

Nanea

Arlington in the 1940s

On December 7, 1941 when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, causing the U.S. to enter World War II, everyday life changed for 9-year-old Honolulu resident Nanea (*nah-NAY-ah*) just like it did for Arlingtonians. Nanea and her community drew on the spirit of *aloha* (*ah-LO-hah; showing love and compassion*) to do *kokua* (*KOH-KOO-ah; good deeds*) for friends, neighbors, and strangers as they worked together to repair the damage from the bombing and began participating in the war effort at home.



Arlington Boy Scouts Scrap Drive, 1943. Collected scraps would be melted down in factories to create supplies needed by soldiers.



AIDING THE WAR EFFORT

The experience of children, like Nanea and those in Arlington, growing up on the home front was quite similar. Civil defense measures infiltrated daily life—newly established Air Raid Wardens monitored assigned sectors to ensure that windows were darkened with paint or heavy curtains so that no light escaped from any house during the nightly blackouts (which made it harder

for planes to identify targets on the ground) and to ensure compliance during day and night-time air raid drills.

Children also took on greater responsibilities to aid the war effort by participating in collection drives for tin, iron, and newspapers; purchasing war stamps and war bonds; planting and tending Victory Gardens; and other tasks

like rolling bandages for the Red Cross and serving meals to aid workers and military personnel. Children and their families also dealt with rationing of food and other goods like gasoline, rubber, and leather and had to say goodbye to friends and family members who enlisted.

WOMEN DURING WW II

Women were recruited to fill positions that were traditionally held by men who left for active combat roles. Many of these new job opportunities for women were directly related to the war effort. For example, in December 1941, the Women's Air Raid Defense (WARD), a civilian organization, got its start at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel (where Nanea and her dog Mele danced the hula in USO shows). The WARs operated the air defense center and provided the U.S. Army with military intelligence by intercepting coded messages that enabled them to track enemy aircraft.

Across the country, here in Arlington, women also worked to defend against Japanese attacks in the Pacific. Over the course of the war, the U.S. Army recruited over 7,000 young women to work as cryptologists at Arlington Hall where they were tasked with decrypting the Japanese Army's complex code system. Their successful code-breaking efforts provided General MacArthur and other Pacific commanders with intelligence about the location, movement, and details of both the Japanese Army and its supply ships. Ultimately, this work saved lives in the Pacific theater and ended the war more quickly.



Staff at Arlington Hall Station, working to decipher coded messages intercepted from the enemy, c. 1943.

The war left an indelible mark on Nanea's Honolulu and on Arlington, where military operations at the Pentagon and Arlington Hall became permanent fixtures. Arlington's population grew from 57,000 in 1940 to 120,000 in 1944, producing the need for additional housing and schools. Changes wrought by World War II caused the county to go quickly from a rural, country escape to an urban center attracting a diverse population and offering ever-expanding opportunities.



Women's Army Corp (WAC) members, Pentagon Motor Pool, 1943.