



US World War II

Oral History Interview Guide

Interviewer Name: _____

Interviewee Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Location: _____

General Background (For All Interviewees)

- Full name and date of birth
- Place of birth and childhood home
- Family background (parents, siblings, occupations)
- Education and early work before the war
- What were your hopes or plans before the war began?
- Do you remember where you were when you first heard about Pearl Harbor?

How did your community react when war was declared?

Section A: Military Veteran Interview

Branch of Service: _____ **Rank:** _____

Years of Service: _____

Enlistment & Training

- Were you drafted or did you enlist voluntarily?
- What was your training like? Any memorable instructors or moments?

How did your family react to your enlistment?



Deployment & Duties

- Where were you stationed?
- What were your primary duties?
- Describe a typical day in your unit.

Did you see combat? What do you remember most vividly?

Personal Experiences

- Did you form close friendships during your service?
- Were there moments of fear, pride, or humor that stand out?
- How did you stay in touch with home?
- What did you do for entertainment or downtime?
- Did you witness or participate in any acts of kindness or humanity?

Return & Reflection

- What was your return home like?
- Did you feel changed by the experience?
- How did the war affect your career, family, or worldview?
- Are there things you didn't talk about for years? Why?
- What do you think people misunderstand about the war?

Section B: Civilian Interview

Role During the War: _____

Location During the War: _____

- Did you participate in scrap drives, war bond rallies, or other efforts?
- Were there changes in gender roles or job opportunities?
- How did schools, churches, or newspapers respond to wartime events?
- Did you have family members in service? How did you stay in touch?



Daily Life & Community

- How did rationing affect your household?
- Did you participate in scrap drives, war bond rallies, or other efforts?
- Were there changes in gender roles or job opportunities?
- How did schools, churches, or newspapers respond to wartime events?
- Did you have family members in service? How did you stay in touch?

Emotional Impact

- What was the emotional atmosphere in your community?
- Were there moments of fear, hope, or resilience that stand out?
- How did you cope with uncertainty or loss?

Post-War Reflections

- How did the war affect your life afterward?
- Did you notice long-term changes in your community or family?
- What do you wish people today understood about civilian life during WWII?

Legacy & Memory (For All Interviewees)

- How do you feel about how WWII is remembered today?
- Have you shared your story with younger generations?
- Is there a particular moment or person you wish more people knew about?
- What advice would you give to someone researching this era?

Artifacts & Memorabilia

- Do you have any photos, letters, uniforms, or keepsakes?
- Would you be willing to share copies for archival or educational use?

Closing Notes

- Is there anything else you'd like to share?
- May we follow up with additional questions?