

## Jerry D. Lewis



Jerry D. Lewis  
Nov. 18, 1925 - Jan. 26, 2019

On Jan. 26, 2019, my father, Jerry D. Lewis, age 93, went home to be with the Lord. He fought courageously against cancer for many years. He was surrounded by his family and passed peacefully. Jerry was kept at his home and passed there in his room.

Jerry was the only child born to Jesse Franklin Lewis and Arlys Clara Meeks who preceded him in deaths. He was born in Diamond, MO., and shortly thereafter moved to Washington state.

He enlisted in the Navy at 16. In October 1942, in Seattle, Wash., he was inducted. He was discharged in January 1946 in Bremerton, Wash., with the Rank of RM 2/C and with many numerous medals including the Purple Heart. He was aboard the U.S.S. Frankford DD297, a newly commissioned destroyer.

He was in every major seaport up and down the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of the United States through the Panama Canal three times, across the Atlantic ocean six times, across the Pacific ocean twice, in nine different oceans or seas, 13 islands, 12 countries, and four major battles.

Our major battles were fighting off a German Submarine Wolf Pack in the North Atlantic, the invasion of Normandy, the invasion of southern France and the Battle for Okinawa in the Pacific. On arriving in Boston on Oct. 3, 1944 to the Boston Navy Yard, my father was to say goodbye to the U.S.S. Frankford and her crew.

He was given three weeks leave and orders to report for duty aboard the U.S.S. Harding upon return. Training was completed on Jan. 31 and Harding sailed for San Francisco arriving Feb. 1, 1945. On Feb. 4, 1945, Harding got underway for Pearl Harbor. On March 19, Harding set course for Okinawa Jima.

They arrived on March 24, 1945, and began mine sweeping operations. On April 1, "April Fools Day" and "The D-Day Invasion of Okinawa," they reported to task group 51.5 for duty in the screen around Okinawa and was assigned shore side Harassment Fire.

On April 16, "A date that will live with Jerry always" they joined the Submarine Patrol.

Four Val Dive Bombers approached the area. After setting one Val ablaze the second Val went into a shallow dive for the Harding Bridge blowing a hole in Harding's starboard forward side. As a result of this action, 22 shipmates were killed and nine were wounded, including Jerry.

The Harding was prepared for the inactive fleet, ceremonies were held and the Valiant U.S.S. Harding DMS28 was scrapped on April 16, 1947. Her crew members were ordered to other duty stations. As luck would have it on Aug. 14, 1945 "I was downtown San Francisco in the good old U.S.A. at about 3:00 pm when all hell broke loose, the war was over!"

On Nov. 5 orders were cut and Jerry left for Seattle, WA staying on the Navy Base in Bremerton, WA. He was there for a month checkup and evaluation before being turned loose on the general public. He was awarded and authorized the following medals as a result of Combat Zones during WWII:

- European-African M.E. area Campaign Medals with three battle stars
- Atlantic- Pacific Campaign Medal, one star
- American Area Campaign Medal
- Navy Good Conduct Medal
- Purple Hear Medal
- WWII Victory Commemorative Meal
- Bicentennial Memorial and Medal
- French-. Normandy Medal

Jerry worked for Standard Oil Co. of California and Alaska 1947-1986.

He was a flight school operator from 1947 - 1979. His first love was. airplanes. He had his share of them. From big twin engine aircraft to his cubs. He flew until 90 years of age and then called it quits. We would make our weekly trips to the airfield and just sit and watch takeoffs and landings.

Jerry is survived by his three children Dean, David and Debra. His "greatest gifts" he says are his grandchildren, Jerid and Crystal and great-grand-child Callen James Lewis.; his sister Vivian; two brothers Vern and Leon; the mother of his children, Betty.

His copilot wife and love preceded him in death, Anita Lewis. They both are flying high once again.