



The USS Arizona Men: 75th Anniversary

T. J. Cooper

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On Sunday, December 7, 1941, shortly before 8 a.m. the men on board the USS Arizona were preparing for Sunday morning services, planning shore leave, writing letters home and visiting with shipmates. Little did they know that the day's events would forever change their lives.

As the Japanese attacked, this quiet morning turned into a nightmare many would carry with them the rest of their lives. Many more would not survive the devastating attack.

"General Quarters" was sounded and the men scrambled for their battle stations. Within minutes, the men were firing back at the swarm of Japanese planes. Facing, fires, black smoke, explosions and the continual strafing from the Japanese planes, these men remained at their respective battle stations. Many died instantly when a bomb went through the after deck and landed in the black powder room igniting a huge explosion and an immense fire ball that traveled throughout the ship.

Faced with badly burned men wandering about on deck, those men that survived the initial explosion, heroically helped evacuate the wounded all the while dodging the bullets from the attacking planes and the fires roaring about them.

By this time, the fuel oil from the ship's tanks had escaped and covered the water around the ship. This oil promptly caught fire making "abandon ship" into a treacherous deed. Many of those that jumped were caught up in the fires and fuel oil. This made it impossible to swim to safety.

This book is a memorial to the men that were serving on the USS Arizona that fateful morning. Who were these men and what did they experience. This is their story.

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