

1943 Victory Apron Still a Patriotic Icon

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In its 65th year, the USO continues its mission to deliver a touch of home to those serving in the military in a faraway place.

Organized in 1941 by President Franklin Roosevelt as a "Home Away from Home" for U.S. troops, the United Service Organizations (USO) is a non-governmental organization still run by civilian volunteers.

Throughout World War II, USO centers in over 3,000 communities provided the military with offerings as diverse as child care for military wives to a quiet place for talking, writing letters or receiving religious counsel to an off-duty place for dancing and socializing. And on hand to greet, comfort and serve a cup of free coffee, sandwiches and doughnuts, were the young women and ladies in their victory aprons.

As the icon of America's mothers, the apron symbolized the comfort and security of the home, with the red, white and blue Victory Apron a reminder of motherhood and the American home as patriotic symbols worth fighting for.

Printed and copyrighted in 1943 by McCall Corporation, the Victory Apron pattern was One Size and cost twenty-five cents. What would today be described as a beginner sewing project, the Victory Apron and its pocket variations could be easily sewn, either entirely by hand or machine stitched.

For sixty-five years, where America's men and women in the military have gone, the USO has gone. Today's USO continues this tradition at more than 120 USO centers worldwide, in order to fulfill its mission to U.S. military personnel and their families "Until Every One Comes Home." The Victory Apron is still a reminder of that mission.

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Visit <http://www.uso.org> for more information on this decades old, volunteer organization

For a Victory Apron pattern, contact EllynAnne Geisel a/k/a The Apron Lady, at 1.877.9.APRONS, email: ellynanne@apronmemories.com. To learn more about EllynAnne's love of all things "apron," visit <http://www.apronmemories.com>.

Ellyn Anne is the author of **THE APRON BOOK: Making, Wearing and Sharing a Bit of Cloth and Comfort**, Foreword by Ellen Levine, Editor in Chief, *Good Housekeeping*, is the quintessential apron resource, exploring the history, evolution and heyday of aprons with full-color photos of vintage and new aprons, patterns, recipes, tips on collecting and preserving these textile artifacts and pictures of apron-wearers and their apron memories. **THE APRON BOOK** is available September 2006 by Andrews McMeel, publisher. (<http://www.andrewsmcmeel.com/products/?isbn=0740761811>)