

Carolyn Conarroe

By Nathan Edwards

Carolyn Conarroe was born in Newcarlile, Ohio, a small farming community. The people of the town focused on supporting their own, which Mrs. Conarroe thought gave the town a nice charm and unique feel. She attended the local public school where there were six grades and four classrooms. The kids were divided up by what the teachers considered smart. The smart kids would go with the 5th graders, and then rest would be with the smart fourth graders. Mrs. Conarroe was held back in the “slow” half of the class, which made her very self-conscious about her learning capabilities. She would often ponder if she was dumb and why she was, but she eventually forgot about it and went on with life. She passed time by reading books and sewing new clothes for school. Her family did not have much money, so if she wanted new clothes she had to make them. She explained to me, “I was glad to have what I had...Fashion was not a top priority. There were much more important things to deal with than fashion.”

Mrs. Conarroe was in her early teenage years when World War Two was going on. To her, the war was just another thing going on in this world that did not have an affect on her. She did not pay much attention to the war, until she heard about Pearl Harbor. She was sewing in the family room when her aunt turned up the radio. Mrs. Conarroe heard the entire story of Pearl Harbor over the radio, and was inspired by the attack. Before she heard about Pearl Harbor the war was nothing, but then she realized her country needed her to chip in. She transformed into a patriot that wanted to help the country. Following her sophomore year of high school, she went to work at Wright Patterson Air Force Base for the summer, one of the busiest bases during the war. She worked in the department that did filing for all the offices at the base. Her job was to type forms and letters, but this was not such an easy thing to do, because of the type writer. Mistakes were a pain to correct, and were considered unacceptable.

The soldiers that were currently enlisted in service would come in and out of the base during war to finish their service. These soldiers considered themselves lucky to be finishing service at the base, because they were not in the field of combat where they were putting their lives on the line. The soldiers would stop by her small desk and flirt with her. Many of the soldiers took interest in Mrs. Conarroe, but she never went on a date with any of them.

The early years of her life had the most impact on her. She experienced more in the early years of her life than some people experience over a lifetime.