

# VALOR in the PACIFIC

A R E M E M B R A N C E

On the morning of December 7, 1941, Japanese naval air forces attacked US Navy and Army facilities at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Attempting to knock out the US Pacific Fleet in advance of a larger offensive in the Pacific, the surprise raid sank and damaged several dozen American warships. While the raid was devastating, the Navy quickly recovered and helped to galvanize our national resolve.



NATIONAL MUSEUM *of the*  
UNITED STATES NAVY



# Understanding Place & Time



## TIMELINE OF THE ATTACK

**0620:** 43 fighters, 49 high-level bombers, 51 dive bombers, and 40 torpedo bombers, comprising the first Japanese attack wave, leave as a group from their carriers

**0715:** The second attack wave—comprised of 35 fighters, 54 high-level bombers, and 78 dive bombers—starts taking off from their carriers

**0755:** Attack on Ford Island Naval Air Station and Hickam Field commences

**0757:** Attack on Battleship Row commences

**0758:** "AIR RAID, PEARL HARBOR. THIS IS NOT A DRILL!" message sent from Ford Island

**0810:** USS *Arizona*'s ammo magazine is hit by a high-explosive bomb and detonates, killing over a thousand of her sailors

**0840:** Second wave arrives at Oahu

**0854:** Second wave ordered to attack multiple targets, including naval air stations and the Navy Yard's dry dock

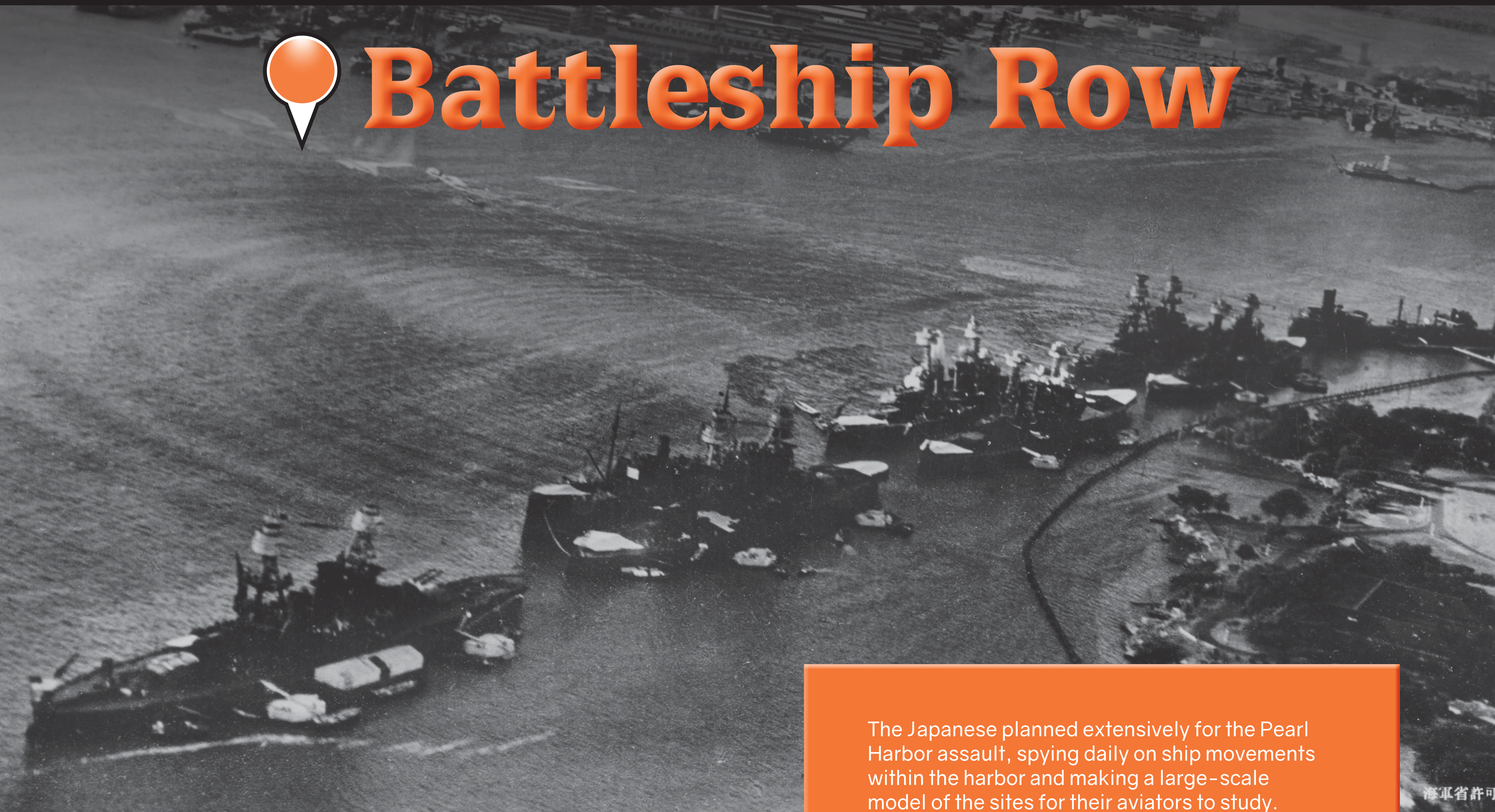
**1000:** Second wave ends attack around this time

**1300:** Japanese strike force ships head for home



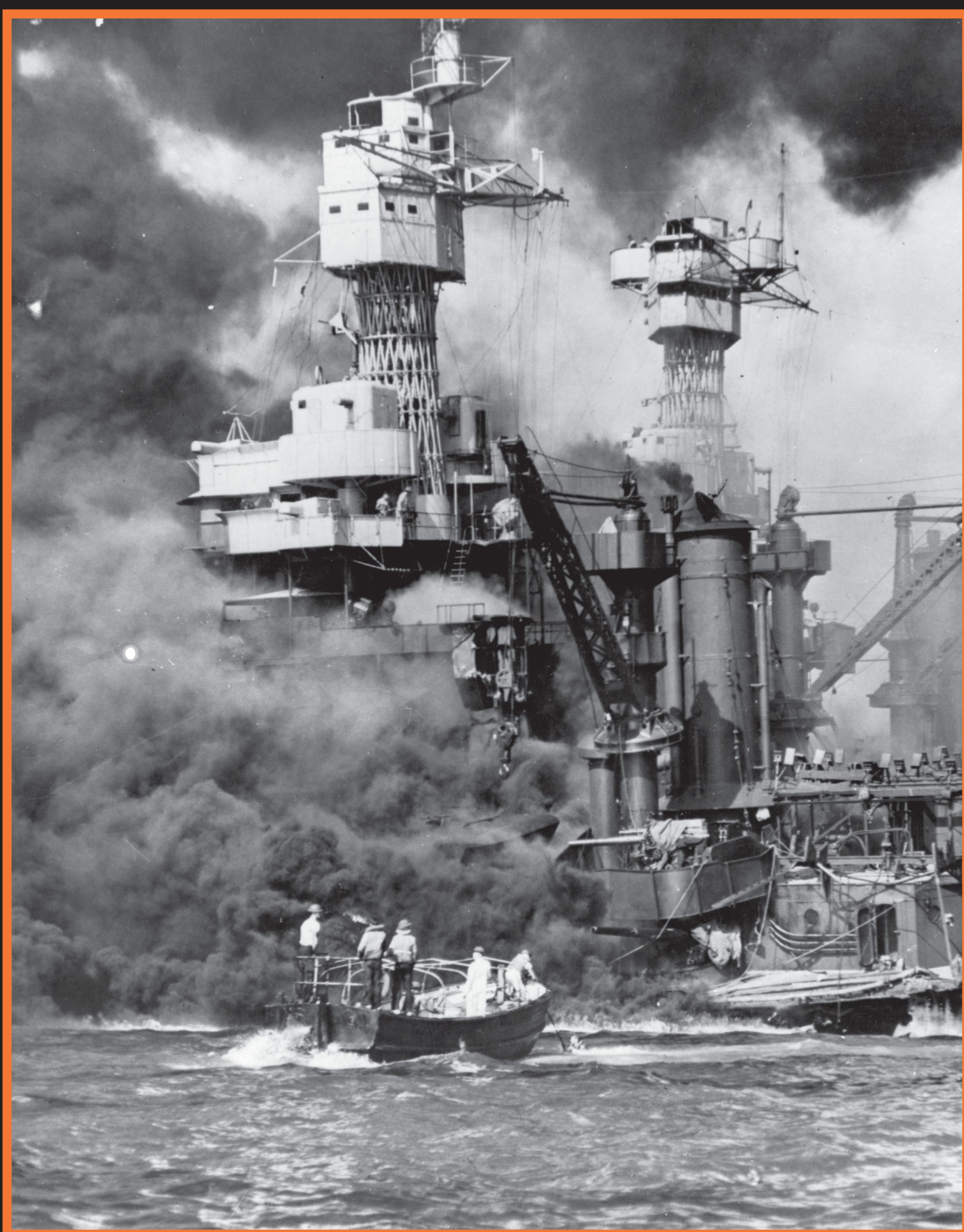


# Battleship Row



The Japanese planned extensively for the Pearl Harbor assault, spying daily on ship movements within the harbor and making a large-scale model of the sites for their aviators to study. When the aerial attack came, the Japanese scored a knockout blow, leaving the Navy bereft of battleships in the Pacific. The loss made it impossible for the United States to counter Japan's advances against the Philippines and East Indies.

**Background:** Soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor began, a Japanese air crewman took this aerial view showing the resulting damage. Oil covers the water, and smoke rises from damaged ships. Ripples from torpedoes, which some believe were fired from a Japanese mini-sub, also appear on the water.



**Left:** USS West Virginia burns after taking six torpedo and two bomb hits. Despite valiant efforts from the crew, fires engulfed most of the ship for two days. Inboard of the sinking West Virginia is USS Tennessee, which sustained light damage.

**Below:** Wreckage from Battleship Row surrounds the fleet tanker USS Neosho, right center, as it escapes the attack, while on the left USS California lists at anchor. The capsized hull of USS Oklahoma can be seen in the background.

Courtesy, Library of Congress



**Above:** USS Maryland, left, which sustained little damage from the attack, fired at the enemy and sent men on rescue missions to other damaged ships. Moored alongside Maryland was Oklahoma, which capsized after being struck by four torpedoes. Smoke in the background is from fires on board West Virginia.

**Right:** A rare frame from a color motion picture filmed on board the hospital ship USS Solace shows the exploding forward magazines of USS Arizona.







# Pearl Harbor Navy Yard

In 1941, the Navy Yard at Pearl Harbor – today called the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard – was the most important base for American ships in the Pacific. Although the shipyard suffered extensive damage, its major repair facilities were largely untouched in the December 7 attack. The facilities proved crucial in the aftermath of the assault since the Japanese had destroyed two major American warships and damaged nineteen others. Most of the latter were repaired and served in the war.

**Background:** Pearl Harbor Navy Yard three days after the attack: the Yard Floating Drydock Number Two holds the destroyer USS Shaw; Drydock Number Two, center, has the cruiser USS Helena; and the battleship USS Pennsylvania, the destroyers USS Cassin and USS Downes are in Drydock Number One, lower center. The dark lines surrounding the docks are oil slicks from the damaged ships.



**Above:** Shaw burns in Yard Floating Drydock Number Two after being attacked by Japanese dive bombers. To the right, Nevada is on fire. Rescue efforts launched from Nevada can be seen on the left.



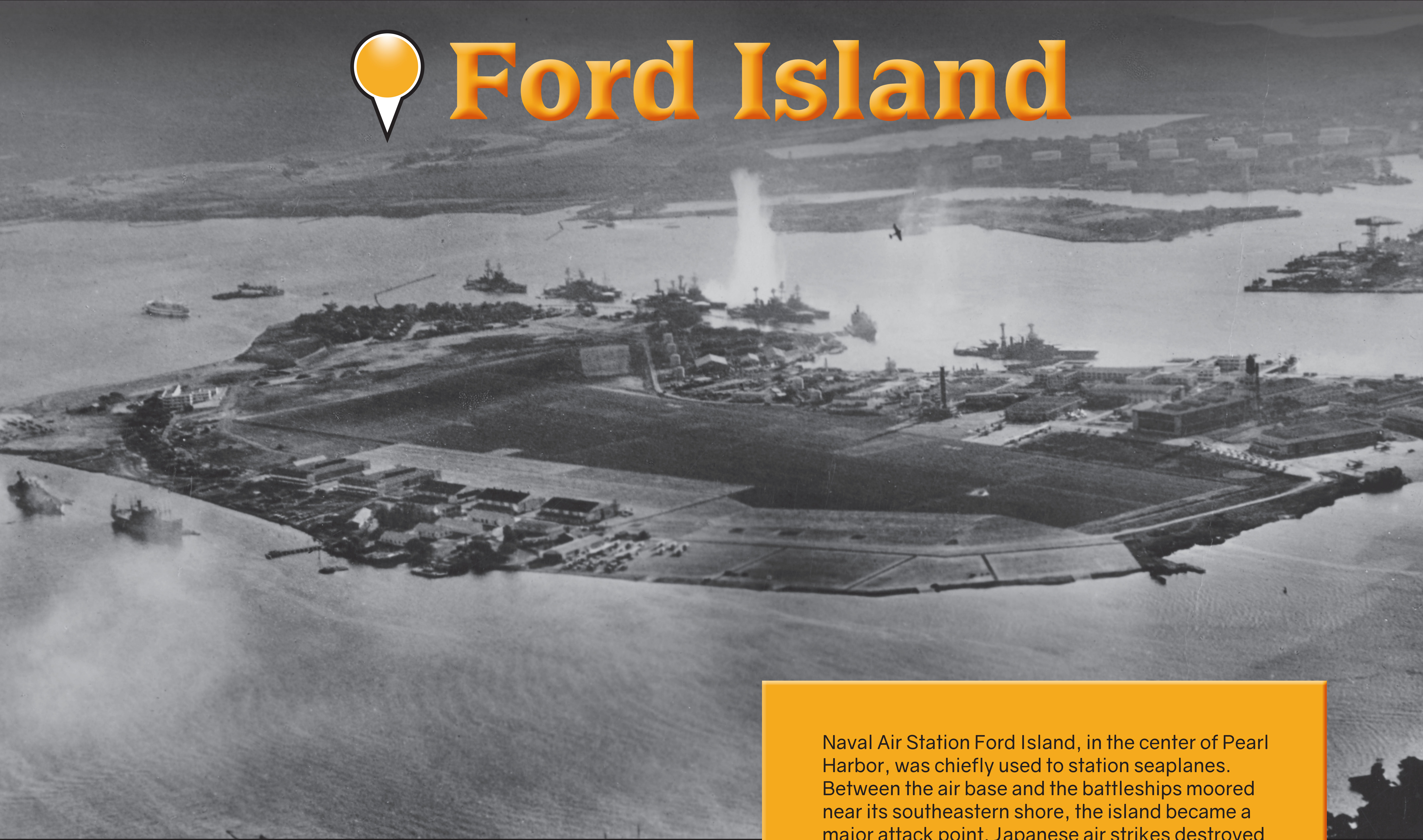
**Above:** Shaw seen from Ford Island. Shaw's forward magazines exploded during the second wave of the attack. Shaw's stern is seen to the left, along with the bow of USS Nevada and the tugboat USS Hoga fighting the fires.

**Left:** The destroyers Cassin and Downes were in Drydock Number One during the attack. Both sustained heavy damage, and Cassin capsized against Downes. Pennsylvania takes up the rest of the dry dock. The smoke behind Pennsylvania is from the sunken USS Arizona.





# Ford Island



Naval Air Station Ford Island, in the center of Pearl Harbor, was chiefly used to station seaplanes. Between the air base and the battleships moored near its southeastern shore, the island became a major attack point. Japanese air strikes destroyed 33 of the 70 airplanes based on the island and many of their hangars.

Background: A Japanese photograph shows most of the Pacific Fleet surrounding Ford Island. Japanese fighter planes also appear in the center and right.



**Above:** The first wave of Japanese raiders hit Naval Air Station Ford Island, causing Catalina patrol planes and hangars to burst into flames. Sailors, in the lower left, hold rifles, preparing for more enemy attacks.

**Right:** Sailors look on from amidst plane wreckage on Ford Island as the destroyer USS Shaw explodes in the center background.



**Left:** A view of Ford Island on December 8, 1941.

**Below:** Sailors manned the antiaircraft machine gun emplacements on Ford Island, while a Catalina search plane warms up for takeoff.







# West Channel



The Japanese pilots had strict orders to target the battleships, aircraft carriers and the navy yard, as well as nearby airfields. That did not mean other ships escaped damage. The light cruiser USS *Raleigh*, the destroyer USS *Helm*, seaplane tender USS *Curtiss*, and the target ship (ex-battleship) USS *Utah* were all hit. Only the target ship was a total loss, and it remains in Pearl Harbor as the second memorial ship.

**Background:** This photograph, taken two months before the attack, shows an aerial view of the West Channel area.

Courtesy, National Archives and Records Administration



**Above:** The cruiser *Raleigh* was hit by a torpedo and a bomb during the attack and almost capsized, but it fired at the enemy and helped to destroy five Japanese planes. The capsized hull of *Utah* is in the background.



**Left:** The target ship *Utah* took two Japanese torpedoes before it began to sink and then rolled onto its side. Sixty-four men and officers died in the attack, most trapped in the ship. The hull of the ship remains partially submerged in Pearl Harbor as a war grave.



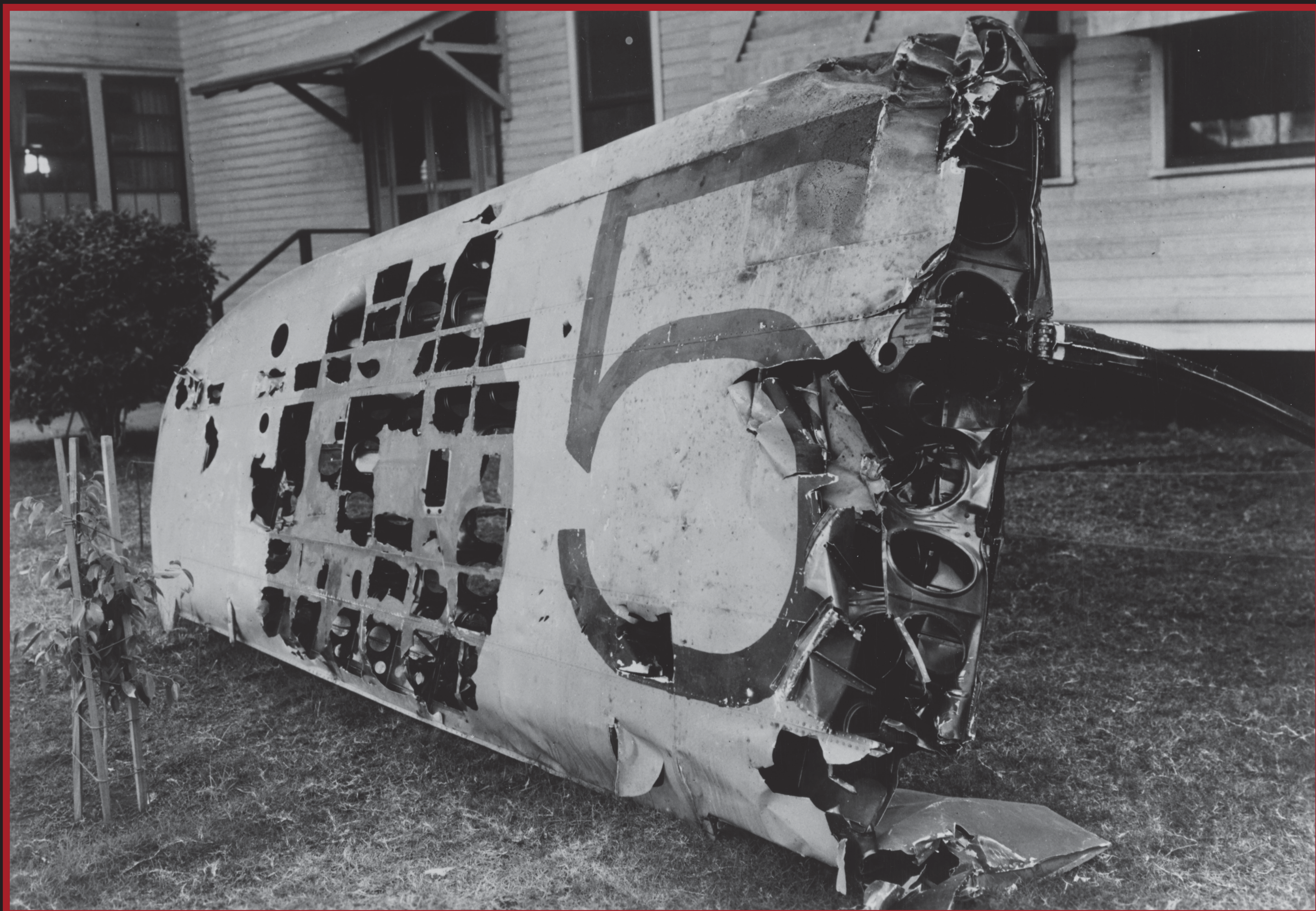


# Naval Hospital Pearl Harbor

Naval Hospital Pearl Harbor, a partially assembled mobile hospital, and the hospital ship USS Solace constituted the main naval medical facilities at Pearl Harbor. On December 7, makeshift holding rooms for casualties sprang up throughout the base, especially after the naval hospital was damaged. The undamaged auxiliary USS Argonne also treated many patients, with many then sent to a "field hospital" at the Navy Yard Officers' Club. About 60 percent of all wounded were burn victims, while hospital staff also treated compound fractures, flesh wounds, and shell shock victims. Almost a thousand patients received care in these hospitals on the first day of the attack.

*Background:* This photograph shows an aerial view of Hospital Point.

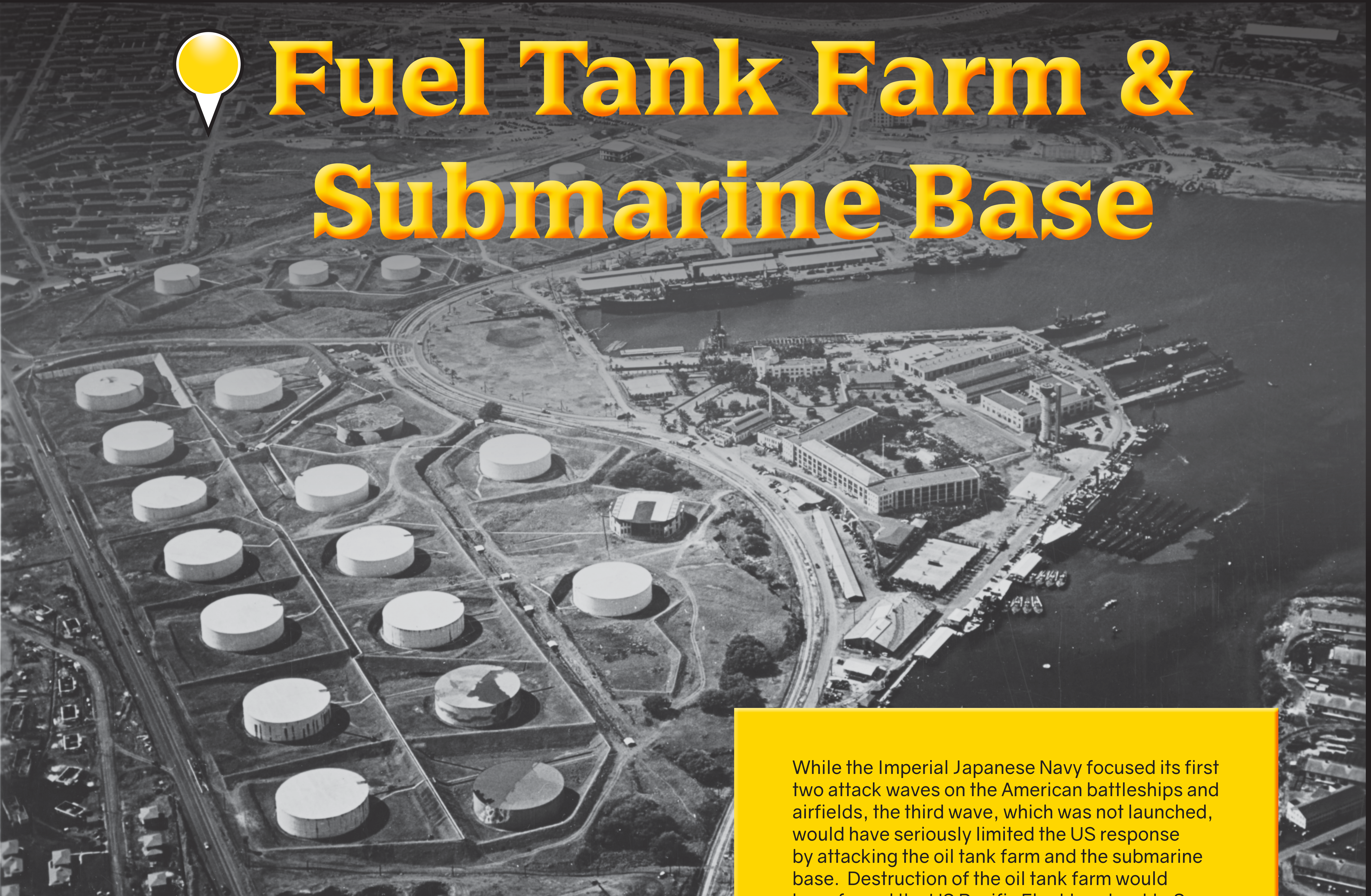
The Naval Hospital Pearl Harbor was not protected from attacks by enemy airplanes. Japanese aircraft fired at the building. One downed Japanese plane also crashed into the hospital.







# Fuel Tank Farm & Submarine Base

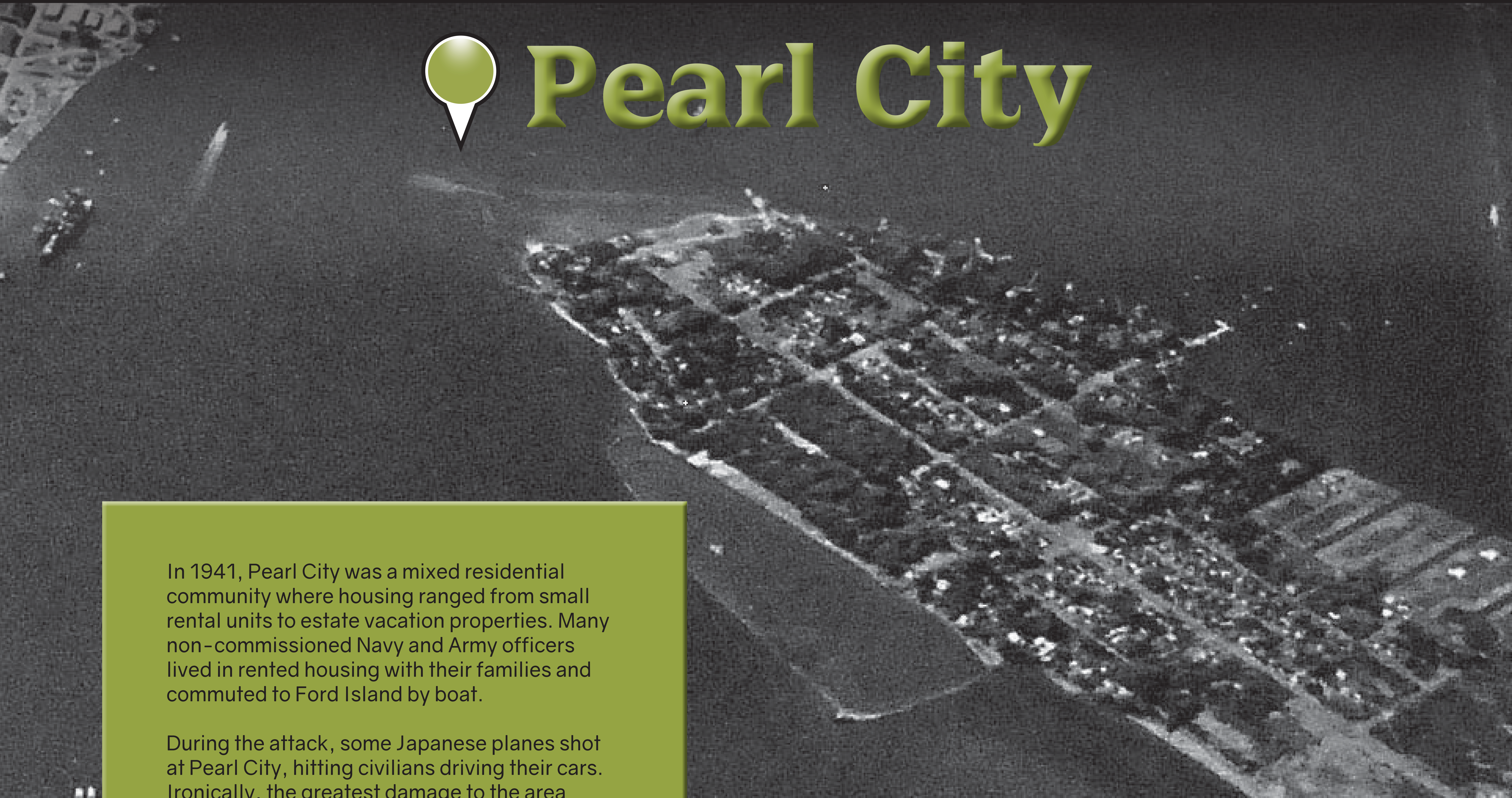


While the Imperial Japanese Navy focused its first two attack waves on the American battleships and airfields, the third wave, which was not launched, would have seriously limited the US response by attacking the oil tank farm and the submarine base. Destruction of the oil tank farm would have forced the US Pacific Fleet to retreat to San Francisco.

*Background:* This photograph, taken two months before the attack, gives an aerial view of the submarine base, right center, and the fuel farm, left.



# Pearl City



In 1941, Pearl City was a mixed residential community where housing ranged from small rental units to estate vacation properties. Many non-commissioned Navy and Army officers lived in rented housing with their families and commuted to Ford Island by boat.

During the attack, some Japanese planes shot at Pearl City, hitting civilians driving their cars. Ironically, the greatest damage to the area occurred after the attack, when friendly fire shot down a plane returning from USS *Enterprise*, which crashed into and destroyed a house. Damage to the area, along with the fires and explosions in the harbor, led most of the population to flee to the nearby hills.

*Background:* This photograph, taken two months before the attack, gives an aerial view of the submarine base, right center, and the fuel farm, left.

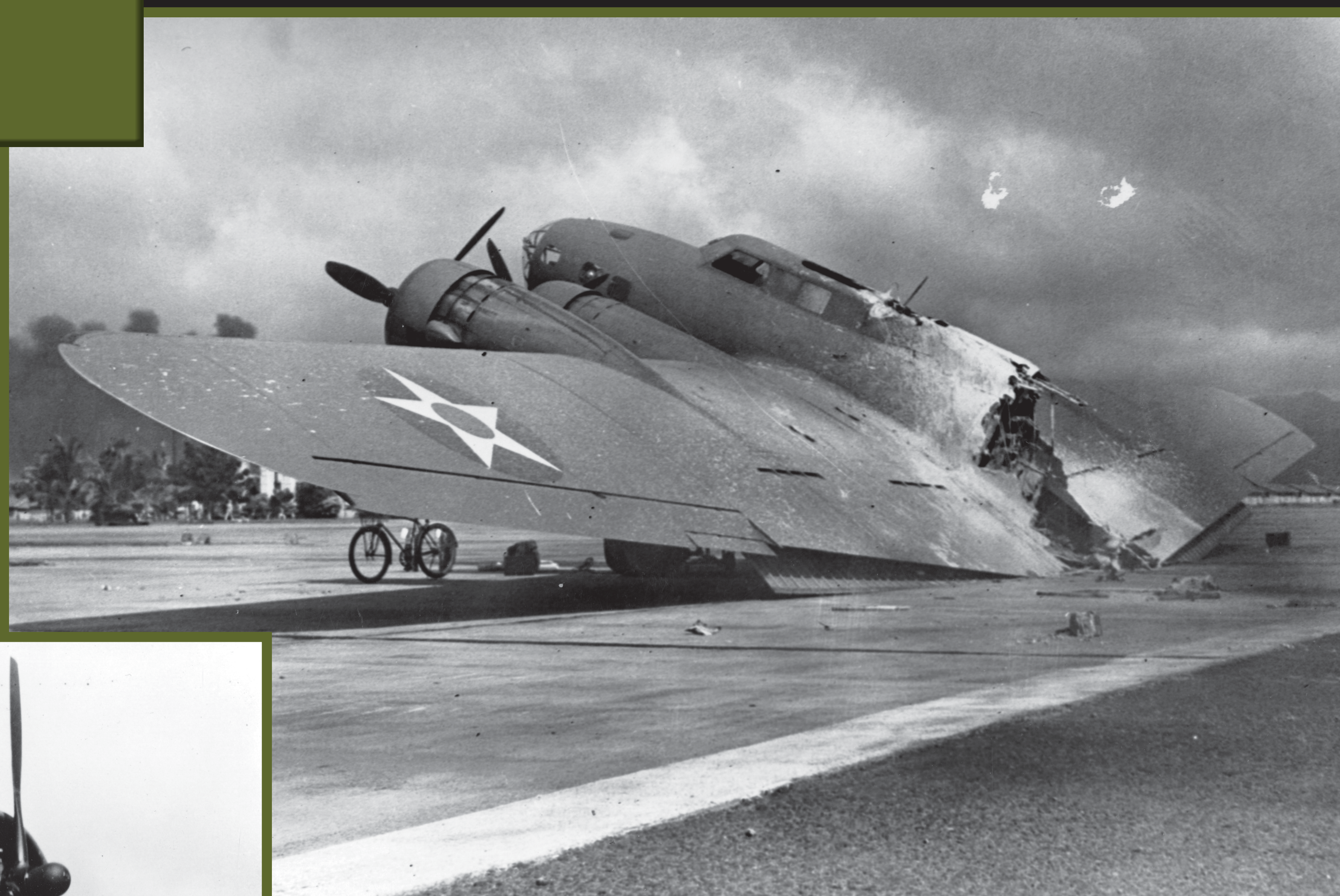




# Hickam Army Airfield

Established in 1935 on the southeastern shore of Pearl Harbor, the US Army Air Forces used Hickam Airfield as its Hawaii bomber base. During the attack Japanese fighters bombed it in an attempt to prevent an American aerial response. The attack destroyed almost half of the airplanes on the field and caused extensive casualties.

*Background:* This photo, taken on May 3, 1940, depicts an aerial view of Hickam Army Airfield.

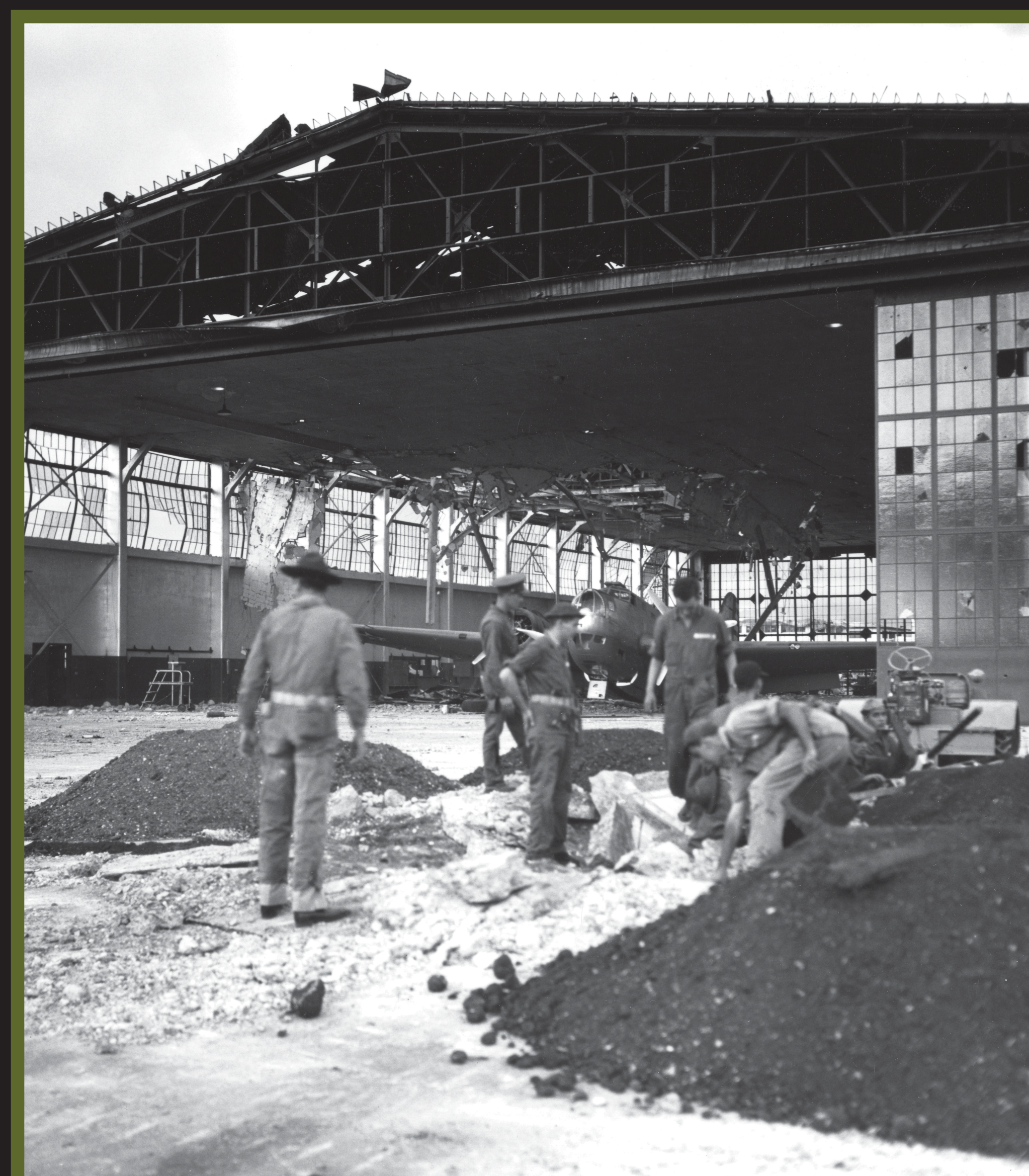


*Above:* A burned B-17C bomber sits on Hickam Army Airfield after the attack.



*Above:* A B-17E lands safely at Hickam Army Airfield during the Japanese attack. Smoke from the burning ships in Pearl Harbor rises in the background.

*Right:* Men at the airfield set up machine gun entrenchments, seen in the right foreground of this photo. Many pilots tried to take off, but, as seen in this photo, the airfield sustained significant damage to multiple hangars and airplanes, limiting the number of planes that could become airborne.



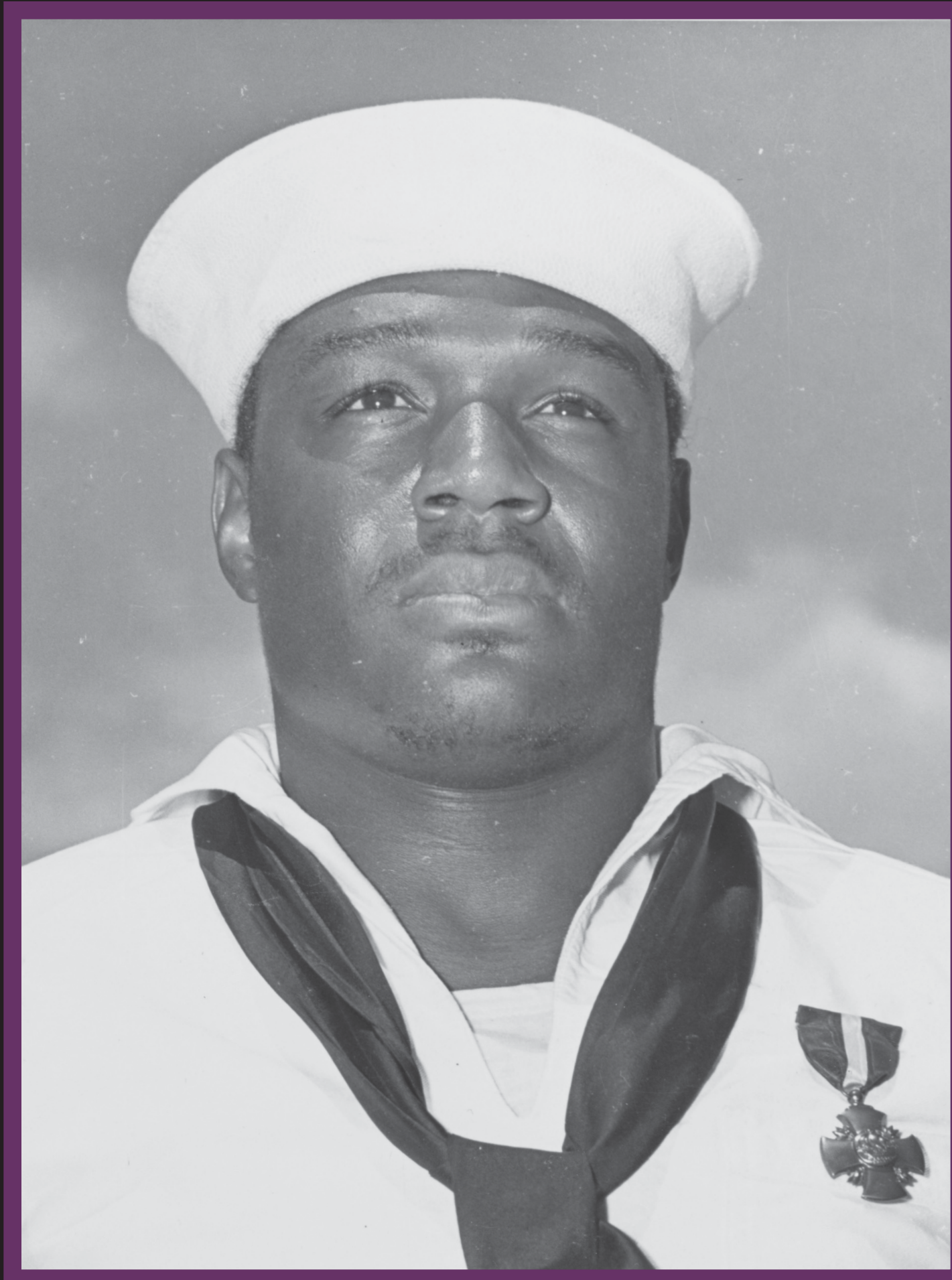


# Personal Stories of Heroism & Survival



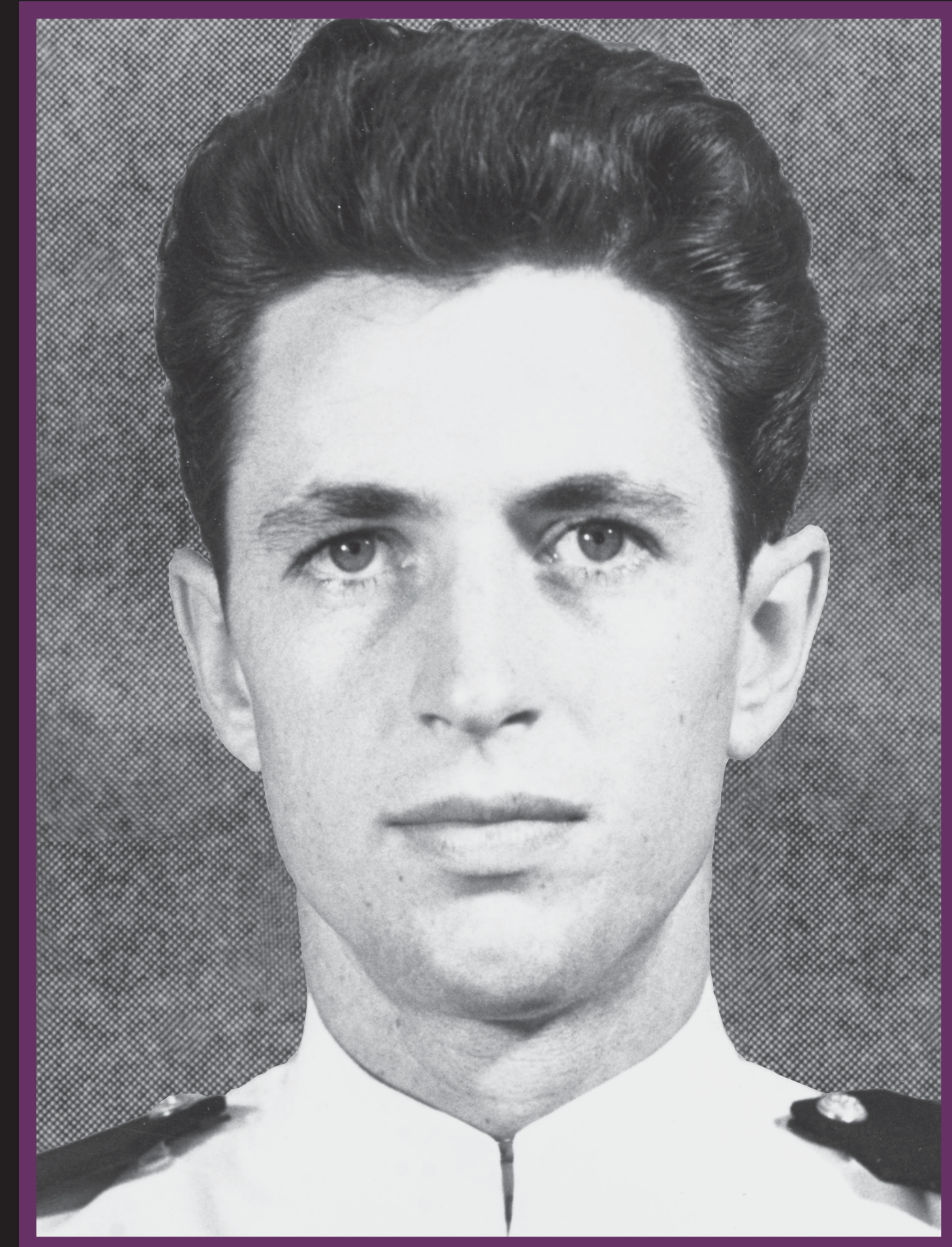
Lieutenant Ruth Erickson was a nurse stationed at Naval Hospital Pearl Harbor. In an interview, Erickson said, "I leaped out of my chair and dashed to the nearest window in the corridor. Right then there was a plane flying directly over the top of our quarters, a one-story structure. The rising sun under the wing of the plane denoted the enemy. ... My heart was racing, the telephone was ringing, the chief nurse, Gertrude Arnest, was saying, 'Girls, get into your uniforms at once. This is the real thing!'"

Erickson went on to serve as chief nurse at three major naval hospitals and, on April 30, 1962, became the Director of the Navy Nurse Corps. She retired from the Navy in 1966.



Cook Third Class Doris "Dorie" Miller was stationed on USS *West Virginia* during the attack. When the ship's captain was mortally wounded, Miller helped carry him to the first aid station, and then rushed to defend his ship. Although he had no weapons training, he manned a .50 caliber machine gun against the attacking planes. In 1942 he became the first African American to receive the Navy Cross. He was killed in action in 1943 on the escort carrier USS *Liscome Bay*.

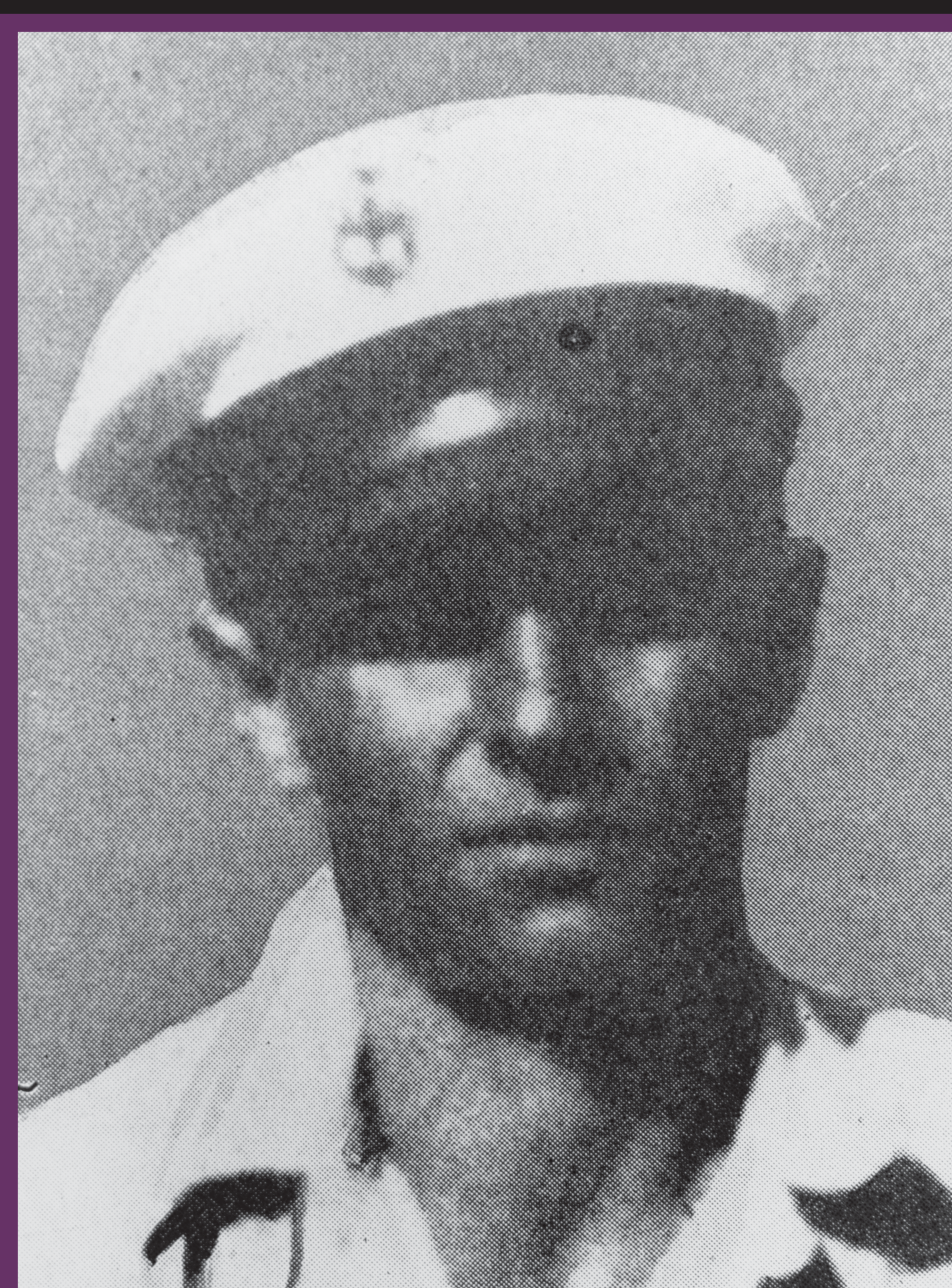
Of his experience, Miller said, "It wasn't hard. I just pulled the trigger and she worked fine. I had watched the others with these guns. I guess I fired her for about 15 minutes. I think I got one of the Jap planes. They were diving pretty close to us."



Twenty-four year old Ensign Theodore W. Marshall, USNR, was an assistant flight officer stationed on Ford Island. He commandeered a truck and transported men from all over the island to their stations. Then he tried to fly two separate airplanes, neither of which he had experience flying. After Japanese attacks destroyed the first plane while he was trying to taxi down the runway, he took off in the second and followed the retreating Japanese for over 150 miles. Unable to overtake the Japanese airplanes and with his fuel dwindling he returned to Pearl Harbor. For his heroism, he received the Silver Star. Marshall retired from the Navy in 1959.



Chief Boatswain's Mate Frank M. Ruby was assigned to Fuel Oil Barge 30, which was moored along Merry Point at the time of the attack. Before being wounded, he was on a pier at the submarine base when he saw the Japanese fighters overhead. The next thing he knew, he awoke in the infirmary on Ford Island after the attack with no recollection as to how he came to be there. Ruby, who served for nine years, celebrated his 99th birthday on Nov. 1, 2016.



Forty-eight-year-old Chief Watertender Peter Tomich was born in Austria-Hungary and was stationed on board the target ship USS *Utah*. During the attack, Tomich remained at his post in the engineering plant on the ship as *Utah* capsized. He secured the ship's boilers, allowing other crew members to escape. As a result, he died in action and posthumously received the Medal of Honor.



Commander Cassin Young was the skipper of the repair ship USS *Vestal*. During the attack, he stayed on board his ship, manning a 3-inch antiaircraft gun against enemy planes. After being thrown from the ship by the explosion of USS *Arizona*, he went back to *Vestal* and refused to abandon the ship. He successfully beached the ship to escape *Arizona's* fires, and received the Medal of Honor for his actions. Young was killed in action in the Battle of Guadalcanal on November 13, 1942.

## PEARL HARBOR CASUALTIES & LOSSES

	<u>United States</u>	<u>Japan</u>
Military personnel losses	2,403	64
Civilian casualties	68	0
US military personnel wounded	1,143	
US civilian casualties	35	
	<u>United States</u>	<u>Japan</u>
Vessel losses	21 sunk or damaged	5 sunk or damaged
Aircraft losses	188 destroyed, 159 damaged	29 destroyed