

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

President Roosevelt in calling for war against Japan, said that ‘Yesterday, December 7, 1941 – a day which will live in infamy...’ The attack was 75 years ago. In the early morning attack, 2,403 people were killed and 1,178 wounded. Eighteen ships were sunk or run aground, including five battleships. In searching the web, I found some interesting information. On board the Arizona, 23 sets of brothers were killed along with one father and son pair. Of the 1,177 crewmen killed in the attack were all 21 members of the Arizona’s band, known as Navy Band Unit 22. Most were on deck for the daily flag raising ceremony. In 1982 the US Navy began allowing the ashes of the Arizona survivors to be placed in an urn and divers deposit the urn on the ship. In 1958, President Eisenhower signed legislation to create an Arizona national memorial. In March 1961 Elvis Presley, who served two years in the Army in the 50s performed a benefit concert at Pearl and raised over \$50,000 toward the establishing of a museum. The museum was officially dedicated on May 30, 1962. Please take a moment to remember all who lost their lives in the attack and in the many battles that followed in WWII.

I find it interesting that later in 1962, the US and the Soviet Union nearly went to war over missiles in the island of Cuba – October 14 – 28, 1962. That brings us to the recent death of Fidel Castro. Starting with the overthrow of President Fugencio Batista, Castro became the ruler of Cuba from 1959 until 2006. In that same time period the US has had 10 presidents. Various embargos and sanctions on Cuba by the US over the years created very little change in Cuban politics, Castro was still in power. One would think that if something doesn’t work for over fifty years, we could try something different! The Bay of Pigs invasion was a failure. We nearly went to war over missiles in 1962. In 2006, Fidel transferred power to his brother Raul, who is now 85 years old.

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead is providing funds for two events. One is a holiday party for the members of our local National Guard Units and the other is a thank you lunch for our wonderful volunteers at the Clay County Veterans Service Office. BTYR is also helping sponsor a local Veterans oral history project. With the upcoming 100th anniversary of the end of WWI, we are interested in interviewing sons, daughters or grandchildren of WWI Veterans. If you have a family story to tell, please contact me.