

EMMARSON: Veteran lost close friend during war

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Island, among other duties, and returning to Pearl Harbor on Saturday, December 6, to refit and refuel. The Selfridge was parked alongside a fuel-oil barge in the harbor.

Emmarson, like so many others, had gone ashore Saturday evening to enjoy the local flavors, and was sleeping in on Sunday morning when the Japanese attacked.

Marvin recalls hearing an explosion, followed shortly by the call for General Quarters. Still half asleep, he ran briefly topside where he saw a Japanese Zero fighter plane flying into the harbor on a low-level run.

"I didn't know what was going on," Emmarson told *The Nugget*.

After seeing the Zero, he ran belowdecks to his General Quarters station in the Selfridge's fire room — where he and others made steam for the ship's engines — and saw no more of the battle raging all around him, which cost the lives of 2,403 servicemen, and injured 1,178 more.

History records that the USS Selfridge's guns were firing within five minutes of the Japanese attack, and by 1300 hours, manned by a mixed crew, the ship was

underway. Marvin recalls that they were sent out from Oahu to find the carriers from which the Japanese attack waves had launched.

"We were lucky we couldn't find them," he said. "They would have wiped us out."

After several other missions, including an aborted attempt to reinforce the beleaguered Marines on Wake Island, Emmarson and his shipmates were ultimately involved in the invasion of Guadalcanal, a pivotal battle in the war.

Marvin recalls that "We escorted these Marines in. I'd see them going ashore in their landing barges, and then the barges came back and they (the casualties) were stacked in there like cordwood. Those goddamn Marines were just tougher than hell. We would go along and fire five-inch shells and try to kill the Japanese, but we didn't get very many of them."

Emmarson's service included many other engagements.

In October of 1942, Emmarson was on board the Selfridge during the battle of Vella La Vella. Having intercepted a convoy of six Japanese destroyers, transports, and smaller craft, the Selfridge was hit by a torpedo that essentially cut the ship in half. In the fight, the Selfridge lost 13 sailors killed, 11 wounded, and 36

missing in action.

Among the dead was Emmarson's friend Owen Bauserman.

"We were very good friends," Marvin said, "like brothers."

Marvin remembers the impact of the torpedo causing the ship to list severely, in danger of sinking, until it was ultimately righted. After a patch repair at a small dry-dock on Guadalcanal, Marvin and his shipmates rode the ship — without a bow — 7,000 miles across the ocean to Mare Island in California, where it was ultimately repaired and retrofitted.

Ultimately, the Selfridge was sent to the Mediterranean, where Emmarson and his shipmates conducted patrols off the shores of North Africa and Italy.

After duty on several other ships, Marvin was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1947.

"I don't have much to say about myself," Marvin told *The Nugget* about his service. "It's all the rest of the guys. I didn't do any more than anyone else. I was just lucky to survive."

After the war, Marvin

returned to Portland where he worked for Western Electric, and ultimately Techtronics Industries, where he helped build oscilloscopes and other technological devices.

Marvin married his wife, Marge, in 1986, and after many years of traveling between Yuma, Arizona, and Sisters, the couple settled in Sisters to be closer to their family, which includes Marge's son John Tehan; grandchildren Audrey, Hattie, and JC; and daughter-in-law Peggy Tehan.

Emmarson's service to his country, and his shipmates, was extraordinary. But a man is always more than his service record. John Tehan told *The Nugget*: "Marv treats my mom like every son wants his mom to be treated, and only a son can say that."

MEMORIAL DAY: Observance will be followed by gathering

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to join the Air Force.

Meeker's last assignment, before retiring, was serving as the vice commander of the USAF Expeditionary Center where, for a year, she was the second in charge of a 14,000-person organization supporting air forces around the world. Another yearlong position was as the senior special assistant to the commander of NATO and the European Command.

The ceremony will be followed by a barbecue at noon with burgers, soda, and coffee (\$5 suggested donation). The public is welcome.

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