

**Eugene William
Rudomanski**

"Rudy" "Gene"

103 Duke Street

Track 1, 3; Dance Commit-
tee 3; Latin Club 2, 3.



Friend and Classmate

This is the story of one of the heroes of Kearny High School. I wonder how many of the alumni has knowledge of this very fine young man.

His name is Eugene W. Rudomanski. When he attended KHS, he was known as Gene or Rudy. Rudy graduated in the class of June 1942

I had known Rudy since Junior High. Rudy lived on Duke Street just north of Davis Avenue. I lived on Davis Avenue between Wilson and Bergen Avenues. He and I spent most of our time ice skating together in West Hudson Park. We also met at the Hudson or Regent Theaters on Saturdays. Just a little hand holding. Of course, that was after the lights went down. Rudy would have to pass my house on the walk to KHS so we would walk together. He was a very sweet guy, I had a big crush on him. I think he really liked my best friend Mary better than me, but Mary went to St Cecelia's High and Mary did not ice skate. Yeah!! I was happy to be second best at the time. Besides, Rudy was a very good student. He studied a lot. I wanted to go to proms, etc. I did just that. We remained good friends. Things were different then, we didn't have go "steady" or what ever the terminology is now. We were very innocent. It was far less stressful and much more fun then it seems to be now.

That is the back -round of two people who were friends from the seventh grade through high school.

Rudy wanted to follow his uncle's path and become a doctor. (Dr. Victor Rudomanski). Ouch!!! Another shot!!!! Dr Rudomanski was the local pediatrician.

However, WWII was in full swing so Rudy went into the Navy before he could pursue that dream.

By 1943 I had met a young man from an other town and we became engaged. He was also in the Navy. My husband had done time aboard an aircraft carrier in the Atlantic and was involved in the Northern African Invasion. After we were married, I was able to join him at several Naval Stations around the country.

Near the end of the war we were home on leave. I ran into Rudy's sister Victoria. I was very happy to see her and have the chance to ask about Rudy. I was stunned to find out that Rudy was listed missing in action somewhere in the Pacific. Victoria was very upset and could not say much about her brother. I remember her saying that the Navy had not released very much information. That was not unusual at the time. I left Victoria with a heavy heart. I knew his family was devastated.

Finally, the war was over. There were many decisions to be made in our lives. The main decision was for us was, that my husband going to remained in the Navy. So we were off on our own adventures for quite a few years. Going home to Kearny was rare and for very short periods. I tried to keep up with the news of my friends. But eventually I lost track of my old friends. It is something I will always regret but it seems to happened to many of us. . .more so, if you have to leave town.

My husband retired from the Navy and we settled in Indianapolis, IN. Why??? My husband worked with the Blue Angels while he was in the Navy. General Motors supplied the engineers to trouble shoot the navy engines. Allison division of General Motors, Indianapolis. They were aware of my husband's retirement from the Navy and offered him a job in Indianapolis.

Huh? Where????

I need the shore, Taylors Ham, New York City, tomato pie, (pizza), soccer, etc.

But here I am, my second home in Indianapolis. Kearny, as I knew it will always be home to me.

Over the years I have often thought about Rudy. I always wondered if his family ever found out where and how he died, but I never heard anymore about him. I thought it would be too painful to his family for me to write and ask about him. I realize now, it would have been the right thing to do. Live and learn.

In 2000 the Indianapolis Star carried a story about the USS Indianapolis and the exoneration of its skipper Capt. Charles B. McVay. I read the account with interest of a former career navy wife. I decided to read the book, In Harm's Way: The sinking of the USS Indianapolis.

Several days before it was attacked, the Indianapolis, a 610 foot long cruiser, had delivered components for the first atomic bomb to be used in the war - the one dropped on Hiroshima, Japan - to the island of Tinian in the South Pacific .

A few minutes after midnight on July 30, 1945, the USS Indianapolis was hit by two Japanese torpedoes. It was four days before rescuers arrived . Of a crew of 1,197 , only 317 survived the shark-infested waters.

I realized why it was a story most people wanted to forget. U.S. Navy officials court-martialed Capt. McVay for wrong doing causing the sinking of the USS Indianapolis.

In the back of the book there is a list of the crew members I was amazed to find my friend, Eugene W. Rudomanski RT2, listed as a part of the crew.

In down town Indianapolis there is a memorial honoring the ill-fated cruiser and its crew.

This year on veterans day, November 11, 2006 the governor of Indiana announced the Indiana World War Memorial in Indianapolis will house a permanent museum dedicated to the USS Indianapolis. The ship's survivors and others have looked for a permanent space to display memorabilia and artifacts from the ship. The museum will detail the tragedy as well as the history of the ship. It was commissioned in 1932. Ironically in New Jersey.

It is amazing to me that when Rudy and I were growing up in Kearny I had no knowledge of Indianapolis, Indiana. (He may have, he studied a lot). But here we are, in a sense in the same city. Home port, at last.

Read the book, it is an astounding story.

Kearny High School should honor this hero. If anyone has any memories of Rudy, please tell us about them.

Thank you for letting me tell you my story about an old friend.

Rita Gould Ringwood
Class of 1943