

## *Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles*

Carroll's Yesteryears  
08 December 1991

WWII touched lives of every citizen, every town in U.S.  
by Jay Graybeal

Fifty years ago today President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed a joint session of Congress. He spoke of the Japanese surprise attack on the American forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on the previous morning, a day he said would "live in infamy." Roosevelt asked for and received a declaration of war against the Japanese. A new generation of Americans would be called upon to fight in the second global war of the century.

Although it is doubtful that there was anyone who had not heard of the attack by Dec. 12 when the local weekly newspapers came out, the *Times* and the *Democratic Advocate* still carried details of the attack and the Declaration of War. H. P. Gorsuch's front-page editorial in the *Times* denounced the Japanese and their German and Italian allies and correctly predicted that the war would "touch every city, town, village, hamlet, community in the United States, and, personally touch in hundreds of thousands of homes."

Editor Gorsuch also noted that a number of local servicemen were serving in the Pacific and hoped that none had become casualties in the recent actions. Among those present were Capt. Charles R. "Bob" Etzler, U.S. Army, formerly of Mt. Airy and his wife Ann. Ann Etzler put on shows, referred to as "Ann Etzler's Cabaret," at the Schofield Barracks Officer's Club. Another was Staff Sgt. William W. Crawmer, U.S. Marine Corps of Westminster. A publicity photograph taken later in the war shows Crawmer working on the engine of a Chance-Vought F4U Corsair fighter aircraft.

The newspapers also carried the first notice of war preparations. A blackout rehearsal was scheduled for the evening of Dec. 12. Air Raid Warden Warfield Babylon provided instructions for the rehearsal. People were instructed to assemble in the nearest building, draw their shades or curtains, extinguish lights and turn on their radios. Warden Babylon further advised "Above all, keep cool and calm, confusion is disastrous."

The *Times* also carried a front page article about Co. C, Maryland State Guard which was to be mustered into state service on the following evening. The local unit was commanded by Capt. A. Earl Shipley; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Charles W. Havens was the executive officer and Capt. Glenn W. Speicher was the medical officer. The first assignment of the fifty-four man outfit was mounting twenty-four hour guard of their armory on Longwell Avenue.

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The paper also carried a copy of a December 8 telegram sent to local American Red Cross chairman David H. Taylor. The Red Cross had launched a fundraising campaign to raise \$50 million; Carroll County's quota was \$10,000.

Although war news dominated local affairs, countians still made preparations for the Christmas season. In Union Bridge Christmas decorations were lit for the first time. "Strips of colored lights have been arranged across Main street from Kelly's Garage to the Methodist Church and at the square extending to the business places on East and West Broadway corner of the square. The belfry of the Union Bridge Methodist Church is decorated with colored lights."

The American entry into World War II began a new chapter in American history. The war became the most pivotal event of the century. Even today we can see its impact on the changing map of Eastern Europe and on events in the Middle East.

The war also brought changes to American society. The demands for manpower and war material hastened industrialization and provided new job opportunities for women, blacks and rural people. Their labors on the homefront did much to break down long-standing stereotypes about race and gender.

*Photo credit: Courtesy of the Historical Society of Carroll County*

*Photo caption: Staff Sergeant William W. Crawmer, USMC of Westminster, present at the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.*