

Dr. Holt, Mr. Brennen, Mr. Seton, Honored Guests, Pearl Harbor Survivors,
Families & friends.

It is indeed an honor for me to speak today on this special occasion: PEARL HARBOR DAY, and re-live that tragic day - December 7th, 1941.

In June 1940, the West Coast Fleet was moved to Pearl Harbor and my husband Lloyd, a Warrant Pay Clerk, on the USS WHITNEY sailed to Hawaii. Fifteen (15) months later I told my husband I wanted to go to Honolulu to be near him. I drew all our savings from the bank, and bought a one-way ticket on the S.S. LURLINE, for myself and son Ronald--3½ years old. We arrived in Honolulu on Oct. 16, 1941.

On Saturday, December 6th, my husband had the duty. My brother Bruce Harrison, who was on the destroyer USS CASE and was tied up alongside the USS WHITNEY, came to visit Ronald and me. I had not seen him for a year. At 6 p.m. the Chief Pay Clerk told Lloyd that he would take the duty for him, and to go home to his family.

Both my husband and my brother were with me that night. We visited until 1 A.M. My brother said, "We go out every week and fire the guns! They will be burned up when we need them." Little did we know that within seven (7) hours these guns would have to be fired with live ammunition. On Sunday we had planned to take my brother on a trip around the Island.

About 8 a.m. Sunday, my brother came to our bed-room and said, "Johnny, we have to go to our ships, they are broadcasting on the radio that the Japanese are bombing Pearl Harbor!" We got up and listened and again heard, "All military men report to your ships and stations."

They dressed quickly and drove to Pearl Harbor, about 12 miles away. We lived in Kiamaki, half way up ~~Wilamina Rise~~ ^{Wilamina Rise.} on Our house sat ~~on~~ the back of the lot. My son and I walked up to the street and could look out over the hill-side and see all the black smoke billowing from the burning ships. We could hear planes, but could not see them! It was a frightening experience!

I left the radio on twenty-four (24) hours a day; that is how we received our information. Women and children were told to stay inside. It was a long day and night. I kept busy playing and reading to Ronald and trying to pass the time. I did a lot of praying, not knowing if my husband and brother had made it safely to their ships. Four months later I learned that the dock where my brother was waiting for a boat was strafed, he fell flat on the dock and almost into the water, but, fortunately, he was not hurt. The USS CASE got underway as soon as possible. The USS WHITNEY was not damaged.

It was two days before I saw or heard from my husband, and then only for one half hour. Two days later I saw him again for 1/2 hour. Every day I would walk up to the street and look at the burning ships. They must have burned for two weeks.

We had to eat our meals before dark so no lights could be seen from the sky at night. The baby's room had one window in it and I covered it with blankets so we could have a light and I could read to Ronald. We slept together in his room.

After about ten (10) days the men were allowed a few hours liberty every 3 days. The first evacuees left Honolulu around Christmas. Lloyd and I stood, arm in arm, and watched the first ships sail around Diamond Head. All of my friends, but two, were on these ships.

We were directed to write post cards to our families, stating that we were well and safe. We were told to go to different locations and be fitted with gas masks. There were none for the children. I carried a shoulder bag ^{with} a jar of water, and a box of baking soda and a wash cloth to be used for my son, if necessary.

In February, we moved into a small hotel near the University, and within a week there were two bombs dropped on Mount Tantulas, at 2 A.M. We were twelve (12) blocks from there. It shook the house so hard we didn't know what was happening. Later, the next day, the bomb craters were found.

There was curfew, everyone off the streets, from 8 P.M. to 6 A.M. In February, the men were allowed to spend some nights at home.

I was pregnant, and on Good Friday I was taken to the hospital. On Easter Sunday, I received my orders to be evacuated. The Doctor told them I was in no condition to leave the Island. My brother came to see me on Easter Sunday; it was the first time they had been in port since December 7th. I was so happy to see him and know that he was O.K. Five days later I lost the Baby!

One month later the USS WHITNEY was preparing to sail to the South Pacific. Lloyd went to the Evacuation Center and requested that Ronald and I be evacuated. My brother's ship also went to the South Pacific, but he was transferred back to the States for re-assignment. He and I sailed for San Francisco May 25th on the USS HENDERSON, the first ship my husband served on.

There were fourteen (14) ships in our convoy, and it took nine (9) days and nights to make the trip. Ronald and I moved to Santa Monica, California and lived with my Aunt until Lloyd finally came home in July 1944, over two years later.

At no time did I let myself cry, but on July 21st, 1944, I thanked GOD for bringing my husband home safely, and then cried for half an hour!

Speech delivered by: Mrs. Lee JOHNSON
Dec. 7th, 1983 at Fort Hamilton, NYC
Wife of: Lieut. Commander Lloyd O. Johnson (SC)
U.S. Navy (Retired), who on December
7th, 1941, was serving on board the
U.S.S. WHITNEY (AD-4) as a PAY CLERK,
U.S. Navy, and who had served on board
the U.S.S. ARIZONA from September 1932
to April 1934, as a member of the Enlist-
ed Flag Allowance of COMMANDER BATTLE-
SHIP DIVISION Three.