI

APRIL 29, 2005

It is Thursday April 29th and this is the beginning of an interview with Ann Patney at her home in Portage, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Patney is 80 years old having been born on Jan 1, 1923. My name is Rebecca Patney and Val Cewinski and we will be the interviewers. Mrs. Patney is Rebecca's grandmother.

Q. What were your remembrances of the attack on Pearl Harbor?

A. Well let's see I was 19 years old I was working up the TE Sanitarium up in Cresson and I didn't take it too serious I just thought about working in the defense plant at the time so we quite our job and went to Pittsburgh got a couple of jobs in D.C. and then we got a job downtown in the clip factory and then we quite there and he was really mad because he said we have a black mark against our name because he was sending these clips over to the soldiers. We went after a week we went down for our pay and he said we had a black mark, he was mad, he was on the second floor in downtown Pittsburgh, we took a trolley down. [said something unintelligible]. And from there we signed up for we saw in the paper advertised for the defense plant you know or else Washington D.C. we didn't know which one to take this man says that Washington was too crowded so we took Maryland we rode on the electric train we changed in Baltimore to electric train and there they took care of us picked us up, examined us, fingerprinted us, checked us out it was a job.

Q. How did you feel about Franklin Roosevelt's leadership during the war?

A. I think he was a wonderful leader. I thought the world of him. Especially older people too they thought he was like god he brought the Social Security in helped the people, put the people back to work. Raised the wages on some like the women that did housework they were only getting like \$5.00 a week and he upped it to \$13 a week. Yeah I thought he was very good.

Q. How were you basic needs for food and shelter affected by the war?

A. Well, we had enough to eat but we were how shall I say it..sugar was hard to get, butter, nylons, what else,

gasoline there was a shortage on that naturally. But we got by.

Q. How did you get news of the war?

A. Well I was working up at the sanitarium I heard the news on the radio Roosevelt said, "We shall declare war." So that's what I heard about it. So yeah, I decided to quite the job and go went to Pittsburgh worked a couple of jobs went to work at the defense plant because I had six brothers in the service they were all going, took two at one time. Would leave one behind, my youngest the youngest brother was he was just a teenager that's why they left him behind Red Cross usually leaves one behind one son behind. My dad got gray overnight. When they took them all.

Q. Was Uncle Stevie the one?

A. He was just a little kid, he wasn't in high school. Then my dad went down to South Fork to see if they could keep one son behind and they wouldn't do it. That's the way it goes.

Q. Did you receive any letters from the front and were any of the letters censored?

A. Yes, all of them were censored. I'd get like six letters from the front my brothers they were all censored everything was blackened out most of it was blackened out. Probably mine were too I'd write six letters every week to my brothers.

Q. How were you affected by the rationing?

A. Oh it didn't bother me one bit I got to drinking coffee without milk or without sugar to this day I drink it without milk or sugar. It didn't bother me I mean we had enough to eat you know. Stockings we didn't wear them so so it didn't bother me one bit.

A. Did you have blackout curtains?

A. No but we had to turn the lights out soon as it got dark this man came around with a flashlight to make sure that everybody's lights were out the fire whistle would blow in town

Q. Did you have air raid drills?

A. No

Q. Did you have air craft spotters?

A. No

Q. Did you have flags in the windows for family members who were serving?

A. Yeah we had six...with the stars on.

Q. Did you have victory gardens?

A. No.

Q. Scrap drives?

A. No.

Q. Did you buy war bonds and if you did how often and what was the cost?

A. I did buy war bonds I'd buy one-two a month I don't remember how much they were. But I cashed them in when the war was over. I don't remember what they were worth. And then I donated blood also for the war..thinking about my brothers.

Q. Describe traveling during the war and problems getting enough gas.

A. Well I didn't need gas because I traveled by train and didn't own a car. At home they had a car and they got gas through black market. This dealer from Portage, I won't name him, brought up a big what-ya-call-it

[Interviewer] Drums

Yeah and stuck it in our cellar filled with gas and somehow after the war my parents were kinda worried about that so they had him, we didn't use it all or something, they had him come and take it all back. There was still some in there.

[Interviewer] Don't want any evidence laying around

Q. What did you do for recreation during the war?

A. During the war I didn't do much for recreation I mostly worked three shifts at the defense plant and when we did we had a recreation hall they called Singlerly Village so we'd go over there and play ping pong or to library to read or something to eat different days they had we meet some people there but never went out we'd go to church they'd be church there but that was about it we didn't do much we walked they'd pick us on the bus to work it was a free ride to work everyday and home lots of times we'd walk to work it was nice in Maryland I liked Maryland it was clean compared to the coal mines that's what I liked. We didn't do much for recreation I didn't anyway. I could have went on the bus they had picked you up on the bus and take you to Aberdeen

Maryland or to what's that other place, navy place, Fort Mead I think they had buses going there to dances to dance with the soldiers there were chaperones on the bus. They kept an eye out for us they had guards walking around we lived in Quonset huts they were made into apartments like Quonset huts guards would walk around protect us. I liked it though it was nice and clean that's what I liked about Maryland the winters were nice, nice and mild that's what I like in Maryland sometimes I wish I would have taken that job at Glen El Morton for riveter he offered me a job after the war was over but I was alone and there wasn't anybody else on my shift so I decided to come home when I think about it I wish I would have taken that job they took care of you they gave you a job they find you a place to stay you didn't have to look for a room or anything that's how nice they treat you when I first got that job they paid our wage to [Mineral landing?] got us a place to live fed us took care of us really nice.