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## Seven siblings served in military, including six during World War II

By Lane Lambert  
The Patriot Ledger

Posted Nov 11, 2011 @ 08:42 AM

Last update Nov 11, 2011 @ 09:20 AM

### Video



[VIDEO: Hull Veteran Sarah Fine talks about her family](#)

Sixty-seven years later, Sarah Fine still remembers her pleas to enlist, and the “no” she repeatedly got from her father.

World War II was at its peak in 1944, and Henry and Mary Fishman had already seen four sons and a daughter join the Army, Navy, Army Air Corps and Coast Guard during the war. The Dorchester couple were reluctant to give their younger daughter permission to go.

To Sarah’s delight, her father relented when she turned 20. Two weeks after the Allies’ D-Day invasion of Normandy, she enlisted in the Coast Guard Women’s Reserve and was soon on her way to Palm Beach, Fla.

“I just wanted to go,” Fine said, as she leafed through wartime memorabilia in her Hull home. “My brothers and sisters were all in the service.”

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Fine’s Coast Guard enlistment gave her family a rare distinction. Even when many American families had two or more children in the military, the Fishmans sent more than almost anyone. Boston newspapers took notice.

The only Fishman child not in the service then was Sarah’s younger brother Milton, who wasn’t old enough. Milton served in the Navy during the Korean War.

“We were like the Sullivans,” Fine said, referring to the Iowa family famous for having five brothers serving together in the Navy after Japan’s 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

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Unlike the Sullivan sons, who all died after a submarine attack on the USS Juneau, the Fishmans all came home.

Now 86, Fine still remembers the determination of her brothers Abraham, Rubin, Hyman and Philip to join the fight after Pearl Harbor – her sister Sylvia, too.

“Everybody wanted to enlist,” Fine said.

Abe went to England with the Army medical corps. “Ruby” was there with an ordnance division. Hy was in Texas as an Air Force engineering officer. Philip was with the Navy in the Caribbean.

Her older sister Sylvia joined the Coast Guard SPARS reserve ahead of her. (SPARS is from the Coast Guard motto “Semper Paratus, Always Ready.”) Another sister, Eva Fishman, worked as a “Rosie the Riveter” at the Watertown Arsenal. Sarah’s fiancé, Philip Fine, was in the Army as well.

Sarah graduated from Roxbury Memorial High in 1941 and went to work at a Raytheon plant. A few weeks after she enlisted in the Coast Guard she was on duty in Palm Beach, taking care of supplies for Coast Guard patrol crews. (“We had hurricane after hurricane,” she recalled.)

Fine and thousands of other women in the Coast Guard Reserve, like their counterparts in the other services, weren’t near combat action. They were used to free men for active duty, and Fine was proud to be able to do that. It was her part in the war effort.

“I got to meet the man I relieved,” she said. “He was glad I was there.”

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She was stationed in Manhattan when the war ended with the 1945 surrenders of Germany and Japan. In 1946 she was the last of the “fighting Fishmans” to come home. She and Phil Fine married, had three children – one of whom is a Patriot Ledger sportswriter – and five grandchildren, including one who served in the Navy.

Only two of Sarah’s siblings are still living – Milton Fishman in Hull and Sylvia Katler in Randolph. When the three get together they still reminisce about their war years. Sarah Fine doesn’t attend national SPARS reunions, but she does treasure the old photos and memories – especially when Veterans Day rolls around.

“I just loved it,” she said.

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