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Per.3

James Ellington

Navy/Boiler Tender 2nd class

1945-1954

2017

James Ellington's Story

James Ellington was born in May 26, 1927 in Richmond, Indiana. When he was in his Sophomore and Junior years in high school he lived with his Aunt and Uncle on their farm. He worked for his uncle at the farm. When he was in high school World War II was happening. When he graduated he enlisted in the U.S Navy because he did not want to be drafted to the U.S Army. He was eighteen years old when he enlisted. On June 19, 1945 he left for bootcamp at the U.S Naval Training Center in Sampson, New York. He stayed at bootcamp for three months.

They had white uniforms that had to stay clean at all times. When they first arrived they got three white hats and uniforms that had to be washed everyday. One of his fellow recruits stole two of his hats, so he had to keep that one clean for the three months he was at basic training, this type of playful like behaviour within the recruits were necessary for the stressful environment the recruits are faced with at bootcamp. An unfortunate memory of basic training he has is that a fellow recruit committed suicide because he couldn't handle all the discipline. As an example of the hardships of their training one of the most memorable things they had to adjust to according to Ellington was what they had to consume which was dehydrated potatoes and eggs,

one can only imagine what it must be like to be constantly eating the same foods on a daily basis during world war 1.

As an 18 year old seaman Ellington experienced being on a ship and traveling on the train. one of his duty stations was Japan during the Korean war. One prank he remembers is that he was sleeping and one of his bunk mates woke him up saying that they were calling him on deck. He ran out and no one was calling him. He went back in the room and everyone was laughing. This happened at San Pedro while he was waiting to be shipped out. Another memory he has is that in a really bad storm a kid got washed over board because he was wearing wooden slippers that were not permitted on deck. That boy was lucky they saw him floating and they sent the helicopter to get him out of the sea. Another memory he has from is that they sent off an aircraft during the Korean war it got shot down. They were able to recover the body and they kept it in a cooler til they got back to Japan. They were able to stay in touch with family by letter. The letters would have to catch up to them and there were huge piles of them. Ellington went into in the Korean war from June 19,1951 to October 6, 1952.

He looked up to an older fellow on the first ship he was on in World War II. They were passing the time zone and it was New Years but they got it twice. They celebrated the second one. They mixed 100% proof alcohol and fruit juice to celebrate. They got really drunk even though they had to be on watch duty the next morning. The 3rd class petty officer was too drunk to stand watch and was busted down to 1st class fireman. He said that was the most fun time they had on the ship.

After the World War 2 he was discharged from the Navy. He was excited to be discharged. On there way back to the states they traveled through the Panama Canal and anchored in Orange,

Texas. He never thought there was pressure in the military. He never made any close friendships in the military. He traveled from New Orleans to Chicago on the Panama Limited train. It was a non stop, one night journey. He was discharged at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Chicago.

In San Diego after returning from the Korean War he bought one of his shipmates motorcycle. He meet his wife Sandy at the shop they were at. She would go there to see the boys with their motorcycles with one of her friends. Sandy and James soon moved to Kodiak, Alaska after his discharge from the Navy where they got married had their first son, and got his first car. He got a job in the Navy in a testing lab doing test compression for concrete. He also designed concrete mixes. Later on, he moved back to his hometown where he had his daughter but couldn't find a job. He and his wife managed to save \$1000 while in Alaska and soon got a job in product development working for National Automatic Tool Company. He worked there for 13 years.

In 1967, he moved him and his family to California because it was his favorite place. He loved the weather, it was hot in the day but it would always cool down at night which never happened in Indiana where he grew up . As the years passed on and his kids grew older him and Sandy lived their lives. Sandy was an obedience teacher for dogs, he remembers her coming home and saying "I've fallen in love with a pure breed!".

Sadly, Sandy always had health problems and would always go to the Loma Linda hospital. One day James and Sandy were supposed to go out to dinner together but she said she wasn't feeling well and he took her to Loma Linda where she passed. The way he was told that she passed hurt us the most. While teaching a sunday school class, he meet his second wife and her

husband. He died in November of 1996 and Sandy died in January of 1997. They both married each other in October of 1998.

Today, James is 90 years old serving a total of 9 years and 2 months in the Navy. He is a Bergeron of two wars he fought and was a hero. He was awarded the China service medal and the occupation medal. He received a letter from President Harry Truman and also got a medal from South Korea. Back then they weren't allowed to have foreign medals from foreign countries. James Ellington made me have a whole new perspective of veterans. They may have just been doing their jobs but they fought for our future and if they didn't who knows if we would even be here today. He is proud to be a sailor and a veteran and always will be. Thank you for serving us and thank you for changing our future. He is proud to be a sailor and a veteran and always will be.