

In this day and age, jet travel is de rigueur for the majority of the U.S. population. Most have traveled extensively within the country and many internationally. But before WWII the U.S. featured a completely different landscape, especially in the majority of the country that was rural America.

My father was born in 1919 and raised on the isolated island of Maui, in the Territory of Hawaii. A long trip for him meant a train ride from the sugar plantation village of Hamakuapoko to the island hub of Wailuku, ten miles away. A shorter trip was to the closest town of Paia.

Paia had a theater and during his senior year of high school he saw a movie titled "Follow the Fleet." Fred Astaire starred and Irving Berlin wrote the music, which included a song called "We Saw The Sea." The lyrics included what would become the famous phrase, "join the Navy and see the world."

Career opportunities outside the plantation were limited so Dad applied and was the first from Maui to receive an appointment to attend the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. During the four years of WWII he traveled over sixty thousand miles from the East coast of the U.S. to the shores of Asia, zig-zagging across the widest part of the Pacific.

Disorientation occurs in combat. But it also happens when experiencing an abrupt change from growing up in an isolated community. When you think about the many men who enlisted from rural America, you can only imagine the loss of bearings they experienced during the immense scope of their sudden travel.

This video is the testament to the movement my father experienced when he left Maui in 1936 and graduated from the Academy in 1940. Many went to war back then and many found romance during the drama of war. Their children are who became known as 'baby boomers.'

My sister, brother and I are some of those 'boomers'. We have our own story that I've chronicled in, "Journals from the Edge."