

“From my home at 111 Grand St., it usually took about five minutes to walk to the Mamaroneck train station, but that January day in 1943 it was not a normal day. Tony and I were on our way to Grand Central Station in New York, the first stop in our journey that would ultimately take us to North Africa and Italy. As we neared Columbus Park in the ‘village’, we could see and hear so many others from Mamaroneck saying their farewells. American flags were waving in the air, and yells of goodbye cracked through the screams and shouts. After saying our emotional goodbyes to our family, Tony and I walked onto the train. The excitement on the platform turned to an eerie silence as we all thought about the people we were leaving. As we pulled away from the station, I began to feel anxious and apprehensive. After a short while, the train stopped at Grand Central Station. We all transferred to a military train at Camp Upton in Long Island. After months of combat and physical training at Camp Upton and Fort Hood in Texas, my letters home began to reflect a change. They had an air of confidence that I was ready to do my job.”

Excerpt from prize winning essay, Thoughts of John J. Marsella, by his nephew, Matt Schumer, MHS Class of 2006