

## War Era Story Project 2012

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Current home town: Chillicothe, Ohio

Age: 87

I remember WWII. On December 7, 1941, I was a senior in high school. The next day, all we talked about was “the war” and what boys were enlisting. Gradually things changed. We graduated and went to work or college, but the boys were missing. My boyfriend, who had graduated in 1941 and was working in the shoe store, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Rationing came: sugar, shoes, tires, gasoline and butter. We had substitute butter: white margarine. One of my jobs at home (I was working uptown as a bookkeeper) was to color the margarine. It came in a plastic bag with a yellow capsule. One broke the capsule and kneaded the bag until it all was a smooth yellow.

I worked and helped at home; I had a younger sister and five younger brothers. When my boyfriend came home on leave, we were married. Then for a time, I was in North Carolina with him. We lived in base housing and had no car and only the minimum furniture. We walked a lot. We weren’t too far from the ocean, and we could take the bus there, or into town to the USO.

When my husband was sent to the Philippines I went home to my parents in Chillicothe, Ohio, where I lived all my life. The rest of the war went slowly. We girls (women now) went to movies, organized sewing clubs, wrote lots of letters and worried about the men. Our oldest son was born during this time. It took 2 months for his father to get the news.

Finally, the war was over and we could start looking for an apartment. Housing was scarce and, eventually, we rented a large house from my parents and re-let the upstairs with a make-shift kitchen and a shared bathroom, with a half-bath downstairs.

We had to wait to buy a cook stove and refrigerator, as there had been none manufactured. We used a hotplate and an ice box. There was still a meat shortage. Things changed. My great-grandchildren are living an entirely different life.