



## The Story of A Flag.....

**I am an AMERICAN Flag!**

**Born of the cotton fields of our nation and woven in the mills of AMERICA by AMERICANS for AMERICANS.**

**I served our country during World War II in the South Pacific. It was my duty to fly as sentinel and symbol of freedom on a USN Minesweeper YMS-322. I honored the sailors on this ship by flying 24/7 as a constant signal to friend and foe that AMERICANS were on patrol.**

**I saw Guam a small but strategic island in the Pacific Campaign. Mounted at the bow of the ship I led my crew through harms way. This was a strange world from AMERICA. Beautiful tropical sunrises and sunsets against a background of the smoke and flames of war. The smell of exotic flowers mixed with diesel fuel and**

**gunpowder. And the unending loneliness of thousands of miles from family and home – AMERICA.**

**I flew the morning of the invasion and knew that freedom and AMERICA would prevail. I signaled help and safety to sailors along the way.**

**It was our job to go into the areas near the harbors and beaches that were heavily mined and make a safe passage for the landing crafts and support ships. We saved the lives of many of our landing forces.**

**Many of us did not come home. Lost in duty serving the fight for freedom. I was one of the lucky ones who found the consideration of a thoughtful sailor who cared for me and protected my return home with him to AMERICA.**

**War & duty take it's toll. I am not as complete or bright as when I started my service. All soldiers and sailors who serve in war leave something of themselves behind and many may not show their scars of battle. My colors may not be as bright and I have lost some of my size but I have survived to fly another day.**

**Today I am here to remind you that we must never forget the AMERICAN Nation and service people who honor and defend the flag, the symbol of our freedom and unity.**

**It is my duty to fly again. Here today to share my years and battle scars with those who would to soon forget what we risked and lost in that Great War.**

**But also as a reminder that 60 years later we still prevail.**

*By G. Blackburn March 20, 2003*