

Best Friends from “Band of Brothers” Look Back

Radio Script by Frank Samandari

It started as a typical winter’s day in Philadelphia. William ‘Wild Bill’ Guarnere had his eyes set on an evening of fun — dancing the night away with his best girl. Then came the news no one wanted to hear: Japanese pilots had bombed Pearl Harbor in a surprise attack.

“We knew what he had to do. We all left the dance hall. The girls were crying. We went up to Second and Chestnut and the lines were so long and deep with men and boys up there!”

‘Wild Bill’ and his buddies were told to come back to the military recruiter’s office in the morning. Soon, they were en-route overseas — joining Allied Forces in the fight against the Axis of Evil.

“That was the personality of kids those days: country first.”

In fact, Guarnere says signing up for service was understood from the start.

“This is what you had to do. This is what you were raised to do. My father made sure we all knew it. Your country’s at war, I don’t want no slackers at this family table.”

Edward ‘Babe’ Heffron agrees.

“Don’t forget, now, you can’t separate America. America should be one... period!”

Both Guarnere and Heffron were part of the original ‘Band of Brothers’ and were featured in the HBO series of the same name.

Always Faithful

Hubert Talton served in World War Two and Korea. He remembers the spirit of sacrifice was infectious.

“One thing about that period of time which was so remarkable was that everybody was involved — civilian and military. Everybody worked together to get the job over with.”

The veterans I talked with are understandably hesitant to compare past wars with the current War on Terror, but for Burt Cornwall, the coming years in the Middle East are crucial.

“During World War Two, we knew we had to do it. Now, because of the type of war it is over there, people don’t understand they’ve got to win that thing... they’ve got to win it. Otherwise we’re in trouble.”



William “Wild Bill” Guarnere (left) and Edward “Babe” Heffron were paratroopers in World War Two. They were part of “Easy” or “E” Company — making them members of the original “Band of Brothers.”