

Clifton Presbyterian Church

Celebrating Fifteen (15) Decades of Service and Gratitude



Childhood Memories of the 1940's

Alice's Story



*Alice 1940
Marion, NC*

The story continues . . . In 1942 at age 7, Alice became quite an experienced mover! Her father worked in defense and traveled a lot. She and her mother traveled with him. They were in Newport News for 4 months living in the Warwick Hotel - "Just like Eloise," Alice says. She went to school wherever they were . . . That year she attended 5 different schools in 4 different states! In August 1943, they moved again, this time to Oak Ridge, TN, where they stayed until the war ended.

They lived behind the wire fence, which required a security badge for admission. Alice was upset that she was too young to have one of those badges, especially since her older sister worked with the photographer that took the pictures for them! She really liked her new school, though, and all the things it offered. It was very advanced compared with the schools outside the fence.

Even as a child, she was very aware of how important it was for everyone to do their part for the war effort. The kids helped by making balls of aluminum foil, gathering newspapers, and any bits of scrap metal they could find, and then taking them to a collection point. She remembers saving stamps in



*Alice 3rd Grade
1943
Oak Ridge, TN*

books, savings bonds, and rationing - gas, clothes, food, just about everything! Two days a week were meatless. "Everyone was so filled with patriotism!" They learned first aid. Blackouts were strictly enforced, and they had air raid drills at school where everyone got under their desks. She listened to radio . . . Dick Tracy, Terry and the pirates, the Lone Ranger, and the Shadow among others, and sent away for the premiums they offered for box tops. Very little merchandise was available for purchase for birthdays and Christmas. "But, I had a bicycle and rode everywhere I could!"

In 1946 the family moved to Orlando, Florida. President Truman visited Orlando shortly after his election. Schools were closed for the occasion and Alice remembers seeing him in an open convertible.



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## Nancy's Story

I was in grade school in D. C. during the war. I remember air raid drills where we all went out into the halls and covered our heads. I remember sitting on our front porch during mock air raids while all the houses were blacked out. One of our neighbors would not drink coffee until she had a ration coupon for it. My father was a supervisor, for what is now Safeway. He brought home some horse meat. My mother cooked it, but none of us liked the smell, so we gave it to the dog . . . who also wouldn't eat it!

My father needed his car for work, so we were a two car family. {Very rare for the 1940's!} I think my mother bought a couple of gallons of gas per week. The only driving she was able to do was to the store once a week (She always took at least 2 neighbors), and to church on Sundays.

We didn't have TV or smart phones, so the war wasn't quite as real to us kids. My older brother, who was 4 years older, and I, weren't really too worried. Sitting around the radio listening to the news didn't bring it home so much . . . and we were winners in all the war movies! Movies cost us 15 cents and candy was a dime!

## Our Stories

*Bud...*

*I remember my mother baking most of my life. I can still smell the aroma of cinnamon from the delicious rolls she frequently made for breakfast. One year, when she did not have the ingredients for a "regular" birthday cake, she used what she had and made a Pineapple Upside Down Cake, which became a tradition for the rest of my life. Along with my sisters and neighborhood friends nothing delighted us more than finding a cookie jar filled with soft, nut filled Toll House cookies!*

*The one time in my life that I don't remember my mother baking is during World War II. Many things were rationed during this time including sugar. My family missed the delicious smells wafting through the house. We didn't understand the empty cookie jar, and why the cinnamon rolls weren't served at*



*breakfast. My parents attempted to explain about the war effort and the need for rationing, but as young children we did not understand.*

*One day as I was playing in the yard my mother came out on the porch and called to me in an excited voice. She told me to take my red wagon and to go to the little store and buy all the sugar the coins in her hand would buy! THE WAR WAS OVER, and once again the wonderful aroma of baking filled our house.*



*Trícia . . .*

*It was a warm spring day and my mother was visiting my grandmother. They decided to walk to the post office since my grandmother had not received a letter from her son, Lt. Robert Jackson, in a while. When they returned to her home, the phone was ringing. My mother answered it, and received the terrible news that her brother, Bob, had been killed in a plane crash at Wright - Patterson Air Base in Dayton, Ohio.*

*I remember my Uncle Bob as being fun loving and always ready to play with my sister, brother, and me. He was musically talented, playing the violin. and, he was newly married. I found it hard to believe that he was not coming home. Experiences like this can affect the family for decades to come.*

*I have read the stories about many Gold Star families, and how they dealt with their grief and loss, and I've come to believe the choices that are made can make a big difference in the family.*

*The initial focus was helping my grandmother deal with the loss of her first born son. You see, she had just lost her husband six weeks prior to my Uncle Bob's death. My grandfather had died of a heart attack. With the support and love of family and friends, she would recover in time. She had another son in the military. My Uncle Charles was on a ship somewhere in the South Pacific, and she had a teenage son at home. With her deep faith and inner strength, she went on to become a successful businesswoman.*

*My family was open to sharing stories and feelings through the years, and it really did bring us closer. Once Bud and I were at the Mobile Airport, with my parents, leaving to come home, and we saw that the body of a military person was being off loaded from the plane. The honor guard was standing at attention as the casket came down the ramp. My mother teared up and told us that she was the family member who received her brother's body at this very airport some twenty-three years ago. We had been to the Mobile Airport many times before, and she had not told us that story. I marveled at her strength.*

*On a happy note, a few months after the war ended my mother gave birth to a baby boy, once more bringing joy and light to our family.*

