



Walter Westhues

Dates of service: About 1943-46

Rank & role: EM1c, Electrician

Unit: USS Corson (AVP-37)

Familial link to William & Theresa: Third Generation through Ben & Viola Westhues

Walter enlisted in the navy because he did not want to be drafted by the army. He spent about two years in Corpus Christi, Texas before he deployed on a ship that made fresh water for other ships. He spent most of the time around the Japan area. He told the story of standing at the stern of his ship and a bomb exploded behind the ship, causing him to be thrown to the ceiling and knocked unconscious. He was in both places where the Atomic bomb was dropped, the first ship in one of the places. He and some of the sailors went on shore and Walt said the most of that group was dead in ten years. When the war ended, his ship helped the POWs that Japan freed. He said they were very skinny, but very happy and excited to be freed and kept saying, "Thank you, Sailor". Many were so excited and happy that their bodies could not take it and they would die right in the sailor's arms.

In one of my conversations with Walter he told me he was a boxer while in the navy. He indicated he had some success, but gave it up after pulverizing one of his opponents and feeling a great deal of remorse and after realizing he could very well be in that person's shoes in the future. Can't imagine getting hit by one of Walter's fist, it would be like getting hit with a sledge hammer.