**HENRY T. MEYER**

Brick Location: B3

My dad, Henry T. Meyer, was rather old for the draft (36), although he looked young enough to be asked for an ID when he and his Navy buddies went out. He had lived in the U.S. since the age of 13 when his family emigrated from Germany. He was very proud to be an American citizen and of his command of the English language (quite the crosswords puzzle king). When the draft board asked him what job he felt suited for, he mentioned some experience in shopkeeper duties, since that was what he did in civilian life. So where did they send him but to radar school. He found himself on the Allan M. Sumner, a destroyer in the Pacific Fleet.

One particularly hot night when he wasn’t on duty, he couldn’t get to sleep in his cramped compartment down below and decided to snooze underneath the torpedo tubes on deck. Little did he know how that decision would affect his life and those of his waiting wife and son back home. Later on that night a kamikaze airplane hit the Sumner and totally wiped out my dad’s compartment. He didn’t talk about it too much. I think it was still all too vivid in his mind…all his friends lost; finding possessions of the Japanese pilot on deck. I had the good fortune to see the Sumner with my dad, walk on its decks and try to imagine what it must have been like to him and all those brace men, then and now.

Our love. Our gratitude.

Submitted by:

Irene A. Pierce

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