

RALPH BARRALE in His Words

I was born at home, 7th and Biddles in St. Louis, Mo. the building no longer exists. My mother told me I weighed 12 pounds. My Godmother was so excited when I was born, she rushed me out in the cold of winter, January 22, 1924 and dashed across the street to the grocery store to weigh me.

When I was about 4 years old, my brother Pete and I were playing in the living room. I fell and hit my head on the corner of the wooden arm of the couch splitting the flesh wide open across my forehead. I was rushed to the hospital. After good care I went home.

At 5 years old I remember looking out the window at the snowfall and having the sensation of rising up in the air as if the snow was not falling but I was going up.

Petey and I were only 18 months apart in age. We were together all the time. My orders from my father were, "Take care of your brother, you're the oldest so you take care of Petey". So, as we grew up, we played together, went to school together and went home together.

One of the games we played was Indian Ball. It is played usually with 4 players on each team 2 infielders and 2 outfielders. The 2 infielders stood between 2 bases. A ball is pitched by a member of the team who was up to bat. The batter had to hit the ball between the two bases without being caught or going foul outside of either baseline if you hit the ball foul you were out. Another game we used to play was flipping baseball cards. We'd line the cards on the ground and flip a card out over them. If your card landed on top of another card you could keep both cards, if it didn't you forfeit the one you had flipped. This was a way of rotating your inventory of baseball cards. We also made skateboards (scooters) out of wood and metal roller skates. Sometimes we would put a candle in a can and pretend it was a headlight. We had lots of fun pushing ourselves around on these, we could do this because there were not too many cars on the street in those days, in the 30's. When my father started selling Sonny Boy Ice Cream during the depression, I would often go out with him and help him sell by yelling out "SONNY BOY ICE CREAM 5 CENTS A BAR" as we walked down the streets. My father had a heavy box filled with dry ice and ice cream bars strapped to his back. It must have been very heavy. When we became a little older, we began looking around for ways to earn a little money. We each got a corner to sell newspapers. We shared a bicycle to get to the job site. Petey would ride on the handlebars and my job was to motivate the bicycle from our home at 2801 Howard St. To 8th and Washington in downtown St. Louis. This was quite a distance for boys of our age. There were 2 newspapers, the St. Louis Post Dispatch and the St. Louis Star Times. I was about 1.

After completing the 8th grade, I graduated from Carr School. At 16 I started working for Guth Electric and also, I joined the I.P.C (Independent Pleasure Club). The I.P.C. participated in competitive sports with other clubs. We played soccer, softball, indoor soccer and basketball. The club had dances in their hall and that's where I met the love of my life, Rose Marie Busalaki.

In 1943 at the age of 19, I was drafted in the Army and went to Jefferson Barracks. I was transferred to Camp Maxey, Texas where I took my Basic Training. After 13 weeks I went home on leave. I proposed to Rose, and we became engaged.

COPY REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after January 1, 1922 and on or before June 30, 1924)		COPY		COPY	
SERIAL NUMBER	1. NAME (First)	(Last)	(Middle)	ORDER NUMBER	
N. 460	Ralph	(none)	Barrale	12294	
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (First)					
1410a Blair Avenue		St. Louis, Missouri			
3. MAILING ADDRESS					
1410a Blair Avenue		St. Louis, Missouri			
4. TELEPHONE					
yes		5. AGE IN YEARS		6. PLACE OF BIRTH	
Central 8384		18		St. Louis	
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS					
Mrs. Josephine Barrale - 1410a Blair Avenue, (Mother)					
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS					
Guth Electric Company - Edwin F. Guth					
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS					
Jefferson and Washington Avenue		St. Louis, Missouri			
10. I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE					
D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 6-1-42)		416-2420-3		Ralph Barrale	

Later I wrote to my mother and asked her to buy an engagement ring for Rose, no matter what it cost and give it to her for Christmas. I wanted to make certain our engagement was official because I wanted to make sure that no one else got her.

My outfit went to Boston embarked on a ship and was sent to England. I was in the 3rd Army (Patton) as a Combat M.P. in the 510 M.P. Bn Company A. When we landed in France my

Company became the 821st Combat M.P. Co. During my military service I served my country in the following campaigns: Rhineland Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), Central Europe (France and Germany), and Northern France. I received a medal from the French Government for that campaign. I was awarded four Bronze Stars and the Good Conduct Medal.

I am entitled to wear:

- The American Theatre Campaign Ribbon
- European-African Middle Eastern Theatre Campaign Ribbon
- 3 Overseas Service Bars
- Victory Ribbon
- German Occupation Ribbon

I attained the rank of Private First Class.

After the war my outfit served as the M.P. 's for the Nuremberg War Criminal Trials. Then when the government came up with the point system (you had to have so many points to be discharged) I had more than enough points and I was discharged. I came home on a Liberty Ship (much smaller than the other ships). It took us three times longer to get to Boston than the other ships. Everyone was seasick which made the days seem longer.

We finally made it back and I started being a civilian again. I went back to work for Guth Electric where I was working at before I was drafted. Rose and I made plans for our wedding. We got married on June 2, 1946 at St. Leo's Catholic Church in St. Louis, Mo. by Father Shockley. Reception was at the Turner Hall. We honeymooned at Idlewild Lodge in Cuba, Mo. We lived with my parents on 21st Street in the upstairs bedroom of the home I helped them get through my G.I. Loan. Our first child was born, Josephine Ann on June 22, 1947 while we were living there.

We rented a place on Slattery Street. We lived upstairs and my sister Theresa and her husband Frank and family lived downstairs. I quit working for Guth Electric and went to work for Continental Can Company. In a sort time I got a promotion and became Foreman in the Lithograph Department. November 13, 1949 our son Ralph was born.

After a year we moved to 2107 Mullanphy to take care of Rose's great uncle. He mostly only spoke in Italian so I was able to understand him. He was in his eighties. We lived there a few years. October 26, 1955 our son Lari was born. We had a home built in Florissant. Two weeks after Lari was born we moved to 255 South Jefferson. Rose's uncle stayed with her sister Ann.

My bother Petey and family moved to California November 1958. It was one of the saddest days of my life because I knew I couldn't see him very much anymore. Our children all graduated from Sacred Heart School.

In 1974 we had a home built in Lake St. Louis on the big lake. We finished the basement which took Lari, Rose and I two years to finish. We enjoyed it for family gatherings and entertaining friends. In 1980, I retired from Continental Can Company after 30 years. Now I have time to go on trips, play golf swimming, boating socializing, going to see my favorite baseball team the St. Louis Cardinals play. I enjoy my family including all the above with my wife.

The next part of my life started by being the Commander of the Lake St. Louis V.F.W. Post 10350 which lasted for 9 years. I was able to keep the Post very active.

It took over two years to make one of my dreams a reality, to rename the South Service Road to Veterans Memorial Parkway. I had to go to every city the road went through get their consent. They were St. Charles, St. Peters, O'Fallon Lake St. Louis, Wentzville Foristell, Wright City and Warrenton. O'Fallon's dedication was November 11, 1999. Lake St. Louis dedication January 28, 2000, St Charles had an Ordinance for it June 28, 2000, Wright City dedication on July 4, 2002, Foristell on January 22, 2002, Warrenton dedication on November 11, 2002.

Mayor Paul F. Renaud of O'Fallon gave me a huge Veterans Memorial Parkway sign. Missouri Senator Bill Ruff gave me a large plaque commenting on all my efforts for the State of Missouri. I also received congratulation letters from State Senator Fred House, State Representative John Dolan and President Bill Clinton February 4, 2000.

I was part of the committee to rename the Page Avenue Bridge, connecting St. Louis County and St. Charles County. The new name is "Veterans Memorial Bridge".

My next dream was to have a Veterans Memorial in Lake St. Louis. Fortunately, the City donated four and a half acres for it. I had a picture in my mind of what it should look like. A large six point star on the ground with a flag of every service at each point. I got a committee of veterans together. We decided to sell bricks with Veterans names and information on it for \$100, also for other people who we would like to honor a love one. The dedication was on Armed Forces Day, May 17, 2008. I received another plaque from the State which I donated to the City to hang on their wall and also a plaque from the City. I have received many letters from people thanking me for all my efforts in getting this Memorial completed in Lake St. Louis. I thank God I was able to do it.

Rose and I now live at 1603 Prospect Village in Lake St. Louis and a smaller home.

My latest project is a Museum for Veterans in St. Charles County. The "St. Charles County Veterans Museum" will open April 2019 in O'Fallon, Mo.

Editor note: Unfortunately, Ralph died just three weeks before we got the keys to the building at 410 E. Elm Street in O'Fallon MO. The museum opened on schedule and we know Ralph and Rose is looking down and smiling.