

# Richard Edward Kraus

## **Born**

24 November 1925, Cook County, Chicago, Illinois

## **Conflict and Branch**

**World War II** – U.S. Marine Corps Reserve - Private First Class

## **Entered Service**

24 December, 1943, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota  
8<sup>th</sup> Amphibious Tractor Battalion  
Fleet Marine Force



## **Death**

3 October 1944, Peleliu, Palau Islands

## **Early Years**

Richard Edward Kraus was born to Hazel M. (Peters) and August Nicholas Kraus, November 24, 1925 in Cook County, Chicago, Illinois<sup>i</sup>. In the following years, the family, consisting of Richard and his sister, Yvonne, moved to Minnesota, possibly because August was originally from Minnesota and Hazel was from North Dakota.

## **War Years**

Richard E. Kraus moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, when he was seven years old. He attended Edison High School there and was inducted into the Marine Corps on his 18th birthday, after previously trying to enlist<sup>ii</sup>. His first combat action was during the Marine Corps' assault on Peleliu in the fall of 1944 as part of a unit attached to the 1st Marine Division. Extensive training for Marines was necessary to enable them to cope with the psychological and physical shock and stress encountered on Peleliu. Combat conditions for the Marines were considered the most extreme of the southern Pacific conflicts. The lack of clean water, high temperature and humidity, on an island that were mainly consisted of coral, made for nearly unbearable conditions.

On the occasion of his heroism and death, he was serving as an amphibious tractor driver with the 8<sup>th</sup> Amphibious Tractor Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, which participated in the D-Day landings on Peleliu. He and his three companions had accepted a volunteer mission to evacuate a wounded fellow Marine from the front lines.<sup>iii</sup> With a stretcher, the four penetrated the lines over some distance being met with an intense shower of hand grenade fire, which forced them to take cover. Upon returning to the rear, the party

of four were approached by two men, who they believed to be Marines. Requesting the password and with no vocal response, they proved to be Japanese, and one of the enemy responded by throwing a hand grenade towards the four Marines. PFC Kraus unhesitatingly using his body to block the force of the grenade and giving his life to save his three comrades.

He had been overseas for only three months at the time of his death. PFC Kraus was also awarded the Purple Heart.<sup>iv</sup>

## Post War Years

Private Richard Edward Kraus, posthumous recipient of the Nation's highest military tribute. This award was presented to his mother on August 2 1945, by Col. Norman E. True, District Marine Officer for the North Naval District<sup>v</sup>.

Private Kraus was initially buried in the U.S. Armed forces Cemetery on Peleliu, Palau Islands. A request by his parent for his body to be transferred to the US and on November 8, 1948, at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, Minnesota, became his final resting place in Section DS, Site 61-N.<sup>vi</sup> Official citation for Private Richard E. Kraus was signed by President Harry S, Truman.

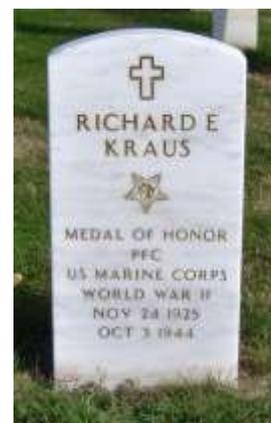
The Gearing-class destroyer USS Richard E. Kraus (DD-849) was named in his memory and served with the United States Navy from 1946 to 1976.<sup>vii</sup>



The USS Richard E. Kraus (DD849)



PFC Richard E. Kraus is one of three Minnesota Medal of Honor recipients from the Northeast Twin Cities who are named on the Anoka County Veteran's memorial at Bunker Hills Anoka County Park in Coon Rapids, Minnesota.<sup>viii</sup>



Photos of USS Richard E. Kraus (DD849) <http://www.navsourc.org/archives/05/849.htm>  
Grave Marker courtesy of Dave Vangness "Find A Grave" contributor

**Compiles by Dianne Lawson  
Josiah Edson Northfield Chapter, DAR**

## **References**

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<sup>i</sup> 1930 United States Federal Census

<sup>ii</sup> [http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus\\_RE.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus_RE.aspx)

<sup>iii</sup> [http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus\\_RE.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus_RE.aspx)

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.militaryhallofhonor.com/honoree-record.php?id=1489>

<sup>v</sup> [http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus\\_RE.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Who's%20Who/J-L/Kraus_RE.aspx)

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.militaryhallofhonor.com/honoree-record.php?id=1489>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://theirfinesthour.net/2014/10/richardkraus>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ParrisIslandMarinesPage>