

Coast Guard Station on Wabasso Beach
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I remember going to the Wabasso Beach Coast Guard Station several times with my dad, Emmitt Walker, bridge tender at Winter Beach Bridge during WWII.

The building was originally a hotel that was turned into a Coast Guard station during the War. There was a stable for the horses that the guardsmen rode as they patrolled the beach because there were German submarines and boats near the beach at times.

The Guardsmen were stationed at the draw bridges at Winter Beach, Wabasso, and Vero Beach. They had to stop all vehicles going both directions to see if anyone was going across the river that should not be there. Also they had to check all the boats that went through the channels and write down the names and numbers. This went on 24 hours a day. It seemed like there were always men in uniform around, although their uniforms were jeans, a denim shirt and a hat.

They were there so much we got to know them well and they became like family, eating many meals of fish, grits, and hushpuppies with us on their shifts. My mom never knew how many people to expect for each meal as whoever was there was invited to eat.

Many nights we had to have all lights out for "black out" so the enemies could not see where the shoreline was and people lived.

I remember it being fun, but us little ones did not know of the real danger of what was going on so we would not be afraid.