



**Leo
Kepka**
Navy

Leo Kepka

Mar 4, 1926 - May 26, 1986

BIRTHPLACE: Wilson, KS

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Second Class Petty Officer

**DIVISION: Navy, Amphibious division of the 5th -
Marine Corps**

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Sep 3, 1943 - Apr 26, 1946

BATTLE: Iwo Jima

**HONORED BY: His children: Terry Kepka, Doug
Kepka, Linda Kohls & Cindy Jackson**

BIOGRAPHY

Leo Kepka was a radioman for the US Navy in the Pacific theater. He was part of the 5th Division aboard the USS Hansford, Leo's job was to set up communications and to radio out to the line of departure as to how things were going, On Iwo Jima, Kepka and his group went ashore on CATS that were like small tanks, they were treaded and would go from the water up unto the shore. His group was to land on Beach Red against heavy shelling. His tank was hit and went down however, Kepka made it to beach and reunited with part of his group. Leo and two other communication men were in a shell hole with sand bags around the top, working to get a message out, that the Lieutenant in charge had been killed and to send in a new person to command. A mortar exploded on or near the foxhole killing Kepka's two partners and severely wounding him. Dr. Richard Haw the medic that tended to Kepka describes what he found. "Kepka told me to tend to the others first. They looked bad and I would hate to have to describe them to either of their families. Leo had part of his helmet blown away. The shell fragments had gone through and he was bleeding profusely. I put pressure on what I presumed was his carotid artery from the area of the wound. Part of his ear was gone but I couldn't control the bleeding so I took a clamp and put on the carotid artery. That slowed things down." Leo was taken back to the ship. The medic presumed he did not make it but Leo did live and returned home, married and had a family. See more of Leo Kepka story in attached documents.