**HARRY H. REID**

Brick Location: B7

My father, Harry Reid, was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA, and was 21 years old and in the hospital at the time Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. His right hand had been caught in a textile machine while working and the skin had been ripped from the back of his hand. Because he was having skin grafted to his hand from his abdomen, he could not sign the draft papers when the local draft board brought them to the hospital for him to sign. He placed an “X” with his left hand and received a medical exemption. But true to the times he healed and then volunteered for the Army at his first opportunity. He was asked to demonstrate his ability to handle a rifle, which he did by working the bolt action in the draft board office, and then he was accepted. His mother cried when he told her the news as both of his older brothers were already in the Armed Forces and deployed overseas in the African and European theaters. He spent a year and a half at the New Cumberland Army Depot in Pennsylvania and rose to the level of Tech Sergeant helping to bring in new recruits and deliver them to their posts after completion of technical school.

Both my father and a close friend decided to request to be re-evaluated so that their physical classification would be changed to lA and they would be able to join the war overseas. Once approved they were assigned to a troop ship and, as it was boarding in San Francisco Bay, they looked at each other on the gang plank and asked “Did we do the right thing?” Several weeks later they arrived on Guadalcanal Island in the South Pacific and helped to build Henderson Airfield with the Army Corps of Engineers. My father left the Army after the war was over and always kept his Army pictures and honorable discharge papers hanging in frames above his bed along with his marriage certificate, as these were the most valuable things in his life.

This act of braver was only revealed to me when I was in my 40’s and I was shocked to learn how selfless a whole generation could be.

My father passed away in March of 2007 after a full life and several grandchildren. He truly was part of the Greatest Generation as described by Tom Brokaw.

Submitted by:

Glenn J. Reid

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