



**Gene
Kircher**
Marine Corps

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Sep 30, 1925 -

BIRTHPLACE: St. Louis, Missouri

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Marine Corps, 4th PNRBN

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Oct 15, 1943 - Nov 10, 1945

HONORED BY: Wife, Wilma Marie Kircher

BIOGRAPHY

Gene was born in St Louis, MO and lived on the South side. In June 1943 he graduated from Southwest High School. As he was 18 years he realized that he would be drafted, probably in the Army, so he made the decision that he would serve in the Marines. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on Oct 15, 1943 in St Louis, MO. He was sent to the Marine Corps Base in San Diego California. After completing Boot Camp he was ordered to Camp Pendleton, CA for Infantry training. On the 31st of December 1943, he was assigned to the Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 20th Marines, 4th Marine Division and promoted to PFC. He then joined the 4th Pioneer Battalion, The Pioneers were the Combat Engineers of the Marines. On 13 January 1944 he boarded the USS Doyen at San Diego, CA. The 4th Marine Division was the only Marine Division to leave the United States and go directly into combat. They landed on Roi and Namur, Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands on 31 January 1944. After the battle on 14 Feb he boarded LST #274 at Roi and Namur and sailed to Pearl Harbor and on to Maui, Hawaii, they embarked on 12 May 1944 aboard the USS LaSalle and sailed. From Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii. Landing on 15 June 1944 at Saipan, Marianas Islands and participated in the battles of Saipan and Tinian. Again after the battles he embarked on the USS Typhoon 10 Aug 1944 and returned to Maui on 25 Aug 1944. Again retraining for the next operation. Once again he embarked aboard the USS Hinsdale at Maui 27 Jan 1945 and sailed from Pearl Harbor after a few days at sea they learned that the next objective was Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands. In Feb 1945 he landed on Iwo Jima and struggled up the beach assisting in the demolition of the Japanese fortifications. He made it through the landings, but on 20 Feb 1945, he received mortar fragments in his legs and arms. Shortly after being wounded by mortars he was hit by rifle fire in the left arm between the elbow and shoulder. The bullet went right through his arm but missed the bone and damaged the nerves. He was evacuated by LCVP to APA 192 for medical care. After their treatment he was transferred on 26 Feb 1945 to the hospital ship USS Pinkney APH2. Upon arrival at Pearl Harbor. He was transferred to the US Naval Hospital at Aehi Heights. He was sent to Maui for recuperation before being sent home. On 12 Oct 1945, he boarded USS Admiralty Islands, CVE #99. Arriving in San Diego on 18 Oct 1945 and processing in San Diego, he was sent to Naval Station,

Great Lakes, IL for discharge. In a short period of 13 months he had fought in three tough battles. He was discharged on 10 Nov 1945. His awards included the Purple Heart, American Theater, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign with 3 Presidential Unit Citation Ribbons with two stars. He is entitled to wear the Combat Action Ribbon.