

HOARD HISTORICAL MUSEUM

FORT ATKINSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTYWIDE WWII EXHIBIT AND PROGRAM AT HOARD HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The year 2021 marks the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. In recognition of the attack that spurred the United States' involvement in World War II, the historical societies and museums of Jefferson County are creating a shared exhibit that explores what life was like in Jefferson County prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

"Before the Storm: Jefferson County Prior to WWII" will be displayed at the Hoard Historical Museum in Fort Atkinson. The exhibit will open on Saturday, December 11 and will be open to the public through the end of the year. There will be special programs the day the exhibit opens.

At 10:30 a.m., the documentary *Pearl Harbor: Into The Arizona* will be shown. The documentary explores a recent underwater exploration into the Arizona complete with Pearl Harbor veterans providing their personal stories regarding December 7, 1941.

At 1 p.m. on December 11 at the Hoard Historical Museum, Jennifer Van Haften, assistant director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, will be speaking on the origins of WWII and the attack on Pearl Harbor, plus sharing the oral histories of soldiers from Jefferson County and Wisconsin.

At 2 p.m., a commemoration ceremony will recognize Jefferson County WWII service personnel. All veterans and service personnel are welcome to attend. The Hoard Historical Museum is asking that any WWII veterans planning to attend please RSVP to the Hoard Museum prior to Friday, December 10 to ensure reserved seating for the WWII veterans. Contact the museum at 920-563-7769 or info@hoardmuseum.org to respond.

Directly after the commemoration ceremony, there will be a dramatic vignette including President Franklin D. Roosevelt's address to a Joint Session of Congress on December 8, 1941,

one day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. During this address, Roosevelt asked for a declaration of war against Japan.

The exhibit will be open to the public during the Hoard Historical Museum's open hours, Tuesday-Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The participating historical societies and museums are: Bark River Woods Historical Society, Concord Historical Society, Hoard Historical Museum & Fort Atkinson Historical Society, Jefferson Historical Society, Johnson Creek Historical Society, Lake Mills/Aztalan Historical Society, and Palmyra Historical Society. Each society will be contributing artifacts, images, and creativity to the exhibit on the attack on Pearl Harbor. "In Jefferson County, we don't have an official county historical society," said Merrilee Lee, director of the Hoard Historical Museum, "However, we are very fortunate to have multiple strong historical societies and museums spread throughout our county. When our individual historical societies tell the story of our communities, we also tell the story of our county. Since this year marks the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the beginnings of US involvement in WWII, we are collaborating to commemorate this important event in our country's history."

Pearl Harbor is located on the island of Honolulu in Hawaii. It was used as a naval base before the US entered WWII and is still the location of an active naval base. On Sunday, December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan bombed the USA naval base at Pearl Harbor. The bombing lasted for over 90 minutes. In total, over 2,400 Americans were killed and over 1,100 were wounded. Of the more than 100 Navy ships based at Pearl Harbor, twenty-one ships were damaged. Eventually all but three were repaired and returned to service. The attack on Pearl Harbor forced the United States into the burgeoning war between Japan and other Pacific countries plus into the European conflict with Germany and Italy. Over the next four years, the historical societies and museum of Jefferson County will be creating a series of events to commemorate WWII and all those who were involved, both in the military and as part of the homefront.

The Hoard Historical Museum and National Dairy Shrine Museum are located at 401 Whitewater Avenue in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin and are free to visit. The museums are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. They are closed on Sundays and Mondays. For more information, call the museums at 920.563.7769, visit our web-site www.hoardmuseum.org, and like us on Facebook.