

LE ROY PENNYSAVER - DECEMBER 13, 2009
December 7, 1941

by **Lynne Belluscio**

Brian Duddy has volunteered to collect WWII recollections and to help assemble a file on LeRoy during the war. So I was interested to look for references to men who were involved with the attack on Pearl Harbor. Although not in Honolulu, William Niccloy was serving as secretary to the United States ambassador in Tokyo and the *Gazette* noted that when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, nine members of the American Embassy, including Niccloy were taken into "protective custody" by the Japanese. He was returned to the United States in return for Japanese nationals who were in the United States. He arrived in LeRoy in August 1942. (I'll have to do a little more sleuthing to find an article that appeared later, that gave an account of his experience.)

Mrs. Gilbert Lounsbury reported that she had heard from her brothers, George and Charles Harsch. George was the Chief Petty Officer on the US Destroyer Downs which had been sunk. Charles was a member of the crew of the SS Indianapolis. The family of John McQuilken reported that they had not heard from their son, John, a Second Class Seaman aboard the sunken Oklahoma, but two weeks later the *Gazette* noted that his family had received a couple of letters. "I



am all right – not even a scratch. Don't know when I'll have time to write again. Keep your chin up." He asked them to send postage, paper and envelopes, because they were in short supply.

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Howard of North Street finally heard from their son, James, an aviation mechanic aboard the Aircraft Carrier, Enterprise in the Pacific Fleet. A card dated December 16 read: "I am alright." There might have been other LeRoyans in-

involved with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, but so far I haven't found anything in the files, but if any of you know of someone, Brian and I would like to know about it.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 the American battleships Arizona, California, Oklahoma and Utah (an old target battleship) were sunk. The Battleship West Virginia settled in shallow water and the Nevada ran aground.

Damaged battleships included

the Pennsylvania, Maryland and the Tennessee. Destroyers Cassin, Downes and Shaw and the mine-layer Ogala were sunk or badly damaged. In all, about 19 ships were sunk or damaged. About 3,000 Americans lost their lives. The Japanese lost 28 planes and three midget submarines. Japanese forces also attacked Guam, Wake Island, the Philippines and other strategic points in the Pacific at the same time.

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