Living History â€“ Dick Rohde

Description

I had the honor of spending yesterday afternoon with a man who was a part of the last naval battle: The Battle Off Samar. I blogged about this battle here on the 60th anniversary of the battle.

Richard Rohde was a radioman aboard the USS SAMUEL B ROBERTS (DE-413) on Oct 25th, 1944. The battle is well documented in Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailorsâ€• by James Hornfischer.

Imagine running at full speed towards the YAMATO, all 68,000 tons, in a 1745 ton destroyer escort. Itâ€™s somewhat of a skewed battle, taking 2 5â€³/38 caliber guns up against 9 18.1â€³ guns.

The battle is the last naval battle to have taken place, and it was a fierce one. Dick was there, and was wounded, and then suffered throught two days in the shark infested waters off Leyte Gulf before being rescued. He graciously spent almost 5 hours with me, sharing some stories, and listening to a few of mine, and itâ€™s amazing how so much of Navy life is still the same.

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One man killed that day aboard the â€œSammie Bâ€• was Paul Henry Carr. I was XO aboard USS CARR (FFG-52), which is what has made the opportunity to meet Dick a special occassion, as I have heard something of Paul, who won the Silver Star for his heroism that day and to get a sense of the battle that day.

It was a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

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