# Iwo Jima Survivors

## Description

Navy
Image via Wikipedia

He walked slowly through the tables, as I stood to gather my backpack full of stuff and leave.Ã,  An older gentleman, wearing a blue ball cap bearing the title of this postâ€™s title.Ã,  As I stepped into the room, rather than to the door, my two friends, neither of them vets, looked quizzically at me, but I kept moving, standing a respectful few feet, while he reached for the chair back, indicating he was at the table of his choosing, I stepped up and asked to shake his hand and thank him.Ã,  He smiled and allowed me to do so.

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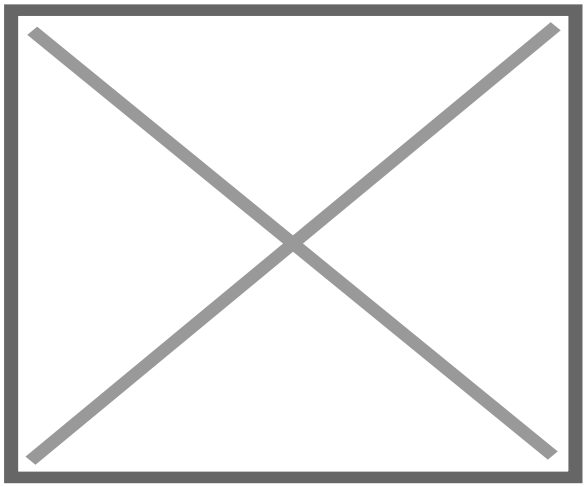
Making the basic assumption that he was one of the few and the Proud, but not set on it, I asked what he had done there.Ã,  He said â€œAmphibs.Ã,  I took the Marines ashore.â€•Ã,  About this time, another gentleman, also elderly arrived beside us and reached out to shake the first manâ€™s hand and said with a smile on his face, not to large, but more of a knowing one.Ã,  He said â€œ5th Marines.â€•

So there I was, thanking one man for his service at that difficult battle, and I managed to be able to thank two of them.



From the USS BOSTON (CA-69) Blog (click to get there)

We chatted for a few moments.Ã,  He had joined the Navy in 1940, was assigned to a destroyer (I missed the name), was a radioman and had been in the Battle of Midway, screening the USS ENTERPRISE (CV-6), and later commissioned USS BOSTON (CA-69).Ã,  What ever his assignment was in 1945, he took that Marines ashore as said â€œI was on Red Beach.â€•Ã,  I handed him my card as I told him a week from today, the old war horses would gather for breakfast and to talk and enjoy each otherâ€™s company, and Iâ€™d be happy to give him a lift (he doesnâ€™t drive any longer).Ã,

He rattled off a list of the campaigns he had been in and they were the many big ones.Ã,  He did his time all in the Pacific, all on sea duty, all in the fight.Ã,  He mentioned, but only in one sentence, that he spent 20 some years in the Air Force.

I then asked if the lady sitting at the far end of the table was his wife, and he said yes, of 56 years, proudly told me.Ã,  He then added a story of how he bought her engagement ring in Pearl Harbor, and then carried it in his shirt pocket, in case the ship sank, until he could mail it home to his mother.Ã,  It took two months to get there, and his mom slipped it on his then fianceeâ€™s finger, I believe he said at Christmas, and they were married in 1946.Ã,  I went over and thanked her for sharing him with me so patiently and let her, and his daughter know about this coming Saturday.Ã,  His daughter, whom he pointed out had been an Air Force Nurse, said, â€œDad, I think youâ€™d really enjoy that.â€•Ã,  I made sure she had my card, too.

And, in doing a little homework for links here, I found, via the USS BOSTON Blog mentioned above, that a son of one of the Plank Owners, William Kelly, a Signalman, wrote a book based on their Fatherâ€™s story:Ã,  â€œA Birdâ€™s Eye View.â€•

Weâ€™ll seeâ€¦.oh, and that night, I met a 21 year Army Vet, a Green Beret, who flared up when I mentioned Khe Shan, commenting how they didnâ€™t believe the Special Forces Camp really had tanks in the wireâ€¦..

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