

JUNE 2024

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LEATHERNECK

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Why do Marines
Pay Homage at the
Bulldog Fountain?

Warrior Shield—
Exercise Strengthens
ROK-U.S. Alliance

Unseen Injuries:
3/5 in Iraq and the
Impact of Combat



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**MARINE
RAIDERS**

From the Publisher & Editor-in-Chief



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

After the Normandy D-Day landing on June 6, 1944, Marine Col Richard H. Jeschke, second from the right, who was an observer during the landing, went ashore with LtGen Omar Bradley, left, and MajGen J. Lawton Collins, second from the left.

Remembering Belleau Wood, Iraq and Operation Overlord

June marks our remembrance of one of the Corps' touchstone battles, Belleau Wood. Although no veterans of this bloody fight in the First World War remain with us today, in many ways the legacy of this battle still represents the emergence of the modern Marine Corps. We present on page 36 "Return With the Elixir: The Psychology of Pilgrimages to the Devil Dog Fountain" by Heather A. Warfield, Ph.D. The author looks at the motivations of the many Marines who travel to France to visit the battlefield and drink from the bulldog fountain in the town of Belleau. Taking an opportunity to "turn the map around," on page 50, Colonel William T. Anderson, USMCR (Ret) looks at the battle of Les Mares Farm, which preceded the fighting at Belleau Wood, from the perspective of the German troops who would face the Marines.

This month, we also present two book excerpts that provide exceptional firsthand accounts of Marines fighting in Iraq in the early 2000s. On page 18, "Hide and Seek" describes the urban fighting in Iraq in 2006 from a scout sniper's perspective as told in veteran Marine Brian Cramer's book "Suffer Patiently." On page 60, you'll find an excerpt from veteran NBC war correspondent Chip Reid's book "Battle Scars," which recounts his time on the ground with the Marines of "Dark Horse" 3rd Battalion,

5th Marines during the early phases of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to recognize the 80th anniversary of the June 6, 1944, D-Day landings of Operation Overlord. This historic combined amphibious and airborne invasion of Normandy, France by the Allies began the liberation of Nazi-controlled Europe. The ultimate victory of the forces of freedom and democracy was far from assured, but those who we now call the "greatest generation" persevered for another year and gained the victory that would help create the world we know today. Although they are very few, we remember the Marines who were part of Overlord, like Colonel, later Brigadier General, Richard H. Jeschke, a combat veteran of Guadalcanal who served as the Force G-3 and assistant planning officer for the Western Naval Task Force. I recommend the Marine Corps History Division's commemorative pamphlet "A Different War: Marines in Europe and North Africa" by Lieutenant Colonel Harry W. Edwards, USMC (Ret) for more accounts of these Marines who served on D-Day. Semper Fidelis.

Colonel Christopher Woodbridge,
USMC (Ret)



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By Brian Cramer

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By Heather A. Warfield, Ph.D.

Every year, leathernecks flock to France to take a swig of World War I history in the town of Belleau. Read how this fountain became a landmark and why Marines young and old still make the journey to visit it.

50 The Germans at Les Mares Farm

By Col William T. Anderson, USMCR (Ret)

The Germans were closing in on Paris in the spring of 1918. Learn about their failures at Les Mares Farm against the U.S. Marines, which helped set the stage for the bloody battle of Belleau Wood.

60 Battle Scars

By Chip Reid

NBC journalist Chip Reid was embedded with 3rd Bn, 5th Marines at the beginning of the war in Iraq in 2003. Twenty years later, he interviewed those Marines again to tell their stories in the book “Battle Scars.”



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COVER: The bulldog fountain is located in the town of Belleau, France. Read “Return With the Elixir: The Psychology of Pilgrimages to the ‘Devil Dog’ Fountain,” on page 36 to learn more about why this landmark has become an iconic part of Marine Corps lore. Photo by Cpl Alexander Sturdivant, USMC. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$3 (for mailing costs) to Leatherneck Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

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Letter of the Month

(Leatherneck will pay \$25 for a "Sound Off Letter of the Month" submitted by an MCA member or provide a one-year courtesy subscription to a non-member whose letter is selected.)

One thing Marines do very well is recognize the sacrifice that Marines and members of our other branches of service have made. We see the honoring of national holidays such as Veterans Day and Memorial Day as a routine way of saying thank you. One could even say it's almost second nature to us because we see how easily it could have been one of us being honored.

I have the honor and privilege of being involved in one such memorial service every year in Marana, Ariz. Twenty-four years ago on April 8, 2000, a V-22 Osprey crashed during a night training mission at Marana Regional Airport. The result of the tragedy was the loss of the platoon on board and the air crew—19 Marines.

Every year, on the Saturday closest to

April 8, members of the town of Marana, Ariz., and Marine Corps League Detachment Nighthawk 72 (named for the call sign on the downed aircraft) 1344 with assistance from Tucson Detachment 007 and LCpl Joshua Lucero Detachment No. 1469, hold a memorial service recognizing the 19 fallen Marines. One of the greatest benefits of the memorial is the healing power it has had for many who have attended.

Those attending the service included many members of the community who were directly affected by the tragic accident. From 911 operators on duty that evening, members of the fire and rescue crews who responded, to neighbors of the airfield itself who saw the accident. In the audience were also members of the Marines from 2nd MAW accompanying Nighthawk 72 and family members of the 19 lost servicemembers.

There is one common factor with all involved. They are all thankful for the memorial and how they feel the Marines' memories are kept alive. This alone is

enough for me to continue my involvement. It's one thing I can do personally as a way to say thanks to this group of Marines who paid the ultimate sacrifice so close to where I lived for almost 30 years of my life.

There are many places around the country who have a similar story. Honoring members of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in sacrifice to our country, whether in combat or in training for combat. If you can be involved, I encourage you to do so. Even if it's just one hour a year to say thank you to someone who agreed to place themselves in harm's way to protect our freedom.

Mike Flynn
Bozeman, Mont.

Thank you for sharing this story and most importantly, thank you for all you do to honor our fallen comrades. Semper Fidelis.—Publisher

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10 TIPS TO MAKE YOUR MILITARY MOVE SMOOTHER

For service members and their families, moving is a natural part of life — and a perk that offers opportunities to experience new destinations and cultures. It's exciting, but it can also be expensive if not done correctly. And those added expenses can lead to financial hardships.

When your next PCS comes, will you make money, lose money or break even? That's a very common question in military circles. In fact, some military members lose thousands of dollars each PCS due to unreimbursed moving expenses and damage to belongings.

These 10 tips can help make your next PCS less financially and emotionally stressful.

1. START A PCS FUND:

USAA recommends all service members maintain a PCS fund worth at least \$2,000 plus whatever is required for expenses the military won't cover — things like moving an RV, boat or other items that can't be included in your household goods shipment. Have a plan to replenish this fund before the next PCS arrives.

2. DECIDE ON YOUR TYPE OF MOVE:

Will it be a full military move, a personally procured move (PPM), or a combination of both? If you are doing a PPM, make sure the military allowance covers your moving costs, so you aren't out of pocket. No matter your choice, make sure your household items are properly insured.

3. USE YOUR PER DIEM WISELY:

If you live a five-star lifestyle during your three-star, military-funded relocation, you can easily go into debt. Before you move, know the per-diem rates, so you can plan each day and stay within your budget.

Scan this QR code or follow this [link](#) to review the rest of our PCS tips and also access USAA's personalized moving checking that can help you with your next move.



Leatherneck

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President/CEO,

Marine Corps Association

LtGen Charles G. Chiarotti, USMC (Ret)

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

Col Christopher Woodbridge, USMC (Ret)

Executive Editor: Nancy S. Lichtman

Deputy Editor: Kipp Hanley

Copy Editor: Lauren Jeter

Staff Writer: Kyle Watts

Editorial Assistant

Briesa Koch

Art Director: Jason Monroe

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134

Phone: (703) 640-0115

Email: leatherneck@mca-marines.org

Web page: www.mca-marines.org/magazines/
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COURTESY OF PETER M. CLAY

**PFC George C. Browning was killed in
action in 1945 on Iwo Jima. His remains
were recently identified by the DPAA in
June 2019.**

Reader Follows Up

Thank you all for publishing my
letter regarding my uncle PFC George
Browning in the April 2024 issue of
Sound Off. He is the principal reason
why I joined our beloved Corps, as he
left me all his World War II savings
bonds. These allowed me to pay my way
through college as my father had passed
away when I was in the 8th grade. Upon
graduating from college, I applied to our
Corps and was accepted at OCS. After
completing OCS in December 1965, I was
commissioned, and after TBS, became
an air traffic controller.

As for my uncle's story, I am pleased to
report that his remains were disinterred
on March 6, 2024, and are on the way to
the lab in Hawaii. Hopefully, they will
match his DNA with the samples my aunt
and I sent in 2019, and he will be sent
home to be buried next to his mother. I
will advise you when this happens.

Peter M. Clay
Irvington, Va.

*Just as we were going to press, we were
updated on this story. On April 17, the
family was notified that PFC Browning's
remains have been identified. Burial
information is still pending.—Executive
Editor*

More on the Camp Lejeune Justice Act

With all the publicity on the toxic
waters at Camp Lejeune, the terminus
of the act is fast approaching in August
2024. The Camp Lejeune Justice Act was

passed in August 2022 and the period
was for 2 years. With dates from 1953-
1987, it is possible that a Marine could
have entered service in 1983-1984 and
after basic training at Parris Island and
beginning ACT (Advanced Combat
Training), during those years, would only
be 60-62 years old by now. They may not
develop cancer or Parkinson's Disease
for another 10-15 years and wouldn't be
covered by the Camp Lejeune Justice
Act. I wonder if there may be some sort
of restitution down the road for those
Marines.

Palmer C. Sweet
North Garden, Va.

*Great question. I'm sure many may find
themselves in this situation, so we'll be
tracking what provisions may be made
for them.—Publisher*

Praise for Leatherneck Magazine From a Longtime Reader

To the editor and staff of the magazine;
this former Marine has been reading
Leatherneck magazine for the past 73
years with great pride. I started reading
issues at 17 years old in 1957, and now in
2024 at the age of 89, I am still reading
the magazine about my brothers and
sisters with great honor and pride.

Everyone on the magazine staff is so
accommodating to all their readers. This
is truly a five-star magazine! Continue
publishing this fine magazine with its
continuous success, and new readers that
keep coming onboard!

Cpl John Messia, USMCR (Ret)
Brockton, Mass.

*We are so glad you like the magazine,
and we appreciate loyal readers like you.
As a longtime Leatherneck staff member,
I recognize your name—it's always good
to see letters from you.—Executive Editor*

Dusty Baker Story Reminded Reader of Another Marine Athlete

When I read the story in the October
2023 issue of Leatherneck "Dusty Baker:
A Baseball Legend and Marine Reserv-
ist," it made me think of another great
baseball player I served with in the Ma-
rine Corps Reserve. I don't know if you
have had an article about him in the past
that I missed, but I felt I had to bring him
up and suggest him to you for considera-
tion.

I am speaking of Rod Carew of the
Minnesota Twins. I served with Rod in
the 26th Rifle Company, FMF, USMCR,
in Minneapolis, Minn. My service there
was from 1963 to 1969. Rod's service
overlapped with mine. Rod was very
personable and carried out his respon-



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sibilities right along with the rest of the unit. Perhaps one of your writers can write an article?

Brian L. Garvey
Moose Lake, Minn.

Great idea for an article! We will see what we can come up with.—Executive Editor

Graduation Photo for Platoon 686, 1943

I wanted to share a great boot camp photo from 1943. My old high school physical education, biology teacher and coach Jerry Kranz is pictured here, front row, second from the left. His son Tony sent me the picture. Mr. Kranz left us in 2015, so he is gone but not forgotten. He was born and raised in Frazee, Minn., and taught school in Starbuck, Minn., from 1954-1960. His older brother Fred Kranz was killed in action on Peleliu, Sept. 17, 1944. Jerry served with the 10th Amphibious Tractor Battalion on Saipan, Tinian, Roi Namur and on Iwo Jima.

Bil Pederson
Mauston, Wis.

Thank you for sharing Mr. Kranz's story

with us. To mark the 80th anniversary of 1944 combat in the Pacific, on page 26 of this issue we have a story about the Battle of Saipan and coming in the July issue, we will publish an article focused on the fighting on Tinian.—Executive Editor

How is the Battlefield Changing?

I really like the use of the many photos (In Every Clime and Place) used to highlight today's warriors preparing for the 21st century battlefield. Reading those entries has brought up a question; how are drones both manned and unmanned changing the battlefield? How is the Marine Corps going to adapt and overcome drone warfare like what we are experiencing now with current global conflicts?

Doug Caldwell
Plano, Texas

New technology like "drones" and loitering munitions are indeed changing the character of war. For much more information about this subject, Premium Members of MCA should access the Marine Corps Gazette online to read how today's Marines are using these new weapons. Visit: www.mca-marines.org/gazette.—Publisher

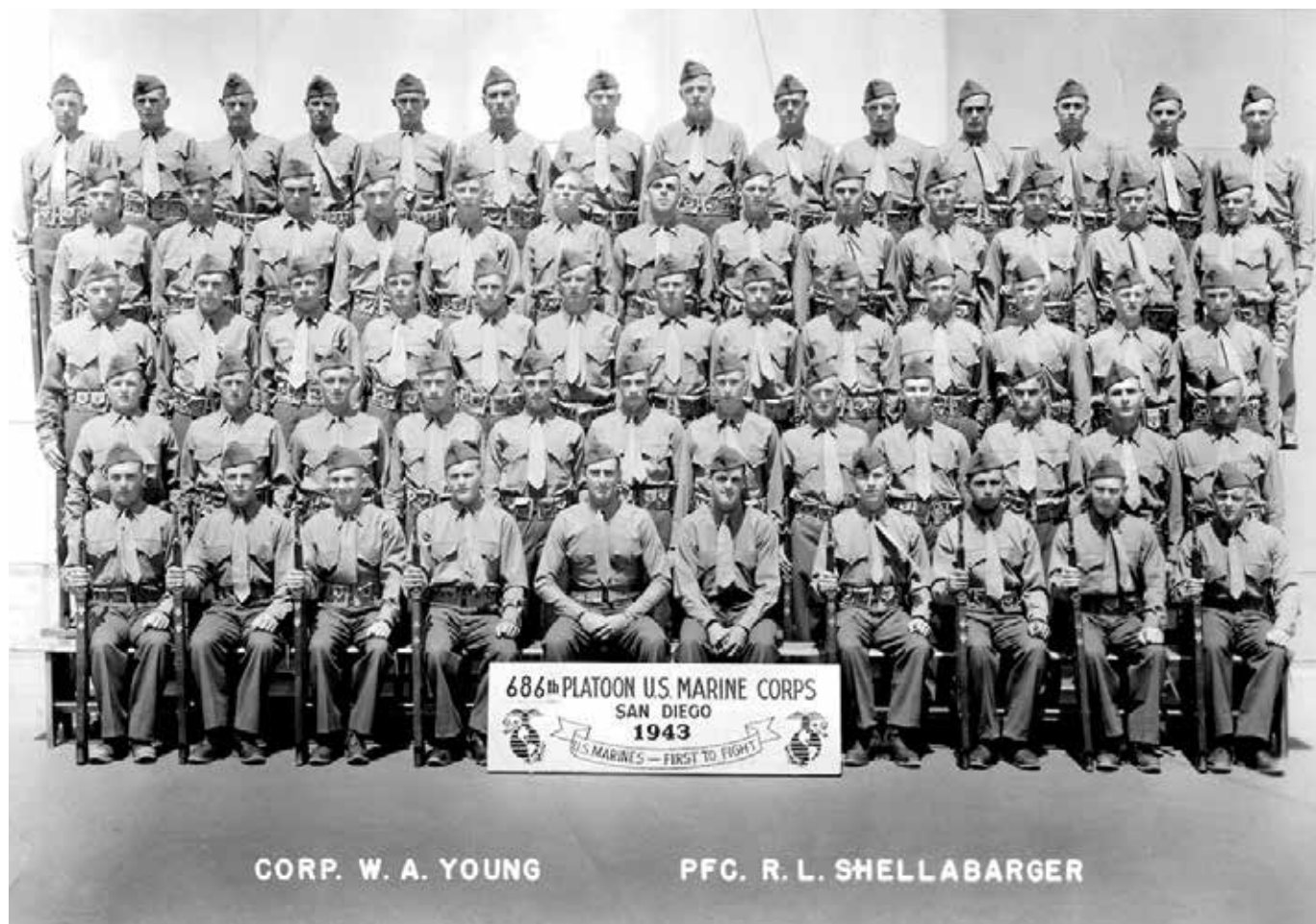
A Firsthand Account on the Attack at Pearl Harbor

I am enclosing the story of Werner Klemm—who was a Pearl Harbor survivor—along with pictures he took. He was in the Navy on the ship USS *Dobin* (AD-3). He was a very dear friend of mine and fellow member of the Marine Corps League Detachment 567 in New Port Richey, Fla. Here is an excerpt of something Klemm wrote for our detachment newsletter:

"Looking back on that day, I know that movies have been made to show the fire and the noise from explosions. But they can never replicate the smells or the heat of the fire, or trying to grab an object covered with oil while most of it is burning.

"We were a trained military organization and soon took the fight to the Japanese. I spent the whole four years of the war in the Pacific, but I will say that after that first day, there wasn't much that surprised me ...

"[After the attack] there was such a strong feeling that we would be invaded that many ships were assigned sections of the harbor where they would be used as forts to repel the invaders. On our



This Platoon 686 graduation photo was sent in by reader Bil Pederson. One of Bil's high school teachers who served in the Pacific theater is pictured here.



A view of the chaos and destruction during the attack at Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

perience a day like Dec. 7, filled me with a sense of duty and honor which has been with me all my life. I can easily separate the important things from all others. I simply must ask myself—is this the honorable thing to do? And the answer becomes obvious.”

Albert D. Villy
New Port Richey, Fla.

What an amazing firsthand account of that “day of infamy.” Thanks for sharing with Leatherneck and thanks for remembering Mr. Klemm and his service to the nation. Semper Fidelis.—Publisher

ship, racks containing guns and ammo were installed all over the ship. After two weeks or so, discipline was restored, and we finally got back to normal.

“‘Normal’ was now a constant state of full alert with around the clock military duty watches. We left Pearl Harbor on Feb. 22, 1942. We went to Samoa, Tongatabu, Fiji, New Caledonia and the South Pacific.

“I joined the Navy at 17 years of age

for travel and adventure and I certainly got that; maybe even a little more than I wanted.

“I consider myself exceptionally fortunate. On Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Pearl Harbor Day, I set aside an hour or so to think of my shipmates who were not fortunate enough to make it back home. They were all young men. We were all in our teens and 20s.

“In closing, I can only say that to ex-

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TO CIVILIAN LIFE, TOO.**



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WHERE THINGS START TO GET BETTER.

In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Kyle Watts

India

15th MEU Arrives for Third Iteration of Tiger Triumph

Marines and Sailors assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and embarked upon the amphibious transport dock USS *Somerset* (LPD-25) participated in the third iteration of Exercise Tiger Triumph in Visakhapatnam, India.

Tiger Triumph, which stands for Tri-Services India-U.S. Amphibious Exercise, is a combined, joint exercise between U.S. and Indian Armed Forces focused on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) readiness and enhancing interoperability. The exercise was held from March 18-31, in port and in the waters near Visakhapatnam and Kakinada, India.

Tiger Triumph highlighted the improved interoperability between U.S. and Indian Armed Forces and enhanced readiness to better achieve mutual regional security objectives in the Indian Ocean region and beyond.



CPL AIDAN HEKKER, USMC

Above: Cpl Robert Rogers, left, a team leader assigned to Co C, BLT 1/5, 15th MEU, posts security with a Republic of India servicemember assigned to 2nd Madras Regiment, 91st Infantry Brigade, during bilateral patrol rehearsals at Exercise Tiger Triumph at Kakinada Beach, India, March 29.



1STLT ROBERT NANNA, USMC

Cpl Preston Bernardi, right, an air traffic controller assigned to VMM-165 (Rein), 15th MEU, guides a CH-53E Super Stallion into a landing zone during Exercise Tiger Triumph at Kakinada Beach, India, on March 27.

This year's exercise focused on advancing large-scale HADR operations. The exercise included a harbor phase, followed by a sea phase where U.S. and Indian forces practiced combined operational maneuver, command and control, and joint sustainment operations. Servicemembers also participated in cultural and athletic events.

Somerset and the embarked elements of the 15th MEU are part of the *Boxer* Amphibious Ready Group and the 15th MEU team. *Somerset* and embarked elements of the 15th MEU are under the command and control of Combined Task Force 76/3 employed by U.S. 7th Fleet to operate with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific.

GySgt Antonio Campbell, USMC

Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. Marines Take Gold In Shooting Competition With British Royal Marines

U.S. Marines and British Royal Marines finished the competitive shooting portion of Operation Longshot on March 15. The exercise exchanges U.S. and British Royal Marines to promote camaraderie, strengthen rapport, and share experience between the two services.

"It's almost like an exchange program," said Gunny Sergeant Chad Ranton, the action team staff noncommissioned officer in charge for the U.S. side of the operation. "They take a lot away from what we show them and bring it back with them across the pond."

This year, eight Marines were sent to Britain and eight Royal Marines came to the U.S. to compete in the operation. Ranton explained that this past year, their counterparts used the U.S. Marines' course of fire in Scotland to increase their own capabilities, tactics and experiences with firearms. The Royal Marines are also adopting similar rifles to the Marine Corps' tried and true M16s, thanks, in part, to the competition.

The friendly rivalry began Feb. 23 and officially ended Mar. 22. The competitive portion ended with the U.S. Marines as the official winner of this year's Operation Longshot, taking every placement—gold, silver, bronze and leather—in pistol and rifle competitions.

"All in a great opportunity to come overseas and train with a Marine force renowned for their marksmanship and knowledge," said LCpl Aiden Coltman, a British Royal Marine with 40 Commando and competitor of the operation. "The competition has allowed me to improve my accuracy and speed to a new level ... I'm looking forward to future competitions with the U.S. Marine Corps."



LCPL ETHAN MILLER, USMC

Above and below: British Royal Marines conducted shooting drills with the Marine Corps Shooting Team during Operation Longshot at the pistol range on MCB Quantico, Va., on Feb. 28. Operation Longshot exchanges servicemembers from the two countries to share shooting techniques, evaluate each member's skillset, and build rapport between the two services.



LCPL ETHAN MILLER, USMC

This operation dates back as early as 1982. The competition breeds excellence and continues to be one of the most important developmental competitions for Marines.

"Training and competing with our foreign allies allows us to form new bonds and strengthen old ones," said Sgt

Collin Anderson, an instructor for the rifle team. "It was a privilege to be able to train alongside the Royal Marines.... We were able to share common tactics and techniques we use in order to strengthen multinational force cohesion."

Shaehmus Sawyer



CPL RAFAEL BRAMBILA-PELAYO, USMC

Helicopters assigned to VMM-162 (Rein), 26th MEU(SOC), fly in formation over MCAS New River, N.C., on March 18. Marines and Sailors assigned to the 26th MEU(SOC) returned home after completing an eight-month deployment as part of the *Bataan* Amphibious Ready Group.

Camp Lejeune, N.C. 26th MEU(SOC) Returns Home From Eight-Month Deployment

Marines and Sailors assigned to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU(SOC)) returned home in several waves beginning March 16, after successfully completing an extended eight-month deployment embarked aboard the amphibious warships of the *Bataan* Amphibious Ready Group (BATARG) in U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa/6th Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/5th Fleet areas of operations.

The BATARG is comprised of the *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship USS *Bataan* (LHD-5), the *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock ship USS *Mesa Verde* (LPD-19), and the *Harpers Ferry* class dock landing ship USS *Carter Hall* (LSD-50).

Upon leaving North Carolina for deployment in July 2023, the Secretary of Defense directed the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) to support operations in the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) in response to attempts by Iran to threaten the free flow of commerce in the Arabian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz. The 26th MEU(SOC) took deliberate actions to task-organize an element aboard USS *Mesa Verde* to execute operations and

activities in support of U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) theater security objectives, while the majority of the 26th MEU(SOC) Marine Air-Ground Task Force embarked aboard *Bataan* and *Carter Hall* was postured in USCENTCOM to deter Iranian activity and increase maritime security in the waters surrounding the Strait of Hormuz.

The 26th MEU's deployment marked the first time the U.S. Marine Corps and II Marine Expeditionary Force were able to certify and employ a special operations capable Marine Expeditionary Unit in over two decades. This historic milestone demonstrated the Marine Corps' commitment to joint naval integration and partnering with forward-deployed special operations forces in support of crisis response and fleet campaigning priorities.

Throughout the deployment, the 26th MEU(SOC) executed distributed operations spanning across the Tri-Geographic Combatant Command to include USEUCOM, USAFRICOM and USCENTCOM, contributing to increased maritime security and regional stability, while also participating in activities with allies and partners to enhance relationships, showcase interoperability and sustain high operational readiness.

In the High North, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC) embarked

aboard USS *Mesa Verde* participated in bilateral exercises with elements of the Norwegian Brigade North and Italian partners to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures in the coastal regions and littorals. While operating in the Baltics, the 26th MEU(SOC) participated in Exercise Northern Coasts, a German, multinational naval exercises series in the Baltic region aimed at delivering realistic, live training for a broad range of amphibious operations. The 26th MEU(SOC)'s participation in Exercise Northern Coasts marked the first time U.S. Marine Corps forces participated in this large-scale NATO-exercise.

Concurrently, in USCENTCOM, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC) embarked aboard USS *Bataan* and USS *Carter Hall* participated in a series of bilateral exercises with the Kuwaiti Marine Corps, Bahrain Royal Marines and the Bahrain Royal Air Force. Additionally, the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) supported Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Prosperity Guardian. When the terrorist attacks against Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, dynamically changed the security environment across the region, the 26th MEU(SOC) rapidly transitioned from participating in a readiness and sustainment training exercise in Kuwait to posturing in the Red Sea,

Marines and Sailors aboard *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock ship *USS Mesa Verde* (LPD-19) salute the ship's colors after returning from deployment with the 26th MEU(SOC) in Morehead City, N.C., on March 17.
(Photo by Cpl Rafael Brambila-Pelayo, USMC)



A U.S. Navy Landing Craft Air-Cushion with the *Bataan* Amphibious Ready Group transports Marines with the 26th MEU(SOC) to Camp Lejeune, N.C., on March 18.



AV-8B Harriers assigned to VMA-231 Detachment, VMM-162 (Rein), 26th MEU(SOC), land on an airfield at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., after returning from deployment, March 16.

CPL AZIZA KAMUHANDA, USMC



CPL KYLE JIA, USMC

ready to respond to emergent operational requirements and to safeguard U.S. national interests.

The Marines and Sailors remained in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea from Dec. 28 to March 1 as the immediate response force with the operational capabilities needed to provide leaders across the Geographic Combatant Command with options in USEUCOM and USCENTCOM. The 26th MEU(SOC) also conducted several enhanced interoperability exercises with NATO Allies and partners in the Mediterranean Sea.

"History has proven the necessity of having forward-deployed Marines, embarked aboard amphibious ships. Over the past eight months, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC) have

showcased the value, utility and unique all-domain operational capabilities you only find in a Marine Expeditionary Unit," said Colonel Dennis Sampson, Commanding Officer of the 26th MEU(SOC). "When coupled together, the ARG and the MEU(SOC) form a flexible naval expeditionary force capable of reassuring our Allies and partners of our commitment to maritime security and capable of dominating within the littorals against any adversary in any clime or place."

From the High North of Norway, to the Baltics, to the Mediterranean, Horn of Africa, to the Middle East, the BATARG and the 26th MEU(SOC) successfully completed over 15 bilateral activities with over 30 NATO Allied and partner countries.

Marines with VMM-162 (Rein), 26th MEU(SOC), march to a homecoming ceremony at MCAS New River, N.C., on March 17.

"I am very proud of the steadfast professionalism of every Marine and Sailor assigned to the 26th MEU(SOC) and the BATARG. They have made a difference and highlighted the relevance of the ARG and MEU to our national security interests across the Tri-COCOM region," Sampson said. "More so, I am truly grateful for the steadfast support from our 26th MEU(SOC) families and friends. I know they are proud of their Marine or Sailor, and I know they are ready for our homecoming."

Capt Angelica White, USMC

Marines Participate in Exercise Warrior Shield 24 With Republic of Korea Marine Corps



LCPL JEFFREY PRUETT, USMC

Above: Cpl Johnathan Saechao, right, a low altitude air defense gunner with 3rd LAAD Bn, 3rd MAW, and a Republic of Korea (ROK) Marine practice firing a Stinger Trainer Launch Simulator during Warrior Shield 24 on Daecheon Firing Range, Republic of Korea, on March 5. Warrior Shield 24 is an annual joint, combined exercise held on the Korean peninsula to strengthen the combined defensive capabilities of ROK and U.S. forces.

Below: U.S. and ROK Marines eat and exchange meal rations during Warrior Shield 24 at Rodriguez Live Fire Complex, Pocheon, South Korea, on March 7 and 20.



LCPL MATTHEW MORALES, USMC



Above: A CH-53E Super Stallion assigned to HMH-466, MAG-36, 1st MAW, lifts a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle during Warrior Shield 24 at Drop Zone Dangmali, South Korea, on March 20. This exercise provided the ROK and U.S. Marines the opportunity to rehearse combined operations, exchange knowledge, and demonstrate the strength and capabilities of the ROK-U.S. alliance. (Photo by Cpl Kyle Chan, USMC)



Left: LCpl Brodie Murphy, left, fires an M4 carbine at a range while Cpl Nicholas Proctor, right, observes, during Warrior Shield 24 at Rodriguez Live Fire Range Complex, Pocheon, South Korea, on March 5. Both Marines are riflemen with 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, and are forward deployed in the Indo-Pacific under 4th Marines, 3rdMarDiv, as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

LCPL MATTHEW MORALES, USMC

Below: A typical sniper hide site setup. Various weapons are staged and ready to be used while Cpl William “Justin” Cooper observes the outside area with a periscope.

Right: A westward view down Route Michigan toward the government center in central Ramadi.



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER



Hide and Seek

By Brian Cramer

Executive Editor's note: This is an excerpt from the book "Suffer Patiently." Published in 2023, Suffer Patiently explores a Marine sniper's perspective. This excerpt covers part of Brian Cramer's 2006 deployment to Ramadi, Iraq, with 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. "Suffer Patiently" is available for purchase on Amazon, at <https://amzn.to/3vyzEOy>, or at www.Briancramer.net.

It was my favorite time of year, and I was certain the weather back home would be cooling off with hunting season in full swing. I could close my eyes any night in Ramadi and hear the whippoorwills and smell the fresh-cut alfalfa back home. That world never seemed so far away as it did in the winter of 2006, and the hunting was never as challenging. The operation tempo experienced during the first couple of months in country showed no sign of letting up and, indeed, would continue until after the new year. Upon completion of numerous missions in support of the battalion's construction of forward operating bases and observation posts, we moved on to other security operations around the area. Reaper Four would spend countless days in support of "Bravo" Company (Blackfoot), located out of the government center complex, and Charlie Company (Cold Steel), operating out of OP Horea.

It was around Halloween that we were

tasked with a reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) mission on Route Michigan, east of the government center. We had been through the area a few times before, providing overwatch for line patrols at night, so we were familiar with the terrain. It would be a short patrol route on foot, and my friend Tom Rubel, along with his team, would be accompanying us on this mission. The hide site we selected was a three-story building with narrow stairwells leading up to the second floor.

On one of our night patrols prior to this mission, I discovered a blood-soaked gurney along with piles of bandages, IV bags, and an assortment of other medical supplies in one of the rooms. It was evident that the location was a makeshift field hospital for the insurgents, and when I walked into the white-tiled room, it was nothing short of a scene from a horror film. Mike and I found the room tucked away toward the rear of the building.

It offered no windows, only small fragments of ambient light slipping through the cracks in the exterior brick and mortar. The rooms' glimmering tile, refracting our infrared beams, was stained with the blood of the wounded and exhibited several handprints plastering the walls, like cave drawings of an ancient culture. In the pitch-black night, through the green hue of my night vision goggles, it was enough to send shivers down my spine. I had to remind myself it was only humans who were engaged. The handprint "art" on the wall was not art at all but rather the blood stains of an unsuccessful enemy combatant.

Aside from the unsettling imagery of the makeshift aid station, the building was a great location. It was easily defensible, with only a couple of access points: one on the east side of the building and one on the south. It was a segmented complex with other entry points, but the only way to get into our portion of the building from those areas would have been by roof, which we thought unlikely given the overwatch ability from the government center and OP Horea.

We explored this route previously at night, and it required traversing a narrow



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER

roof overhang to enter the building. This was quite the venture under darkness, under a load of full gear, tiptoeing across a narrow roof ledge three stories above the ground. I was always fearful of death by gunshot or IED, but the reality of falling or injuring yourself on a patrol route was just as likely, and just as potentially fatal.

In addition to its defensibility, the site offered a couple rooms on the east side of the complex where, if positioned correctly, a window could be made to see some distance north across Route Michigan and up Central Street into the souk (marketplace). Across the northern section of the building, there were several rooms, one of which gave a tight and concealed window that looked west toward Fire Station Road and also allowed for observation to the north. From this building, we were able to establish several OPs with relatively safe and concealed vantage points.

The only limiting factor of this spot was the unobservable ingress and egress routes the enemy could use without interruption to the north and south. Friendly

forces would be blind to the routes south of our hide due to the nature of the tall buildings. To the north, it was more of the same, and directly in front of our position was a location we nicknamed Fast Freddy's. (Fast Freddy's was a local pool hall and bar at Camp Lejeune.) On a prior patrol at night, we uncovered this spot as we ventured into the southern edge of the souk. The building was two stories tall, with a rooftop that offered the enemy a great line of sight down Route

It was evident that the location was a makeshift field hospital for the insurgents, and when I walked into the white-tiled room, it was nothing short of a scene from a horror film.



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER

Sgt Brian Cramer, left, and fellow sniper Sgt Scott Schreck prior to mission departure from Hurricane Point. Assistant team leaders would often carry Squad Automatic Weapons as primary weapons due to close engagements, which doubled the firepower of the team.



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER

Marines hold a rooftop position in northern Ramadi, along Racetrack Road. Rooftop surveillance gave Marines a high ground advantage and a better view of the surrounding urban area.

Michigan to the east and west. It posed a heavy threat to both Bravo and Charlie Companies as it was a prime location to engage their positions and allow the enemy a smooth egress to slide away deep into the souk with ease. Walking through Fast Freddy's that night using my infrared flashlight, it was evident the pool tables in the building were not relics of a past life; they were still being used.

Considering the pros and cons of the location, it was a good fit for the R&S operation we were tasked with. Joshua Long and Travis Amos briefed Blackfoot's command on our mission intent, and we were ready to go. In surveillance and target acquisition fashion, we completed a quiet insertion under the cover of darkness and, in short order, had several OPs and security segments set up within the building. The patrol route to the café was a short one, but this sector of the city was battered more extensively than any other. Once we had the OPs established, we split watch as usual. Mike, Travis, and I would take turns on observations from the room to the east, looking north up Central Street; Tom, Josh, and Brian would rotate out of the OPs on the north, focusing west on Fire Station Road.

The early morning hours prior to sunup were always critical for noise discipline. Teams had to remain quiet to avoid compromise. No smoking, no lights, and no talking—if it wasn't natural to the environment, it didn't happen. It was around these times that we could often hear feet on the streets below. They

were scouting elements making their way around the buildings to see if any Marine snipers had moved in and set up at night. Sometimes they would send scouts into buildings to compromise teams. It was not uncommon to hold a civilian hostage for the duration of a mission if they walked into your hide site. Rules of

The man was running a full sprint looking back over his left shoulder. It was as if he were a wide receiver going out for a pass, and the 40mm grenade now visible tumbling through the air was the football headed directly for him.

engagement prevented any physical action against such a person, but the reality of a random passerby navigating bombed-out buildings in the deadliest section of the city was complete bullshit. They were enemy recon elements, and they were killers.

The morning lapsed uneventfully, except for the scurry of feet past the east side of the building. I let the team know on personal role radio (PRR) that we had company early on, and I could hear the person on the street below peering their head up the stairwell leading to our teams.

Kelly confirmed he never saw anyone breach the stairwell but did hear the person muddling around the entrance for some time. Those scenarios would always get my heart pounding uncontrollably, and I'm sure for the guys on security, it did as well. Sitting on a security element, posted up and tucked away out of a direct line of sight, hearing footsteps and whispers in the dark only feet away down a hallway or descending a stairwell—such movements could overwhelm the senses. Waiting. Just waiting to be face-to-face with an armed combatant. At that point, it would be about who's fastest on the trigger.

As the sun heated up the cool morning air, the activity was minimal. This section of the city was close to a heavily operated military route, and civilians knew to stay away. The buildings near Route Michigan between the government center and OP Horea were unoccupied. The streets were lined with razor wire the entire stretch, and crossing the road in that section was impossible.

Not only was it impossible for civilian foot traffic, but it was also dangerous for friendly forces. Row upon row of razor wire and concrete road barriers block every blown-out and rubble-filled intersection. No one dared venture too close unless there was ill intent involved. A few hours into the morning, Mike was on observation when he called Travis and me on the PRR. He had a military-aged male (MAM) closing in toward the razor wire and then ducking back up Central Street. He was walking out and peeking around the corner, looking east down Michigan, then disappearing back up Central out of Mike's field of view.

Travis and I stayed in the backup room listening to Mike on the PRR, not wanting to jump too early and spoil our position. The MAM had returned and was now using a pole to push a bag out from behind one of the concrete barriers. This time he had an assistant with him. They were pushing an IED near the side of the road in hopes of later detonating it on a convoy. Both Tom and Mike confirmed they were about to engage, so Travis and I bumped up into the OP room. I hadn't had much time to secure my gear, so into the room I went, slick with no body armor in a low crouching walk with my blooper in hand and an extra 40mm grenade in my pocket. This was going to be an awfully close engagement; Tom and Mike were ready with M4s rather than our long guns being that it was only about 50 yards away.

On his command (because he had the

From left to right: Cpl Jerrell Poole and Cpl Mike Hernandez share a meal provided by an Iraqi family while at a sniper hide site near a marketplace in Ramadi.

periscope pressed to his eye), we popped up quickly in the window. Tom and Mike let off a few rounds and dropped the first assailant immediately, near the wire on the edge of Michigan. The MAM with the pole immediately stood up and bolted north up Central Street. I had a small window of about 20 yards of visibility from the barriers on Michigan north up Central until I lost my line of sight.

I raised the M79 in a moderate shoulder fire fashion for a steep trajectory and let a round loose. With the low-toned thud of the 40mm exiting the barrel, the three of us watched the scene unfold from the window for a few seconds, but it felt like an eternity. The man was running a full sprint looking back over his left shoulder. It was as if he were a wide receiver going out for a pass, and the 40mm grenade now visible tumbling through the air was the football headed directly for him. Continuing to run and look back, the grenade was closing in, then, finally, impact. The ground-rattling blast threw the man forward into the air and out of sight. We had dispatched two fighters within just a few seconds, but before we even had time to celebrate, the streets erupted with gunfire.

Immediately after our engagement, the room we were in started taking rounds. The bullets were flying up from the street, impacting the ceiling of the room and



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER

going through the window near Quizphi, who was on security. He responded by tossing a frag out onto the street below us. After that, there was a pause in the return fire. The sound of the rounds aggressively ripping concrete from the ceiling onto our heads was so loud my ears were left ringing uncontrollably. With my body gripped with fear by the proximity of the engagement, I tucked back into the hallway, secured my body armor, and took stock of my gear to stand by for QRF (Quick Reaction Force) and extraction. It was apparent to me that this was an active compromise situation, and we would soon be popping smoke and blasting our way out of the building

to the safety of a convoy we would be calling to pick us up.

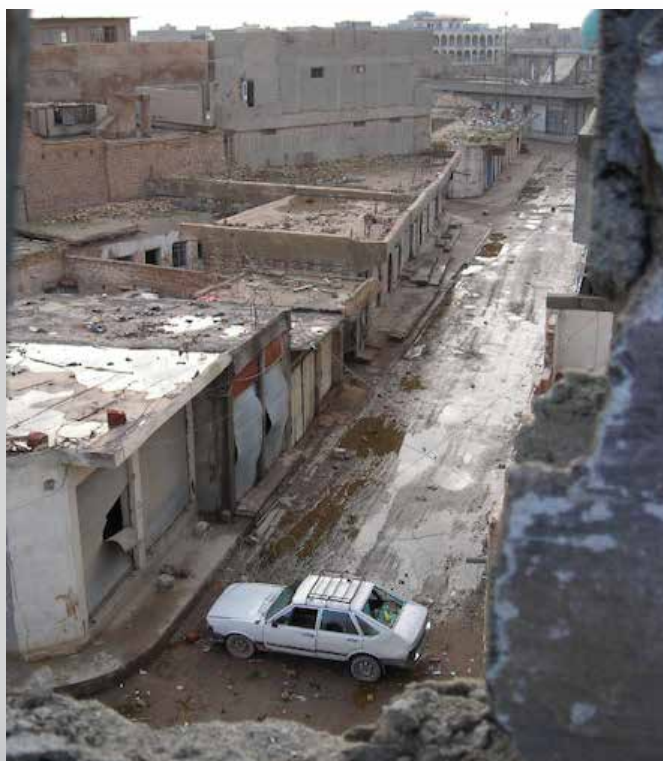
Travis motioned me to move down the hall, link up with Cpl Jerrell Poole, and call in our situation report. I got on the headset, but before I could make comms, another barrage of gunfire began. This time it was coming from a flat trajectory from the east into the rooms adjacent to where Jerrell and I were sitting. Simultaneously, Tom spotted two individuals popping out into the north side of the intersection at Fire Station, and he eliminated them immediately under a hail of gunfire from his M4. As Jerrell and Kelly were returning fire to the east, I stayed tucked close to the floor on the

Below: While using a laptop for mapping and imagery analysis, Cpl Joel Alvarenga observes targets through a narrow hole in the wall of a hidden sniper site armed with a suppressed MK-11.

Right: A sniper's line of vision from an LP/OP hide site. The spot was used to provide overwatch while a new FOB was built near central Ramadi.



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER



COURTESY OF EVAN MCALLISTER

Members of the sniper team "Reaper 4." Back row: Sgt Brian Cramer, Cpl Jerrell Poole, Cpl Michael Hernandez and Sgt Travis Amos. Front row: LCpl Dean Kelley and LCpl Quizphi Wilson.

radio, trying to talk through the belting of the SAW rounds Kelly let loose. Between the team chat on the PRR, the impact of incoming rounds on the concrete, and the return barrage of our guys—all combined with my excessive heart rate, which was now beating out of my temples—I was struggling to think.

"Blackfoot, Blackfoot, this is Reaper Four, over!"

"Reaper, this is Blackfoot; go ahead."

"Roger, I need you to get Reaper Six on the radio immediately; we're in heavy contact, over!"

"Roger, stand by."

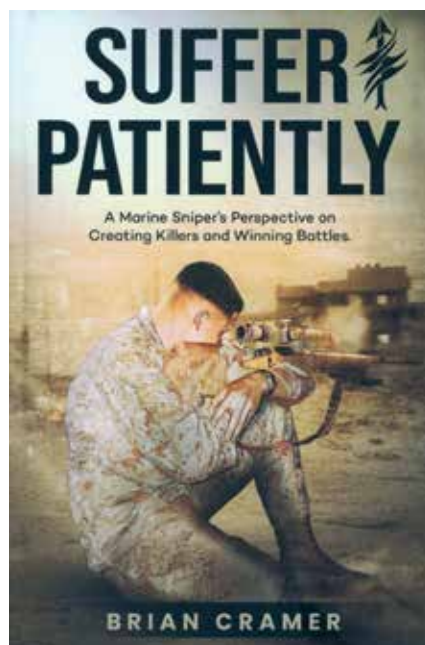
Our platoon sergeant would always be there in support of our teams at the nearest FOB, assisting with support and resources when needed. He couldn't be everywhere all the time, but I was glad he was there that day. "Reaper Four, this is Six; go ahead, over." I frantically gave a rundown of the engagement and advised him that we were in a heavily active compromise scenario and were seeking QRF and extraction. "Four, I need you to calm down and assess the situation, over." At that point, I took the radio from my ear and drew a deep breath. I was letting fear get control of me and had to dial it in. I called back in and walked them through our status.

Travis and Long determined we should stay in position with the support of Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance, and I relayed this over. Sully responded in short order after getting with Bravo Company.

"Reaper Four, this is Six; we're going to get Blackfoot to launch ISR and get eyes on what's happening to the north and south of your position, over."

"Roger, Four standing by."

At that point, Tom was positioned in the OP on the north side of the building, still engaging targets at the intersection of Fire Station and Michigan. The enemy would continue to pop the corner to return fire and work to retrieve some of the bodies that were now lying in the roadway. Their effort was futile and resulted in mounting casualties as Tom and Brian continued to work that intersection.



COURTESY OF BRIAN CRAMER

"Four, I need you to calm down and assess the situation, over." At that point, I took the radio from my ear and drew a deep breath. I was letting fear get control of me and had to dial it in.

I watched Travis make his way down the hall, checking on the guys, while Quizphi, still holding tight security on the stairwell, was ready to let out another frag as I poked my head in on Mike. Mike was still bouncing window to window with Jerrell, sending rounds back down range to the east. It was an active situation, to say the least, and now the Marines at OP Horea and the government center had joined the fight. They apparently identified targets moving within proximity to their line of sight and began opening fire as well. As we waited for the ISR, I recall thinking to myself fearfully, "How many f---ing people are out there on the street right now closing in on our position?"

I did not know how extreme the level of success of that mission was until after we completed our debrief. We surmised we killed over 16 enemy fighters that day, and this was confirmed by some of the chatter picked up from the enemy via our human intelligence exploitation teams. It was a new tactic for us, and we would seek to employ it numerous more times over the course of the deployment. The textbook sniper operation was extraction upon active compromise, but the alternate idea of stirring up the hornet's nest and holding tight to slug it out toe to toe appeared fruitful. For whatever reason, the enemy was really coming after us that day. It may have been the quick initial engagement or the slow rate of return fire we applied at the onset that made them think we were a small special forces unit and that they were head-hunting bounties. In the end, we'll never know why the level of ferocity was so intense that day, but it was dialed in and accurate. Fortunately for us, we made it out unscathed.

Author's bio: Brian Cramer enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2003, shortly after his 17th birthday. He went to boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., upon graduation from high school. He completed multiple deployments operating as a sniper. Cramer currently lives and works in Florida with his family. 🐼

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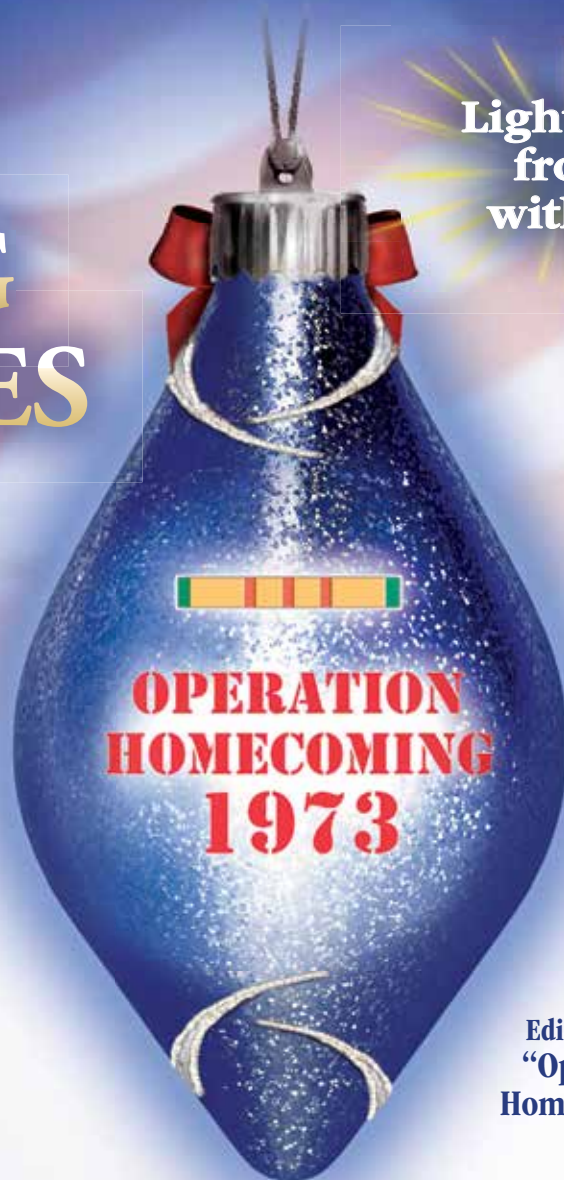


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Camp Pendleton, Calif.

2/1 Veterans Remember 20th Anniversary of Operation Vigilant Resolve

Around 150 veterans and active members of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division, reunited at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., on Feb. 29, to honor the 20th anniversary of Operation Vigilant Resolve.

The battalion served as one of the lead units in the first Battle of Fallujah, known as Operation Vigilant Resolve, in April 2004. Retired Lieutenant General John A. Toolan Jr. and retired Sergeant Major Bill Skiles joined the memorial events, including a hike up First Sergeant's Hill in Camp Horno, weapons displays for the veterans and a memorial dinner for the group. Skiles, who served as the first sergeant for "Echo" Company in 2004, could not hide his excitement for the event and to see his Marines again.



SGT EZEKIEL JAY CORREA, USMC

"It's just so great to be here and see all these Marines and Sailors and remember the sacrifice of not only them, but the families too," said Skiles. "We're going to hike up this mountain and carry heavy things with us to symbolize what these veterans and families carry with them every day. There are some great memories with these guys, including memories with our company commander, Doug Zembiec, who can't be here today."

Major Doug Zembiec, nicknamed the "Lion of Fallujah" for his actions as a company commander during Vigilant Resolve, earned the Bronze Star after braving small arms fire and jumping onto a tank to direct its fire during one engagement. He was killed in Iraq in 2007, but earned the Silver Star for saving the lives of those he led in the moments leading up to his death. Zembiec is still honored and loved by his Marines today.

"Being here today and hopefully making it to the top of that mountain means everything to me," said De'on Miller, the mother of Silver Star recipient Lance Corporal Aaron Austin. "I had Aaron for 21 years, but I've had these guys around me for 20, so they're my family now."

LCpl Austin, a Texas native, was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for reinforcing a suppressed rooftop position and saving multiple Marines during an enemy attack. Austin is just one example of the selfless sacrifice the Marines of 2/1 displayed 20 years ago. Among the group Austin saved was Rick Loomis, an embedded journalist who reported on the battle and also attended the reunion.

"It was so intense there, I will never forget it and I respect the hell out of everyone who lived it and lives it now," said Loomis, who named his son after Austin. "I helped carry Aaron off the battlefield and now try to help veterans wherever I can."

1stLt Noah Richardson, USMC



SGT EZEKIEL JAY CORREA, USMC

Triangle, Va.



COURTESY OF JOHN B. ATKINSON

Amphibious Tractor Association Prepares Memorial at NMMC

In November 2023, members of the Amphibious Tractor Association (ATA) gathered in Virginia to conduct a site survey for their designated rally point on the Heritage Walk of the National Museum of the Marine Corps. The memorial design has been approved by the Marine Corps History Division. The copyrighted lithograph, "The Memorial Comes to Life," depicts key elements of the memorial's design. This reconnaissance enabled the team to finalize scope, scale and other memorial details with their artist and designer, their sculptor, and site and stone team. This will enable the sculpting of a miniature bronze model ahead of full-scale sculpting and foundry work. The miniature will be completed this summer, and with continued fundraising, the full memorial will be in place in 18 to 24 months. Visit the website: www.amphibioustractormemorial.com to learn about the amtrac and "Alligator Marines," and support the mission.

Submitted by: John B. Atkinson



COURTESY OF JOHN B. ATKINSON

St. Louis, Mo.

WW II Marine Celebrates Centennial Birthday

William Kenneth Luttrell was born on Jan. 16, 1924, in Brentwood, Mo. He graduated from Brentwood High School in June 1941. Luttrell recalled that December when he heard on the radio that the Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor. He received a letter from the draft in December 1942, and his Marine Corps adventure began with a three-day direct Pullman train car trip to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

Luttrell arrived in the Pacific with the newly formed 4th Marine Division in January 1944. He took part in the amphibious landings at Roi-Namur, Saipan and Tinian, making sergeant in August 1944. On Feb. 19, 1945, he hit the beach with the first wave in the Battle of Iwo Jima, marking his fourth island assault. Two days later, they had penetrated about 400 yards heading toward their objective of airfield No. 1 when Luttrell's section was hit. He suffered serious wounds from mortar shrapnel through the mouth and was temporarily blinded. One other Marine was wounded, and two killed.

After the war, Luttrell was a successful local businessman and a long-time member of the Marine Corps League, South St. Louis Detachment 183.

Submitted by: Eric Meier



COURTESY OF ERIC MEIER

"Corps Connections" highlights the places and events through which active-duty and veteran Marines connect with one another, honor the traditions of the Corps and recognize the achievements of their fellow leathernecks. We welcome submissions of photos from events like the ones featured here. Send them to: *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to leatherneck@mca-marines.org. Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos. 🐊



Tank Attack on Saipan!

By MSgt Jeff Dacus, USMCR (Ret)

"All of the sudden, the world stopped. An area about 2 miles square seemed to be lighted, and all we could see was tanks and infantry, some as close as 50 yards, and all the way back to Mount Tapotchau. I remember that instant seemed to last forever." —A Marine rifleman on Saipan, June 17, 1944.

By June of 1944, the Central Pacific drive of the United States had inexorably pushed the Japanese back toward their homeland. Throughout the methodical island-hopping campaign, the Japanese had put up stiff resistance, fighting furiously on the sea, on land, and in the air. Unlike the Marines, who had developed a combined arms team that included infantry weapons, artillery, and tanks as well as naval gunfire and

close air support, the Japanese failed to integrate all their available weapons. Noticeably absent was any significant use of tanks or armor. That would all change with the invasion of the Mariana Islands.

The 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions landed on Saipan on June 15. Japanese artillery and mortars were hidden on the heights overlooking the beaches. Small, local counterattacks attempted to push back the invaders. But the Marines'

combined arms teams dealt with each piecemeal attack. Despite more than 3,000 casualties and gains of less than a mile inland, in some places less than three hundred yards, the Marines had a solid foothold on the island. By evening, the Army's 27th Infantry Division was landing.

On D-day, the men of Lieutenant Colonel William K. Jones' 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, came ashore on the extreme left flank of the invasion force. Known as "Willie K" by Marines, Jones led his men inland beyond the beaches, where the bulk of enemy forces were entrenched, passing a radio station with its tall tower a few hundred yards from the beach.

The Japanese use of tanks on the first



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day was disjointed and uncoordinated. At about noon, four unsupported light tanks attacked the boundary between 1st and 2nd Battalions, 6th Marines. "Amtanks," Marine amphibious infantry support vehicles mounted with a cannon, destroyed three of the Japanese tanks.

During that first night, Japanese sailors attempted a small landing with a few amphibious tanks on the left flank of 2ndMarDiv. It was defeated by the combined arms of the Marines, in part due to a new weapon, the 2.36-inch rocket launcher, which would later be nicknamed the bazooka.

The Japanese also carried out frequent infantry attacks that night, probing and pushing for weaknesses to exploit. Artill-

Left: Marine infantry tanks demonstrate well-organized coordination while pushing back enemy defenders in northern Saipan, July 7, 1944.

Below: A wrecked Japanese tank found in the hills by Marines, July 8, 1944.



COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND



FILE PHOTO

Type 2 Ka-Mi amphibious tanks of the Yokosuka 1st Special Naval Landing Forces on Saipan before Marines landed.

Right: A view of the town of Charan Kanoa and the beaches, taken a few days after the Saipan invasion.

Below: PFCs Lauren N. Kahn and Lewis M. Nalder shot a 2.36-inch rocket launcher and hit four Japanese tanks while defending a group of Marines under attack.



ery, naval gunfire, tanks and 75mm guns mounted on halftracks supported the Marine infantry, and by morning there were over 700 Japanese dead near 2ndMarDiv and hundreds more in 4thMarDiv's sector.

The next day, Jones' battalion continued to carve out the island's terrain, flanked by 2/2 under Major Howard Rice. The men of 1/6 made way for the remainder of the 2nd Marine Regiment to land.

That night, both Marine divisions formed tight perimeters and prepared for a Japanese counterattack. Lieutenant General Yoshitsugu Saito, the commander of the Japanese army on Saipan, issued an order for the 136th Infantry Regiment and the 9th Tank Regiment to "attack the enemy in the direction of Oreal (Charon Kanoa Airfield) with its full force." In "Saipan: The Beginning of the End" by Carl W. Hoffman, Saito described the plan: "The tank unit will advance SW of Hill 164.6 after the attack unit [the infantry] has commenced the attack. The tank unit will charge the transmitting station and throw the enemy into disorder before the penetration of the attack unit into this sector." Then, the Japanese 1st Yokosuka Special Naval Landing Force would attack from the north, parallel to the beach, to capture the Charon Kanoa

Airfield, which was well behind Marine lines. One Japanese NCO noted, "Our plan would seem to be to annihilate the enemy by morning."

This time, the Japanese had between thirty and forty tanks. Most were medium Type 97 Kai Shinhoto Chi-Ha vehicles armed with a 47mm main gun and a couple of machine guns. A few were the smaller Type 95 Ha-Go armed with a 37mm main gun and two machine guns.

The tanks gave away their presence moving into their attack positions. The Marines heard the sounds of their engines, as well as the chanting and shouting of Japanese infantry, early in the



The 37mm antitank gun was used by Marines on Saipan for a wide variety of fire missions. Bullet holes from Japanese counterfire can be seen scattered across the gun's defensive shield.





COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND



This Type 97 Kai-Shinhoto Chi-Ha tank was knocked out on Saipan during the attack on June 17, 1944. Japanese tanks had light armor and were easy targets for antitank weaponry.

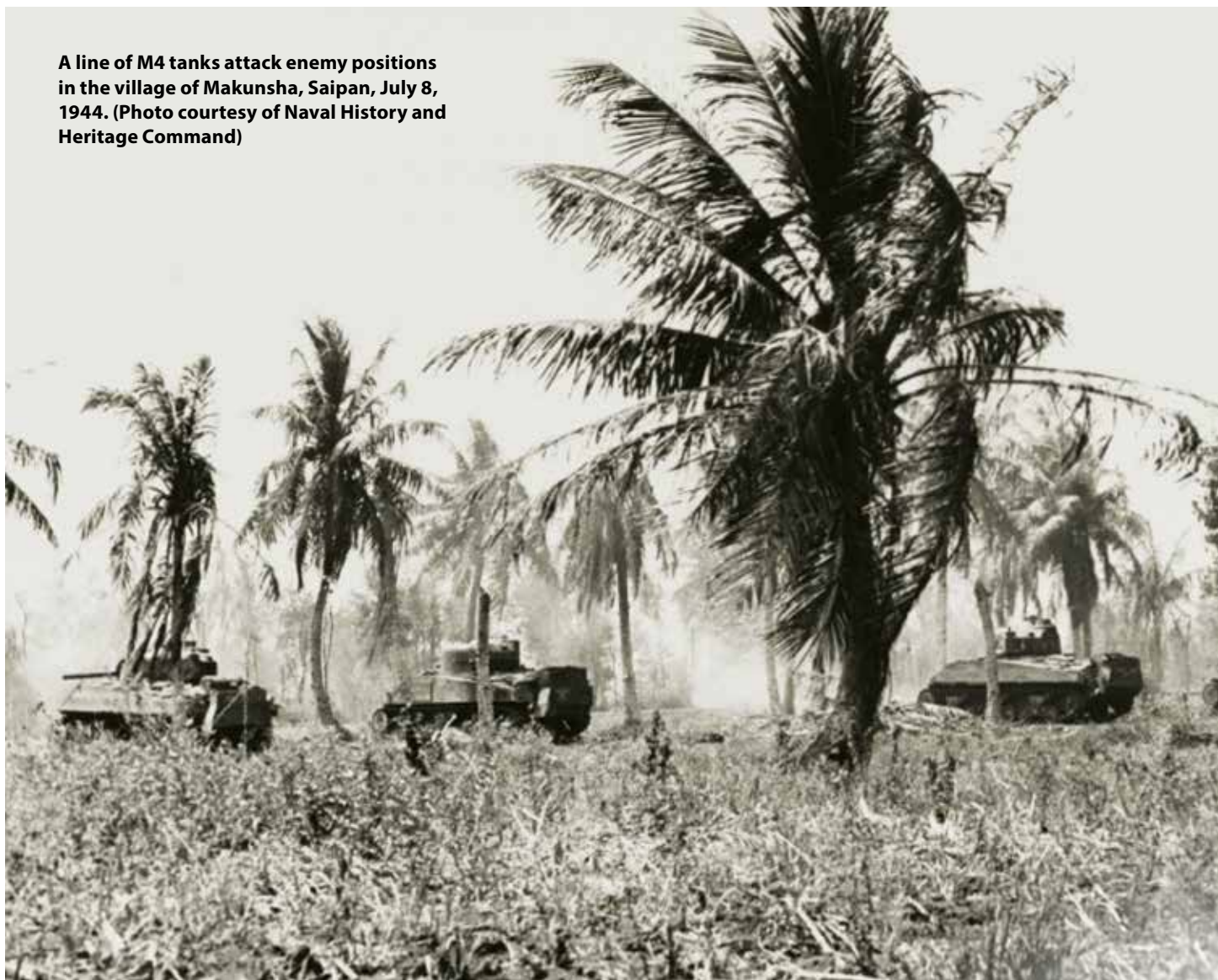
USMC

evening. Due to poor coordination, the Japanese attack didn't begin until 3:30 a.m. and the Marines were ready.

Captain C.G. Rollen called for armored support as the enemy tanks approached the front line of Company B, 1/6. A platoon of M4A2 tanks from Company A, Second Tank Bn, and a section of the halftracks were dispatched to support the infantrymen. Rollen called for artillery and naval gunfire support. The Navy provided an almost constant supply of star shells, turning the night into an eerie bright daylight.

Correspondent Robert Sherrod, in his book "On to Westward," quoted one Marine who said: "The [Japanese] would halt, then jump out of their tanks. Then they would sing songs and wave swords. Finally, one of them would blow a bugle, jump back into the tanks, if they hadn't

A line of M4 tanks attack enemy positions in the village of Makunsha, Saipan, July 8, 1944. (Photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)



been hit already. Then we would let them have it with a bazooka.”

Major James A. Donovan Jr. executive officer of 1/6, noted: “Many of the tanks were ‘unbuttoned,’ [with their turrets open,] the crew chief directing from the top of his open turret. Some were being led by a crew member afoot. They seemed to come in two waves, carrying foot troops on the long engine compartment or clustered around the turret, holding on to the handrail. Some even had machine guns or grenade throwers set up on the tank.” Marine artillery and machine guns stripped away their infantry support. Then the infantry Marines took over.

The armor of the Japanese light and medium tanks was so thin that, in many cases, Marine antitank rounds went completely through them. Several Japanese tankers became disoriented as star shells and tracers lit up the darkness. They strayed into nearby swamps and were immobilized, making them easy targets for the Marines.

Donovan recalled, “The battle evolved itself into a madhouse of noise, tracers, and flashing lights. As tanks were hit and set afire, they silhouetted other tanks coming out of the flickering shadows to the front or already on top of the squads.” Marine infantrymen hunkered down in their foxholes as some of the enemy tanks managed to reach the front-line positions.

Jones related in a June 1988 *Leatherneck* article, “One tank, leaking oil heavily, soaked a Marine as it passed over his foxhole. Another Marine, also lying low in his foxhole until a tank passed over him, jumped out and stuck a coconut log in its bogey wheels. The tank spun in circles. And when the bewildered tank commander opened his turret top to see what was going on, the Marine jumped on top and hurled a thermite grenade into the open turret. The tank blew up like a volcano.”

As the battle grew in ferocity, Rollen was injured by the concussion of a near

miss. Jones ordered Captain Norman K. Thomas, the Headquarters Company commander, to take over the command. Oddly enough, Thomas had earned a Silver Star on Tarawa in relief of Rollen there. Now, as Thomas advanced, he was struck and killed by fire from a Japanese tank. Sergeant Dean Squires saw the captain fall. He shot the Japanese vehicle commander and placed a demolition charge on its back deck—the resulting explosion disabled the tank.

Corporal Donald Watson threw two phosphorous grenades on the back deck of a tank passing by his foxhole, then shot the crew as they exited the burning vehicle. Despite machine-gun fire from another tank, he retrieved a wounded comrade who was stranded in the midst of the enemy tanks. He would be awarded the Navy Cross.

Two other Marines were awarded Navy Crosses by knocking out seven tanks with seven rockets. Private First Class Charles D. Merritt and PFC Herbert J.



USMC

Above: The remains of a Japanese light armored tank that was destroyed by a 75mm armor-piercing shell.

Below: This abandoned Japanese tank was used by Marines to provide support for advancing troops.



USMC



Gen Thomas Watson, the 2ndMarDiv commanding general, surveys the damage in the aftermath of the June 17 attack on Saipan.

Hodges moved into the open, dodging from left to right and back again. Both were untouched by enemy tank and infantry fire.

Private Robert S. Reed used his rocket launcher to hit four Japanese tanks. After he ran out of rockets, he mounted a Japanese tank and put it out of action with a grenade down the hatch. PFCs John Kounk and Horace Narveson stalked the enemy tanks. Ultimately, they scored hits on three tanks with four rockets.

Machine-gun squad leader, Sergeant Alex Smith, frustrated that the bullets of his guns bounced off the tanks' armor, left his Marines and moved into the open. Using the grenade launcher mounted on his carbine, he disabled three tanks in quick succession.

Japanese artillery attempted to silence the Marine artillery instead of concentrating on the Marine front-line positions. This let the infantry Marines concentrate on the enemy assault. Marine artillerymen suffered many casualties but continued firing.

During the action, Donovan noted, "The Japanese tanks ... appeared confused. As their guides and crew chiefs were hit by Marine rifle and machine gun fire, what little control they had was lost. They ambled in the general direction of the beach, getting hit again and again until each one burst into flame or turned aimless circles only to stop when hit."

As daylight spread across the battlefield, Marine tanks and halftracks advanced into the area, finishing off many of the derelict enemy vehicles. By 7 a.m., the attack was over. Only one Japanese tank remained in action, but it rolled away into the hills. A call for naval gunfire brought down a barrage of 5-inch gunfire from a destroyer, which turned the tank into a smoking pyre. Despite the long night, Jones' Marines began the day's attack at 7:30 a.m.

If all the claims of destroyed tanks were added up, including those of the infantry, antitank guns, tanks, and halftracks, they would have equaled over 50 tanks. After the battle, 2ndMarDiv

observers counted 31 metal carcasses. Perhaps a thousand Japanese men were dead. Jones was circumspect, stating that if the Japanese attack on June 17 had been successful, it "would have been fatal to the division's fighting efficiency."

For the rest of the campaign, Japanese tanks were used only in small numbers, the largest armored attack occurred on June 24, when tanks of Co C, 2nd Tank Bn, destroyed seven Japanese tanks near the town of Garapan.

Slowly, relentlessly, the Marines and soldiers conquered the island. Airfields were secured, allowing B-29s to bomb Japan. The only major counterattack was a banzai charge on July 7, the largest in the Pacific Island campaigns, of 4,000 bedraggled Japanese soldiers, sailors, and civilians without armored support. They smashed through front-line positions but were ultimately killed. The campaign for Saipan ended with the island declared secure on July 9.

In Oscar Gilbert's book "Marine Tank Battles in the Pacific," the commander of the Marine tanks, Captain Ed Bale, talked about credit for the destruction: "The argument has never been settled who destroyed the Japanese tanks, whether B Company [2nd] Tank Battalion or whether Weapons Company, 6th Marines did." Sherrod gave credit to the infantrymen in an article for *Leatherneck*: "But most of the [Japanese] tanks were knocked out by infantrymen ... who declined to get panicky. They waited in their foxholes until the moment was right, then they let go with bazookas or with antitank grenades. Some of them sat in their holes until the tanks rolled over and past them. Then they aimed at the weaker rear armor." Ultimately it was the individual Marine, acting as part of the combined arms team, that defeated the Japanese in the Pacific.

General Thomas Watson, commanding general of 2ndMarDiv, surveyed the destruction around 1/6 and pronounced, "I don't think we have to fear [Japanese] tanks anymore. We've got their number." The general was right; the Japanese never tried a large-scale tank assault in the Pacific.

Author's bio: MSgt Jeff Dacus, USMCR (Ret) is a retired Marine tanker. He is the 2020 recipient of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation General Roy S. Geiger award. He is the author of the books, The Fighting Corsairs: The Men of Marine Fighting Squadron 215, Desert Storm Marines: A Marine Tank Company at War in the Gulf, and Perceptions of Battle: George Washington's Victory at Monmouth.

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“France ’40” a Must to Learn Maneuver Warfare

By William J. Treuting

During the maneuver warfare debate in the post-Vietnam Marine Corps, writers for *Marine Corps Gazette* referred to history when making the case for the Corps to adopt this strategy. Among the most cited historical examples was the 1940 German invasion of France during the Second World War. It was here where the tactical, operational and strategic innovations of the German storm-troopers of World War I were combined with the technological advances in armored and mechanized warfare to produce one of history’s most stunning victories between near-peer powers. Being one of the most lauded instances of maneuver warfare in history, it is appropriate that I recommend Wargame Design Studio’s “Panzer Campaign France ’40” for Marines endeavoring to conduct professional military education.

The game contains some of Wargame Design Studio’s largest and most ambitious scenarios and is not meant for inexperienced wargamers. Players will likely find it most productive to use team play for some of the larger scenarios—wherein both sides split the different commands between multiple people. While other titles focus primarily on the tactical level of war, “France ’40” is designed for those interested in wargaming or conducting professional military education at the operational or strategic levels. However, there are still a variety of smaller scenarios for those wishing to wargame some of the individual battles within the larger campaign.

For those conducting professional military education on the application of maneuver warfare at operational and strategic levels of war, 01A: WDS Fall Gelb and 01: The Invasion of France and Belgium offer great opportunities. The former is a behemoth of a map, encompassing the entirety of the Netherlands and Belgium, tracing the

Rhine River as it begins in the North Sea as far south as Colmar, and extending just to the west of Paris. With millions of troops available to play on the board, this scenario, in particular, is most suited toward team play. The Allies have the advantage in overall numbers and terrain that is largely conducive for defense; alternately, the Axis start with the initiative and have better quality troops—particularly in their armored and mechanized formations. In 01L: The Invasion of France and Belgium, the map is significantly smaller (yet still incredibly large) and focuses primarily on the fighting in Belgium and Northern France, encompassing the area south of the border with the Netherlands down to around the Maginot Line. This scenario can be played with one person or multiple players and is balanced roughly the same as 01A: WDS Fall Gelb. In each scenario, the smaller, yet more agile, German army

must aggressively scout the enemy’s position to determine the surfaces and gaps to rapidly exploit any opportunities to encircle their foe. Allied victory will require the player to launch a determined defense to either attrite the Axis forces along their main effort or attempt to use their dispersed armored forces to attempt their own counteroffensives.

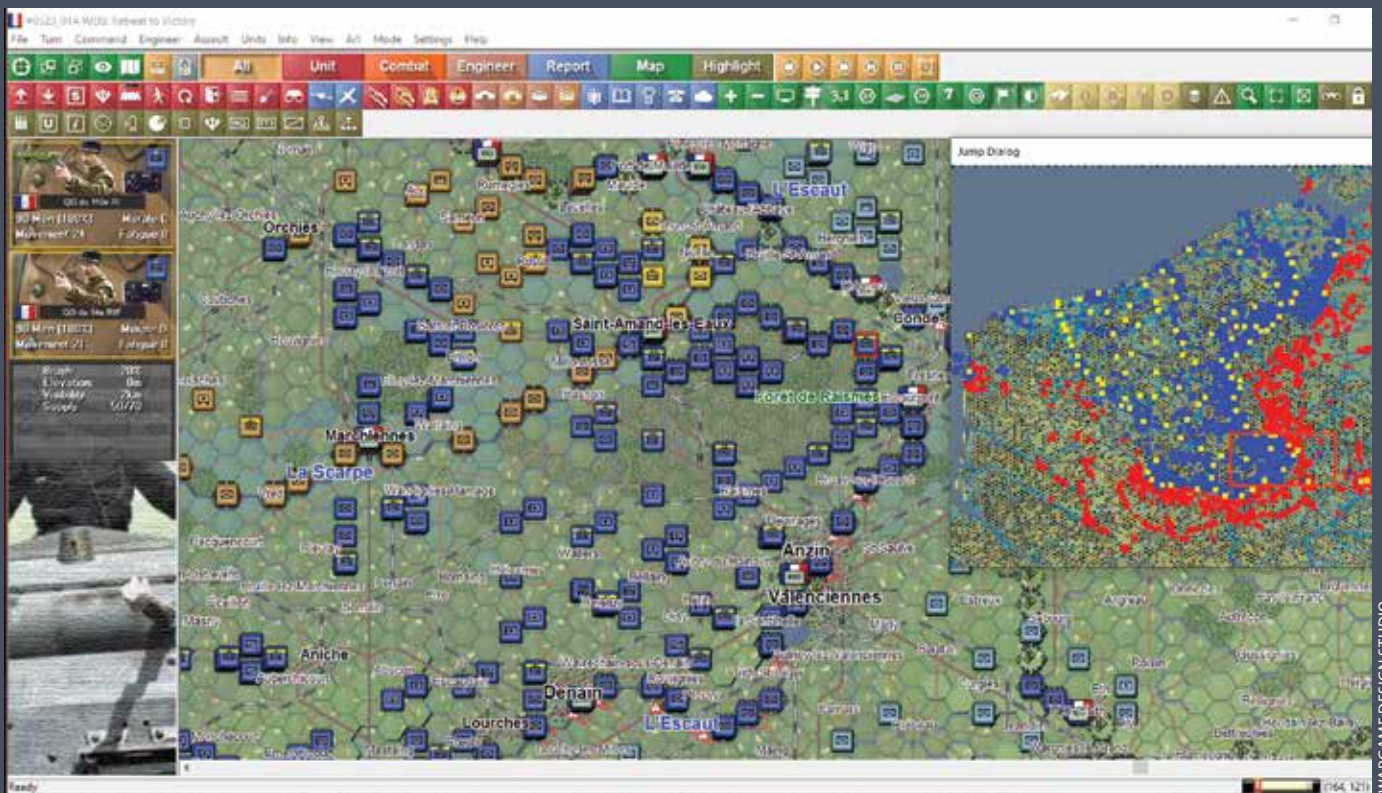
For players who might feel initially overwhelmed by these larger scenarios, there are smaller battles and maps to help build familiarity with this historical campaign. 03: Holding the Dyle Line depicts the British and French drive to the Dyle River to stop the initial advance of the German supporting effort assaulting through Holland and Belgium. While still a large scenario—covering the majority of Belgium and parts of Northern France and lasting 86 turns—it breaks down part of the campaign so that it can be easily managed by one person on each side. As with most battles in “France ’40,” the numerically superior Allied armies battle against the smaller, yet qualitatively better, Axis forces. Although a longer scenario at 140 turns, 04: Like A Syth Through the Ardennes depicts the German offensive through Belgium and into France on a smaller map. In this scenario, time is of the essence as the Axis army must quickly cut through the Allied positions, whereas the Allies must conduct an aggressive delaying action to allow time for their forces to concentrate.

Still, if these scenarios are too large, there are still several tactical engagements worth playing. 03: Crossing the Meuse portrays the most critical phase of the German main effort through Belgium to cut off the Allied armies to the north. Lasting only 26 turns, this scenario pits the Allied and Axis powers on opposite sides of the Meuse River. To succeed, the Axis must conduct a successful river crossing and maintain their forward momentum by continuing the drive

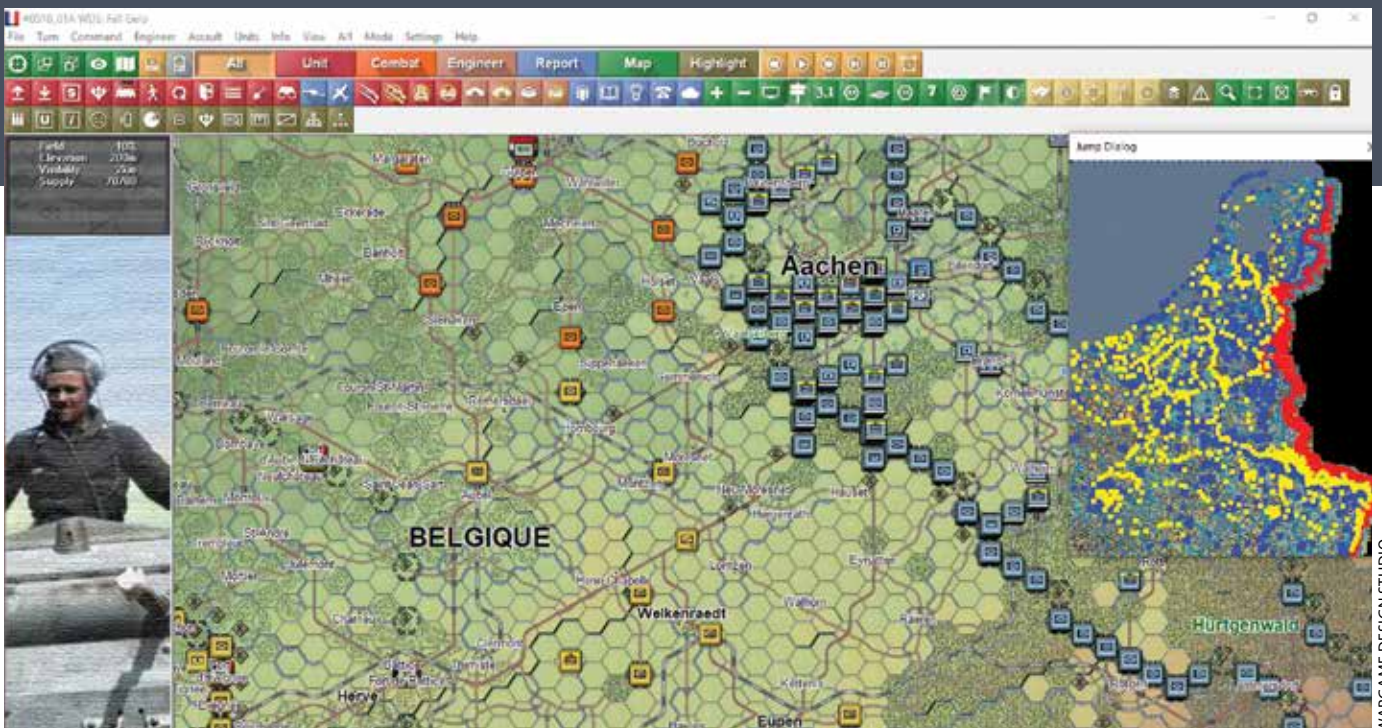


WARGAME DESIGN STUDIO

**“France ’40” is designed
for those interested in
wargaming or conducting
professional military
education at the
operational or
strategic levels.**



A screenshot of Panzer Campaign gameplay shows the German army surrounding Dunkirk (above) and German units moving to invade France, Belgium and the Netherlands (below).



toward France, whereas the Allies must delay, or even halt, the Germans to give their armies enough time to concentrate. Finally, for those wanting to earn the basic tactics of the era, 02A: WDS The First Great Tank Battle allows players to fight the Battle of Hannut where two German armored divisions faced two French armored divisions. In this 18-turn battle on one of the campaign's

smallest maps, players spar in the first large-scale tank-on-tank battle, with each side fighting with numerical parity. Here you can learn and apply the basic tactics of the era in a fast-paced battle.

Ultimately, "Panzer Campaign France '40" offers those studying the tactical, operational and strategic application of maneuver warfare a chance to intimately examine one of the historical foundations

of Marine Corps doctrine. It is certainly worth any serious student or wargamer's time and effort.

Author's bio: William J. Treuting is a historian, associate editor for Marine Corps Gazette, co-host of the MCA Scuttlebutt podcast, and director of MCA Films.

Return With the Elixir:

The Psychology of Pilgrimages to the “Devil Dog” Fountain



CPL BOBBY J. YARBROUGH, USMC

Cpl Seth H. Capps, a member of the Silent Drill Platoon, drinks from the bulldog fountain in the village of Belleau, France, May 30, 2010.

By Heather A. Warfield, Ph.D.

A shuttle van rolled to a stop across the street from the Belleau Town Hall. Out of the side door emerged an elderly gentleman, hunched over, his physical frame sharply contrasted by the fierce resolve propelling him forward. Protruding from his bowed head was a red hat emblazoned with a vibrant yellow USMC. His eyes rose to meet mine as I introduced myself and he waved his

hand for me to follow him. The 82-year-old man was named James, and he told me he had been a recruit at Parris Island in 1959. He had dreamed of coming to Belleau Wood for over six decades. With his health in decline, it was now or never. Earlier in the day, James and his wife walked through Belleau Wood with the intent of “walking in the footsteps of those heroes from 1918.” James was adamant that their day end with a visit to the “devil dog” fountain.

It was clear there was a lot riding on this moment, and he wanted it to unfold exactly as he envisioned. We walked to the iron gate, and after a woman from the local museum had unlocked it, James slowly pushed it open with his cane. He beckoned his wife to join us, and the three of us walked into the old farmyard. When he saw the fountain, James whispered, “It all makes sense. This is why we are the devil dogs. I knew we earned this title from the Germans in World War I, but now it all makes sense. I’m here because I’m a Marine.”

James hobbled toward the fountain. His wife held his right arm, stabilizing him as he leaned forward to position his head near the water trickling out of the dog’s mouth. He removed his hat, closed his eyes, and craned his neck to drink from the fountain. He paused with his eyes closed, then turned to his wife and said, “I’m done. It’s complete.” His face was splashed with water droplets. He shuffled back to the van and climbed into his seat. After a few minutes, his wife joined him and we waved goodbye as the van drove up the hill. I was left to ponder what I had witnessed—and to reflect on James’ words, which seemed to imbue a profound sense of meaning. He hinted at a lifetime of reasons that motivated him to make a pilgrimage to Belleau Wood and the bulldog fountain. The fountain positioned him in a line of continuity existing within a sacred landscape. It reaffirmed an overarching narrative that as an individual Marine, James existed inside the collective. He and the Corps were one.

I’m here because I’m a Marine.

History of the Fountain

The Marine Corps has long understood the power of place and the importance of inculcating a sense of connection to hallowed ground. Servicemembers of all branches are tied to particular places, but Marines are collectively tied to the *same* places: Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, Chosin Reservoir, Khe Sanh, Fallujah. This list of sacred places includes the devil dog fountain, which has become synonymous with Belleau Wood. However, because Marines were never in this exact location in 1918, the site’s prominence is not



USMC

Left: Moving through the shattered woods, Marines kept low to avoid being shot by German soldiers.

Below: Tradition states that the devil dog fountain in Belleau, France, will give long life to any Marine who drinks from it.



LCPL KELVIN CLARK, USMC

It is quite appropriate that Belleau means “beautiful water”—and the elixir pilgrims seek is the essence of the place.



CPL DANIEL A. WULZ, USMC

Marines with 5th Marine Regiment, 1stMarDiv march to Belleau, France, after a Memorial Day ceremony at the Belleau cemetery, May 26, 2013.

grounded in historical events. Rather, it emerged from the confluence of geographic proximity to Belleau Wood, individual and group identity, rituals and rites of passage, personal relationships, devotion, and collective memory. The site is an exemplar of how once-insignificant places can evolve into pilgrimage sites—and of the symbiotic relationship that emerges between sacred sites and pilgrims.

The fountain is located inside the village of Belleau on private property, formerly the 16th century chateau built for the Graimberg family. The current owners are descendants of Alphonse Paillet, who, in 1842, purchased the chateau, along with most of the hunting preserve known as Belleau Wood. Paillet sold Belleau Wood to the Belleau Wood Memorial Association in 1923, and it was dedicated as a shrine to the American Expeditionary Force. The family retained the chateau ruins and have been an integral part of the growth of pilgrimages to the site. The fountain is sourced by a spring-fed aquifer that supplies water to the entire area. The sculpted bronze bulldog head is more accurately a Dogue of Bordeaux, a hunting breed that gained popularity in France in the mid-to-late 19th century. This particular fountain was used inside the farm area of the chateau grounds and is an unlikely structure to emerge as a sacred site. However, its proximity to the battlefield and the significance of the bulldog coalesced into the birth of a Marine Corps shrine. Visits



CPL JENNIFER E. REYES, USMC

Cpl Sutton Rosencrantz, a machine-gunner with 6th Marines, 2ndMarDiv, reenlists after a ceremony at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, Belleau, France, May 29, 2022.

to this shrine are a relatively recent phenomenon, as Marines were not in the village of Belleau during WW I. There is a possibility that a Marine may have been held as a prisoner of war or treated in the German first aid station under the chateau. But, despite this, there are no accounts of Marines drinking from the fountain during the war.

The historic silence on the topic of the bulldog fountain is conspicuous given its current prominence. It is particularly

noteworthy because of the number of fountains established by Americans as living memorials after WW I, such as the fountain on Belleau's main road that is dedicated to the memory of soldiers from Pennsylvania who died in Belleau Wood. There is no mention of our fountain in the writings about Belleau visits to include the 1920 Knights of Columbus pilgrimage, the dedication of Belleau Wood in 1923, or the 1929 reconstruction of the church that also serves as the U.S. Army 26th "Yankee" Division memorial. Brigadier General James Harbord, USA was incensed by the location of this memorial and released a number of press statements asserting that Belleau Wood belonged to the Marines. Had the fountain been important to the Marines, this would have been a perfect time to emphasize their connection not only to Belleau Wood but to the village of Belleau. Gold Star Mothers also visited the area as part of the U.S. government funded pilgrimages of 1930-1933, and there are no written or photographic records of them visiting this particular fountain.

After World War II, veterans of both wars continued visiting the area, and the Yankee Division veterans again paid for repairs to the church, which was rededicated in 1953. Also visiting during this time was 20th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Lemuel Shepherd. He was concerned that people were forgetting the contributions of Marines in Belleau Wood and initiated a plan to erect a monument, which was dedicated in 1955. It seems likely that Shepherd, along with other dignitaries, would have paid a visit to the fountain had there been an established Marine Corps connection to the site. The following decades reflect a similar lack of attention.

Based on testimonies from Belleau residents and press pieces from the 1980s, it was sometime during this decade that Marines began to visit the village of Belleau and the fountain as an extension to Belleau Wood itineraries. In the November 1988 issue of *Marine Corps Gazette*, author Agostino von Hassell described Marines visiting the devil dog fountain and proposed an interesting rationale for why Marines were connected to the village of Belleau. He referenced an account wherein the Germans occupied Belleau in 1914 and encountered the "Hounds of Belleau" inside the chateau. During the subsequent fighting in June 1918, the Germans recalled their first skirmish in Belleau, which resulted in the devil dogs moniker. On July 15, 1990, *Boston Globe* sportswriter Bud Collins asserted that the Marines had



USMC

A Marine is carried from the battlefield at Belleau Wood. More than 1,800 Marines were killed or wounded on June 6, 1918.



Marine reenactors dodge explosives and falling debris in a wheat field near Bealeton, Va., June 9, 2009, while filming a movie for the National Museum of the Marine Corps' exhibit showcasing the Battle of Belleau Wood. (Photo by Nancy Lee White Hoffman)

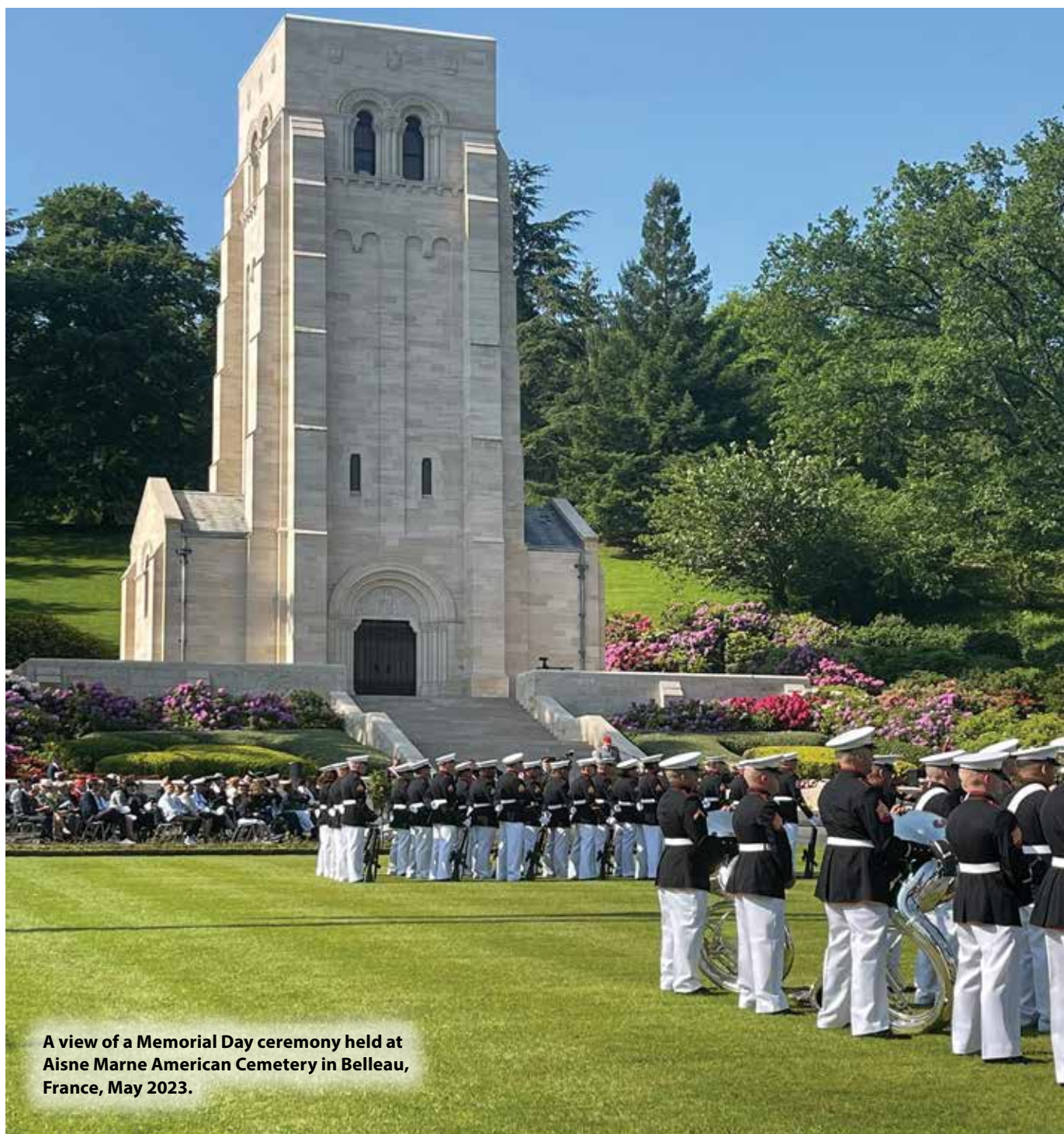
bivouacked in the former farmyard of the chateau during the war. This is particularly interesting given the fact that the date of Collins' visit to the location corresponded to the dates in 1918 when the Yankee Division liberated the village. Despite the historical inaccuracy of the Marines' connection to Belleau, both authors linked fragmented pieces into one integrated framework. From this point, the village of Belleau was subsumed into the Belleau Wood narrative and fused together as one place within the collective memory of the area. This is illustrated by a conversation I had with a veteran Marine visiting Belleau Wood, who stopped me to inquire about the location of the fountain inside the woods. This man had actually been at the fountain and inside Belleau Wood in the early 1990s with a group from The Basic School but had forgotten the sites were geographically separated. At some point in the decades following his visit, his individual memory of the fountain's location had merged with the collective memory of Belleau Wood.

While Belleau Wood had been hallowed



Gen Charles C. Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, traveled to Belleau, France, to drink from devil dog fountain, May 31, 1998.

COURTESY OF HEATHER WARFIELD, PH.D.



A view of a Memorial Day ceremony held at Aisne Marne American Cemetery in Belleau, France, May 2023.

COURTESY OF HEATHER WARFIELD, PH.D.

ground since 1918, the subsumption of Belleau into Belleau Wood was cemented by 31st Commandant General Charles Krulak during his 1997 and 1998 visits. Gen Krulak's personal connections to the area ran deep—he grew up hearing about the battle from his godfather, General Holland Smith, who had seen action at Belleau Wood—and these visits sacralized the oneness of the landscape in four significant ways. First, he chose the battlefield as the setting for the 222nd Marine Corps Birthday film. Like a prophet standing in the wheatfield, with one arm seemingly reaching back to

WW I-era Marines and the other arm extended to future generations, Gen Krulak passionately spoke of continuity, identity, and shared vision. He also effectively used water as a connective motif by saying Belleau Wood was “like a river that runs through all Marines and all Frenchmen ... rippling through our souls, renewing us, sustaining us and fortifying us for the trials to come.” Secondly, Gen Krulak was photographed drinking directly from the devil dog fountain, giving a visual template for how future Marines would engage with the site. Third, he referenced his visit to

Belleau Wood as a “pilgrimage of great personal meaning” and emphasized the importance of reenacting the journey of the 1918 Marines. Lastly, Gen Krulak acknowledged the local residents by presenting the fountain landowners with a Certificate of Appreciation, a powerful indicator of the importance the Corps placed on the site.

Current Practices at the Fountain

The devil dog fountain's emergence as a sacred site is concurrent to the growth of pilgrimages worldwide. The practices there mirror those at other

sacred sites involving wells or fountains. These places are often associated with healing properties, miracles, or divine connections, which makes them focal points for spiritual practices and pilgrimages. Pilgrims and visitors come to these wells seeking physical, emotional, or spiritual well-being and either ingest the water or immerse themselves in it. Over time, stories and legends associated with such fountains get passed down through generations.

Like other sacred wells, the bulldog fountain is a center point of gathering for those who share a common identity and has become an important site for rituals and rites of passage, including reenlistments, promotions, and retirements. Moreover, the fountain shares another characteristic with other pilgrimage sites: an element of challenge or difficulty to access. The courtyard gate is locked and knowing how to access the key becomes part of the experience and affirms a sense of exclusivity.

I spoke to a Marine sergeant who told me she had waited her entire life to be at the fountain. The fact that she was stationed in Europe was a dream come true, and being at the fountain was her sign that she was in the right place at the right time. She attributed her good fortune and life trajectory to the Marine Corps and was eager to send photos to her family and friends to show them how she made it to the fountain, knowing how proud they would be.

Another Marine I spoke to, a captain who was a prior enlisted Marine, told me being at the fountain reminded him of the yellow footsteps at PI and how he was walking in the footsteps of Marines from 1918 and taking his place among all Marines. He said that he felt a great deal of responsibility to honor the Marines of the past.

It is customary for Marines to drink directly from the fountain rather than filling a canteen or bottle to drink from. Either during the initial drink or the subsequent one, most Marines are photographed in the same pose as Krulak in 1998. If they are part of a group, they will often flank the fountain for a photo. These photos are subsequently posted on social media with the hashtag #BelleauWood, further cementing the oneness of the two places.

The water's meaning has evolved over time, too. Marines drinking from the fountain in the 1990s focused on the power of the water to extend one's professional life in the Corps. Now, it is said that the water extends one's physical life for 20 years. It is also



LCpl Anthony Chaidez with 2nd ANGLICO drinks from the bulldog fountain during a tour of the Belleau Wood battle site, June 29, 2018. (Photo by Cpl David Delgadillo, USMC)

considered the element that links all Marines to one another. Marines drink the water for those at Belleau Wood, for the current Marines, and for future Marines. Many Marines report taking home bottles of water from the bulldog fountain in the same manner as pilgrims do from other sacred wells. These bottles are treasured artifacts that form part of a collection that may include sand from Iwo Jima or one of the Normandy beaches.

Not all visitors coming to the fountain are Marines; others such as civilians and non-USMC servicemembers frequent the site. U.S. Army and National Guard personnel visiting the fountain often recount contested battle histories and the evolving collective memory of the war. In many ways, this reinforces the fountain's status as a pilgrimage site—contested narratives always characterize such places. The long-standing interservice rivalry between the Marine Corps and the Army is also a point of dialogue, with a particular emphasis on WW I. Soldiers often remark that the Marines were never in that location and jest that they will post photos in front of the fountain on social media with messages related to historical accuracy. There is also a sense that the Marine Corps has systematically removed the Army's presence in the Belleau Wood narrative, and one soldier told me that the Corps was “doing what Marines do and making everything about themselves.” Soldiers visiting the fountain who know about the Yankee Division's liberation of the village of Belleau also recount the actions of July 1918. In addition, they point out the weather-



COURTESY OF HEATHER WARFIELD, PH.D.

A Marine Security Guard social media post shows a group of Region 8 Headquarters Marines that made the pilgrimage to Belleau, France, to drink from the fountain.



vane on top of the nearby barn, which depicts a Yankee Division soldier with his boot permanently kicking east, symbolizing pushing the Germans out of Belleau.

There is also a local impact resulting from the prominence of the site. The museum across the street, opened in 2008, retains the key for gate access and now has vessels for the water, similar to other holy wells like Lourdes. Local guides have incorporated a stop at the fountain as part of battlefield itineraries in the area. The fountain landowners remain central to the site and fund ongoing maintenance and access for ceremonies and cultivate personal connections with the diplomatic and military communities in France.

Memorial Day

The steady stream of Marines visiting the Belleau area rises to a groundswell during the Memorial Day weekend. There is a growing list of ceremonies for the weekend occurring across multiple sites, to include the German cemetery and the

village church where a Catholic mass is held on Saturday evening. The recent inclusion of Marine Corps participation in this service is conspicuous due to its overtly religious nature, indicative of the evolution of pilgrimages in Belleau. During the 2023 service, there were contributions by French clergy members, local residents, and American military dignitaries. During the sermon, the priest referenced “martyr Marines” who died in Belleau Wood, which is interesting given the fact that the church itself is a memorial for the Yankee Division. During this service, Marines inhabit a space that was paid for by the sacrifices of their brothers-in-arms in the Yankee Division. For the locals, though, these Marines seem to personify the names of the war dead flanking the church walls. The Yankee Division soldiers, who liberated the village of Belleau, seem to have been reborn as Marines, a nod to the Corps’ powerful influence on the collective memory of the area in WW I.

On Sunday, the culminating ceremony, infused with grand military pageantry,

occurs at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery. Similar ceremonies take place at all American Battle Monuments Commission cemeteries in France and all of them include military representation. However, the ceremony at Aisne-Marne is palpably “Marine Corps” in choreography, presence, and tenor. The list of distinguished guests continues to grow and is evidence of the increasing importance ascribed to the ceremony by French military and government officials. Moreover, the German Army has a burgeoning presence, and several German soldiers I spoke to shared that they were there to honor the war dead of “our allies” and focus on reconciliation.

The Marine Corps understands the power of place, and the Memorial Day ceremony demonstrates a superior grasp of symbolism, ritual and narrative. Ceremony attendees from many countries fill the parade ground, and their gazes are initially fixed on the Memorial Chapel, ascending as a stark reminder of the human costs of war. Behind the chapel is Belleau Wood. Prior to the start of last



CPL MICHAEL VIRTUE, USMC

Left: A ceremony held in Belleau, France, May 28, 2023, commemorated the 105th anniversary of the Battle of Belleau Wood.

Below: Gen David H. Berger visited the fountain during his tenure as the 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps.



COURTESY OF HEATHER WARFIELD, PH.D.

year's ceremony, visitors watched the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps descending from Belleau Wood, shoulder to shoulder with the Chief of Staff of the French Army and a German Brigadier General. Not only was this a powerful symbol of reconciliation between former enemies, it was also a reminder that the Marine Corps, which had been untested in the conflicts of WW I, matured inside the primordial darkness of Belleau Wood and emerged victorious.

The speeches given by dignitaries mentioned the sacrifice and loss of life in WW I. This reality was made more poignant by the setting, which includes over 2,200 graves of servicemembers who died during the war. Death and burial are tangible at places like this, and the proximity of the cemetery to the battlefield creates an immediate sense of the gravitas of the toll of war. The entire Memorial Day ceremony was a well-choreographed display of order, discipline, and precision that sharply contrasted the chaos and carnage of 1918.

As the ceremony ended, hundreds of

attendees made a procession through the town, down the main street, and into the courtyard for a reception at the devil dog fountain. Like other pilgrimage processions, an amalgam of people moved together toward the sacred site. It was even more remarkable given the blending of military ranks within close proximity, which would not occur in any other setting. The climactic event was Gen David H. Berger's arrival at the fountain, where he gave a speech thanking the local hosts, allies, and partners and mentioning the "sacrifices of those who fought here at Belleau Wood." He posed for a photo with the other generals, who represented the military alliance amongst the United States, France and Germany. He re-enlisted a Marine during the reception as well.

Memorial Day weekend is also about the local inhabitants, often silent stakeholders in the pilgrimage saga of Belleau Wood and Belleau. During this weekend, the Belleau locals are co-creators of the experience; they renew personal relationships with Marines and other visitors and have a sense of agency in decision-making about the ceremonies. This agency is increasingly important as the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery has been

designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The added notoriety and people visiting these sites impacts the locals and, like other pilgrimage sites around the world, their voices are often marginalized. Many of the families have lived in the area since before WW I, and they have their own strong attachments to the sites. These attachments often reflect a different type of priority, function, and meaning than for American pilgrims and visitors. During the Memorial Day weekend, the locals also host Marines in their homes, and the relationships forged over decades are treasured by all involved. Finally, the fountain landowners have the opportunity to remind visitors of their benevolence and hospitality, while also ensuring a seat at the table regarding the future of the fountain.

The Hero's Journey

The Marines fighting in Belleau Wood in 1918 engaged in a hero's journey mirrored by an archetypal psychological process. They left their ordinary world for a call to adventure and reached a place known as "Hellwood." After fighting with the enemy inside this Hell, they were bruised and battered; many were dead. The survivors emerged and returned

home with the elixir of victory. Their reality set the stage for a new type of journey: walking in their footsteps through reenactment. Such reenactments began as early as 1919 as pilgrims flocked to Belleau Wood to follow in the footsteps of the heroes. And it was important for them to retrace the steps exactly as the events unfolded in June of 1918. However, the reenactments could only reach the resurrection stage of the archetypal Hero's Journey through the practice of calling to memory the Marines and their actions—they could not return with the elixir of victory as their forebears had.

Gen Krulak tapped into this need for the completion of the quest in his 1997 video. He provided a pilgrimage template as he moved from the wheatfield into the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, while recalling the people and events of the battle. He was then photographed at the devil dog fountain drinking directly from the source of the water. This imagery sent a powerful message that pilgrimages were a sanctioned part of the Marine Corps experience and further cultivated the idea that places connected to the Corps could be spoken of in overtly spiritual terms. His use of the water motif provided further language to describe how Marines are connected to

hallowed ground and that there is a life force that fuses all Marines together. The fact that the water originates from the same source as it did in 1918 carries deep spiritual significance. And Krulak's language around renewal and rebirth set the stage for a shrine that could be visited and revisited by future generations of Marines seeking exactly that.

For James, the 82-year-old Marine veteran, his visit to the devil dog fountain was a moment of completion to the narrative of his life that opened at Parris Island. He was looking to reaffirm his place within the collective, and it must have been reassuring to know that the memory of past generations of Marines lives on at sites like Belleau Wood. In knowing this, there is the comfort that he will not be forgotten. He had walked the battlefield and communed with the Marines of 1918—and the last step was that he needed to ingest the water from the sacred fountain. Within the fusion of the individual with the collective, *I am here because we were here* is interchangeable with *we are here because I am here*. "Here" is Belleau Wood, which now includes Belleau—their oneness understood through how average places evolve into sacred spaces through their relationship with pilgrims.

James was a pilgrim reenacting the Hero's Journey, and his final quest was to return home with the elixir from the devil dog fountain. He found completion, belonging, and continuity with the Marines of the past and the Marines of the future. He became fused with a landscape that emerged as hallowed ground. It is quite appropriate that Belleau means "beautiful water"—and the elixir pilgrims seek is the essence of the place.

Author's bio: Heather A. Warfield is a professor, researcher, author, and consultant with subject matter expertise on pilgrimages to the Western Front of World War I. She was a 2022-2023 Fulbright France Research Scholar at the University of Lille where her research focused on post-war pilgrimages to Belleau and Belleau Wood. While in France, she contributed to a number of staff rides and educational experiences for U.S. military groups. In addition, she is the series editor of Pilgrimage Studies and is the co-editor of the book "Pilgrimages to the Western Front of World War I: Historical Exemplars & Contemporary Practices," to be published in 2024. Her book on pilgrimages to Belleau and Belleau Wood is forthcoming in 2025.

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MCA provided Marines at VMUT-2, stationed at MCAS Cherry Point, NC with copies of "On Killing Remotely: The Psychology of Killing with Drones" by LtCol Wayne Phelps with LTC Dave Grossman. This book highlights a lot of the positive and negative effects that Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) crews experience.

1stLt Joshua J. Nobles
VMUT-2

LCpl Samira S. Cortes
VMU-FRD



U.S. Senator Retires From Marine Corps Reserve

Colonel Daniel S. Sullivan, the last actively serving Marine in the U.S. Senate, retired from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., on Feb. 1. Sullivan is one of four current U.S. Senators to have earned the title Marine and is one of 34 Marines to have ever served in the U.S. Senate. During the ceremony, Sullivan was honored for his 30 years of service to the Marine Corps and the nation.

“I had the honor of commanding, leading, training, and of course, learning from hundreds and hundreds of infantry Marines, reconnaissance Marines, anti-terrorism Marines, ANGLICO Marines, MARSOC Marines, for three decades, and what an honor it has been,” said Sullivan.

Sullivan’s wife, Julie, their three daughters and his two brothers attended the ceremony to celebrate the occasion with him. Other family members, friends, fellow senators and servicemembers were



LCPL SARAH PYSHER, USMC

LtGen David Bellon (left), commander of MARFORRES and MARFORSOUTH, pins a Legion of Merit medal on Col Daniel Sullivan during his retirement ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., on Feb. 1. During the ceremony, Sullivan, shown with his family (below), is a U.S. Senator from Alaska who served 30 years in the Marine Corps Reserve.



MARFORRES COURTESY PHOTO

in the audience. Lieutenant General David Bellon, Commander of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces South; General John Abizaid, USA (Ret); and Brigadier General Balan Ayyar, USAF (Ret) spoke during the ceremony.

"We are grateful to Colonel Sullivan for his extraordinary legacy of serving with distinction in both the Marine Corps and the United States Senate," Bellon said. "He serves as an example for other Reserve Marines and their families—excellence and success in multiple careers are absolutely possible."

All three guest speakers praised Sullivan for his integrity and grit as a Marine, senator, and most importantly, a husband and father.

"I'm Alaska's junior U.S. Senator, but with the exception of husband and father, the title 'Marine' is my proudest achievement. Always has been. Always will be," said Sullivan. "This great honor was only possible because of the unwavering support of my wife, Julie, and my three daughters: Meghan, Isabella and Laurel."

"I have often said that, for those serving, the whole family wears the uniform. I also want to thank the Marines with whom I served for three decades. I learned from every one of those brave men and women who are a part of the most lethal fighting force in the world and who represent the best of America," Sullivan said. "I now join the ranks of another highly esteemed group in our country—America's veterans. Like so many Marines before me, I will always carry with me the values that are at the core of the Marines: honor, courage and commitment."

During the ceremony, Sullivan was awarded the Legion of Merit, which is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

"Surround yourself with self-motivated people who strive to answer their 'irrational call to service' and life unfolds with great options," Bellon continued. "Understanding dual careers can be extremely complicated for families. The Corps and our country are better for our Marines' loyal dedication to both."

Sullivan earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Harvard University in 1987 and a joint law and master's degree in foreign service from Georgetown University in 1993 before joining the Marine Corps. He went on to serve as an infantry and reconnaissance officer with a secondary military occupational specialty as an intelligence officer. He initially served four years on active duty before joining the Marine Corps Reserve in 1997. The Corps recalled him back to

active duty in 2004 and he deployed to the Middle East, the Horn of Africa and Central Asia.

He was activated again in 2013 and deployed to Afghanistan, working on a joint task force that focused on dismantling terrorist networks and criminalizing the Taliban insurgency. During this time, Sullivan also served as Alaska's attorney general and commissioner of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The citizens of Alaska elected him as their U.S. senator in 2015 and again in 2020 for the term ending in 2027.

Closing out the ceremony, Sullivan

thanked everyone who supported him throughout his career and gave a special thanks to his wife and daughters. Sullivan concluded his remarks saying, "God bless America. God bless the Marine Corps."

LCpl Sarah Pysher, USMC

Reserve Marine Awarded Fire Department Medal of Honor

Sergeant Bobby Philips, USMCR, a motor vehicle operator with Deployment Processing Command-Reserve Support Unit East, Force Headquarters Group, was awarded the Columbia-Richland Fire Department Medal of Honor on Jan. 19.



SGT ETHAN LEBLANC, USMC

Sgt Bobby Philips, motor vehicle operator with Deployment Processing Command-Reserve Support Unit East, Force Headquarters Group, was awarded the Columbia-Richland Fire Department Medal of Honor on Jan. 19. Philips, a fire captain at the Columbia-Richland Fire Department, took courageous actions, braving life-threatening conditions in the line of duty to save lives during a fire in Columbia, S.C.

According to the fire department Medal of Honor award citation, Philips' courageous actions, braving life-threatening conditions in the line of duty, saved several lives during a three-alarm fire.

Philips initially enlisted as an active-duty Marine in June 1998, first deploying in 2001 for training exercises in the Western Pacific and participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and 2004 to 2005. When Philips left the Marine Corps in 2006, he decided to pursue his high school passion of becoming a firefighter. After 13 years, he decided to reenlist in the Marine Corps Reserve to follow the call to serve again while maintaining his civilian career as a fire captain.

"I started to miss the Marine Corps, its camaraderie, the pride, and the feeling that comes with serving my country," said Philips. "It's something you can't find anywhere else."

On May 26, 2023, Philips and the firemen of Rescue 1 responded to a fire at a local apartment complex. After rescuing a woman and her dog from the first floor, he and his team moved to the third floor to assist another fire crew. Two firemen became trapped on the second floor when the building collapsed, resulting in one becoming incapacitated while the other remained conscious.

"I remember immediately thinking that they were dead, then the thought came to me, 'It's time to go to work.' I knew that regardless of their condition I had to get them out," Philips recalled.

With the building still burning, Philips and several other firemen freed both firefighters from the wreckage and carried them out of the burning building, where they received medical treatment. Upon his arrival to an awaiting ambulance, Philips realized that while he was concentrating on saving his fellow firemen, his air tank had run empty.

Philips credits his focused and calm demeanor to the experience and training he received from the Marine Corps. The way he thinks, carries himself and treats others have been elevated by the Marine Corps to reach a higher standard. "Philips brings a plethora of experiences as a leader and a mentor; he is always the first one to volunteer for tasks and never shies away from hard work," said Marine Corps Captain Johnny Felice, Philips' officer in charge.

Philips stated in his closing remarks that he found a deep sense of discipline, strength, and courage while serving in the Marine Corps, which he hopes will inspire others to take their first step to becoming a Marine.

Sgt Ethan LeBlanc, USMC



SGT HANNAH ADAMS, USMC

GySgt Benjamin Frazier, an intel instructor with Marine Corps Detachment Dam Neck, Va., was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for saving the life of a fellow Marine at NAS Dam Neck, Va., on March 21.

Leatherneck's Quick Thinking Saves Life of Fellow Marine

A Marine in Virginia Beach, Va., was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal on March 21 for saving the life of a fellow Marine.

In May 2022, Gunnery Sergeant Benjamin Frazier, an intel instructor with Marine Corps Detachment Dam Neck, Va., spotted a young man contemplating jumping off a bridge while Frazier drove on Interstate 64. Without hesitation, Frazier pulled over and dialed 911. There was one woman already attempting to talk the man down from the bridge, but once she glanced around for help, Frazier entered the scene.

"It was just one of those sixth-sense moments," Frazier stated. "I made the initial report to first responders and engaged the situation after the woman was pushed away multiple times."

It was clear that the man was distressed and adamant about his decision to end his life. Frazier grabbed his left arm and leveraged his bodyweight backward to prevent the man from jumping. The man tried to break free multiple times.

"I remember seeing the ocean," Frazier vividly recalled of the moment when they teetered dangerously close to the edge of the bridge, with the fast-moving waters below. Unsettled by the sensation, Frazier swiftly and tactfully maneuvered the man away from the ledge, determined to ensure their safety.

Recognizing the individual as a fel-

low Marine, he embraced the chance to discuss military life and their shared experiences. Frazier knows firsthand the profound effect that subtle actions have on subordinates, prompting him to skillfully create a connection with the Marine.

"I was a young Marine at one point in my career too," Frazier reflected. "We talked about hometowns and how his younger siblings needed him as a mentor."

When first responders arrived, Frazier rallied those around to assist in the process. Taking charge of the group, he ensured the servicemember was safe in the escorting process. He attributes his ability to mitigate the situation to the comprehensive training, critical thinking skills and military leadership instilled in him by the Marine Corps.

For his heroism and leadership, Frazier was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal. Since Dec. 6, 1941, this medal has been awarded to Sailors and Marines who have distinguished themselves through heroic or meritorious service. Frazier humbly acknowledged that receiving this medal provided an opportunity to advocate for the importance of looking out for one another.

During the ceremony, Frazier concluded, "As Marines, we need to hold the brotherhood and sisterhood principles in combat, to the garrison setting."

Sgt Hannah Adams, USMC



Leatherneck Laffs



"Sir, your email to the general about the unreliability of the internet won't go through."



"He lists his references as Santa, God and his mother. I think he'd be an excellent recruit."



"I sure do like the days
Leatherneck magazine arrives!"



"Recruits, back home you would
call this line dancing."



COURTESY OF COL WILLIAM T. ANDERSON, USMCR (RET)

German infantry cross over Chemin des Dames to follow the retreating enemy, circa 1918.

The Germans at Les Mares Farm

By Colonel William T. Anderson,
USMCR (Ret)

Quite often military history tells the story from one national perspective only. As a result, these accounts often fail to give all the reasons for failure or success. Was a defeat due to the incompetence of that force's leadership or was it the result of brilliant tactics by its opponent? What role did luck, good or bad, play in the result? The real story likely lies somewhere in between. Thus, to understand what really happened at Belleau Wood, we need to look at the German perspective through the German accounts of the Great War published between 1921 and 1933 and the extant histories of the units involved.

What follows is an account of the German operations at Les Mares Farm based upon the passages of the German Reich Archives "Schlachten des Weltkrieges" (Vol. 33), as well as the relevant German war diaries and unit

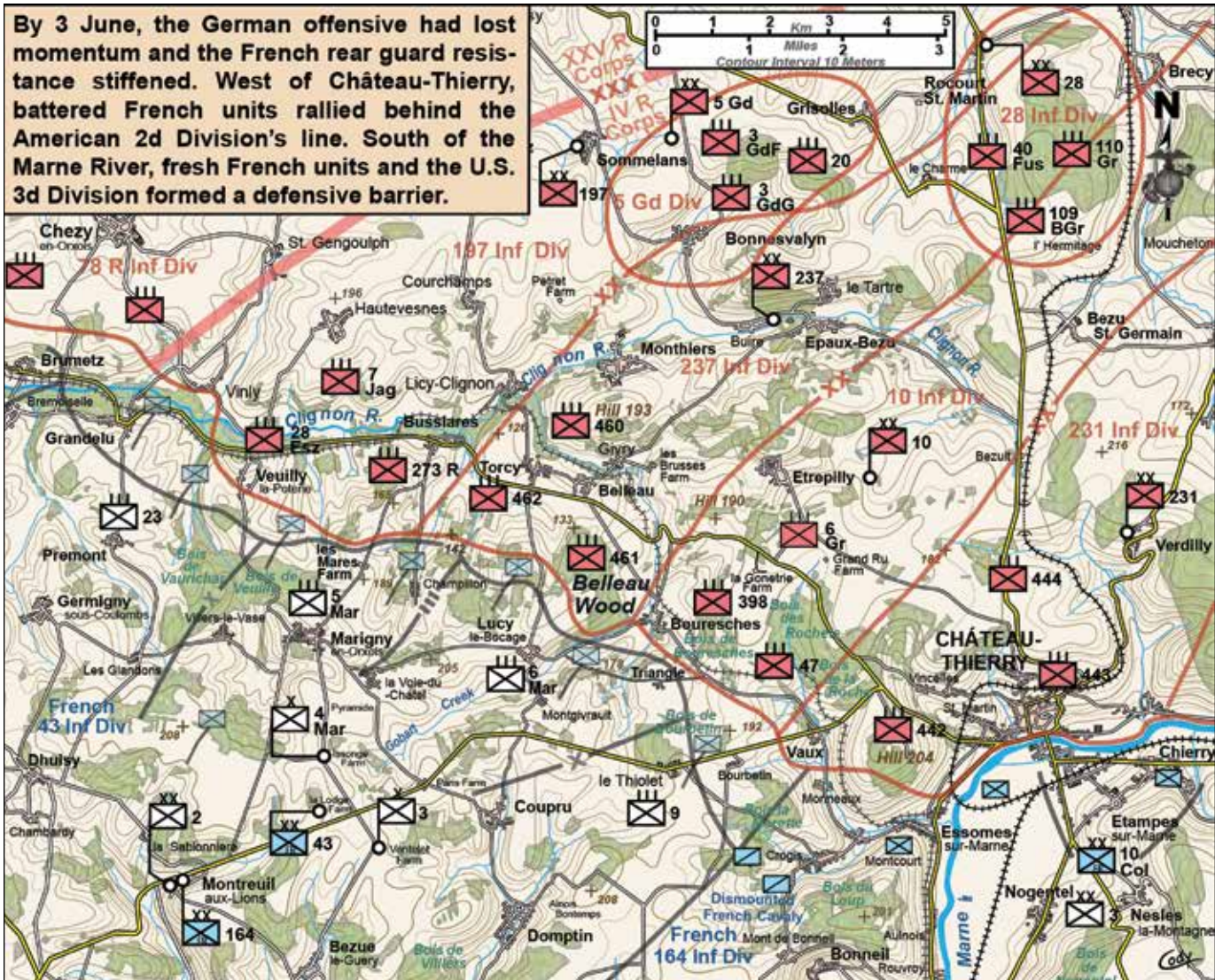
histories that concern the fighting from June 1-5, 1918. The translations address specifically the operations of the IV Reserve Corps in the German offensive across the Chemin des Dames starting on May 27, 1918 (aka, Blücher-Yorck Offensive). As part of the German 7th Army, this command, referred to as Corps Conta for its commander, General Richard von Conta, was a part of that offensive which would bring them into direct contact with the Marines of the 4th Brigade.

In the spring of 1918, Germany was in an excellent position to inflict a decisive blow on the Western Front. At this point in the World War, Russia's withdrawal had enabled Germany to transfer more than a million experienced soldiers to the west, giving Kaiser Wilhelm II's army numerical superiority. Equally important at the time was the sad state of the Allied forces. The French were exhausted from four years of war; and the British army had sustained serious losses at Ypres in

Flanders. Even so, Germany's main hope for victory depended on early successes before the American Expeditionary Forces could reach the front in sufficient numbers.

On May 27, 1918, the Germans launched the third of General Erich von Ludendorff's spring offensives against the French between Soissons and Reims. Assaulting across a 30-mile front, they drove over the Chemin des Dames ridge, catching the Allies by surprise, and approached the banks of the Marne River. On May 29, they captured the important railroad junction of Soissons and began to exploit their success. The results demoralized the Allies. Everything was in Germany's favor, and it appeared nothing stood between them and Paris.

Although the Allies were left in disarray, one unknown variable remained for the German advance: the Americans. The Americans proved themselves to be worthy opponents when the 1st Infantry Division fought valiantly at Cantigny on



A field gun used by German soldiers while fighting against U.S. forces in Europe during the first world war.

May 28; and the 3rd Infantry Division, which would come to be known as the “Rock of the Marne” division, prevented the Germans from crossing the Marne River at the Château-Thierry on May 31, 1918.

At the same time, the 2nd Infantry Division finally deployed east toward Château-Thierry. The division consisted of the 3rd Brigade (9th and 23d Army Regiments and the 5th Machine Gun Battalion), the 4th Brigade (Marine) with the 5th and 6th Regiments and the 6th Machine Gun Battalion. Despite early confusion due to conflicting orders, the deploying troops finally began the move east via truck convoys as June began.

After a difficult trip against waves of fleeing refugees, the Americans disembarked on June 1 at Montreuil-aux-Lions, east of Paris, followed by a foot march of approximately 5 miles on the Paris-Metz Road. It appears, purely by



chance, that the Marines in the 4th Brigade (Marine) were tasked to defend an area north of the Paris-Metz Road, northwest of Château-Thierry, in the vicinity of Lucy-le-Bocage. The 9th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, took the right flank of the division sector closer

to Château-Thierry. This decision would ultimately direct the Marines toward their destiny against units of the German IV Reserve Corps in woods and fields at Belleau Wood.

The German troops in Corps Conta who arrived in the vicinity of the Clignon

A modern-day aerial view of Les Mares Farm in France.



Creek on June 1 were the 197th Infantry Division, 237th Infantry Division, and the 10th Infantry Division, from their right to left. Created on the Eastern Front in August 1916, the 197th Division was given the task of crossing Clignon Creek and attacking the heights south of the creek. Under the command of Lieutenant General Karl Wilhelmi, the 197th Division consisted of the 7th Saxon Jäger Regiment, 28th Ersatz Infantry Regiment, 273d Reserve Infantry Regiment and 261st Field Artillery Regiment. The Saxon Jägers marching toward Clignon Creek and Bussiaries included the 13th Jäger Battalion, 25th Reserve Jäger Battalion and 26th Reserve Jäger Battalion. Commanded by Colonel Kurt Baron von Uslar-Gleichen, the Saxon Jägers remained in reserve but quickly moved forward as the battle progressed.

On the division's left wing, the 273rd Reserve Infantry Regiment, commanded

by Colonel Hermann von der Heyde, was directed to attack at noon on June 1. Success at Bussiaries would allow the right wing and the 28th Ersatz Infantry Regiment to assault the heights to the southwest of Veuilly-la-Poterie, placing the German forces in a position to cut the Paris-Metz highway.

That very morning, the 273rd Regiment was assigned the 1st Battery, Field Artillery Regiment 461, as an escort battery to provide direct fire as appropriate. The 1st Battery was split up with the 1st platoon attached to the I Battalion and the 2nd platoon to III Battalion, with two field guns each. This provided the attacking German troops considerable firepower throughout the battle that June.

Meeting stubborn French resistance as they approached Clignon Creek, the Germans were only able to drive the French back across the creek with spirited

offensive action. But not without cost. The attacking companies from the 1st Battalion suffered a loss of 10 dead, including the leaders of the 3rd Company, Reserve Lieutenant Otto Meyer, and Reserve Lieutenant Frederick Krull of the 2nd Company, and more than 40 were wounded. Lieutenants Meyer and Krull are buried together at the German Military Cemetery at Belleau. These officer losses were keenly felt as they were highly respected and experienced combat leaders.

The division's war diary entry for June 1 noted the difficulty presented by the enemy and terrain: "The estimate of the situation was that the enemy, regardless of losses, seemed determined to hold the Clignon sector under all circumstances. The stubborn resistance on the north bank of the creek probably was to enable him to organize the defense south thereof with fresh troops brought in the meantime."

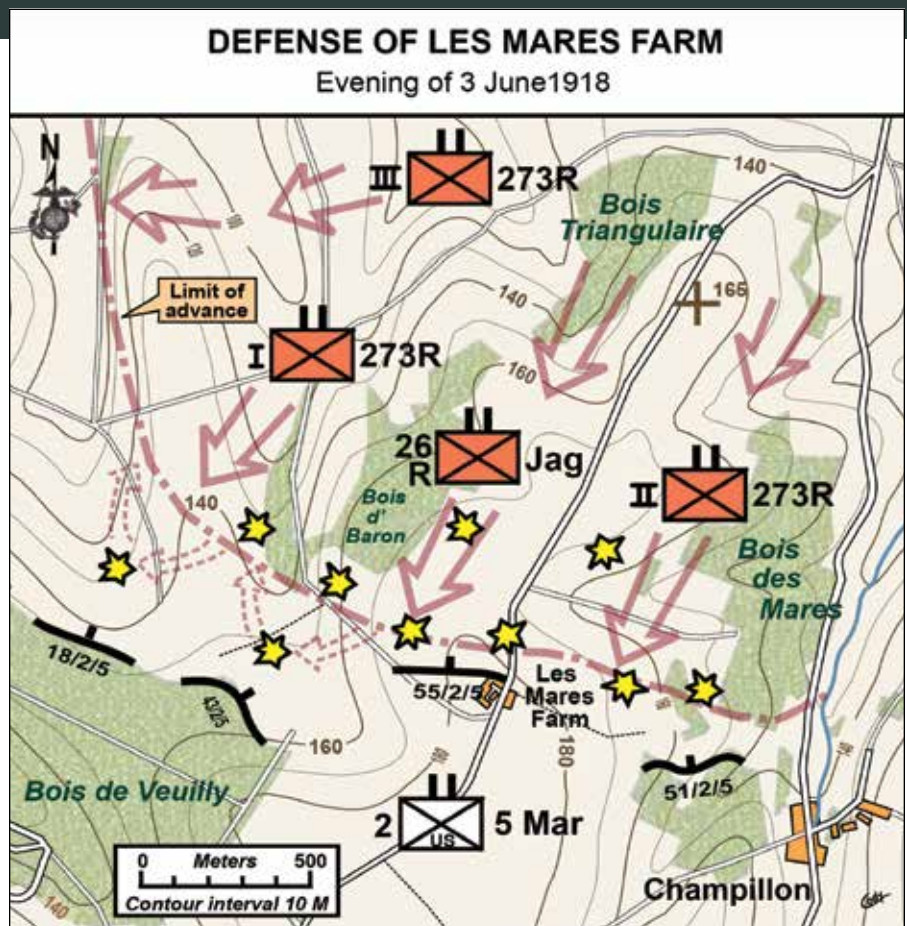


GILLES LAGIN

On June 2, the decision was made to continue the attack and drive the French back across Clignon Creek. It began at 8:30 a.m. with the 273rd's 1st Battalion reaching the regimental objective of the Torcy-Bussiaries road at 9:30 a.m.

For the remainder of the day, the 2nd Battalion was leading the assault of the high ground beyond Bussiaries. The regimental history mentions several small unit leaders in the 11th Company who were lost in the heavy fighting against the creek's north bank:

- Landwehr Lieutenant Hippe, 11th Company commander, was wounded.
 - Landwehr Lieutenant Horstmann took over the leadership of the company and he also fell.
 - Patrol leader Senior Sergeant Prigge who had previously been awarded the Iron Cross, 1st Class, was fatally wounded.
- The regimental losses were one officer and 10 men killed with 63 wounded.



LT COL R.L. "BILL" CODY, USMCR (RET), MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

As a result of the casualties, Colonel Hermann von der Heyde was given the 26th Reserve Jäger Battalion of the 7th Saxon Jäger Regiment that had moved forward on June 2. The Jäger Battalion was commanded by Captain Richard Ehrig. At the beginning of the war, the Jäger Battalions were considered elite light infantry and manned by outdoorsmen who were accustomed to service in woodlands and mountains. As the war progressed, however, other men were allowed to join the Jäger units. Remarkably, the caliber of those soldiers was still considered generally better than in other infantry units.

On the morning of June 3 at 8 a.m., an order arrived at the 273rd Regiment for the attack to continue at 11 a.m., and the 1st Battalion immediately moved to a forest north of Bussiaries along a railway embankment. However, the battalion did not attack until noon as the battalion commander, Major Boehm, was wounded. The leadership of the battalion was then assumed by Capt von Oertzen.

With only enough artillery ammunition for 15 minutes of preparatory fire by the division's 261st Field Artillery Regiment, the 273rd was able to cross the Clignon Creek relatively quickly, taking Montécouvé and Eloup without major fighting. Fortunately for the Germans, the French



COURTESY OF COL WILLIAM T. ANDERSON, USMCR (RET)

Colonel Hermann von der Heyde

had apparently withdrawn their main force to the heights south of the Veully-la-Poterie-Bussiaries line. In Bussiaries, however, French resistance stiffened. Due to uncertainties about the course of the divisional front line, the 273rd Regiment did not advance beyond Bussiaries. The French still strongly held the forest to the southwest of the village. In addition, effective French flanking fire coming

from Hill 126, west of Torcy, also slowed the advance.

In the afternoon, to give new impetus to the attack, the 26th Jäger Battalion was ordered to attack south on both sides of the Bussiares-Marigny Road and advance towards the Les Mares Farm, while Heyde's 2nd Battalion was to move to 1 kilometer north of Champillon. At a quarter before 8 p.m., the assault began after 15 minutes of artillery preparation. Under the effective firing of the two machine-gun companies north of the creek, the 2nd and 3rd Companies crossed Clignon Creek and climbed the heights beyond Bussiares with the 1st Co following in trace. By encirclement, they fell on the strongly occupied forest known as the Bois Triangulaire (Triangle Wood/Dreieckswald) just south of the village. At the same time, several key small unit leaders were wounded as Hill 165 beyond was occupied.

While initially fighting against the withdrawing French troops, the Germans now met the left flank of the 4th Brigade (Marine) sector as they approached Les Mares Farm. Sustained accurate rifle fire from the Marines of the 2nd Bn, 5th Marines, around the farm did considerable damage to the German soldiers attacking up the slope in the fields north of the



COURTESY OF COL WILLIAM T. ANDERSON, USMCR (RET)

Captain Richard Ehrig

village. Nevertheless, as noted by future Commandant of the Marine Corps, then-Lieutenant Lemuel Shepherd Jr. in his oral history, the German Jägers were able to drive the Marine forward outposts back to the farm. For a short period, in fact, the assault elements of the 26th Reserve Jägers threatened the Marine positions at the farm itself.

The timely support of the 2nd Division artillery, having finally arrived near the front, limited the German assault that

converged on the farm buildings. The 2nd Battalion, 273d Regiment, on the Jäger's left, could not support the Jägers due to the unfavorable terrain near Champillon, sustained fire from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines' 51st Co to the east of the farm flanking fire from the east by the 3rd Bn, 6th Marines, and guns from the Marines' 6th Machine Gun Battalion south of Hill 142. Since contact with the 237th Infantry Division had now been lost on the 197th Division's left flank, the 25th Reserve Jäger Battalion was moved forward and placed southeast of Bussiares to protect the flank at Hill 142.

At this critical moment at Les Mares Farm, as highlighted in the 26th Reserve Jäger's history, battlefield communications then broke down. All their signal flares failed to fire properly, probably due to dampness. As a result, the forward German troops could not mark their positions and the German artillery continued to fire on the Les Mares Farm with the Jägers in the vicinity as well. After an hour, the Jägers Battalion's 3rd Company had to give up the positions at the farm, which had been occupied at great cost. They withdrew to a position 50 meters north of the farm. The 2nd and 3rd companies had lost 25 men killed in action.



The road leading to Les Mares Farm where German forces led their attack on Marines.

COL WILLIAM T. ANDERSON, USMCR (RET)

A German trench mortar, or “Minnenwerfer,” captured by U.S. Marines of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Regiment commanded by Col Frederic M. Wise, and towed back to a salvage station.

On the evening of June 4, the 26th Reserve Jägers reorganized facing Les Mares Farm and decided they had unfinished business. The 1st Company, on the left, wanted to improve its position the next day by storming Les Mares Farm again with a surprise attack. The trench mortars of the 273rd's 1st Battalion in defilade in Bussiares were prepared for the assault at dawn on June 5. Unfortunately, the 261st Field Artillery Regiment supporting the 197th Division could not provide sufficient support because of a lack of ammunition. The attack was under an unlucky star from the beginning. After a few rounds, one of the two trench mortars was put out of action by a broken tube. The fire of the other was ineffective. Thus, the assault was carried forward with great courage, but never reached the farm. The best of the company fell as 18 men were killed with many wounded, and the German offensive lost valuable momentum.

On the evening of June 5, the 1st Bn, 273rd Reserve Regiment replaced the bloodied 26th Reserve Jäger Battalion which was withdrawn to the rear to be the regimental reserve. Regrettably, as noted



USMC

in the battalion history, the two trench mortar guns of the battalion in Bussiares under Deputy Officer Krumbiegel failed to muster in the rear. Probably six to seven men in all had fallen victim to a direct hit from Allied artillery during their movement.

Ominously, the intensity of the Allied artillery fire increased more and more during the night. At 4 a.m., it became what the Germans called extermination

fire, or a massive barrage to destroy enemy personnel and defenses. Half an hour later, green flares announced an Allied counterattack. It was June 6, 1918, and the assault on Belleau Wood had begun.

The attack on Les Mares Farm is considered the closest the Germans would ever get to the French capital. Indeed, the German forces had been on the move since May 27, fighting their way



This painting by artist Harvey Dunn depicts German soldiers charging through the wheat fields at Les Mares Farm in 1918.

COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

to Clignon Creek. As Clausewitz teaches, the IV Reserve Corps had reached its culminating point defined as ... “[s]ince the object of the attack is possession of the enemy’s territory, it follows that the advance will continue until the attacker’s superiority is exhausted ... ”

Several factors at Les Mares Farm led to the loss of momentum in the German advance. As noted by General A.D. von Unruh, the IV Reserve Corps chief of staff, their “casualties were increasing alarmingly; ammunition was running short and the problem of supply, in view of the large demands, become more and more difficult.” Of significance, for example, was the loss of nine officers killed in action in the 273rd Regiment between June 1-6 as recorded in the regimental history. With the loss of 12 percent of the regiment’s officer strength and in leadership positions, no wonder the regiment was stymied. Thus, it became clear why the German offensive ground to a halt with the determined French resistance and the fresh, unbloodied Americans.

The Reich Archives account emphasizes the high toll on the 197th Infantry

Division, as a whole: “... the 197th [was] no longer fully ready for combat. Like many other units engaged in combat on secondary theaters, the 197th Infantry Division, had repeatedly been forced to release their younger and best-trained soldiers in exchange for troops that were less effective in combat during its operations in the East. Having been used as a static division along the Ailette [River] before the Blücher-Yorck Offensive, it was 924 soldiers short of its nominal strength and had so far lost 38 officers and 1377 troops.”

For some context, a German infantry division at this time of the war contained approximately 219 officers and 9,612 soldiers. Thus, the 197th Infantry Division was significantly compromised as a fighting force. As a result, Corps Conta headquarters directed on the relief of the division by the 5th Guards Infantry Division on June 7, 1918.

The 26th Reserve Jäger Battalion’s 1923 history emphasizes another problem: while Allied trucks were bringing up men and supplies constantly, only one railroad hub through Soissons was available to the Germans. The significant rail-

road yard in Soissons was clogged easily with men and equipment. In addition, the necessary equipment and horses required for the supply columns to quickly bring more powerful artillery and ammunition forward were scarce. Thus, the “brave German infantry” stood virtually unprotected under the ever-increasing enemy artillery fire.

The exhausted Germans would not have time to recover as the Allies decided to attack in the early morning hours of June 6, a momentous day in Marine Corps history. First, the attack at Hill 142 followed by the assault of Belleau Wood. But that is another story.

Author’s bio: Col Anderson spent the last portion of his military and civilian career in Europe with HQ MARFOREUR and with NATO at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. A former defense contractor at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., and Marine Corps historian, he was an adjunct faculty member at the USMC Command and Staff College Distance Education Program from 2009 to 2017.

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SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

A Sandy Shower

In April 1968, as a recently arrived 0311 in Vietnam, I was assigned to Co H, 2/26. I remember being in a bunker at a place called "Con Thien Northern I Corps."

One day, while standing at our post, another Marine and I noticed a large rain cloud coming our way. The rain cloud reminded me of storm clouds back home. We waited until it arrived and saw the rain come down. Man, were we glad to see it! Being hot and dirty, we decided that we would go grab our newly arrived "goodie boxes," which included bars of soap. Out of our bunker we ran and washed ourselves down. It felt great!

Believe it or not, the next day there was another large cloud. Again, we grabbed our bars of soap. Only this time, we ran right into a storm of sand, not rain, and we were sandblasted!

Oh well, good things don't last forever!

CWO-3 J.L. Smith,
USMC (Ret)
Elkmont, Ala.

Fix That Flag!

In 1967, I was assigned to electronics maintenance support branch, Headquarters and Service Bn at MCB Quantico. Our workshop was near Larson Gymnasium near Officer Candidates School. We took care of the two-way radios in the PMO, fire and game warden's vehicles. We provided sound systems for outdoor events and troop classes that were held throughout TBS and OCS. One time, we had a request to set up the sound system for the Marine Corps

Birthday ceremony to be held at Butler Stadium.

A fellow Marine named Corporal Cobb and I went to the stadium and met with a major a couple of days before the celebration. He showed us where we could set up and get complete sound coverage for the event. We provided microphones for the MC and VIP speakers. The platform was set up for the VIPs and generals attending the event. We placed our main sound system behind the platform and laid out

**The major was
off to the side waving
at us. ... The flag had
been mounted on
the guidon upside-
down with the star
pointing toward
the floor and he
wanted me to fix it.**

our cables, speaker and microphones.

The day before the ceremony, Cpl Cobb played a demo tape into the sound system, and I walked around the stadium checking sound coverage. While checking our equipment, we also brought in chairs, tables and a flag that we set up the way the major wanted it.

Then, on Friday, Nov. 10, 1967, during the Marine Corps Birthday ceremony, we were playing marching music into the sound system and civilians and troops began to arrive. When the guests were there and the band started to play the national anthem, Cpl Cobb brought out the microphone and stand for the master of ceremonies.

The major was off to the side waving at us. He motioned for me to look at one of the brigadier general flags. The flag had been mounted on the guidon upside-down with the star pointing toward the floor and he wanted me to fix it. So, I gently got up on the platform and pulled out the guidon. I noticed two screws holding it to the wooden pole. I reach into my pocket and pull out my keys that had C-ration opener on it. I used the flat end like a screwdriver and slid the flag down the pole to turn it the correct way. The whole time I could feel a few hundred eyeballs watching me complete my task. When the master of ceremonies was ready to introduce the first speaker, I heard a round of applause come from the crowd. The colonel to my far left saw me placing the guidon back into the stanchion, I pointed to the star, and he smiled and nodded. I looked toward the major and he gave me a thumbs up. The ceremony continued.

MGySgt Robert "Bob" Ripley,
USMC (Ret)
Twentynine Palms, Calif.

My Enlistment Crisis

I have waited more than 60 years to tell this, for lack of whom to relate to. I was within a few days of completing four years of service with a very good record. So much so, my commanding officer was determined to get me to reenlist. I was given extra reenlistment meetings.

Finally, the CO signed my record to be released in a few days. The next morning, everyone in the 8th Engineers fell into formation, for the reading of the President's orders to extend all personnel

until further notice. As the major walked the ranks, he stopped in front of me and told me to report to the office.

While standing in his office he then ordered me to report to the battalion office. So, there I was, standing before the commander, with my CO recommending a reduction in rank for missing a maneuver.

My CO told me, "Lance corporal, your service has now been extended."

I had no idea what was happening until it was over. Later, word leaked out of the office. The CO was worried he had already signed for my release and the President's orders might have been a problem. So, he relieved himself by sending me through battalion.

Shortly after that, an IG inspection for the 8th Engineers was scheduled. Hearing this, I sent a request to meet with the IG. As soon as that hit the office, I was called back to the CO's office and told that I could be released. Within a few days, I was out and headed home, never to hear of the request mast.

Even through that experience, I have spent years telling people about the good times I had in the Corps. It was the highlight of my life!

LCpl Richard D. Runion
USMC, 1958-1962
Jupiter, Fla.

A Pot Worth Peeing In

One of the more memorable souvenirs I have from my service in Korea was obtained in a non-prosaic way. Our company, H&S of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division, was moving forward slowly, following the skirmish

line of “George” Company taking a hill. Suddenly a barrage of Chinese mortars filled the air, and everyone scurried for whatever cover he could find. For most, it wasn’t much, but for my jeep ambulance driver, two rear aid station corpsmen, and me, there was what was left of an old bunker, without a roof but with most of the four walls still intact. We had dived in and felt pretty good because only a direct hit would get us! It was clearly a Chinese bunker because there were several foreign items that had been left behind. One of them was a beautifully fired and decorated grey-blue ceramic clay bowl about a foot in diameter. I grinned as I handed it to Sergeant John Gumpert, my thrice-wounded former machine-gunner, now an ambulance driver.

“Can you find a safe place for this in the jeep, Gump?”

“Yes, sir!”

He put it in his knapsack, carried it for me till we took the hill and set up our company in tents a few hundred yards behind the

new MLR. It survived my tour with 3/5 in the jeep, nine months at Easy Med, two weeks at sea on my voyage to the Golden Gate Bridge, and 70 years since then.

Oh, what was it used for by the family who left it behind in their haste? I once asked my house worker, Emmett, that question, and he told me that it was used for pee!

LT Birney Dibble, USNR (Ret)
Eau Claire, Wis.

A Satisfying Screw Up

In 1962, I was stationed at Twentynine Palms, Calif., when the Cuban Missile Crisis started. I was detached to a replacement artillery battalion along with two of my buddies. We were all in FDC & Survey. The Corps bused us down to the docks in southern California where we boarded USS *Noble* (APA-218). As we had no duties at the time and one of my buds, J.J., just happened to have a bottle of vodka in his duffel bag, we decided to start drinking screwdrivers.

We encountered a few

problems: First, we ran out of orange juice; second, we were restricted to the ship. Now you must understand, we all had three years in the Corps at this time and felt a little salty. There were work parties being marched off the ship, and there were vending machines at the end of the dock. J.J. told us to follow him, so Les and I, being good Marines, followed our lance corporal down the ramp after a work party, and when they turned left, we turned right toward the vending machines. We did not get 50 feet before the shore patrol surrounded us and marched us back up the ramp, and straight to the security officer who was a very “green boot” second lieutenant. We were told to clean out the brig, which was full of extra mattresses, while listening to the lieutenant tell us we were going to be court martialed for desertion in a time of war.

Our commanding officer was a gruff sounding, cigar smoking Marine captain. He came down to the brig, growling about how he

was going to take these “sniveling cowards into his custody to see to their punishment.” The lieutenant tried to say that we were his prisoners, but he was no match for the captain.

He marched us up onto the deck, where he turned toward us and said, “Which one of you has the vodka?”

J.J. admitted he was the one responsible. He was told to go to his bunk, get the vodka and bring it to the captain. We had no idea what was going to happen to us.

When J.J. got back with the vodka, the captain took it and said, “This is mine now, but I do have some orange juice.”

He poured us four screwdrivers, drank his down and left with the bottle. We never saw him or that lieutenant again for the rest of our deployment, and nothing was ever said about the adventure down to the dock. Les and J.J. were two of my best friends in the Corps. We always had each other’s backs; they were great Marines. J.J. is gone now but I stay connected with Les, even 60 years later.

Jim Kneer
Shasta, Calif.

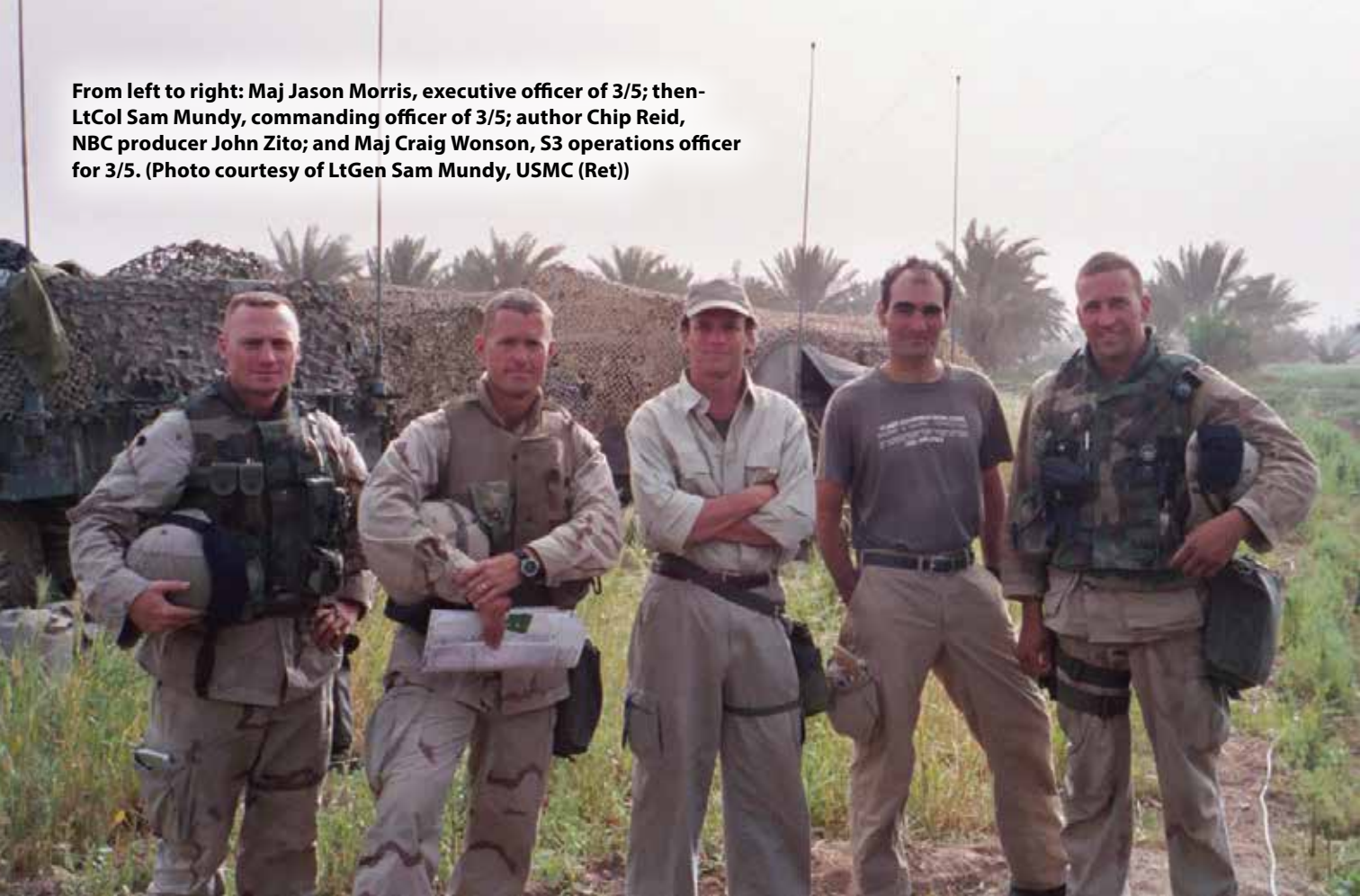


COURTESY OF JIM KNEER

Do you have any interesting stories from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? We would love to hear them. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Briesa Koch, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to leatherneck@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or a one-year MCA membership for the “Sea Story of the Month.” 🐚

Marines Jim Kneer, top center, Les Permenter, left, and John “J.J.” Grzesiak, right, were stationed aboard USS *Noble* (APA-218) in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

From left to right: Maj Jason Morris, executive officer of 3/5; then-LtCol Sam Mundy, commanding officer of 3/5; author Chip Reid, NBC producer John Zito; and Maj Craig Wonson, S3 operations officer for 3/5. (Photo courtesy of LtGen Sam Mundy, USMC (Ret))



Battle Scars

By Chip Reid

Executive Editor's note: In 2003, NBC News journalist Chip Reid embedded with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines during the opening days of OIF. He spent six weeks living with the Marines and telling their stories to TV audiences back home. He developed a better understanding of what it means to be a Marine—he also developed a profound respect for these young men and the sacrifices they made.

Twenty years later, Reid interviewed those Marines again. In this book he tells their inspiring stories of heroism in battle, camaraderie, patriotism and belief in the mission. Reid also writes about recovery from wounds—both physical and mental—and delves into the new appreciation for life that results from post-traumatic growth.

We chose to publish this excerpt in this issue because June is PTSD Awareness month, and hope that it reinforces the importance of speaking openly about mental health issues. For information about resources available to veterans, visit: www.mca-marines.org/blog/resource/resources-for-veteran-marines/

Preface

On Thanksgiving Day 2021, while driving from my home in Washington, D.C., to the Philadelphia suburbs for a family dinner, a souped-up pickup truck roared past me on I-95. It had temporary plates and two Marine Corps stickers, one on the rear window and one on the bumper. I thought: “Isn’t that just like a Marine. He just bought the damn thing

and it’s already plastered with Marine Corps stickers.”

That got me thinking about the most challenging, gratifying, jaw-dropping, and frightening story I covered in my 33 years as a journalist—the slightly less than six weeks I spent embedded with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, as a correspondent for NBC News.

For years I had thought that one day I would escape the journalism rat-race and write a book, but I hadn’t settled on a topic. “That’s it!” I thought as the pickup disappeared out of sight. For the 20th anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2023, I would write a book about the Marines of 3/5.

As I drove, I thought of questions I wanted to ask them. Where are they today and what are they doing? Do they have families? How did their lives change due to their first combat experience? (It was the first combat for almost all of them.) What did they learn as Marines that helped them prosper in civilian life? Did they struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)? What do they think about the war today?

When I returned home, I reached out to some of the Marines I had occasionally stayed in touch with and started asking questions. I found their stories fascinating and powerful—and they were eager to tell them. They clearly did not want their service and their sacrifice to be forgotten.

At first, I thought I could get a good cross-section with about a dozen Marines, but word spread about my project and requests to be included started pouring in. Eventually I interviewed more than 40

Marines, plus several wives and grown children, whose experiences and insights were often as engrossing as those of the Marines.

I was often surprised, sometimes stunned, by their honesty, how deep they reached to tell me their stories. On several occasions I heard the words “I’ve never told this to anybody who’s not a Marine, but ...”

I was deeply gratified that they still trusted me after all those years. Many of them talked about arriving home from Iraq and discovering that their families knew all about where they had been and what they had done because they had been glued to NBC and MSNBC, waiting for my frequent updates on their progress along the road to Baghdad.

Whenever I appeared on TV, I was later told, the phone tree would “light up” with wives, mothers, and other loved ones speaking only two words before hanging up: “Chip’s on!”

Of course, their passionate interest in my reports had nothing to do with me—it was because they were desperate for information about their Marines. Where were they? What were they doing? Were they in danger? Had anyone been injured—or, heaven forbid, worse? When were they coming home? They hoped to catch a glimpse of their Marine in the background of my live reports—or even better—to see and hear him in an interview. I interviewed as many Marines as I could convince NBC and MSNBC to put on the air.

One of my most prized possessions is an immense photo book with “Marines” stamped on the front in gold letters. It contains dozens of letters and family photos from the Marines’ wives, girlfriends, fiancées, parents, grandparents, etc., thanking me and my crew for enduring battlefield conditions to report on their men.

This book is a tribute to the dozens of Marines I interviewed, and to everyone who served in the Iraq war. Many of the Marines I interviewed also served in Afghanistan, so I think of this book as a tribute to all who served in those wars.

World War II and the Iraq War, of course, have very different places in American history. World War II saved the world from fascism and dictatorship. The Iraq War, by contrast, is a war that

Maj Craig Wonson, left, and 1stLt Chris MacArthur in an AAV near an Iraqi guard compound outside of Al Aziziyah. Rising smoke in the background can be seen from a firefight between Marines and Iraqi soldiers. (Photo courtesy of LtGen Sam Mundy, USMC (Ret))



COURTESY OF LTGEN SAM MUNDY, USMC (RET)

Then-LtCol Sam Mundy addresses Marines and Sailors of 3rd Bn, 5th Marines after a morning run around the assembly area in Kuwait, a few weeks before the war began in 2003.

many Americans, especially young ones, know little about. Many Americans who do know about the war believe it never should have happened.

I had serious reservations about the war in Iraq even before it began. But I believed then, and I believe even more strongly now, that the stories of those who fight our wars should be told. Even if a war is unpopular, even if you think it was a mistake, our men and women in uniform put their lives on the line and answered their nation’s call.

In writing a tribute to the Marines of 3/5, I believe it’s important to honor not only their service, but also their sacri-

fice—in battle and in the two decades since. Indeed, there is quite a bit of sacrifice in the pages that follow, including death in battle; death by tragic accident; life-changing injuries; and the whole panoply of nightmarish symptoms of PTSD. Also, of course, addiction, divorce, and suicide, which tend to plague the armed forces to a greater degree than the non-military public.

But there is also much that’s positive and life-affirming in this book: heroism in battle; the intense, life-long camaraderie among Marines; patriotism and belief in one’s mission; life-changing traits learned as Marines; and the post-



traumatic *growth* that often follows PTSD.

For the most part, I have told the 2003 Iraq invasion story chronologically, from Kuwait to Baghdad, while interspersing that account with stories from the past 20 years about Marines who were affected by specific battles and other incidents along the way. It took only 22 days for the Marines of 3/5 to fight their way to Baghdad, but the effects on those who fought in that war have lasted two decades.

As the convoy moved toward Baghdad and the Marines came under attack almost daily, I was awed by the fact that men as young as 18 and 19 were charging forward under machine-gun fire and making instantaneous life and death decisions at an age when my biggest worries were who to take to the high school prom and what courses to take in college. I developed enormous respect for their courage and devotion to duty. That respect only increased during my time writing this book.

From someone who doesn't have a military bone in his body, this is my small contribution to ensuring that the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform—even in unpopular wars—are not forgotten.

Marine Families Tell Their Stories: The Martinez Family

In early September 2003, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines came home from Iraq after a seven-month deployment. NBC News asked me to cover the homecoming of “my” battalion. I met Joe Klimovitz, who was my cameraman in Iraq, at Camp Pendleton in Southern California.

We waited for the Marines to arrive, standing with their wives, newborn babies, mothers, fathers, and other family members, who profusely thanked us for our reports. In previous wars, those with loved ones on the front lines often went weeks or months without hearing a word. With our live and taped reports airing multiple times every day, the families kept their televisions tuned 24/7 to MSNBC or NBC.

The Marines arrived in three waves with the last arriving at 2:30 a.m. The families of the final group had waited in a state of nervous excitement for more than eight hours. When the Marines finally got off the buses, Klimo shot video of the emotional reunions and I did interviews for stories that would air later that day.

Looking at those stories years later, one of the lines I wrote stands out: “Many here say that after so long apart, getting back to normal will be hard work.” That turned out to be an enormous understatement for many of the Marines and their families, including Corporal Mike Martinez, who held his son Mike Jr., while I interviewed him and his wife Stefanie, who held their newborn son Scott.

A photo of this moment is included in this book. Stefanie was overwhelmed

**NBC reporter Chip Reid (right)
was embedded with 3rd Bn,
5th Marines in the early days
of the war in Iraq in 2003. Reid
was with 3/5 as they advanced
to Baghdad (below).**



COURTESY OF CHIP REID



COURTESY OF CHIP REID

with joy to have their family reunited, but Mike was stoic and distant. Looking at his eyes, he appears to have what is known as “the one-thousand-yard stare.”

At the time, I thought that’s just the way Marines are. They don’t like to show their emotions. And of course, he must have been physically and mentally exhausted. In fact, though, as I later learned, the extreme disconnectedness of some of the Marines, including Martinez, was also a sign of difficult times to come.

Almost 20 years later, I interviewed Mike and Stefanie Martinez again, this time on Zoom from their home in California. Their son Mike Jr. is in the Air Force and joined us on Zoom from a base in Italy. Son Scott, a Midshipman at the United States Naval Academy, joined us from Annapolis, Md.

My first impression of the family on the screen in front of me was of the quintessentially happy military family—the proud father wearing a shirt with the Marine Corps eagle, globe, and anchor symbol, sitting next to his beautiful, smiling wife; the sons, Mike Jr. and Scott, both handsome young men proudly following in their father’s military footsteps. And in fact, I was right. They are a happy family. But it took a long time, a tremendous amount of patience, and a lot of love to get to this point.

Mike had told me before the interview that he struggled mightily with PTSD for several years following his 2003 deployment in Iraq, so I approached the topic gingerly because his family was present. He told me not to worry about it. He was totally open to any question I wanted to ask. “They know 100 percent,” he said.

All four members of this courageous family were not just willing, but eager, to talk about their struggle in detail. Their hope is that other families can learn from their difficult experience. Perhaps someone else who reads this—and is driving his family to the ragged edge because of PTSD—will seek help right away, instead of putting it off for 15 agonizing years.

Mike said he had several symptoms of PTSD, including explosive anger. Just about anything could set him off. He had such a short fuse that his family was always “walking on eggshells.”

Mike Jr. said there was never any physical abuse—but the mental abuse was at times, severe. His father could explode without warning. He said it was like living with a drill instructor. “We were scared. I was always angry, hearing my dad going off on our mom. Why is he doing this? Why is he like this? I didn’t understand at the time.”



COURTESY OF MIKE MARTINEZ

Cpl Mike Martinez reunites with his family after returning stateside in early September 2003 after his deployment to Iraq with 3/5. His time overseas led to a challenging struggle with PTSD for which he sought professional help in 2019.

Younger brother Scott said: “It was something that we just had to keep going through and endure, despite the fact that we knew it was wrong.”

There were some good times. Even some good years. “It wasn’t 24/7,” wife Stefanie said. “It would come and go in spurts.” But the bad times always seemed to return.

Anger was not Mike’s only PTSD symptom. Many veterans with PTSD suffer from addiction. Mike’s addiction wasn’t drugs or alcohol. He medicated himself with food, gaining an enormous amount of weight and peaking at 340

pounds. That made him even more frightening. Stefanie said his attitude was: “I’m big and intimidating, and I don’t care what people think.” Mike said his mindset, before he sought help, was: “This is just who I am. I’m the big bad guy. I’m right, you’re wrong.”

Much of that attitude was aimed at Stefanie, who says the hardest part was that she always doubted herself. “I always felt like there was something I did wrong. Everything I did was never right, and I couldn’t keep him happy.” She was often too frightened and confused to respond to his outbursts. “I would always shut down. I couldn’t say anything.”

Her job, she said, was to try to keep peace in the household. When Mike was angry, she would sneak away to warn the boys. “Just stay away from dad, he’s in a mood,” she would tell them. “I was always protecting them so they wouldn’t get the brunt of the anger,” she told me, as her husband nodded in agreement beside her. Mike’s PTSD almost tore the family apart. “There were moments where I wanted to just give up and leave, take the kids and go,” Stefanie said. “There were many nights I cried myself to sleep because I just didn’t know what else to do. I was stuck.”

She said three things kept her going: her sons, her faith, and her commitment to helping her husband climb out of the dark hole he was in. “Don’t give up. He needs you,” she would tell herself. “You have to stay. You love him. And I do. I love him to death. And I decided, I’m going to fight for him. I have to fight for him because he’s not fighting for himself.”



COURTESY OF SCOTT SMITH

HM Michael “Doc” Johnson, left, and Cpl Scott Smith in Iraq on March 24, 2003. Johnson was killed a day later in an Iraqi ambush near the city of Ad Diwaniyah.



COURTESY OF CHIP REID

From the left: Author Chip Reid, Rob Witt, Elber Navarro, Rob Gilbert, Robert Kerman, Scott Smith, Frank Quintero and Miles Thetford reunite at a 20-year reunion banquet at Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 2023.

Mike had sought help at the VA in 2007, but says they weren't helpful at all. A nurse even told him he needed to "suck it up." Instead, he gave up. It took him another 12 years to try again. For most people, New Year's resolutions rarely meet with success, but on Jan. 1, 2019, Mike's resolution was to get help. And it turned his life around.

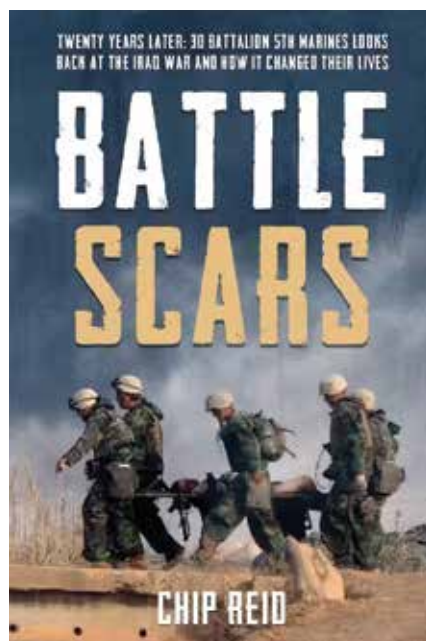
He started seeing a therapist who guided him through his time in combat and the horrors he had witnessed, zeroing in on one particular incident—the death of Michael "Doc" Johnson, the battalion's first fatality in 2003. For years Mike had blamed himself for Johnson's death, even though his reasoning made little sense. This is how he explained it: "When Johnson got hit, I felt like I failed. As a forward observer my job was to call for fire, to provide support for anybody who's in need. I broke my radio; I could not maintain communication. My one job was to maintain communications. I could not do that. Because I failed, Johnson died."

With the help of his therapist, and the strong support of his family, he finally accepted the fact that blaming himself was absurd. "It's the Marine Corps," he says now. "... Things break. It was absolutely not my fault that Doc Johnson died." That was the beginning of the end of 15 years of self-imposed torture over unfounded feelings of guilt.

Eventually he reached the light at the end of the tunnel—and turned PTSD into Post-Traumatic Growth. Stefanie, who attended some of Mike's therapy sessions, says his turnaround has been

the answer to her prayers. He's growing in ways that amaze and inspire her. He's going to school, with the goal of trading his monotonous job at the post office for his dream job—teacher and sports coach.

"He's now in a very happy place," she says. "He's very content with his life now." Mike calls it a "positive place," a dramatic change from the constant negativity of just a few years ago. And he adds that there's no chance he could have made the change without the love and support of his family. "They were my rock," he says. He now has a new mantra: "Better every day." A vast improvement, he says, over his previous mantra: "F-- 'em."



COURTESY OF CASEMATE PUBLISHERS

Scott sees a silver lining on the dark cloud of his father's PTSD. It taught him an important life lesson. "We saw firsthand what PTSD can do to those around you," he said. "I feel like we have a different understanding than what the average person has."

Epilogue

And here's an update on Mike Martinez. During his interview he said he wanted to leave his tedious job at the post office and pursue his dream—to become a teacher and a coach. Well, guess what. He did it. In October 2023, while I was narrating this audiobook, I received the following email from Mike: "After reading the transcript from our interview, I wanted to update you with more information. I have now finished my bachelor's degree program and I am working full time as a 7th grade math teacher. I also became the head coach for our high school cross country and track and field teams. I genuinely believe PTG is real but strangely must appreciate the PTSD that allowed me to rebuild myself into something that I never thought was possible. I guess it's true that you can't have a rainbow without the rain."

Author's bio: Chip Reid's journalism career has spanned 33 years. In addition to being embedded with Marines during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Reid reported from Ground Zero and the Pentagon after 9/11. He has also covered stories on the war on terror from Afghanistan, Israel, Gaza, Uzbekistan, Egypt and around the world.

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Proper Respect for the Flag

Executive Editor's note: In recognition of Flag Day this month, we are republishing these important reminders. This is from the June 2005 issue of the magazine, written by Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret), who was the Leatherneck editor at that time.

The first United States flag, whose birthday we observe on June 14, was approved by the Continental Congress on that date in 1777. It is the symbol of our great nation and all it represents. Marine Corps Order P10520.3B notes: "The national flag represents the living country and is considered a living thing, the union being the honor point." As our national symbol, it is to be respected and honored.

The following are selected flag etiquette rules excerpted from the United States Code:

DO

Always respect the flag.

When in uniform and the flag is paraded past or hoisted, stand and salute if outdoors. Also, stand and salute if indoors and under arms (covered). If indoors, in uniform and uncovered, stand at attention.

When the flag is paraded past or hoisted and you are in civilian clothes, stand at attention, remove any head cover, and using your right hand, place the cover over your left shoulder, thus your right hand will be over your heart. If bareheaded, always place your hand over your heart.

When the flag is displayed with another flag against a wall with crossed staffs or

on upright staffs, ensure the U.S. flag is displayed on its own right. When you face it, it will be on the left.

The U.S. flag is at the center and the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

Ensure the flag is always on the marching right, or, in a line of flags, in front of the center of that line when in a procession.

Wear your flag lapel pin on the left, near the heart.

Destroy, in a dignified manner, preferably by burning, any flag that is no longer a fitting emblem of our nation.

DON'T

Disrespect the flag.

Fly the flag with the union down, except as a signal of distress or emergency.

Let the flag touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water or merchandise.

Use the flag as apparel, bedding or drapery.

Fasten, display, use or store the flag in such a manner that it will be easily soiled, torn or damaged in any way.

Use the flag as a cover for the ceiling.

Mark, write, draw or place a marking, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing on the flag.

Use the flag as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

Use the flag for advertising purposes or in a display case where products are placed on the flag.

Use the flag as a costume or athletic apparel. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firefighters, police officers and members of patriotic organizations.



MARINE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Marine spouses gained insight and resources from a panel of speakers, local vendors and Marine Corps Community Services representatives at the first-ever “Behind the Camouflage Spouse Summit” in Albany, Ga., on March 14. The event was hosted by the Marine Corps Association.

MCA Launches New Program For Marine Spouses

The Marine Corps Association successfully hosted the first “Behind the Camouflage Spouse Summit” in Albany, Ga., on March 14, near Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany. This event marked a significant effort by the Marine Corps Association to foster camaraderie, support and connectedness among Marine Corps spouses, while also providing valuable resources and networking opportunities.

The Behind the Camouflage Spouse Summit aimed to bridge the gap between Marine Corps spouses and their base and community resources. The event provided an inviting atmosphere for spouses to engage with one another and gain valuable insights into the Marine Corps community. Attendees were treated to a catered luncheon, where they had the opportunity to connect and share experiences. The highlight of the summit was a panel of subject matter experts who provided valuable information and guidance on various aspects of military life, including family support, healthcare and community support.



MARINE CORPS ASSOCIATION

In addition to the panel discussions, spouses had the chance to interact with vendors from both the local community and Marine Corps Community Services. This allowed attendees to explore a wide range of resources and services available to them, enhancing their overall well-being and support network.

The Behind the Camouflage Spouse Summit in Albany is part of a larger initiative by the Marine Corps Association to host similar events across different Marine Corps installations. This year, additional summits are planned at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and in the National Capital

Region, further expanding the reach and impact of these valuable gatherings.

“We are thrilled to have hosted the Behind the Camouflage Spouse Summit in Albany, Georgia,” said Marta Sullivan, Director of Engagement and Expositions at the Marine Corps Association. “These events are fantastic way for spouses to come together, find much needed support, and help one another thrive.”

For more information about upcoming events and initiatives by the Marine Corps Association, visit www.mca-marines.org/events.

Leatherneck

ENDURING PRINCIPLES

- Marines are focused on combat; every Marine is a rifleman.
- Marines are ready, relevant, and forward deployed.
- Marines are innovative, adaptable, and versatile. Marines win.
- Marines do what is right for the Nation.
- Marines keep their honor clean.
- Marines take care of their own.
- The Marine Corps is a naval expeditionary force.
- The Marine Corps is an integrated combined arms organization of complementary air, ground, and logistics components.
- The Marine Corps is a good steward of the Nation's resources.



These principles, as articulated by
our 36th Commandant, remain relevant today.

CMC Publishes Latest Guidance To the Marine Corps

From the order titled “Maintain Momentum” by Marine Corps Commandant, General Eric M. Smith:

Marines, thank you for your service and sacrifices. The entire Marine Corps, active, reserve, civilian Marines, and our families continue to serve with the honor and commitment familiar to all who have ever earned the title, “Marine.”

Prior to my confirmation as the Commandant, I issued White Letter 1-23, which confirmed the direction and momentum of our Corps’ aggressive modernization, experimentation, and campaign of learning. I’ve had some time to reflect over the past few months and remain firmly committed to our current path. This Frag Order serves as a bridge between White Letter 1-23 and a forthcoming Commandant’s Planning Guidance that will be released when I deem it appropriate. First and foremost, I aim to communicate my vision for Who We Are, Where We Are Going, and How We Fight.

We are unique among the militaries of the world. First and foremost, we are a warfighting organization. We exist to fight and win our country’s battles. Everything we do should center around that goal. The character of war may

change, but its nature never will — it is the violent struggle between two irreconcilable wills. That struggle is where Marines thrive. We ask for nothing more than the chance to be First to Fight.

Ironclad discipline is the currency of our Corps. Steadfast adherence to our

**Ironclad discipline is the
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in garrison.**

standards sets us apart and gives us a decisive advantage in combat. Discipline is, and has always been, the foundational part of warfighting—and that starts in garrison. The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war.

Force Design set us on a critically

necessary path—one that will continue. In White Letter 1-23, I outlined my top five priorities of 1) Balancing Crisis Response and Modernization, 2) Naval Integration and Organic Mobility, 3) Quality of Life, 4) Recruit, Make, and Retain Marines, and 5) Maximize the Potential of our Reserves. Those priorities remain at the heart of my strategy and the direction for our Corps and are not in order of precedence. How we achieve each priority will require a delicate balancing and deliberate application of precious resources where, and when, they will do the most good.

We are and will remain a naval expeditionary force that fights from the sea as task-organized combined arms air-ground task forces. With Force Design in place, we will continue our proud history as our Nation’s expeditionary shock troops that can deliver combat power from sea to land—now with the additional capability to project power from land to sea. As a globally present and persistent force, we remain inextricably linked to naval campaigns, and we will be forward deployed with both conventional and special operations forces, ready to transition at a moment’s notice in times of crisis.

Modernization’s effect on how we fight is evolutionary, not revolutionary. Our foundation as our Nation’s expeditionary force in readiness will not change. But the formations, capabilities and methods we use against our adversaries must evolve. Just as the Marine Corps evolved from a Marine Amphibious Unit to the Marine Expeditionary Unit, and now to a force capable of not only Joint Forcible Entry Operations, but also a MAGTF capable of “standing in”—Marines always adapt to the changing realities of modern combat.

Marines, war is evolving—but that is nothing new. We evolve our equipment, training and tactics to stay ahead of our adversaries. This evolution may change the shape of our formations or the technology we fight with, but it will never change the fundamental nature of our Marine Corps, nor the significance of each Marine. We have adapted alongside the changing character of war for centuries—we are still on top, and we will stay there. Further updates will be issued when necessary. Sergeant Major Ruiz and I are honored to serve beside you. Semper Fidelis!

Gen Eric M. Smith,
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Executive Editor’s note: to read the full text of FRAGO 01-2024, go to <https://www.mca.marines.mil/FRAGO-01-2024/>, or read the full version in the June issue of Marine Corps Gazette. 

Reunions

• **FMFEUR/MARFOREUR (London)** is planning a reunion. Contact Kurt Stinemetz, (334) 590-8016, kstinemetz@charter.net.

• **Marine Corps Weather Service**, June 16-21, Billings, Mont. Contact Kathy Donham, (252) 342-8459, kathy.donham@hotmail.com, or Dave Englert, (812) 630-2099, englertd@psci.net.

• **Mike Co 3/7 (1965-1970)**, July 31-Aug. 4, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact David Ray, (612) 860-8932, davidrayray49@gmail.com.

• **Adak Marines**, Aug. 3-10, Adak, Alaska. Any Marines who served at Adak are welcome. Contact Barry Erdman, (920) 540-1585, beefoot2@aol.com.

• **1st Marine Division Association**, San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 18-25. Contact June Cormier, (760) 763-3268, june.oldbreed@fmda.us.

• **National Montford Point Marine Association**, Aug. 21-24, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact Ron Johnson, (504) 202-8552, vice_president@montfordpointmarines.org.

• **3rd Bn, 4th Marines Association**, Aug. 21-25, Herndon, Va. Contact Travis Fryzowicz, (732) 251-5518, travisjfry@gmail.com.

• **Marine Air Base Squadrons-49**, Sept. 7, Earlville Md. Contact Col Chuck McGarigle, USMC (Ret), (609) 291-9617, (609) 284-2935, col_of_mar_ret@comcast.net.

• **1st Bn, 5th Marines, 1985-1992**, Sept. 5-8, Macomb, Ill. Contact Scott Hainline, (309) 351-2050, ptimfi@yahoo.com.

• **USMC Motor Transport Association**, Sept. 15-19, Reno, Nev. Contact George Hanlin, (301) 514-1087.

• **"Battery Adjust" Marine Artillery Association**, Sept. 18-22, Savannah, Ga. Contact Ed Peterson, (732) 754-8755, ed66451@aol.com. All eras welcome.

• **Golf Co 2/7, 1965-1970**, Sept. 18-22, Tucson, Ariz. Contact Travis Skaggs, (775) 291-6813, tskaggs6@email.com.

• **Recruiting Station Baltimore, Md.**, Sept. 21-22, Dorsey, Md. Contact Ed Wakeley or Matt Cicchinelli, rsbaltreunion@outlook.com.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Association**, Sept. 26-28, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact LtCol George Carlson, USMC (Ret), (931) 307-9094, treasurer@marcorengasn.org or visit www.marcorengasn.org.

• **USS *Saratoga* (CV/CVA-60)**, Oct. 2-6, Jacksonville, Fla. Former *Saratoga* shipmates (Ship's company, air wing and

MarDet) welcome. Contact Mark Kikta, (202) 262-1294, mdkikta@msn.com.

• **Kilo 3/7**, Oct 16-24, Rapid City, S.D. All eras welcome. Contact Bill Gerke (631) 433-8575, msggerke@aol.com.

• **USMC A-4 Skyhawkers**, Nov. 11-13, Pensacola Beach, Fla. All drivers, maintainers, and aficionados welcome. Contact Mark Williams, (702) 778-5010, rogerwilco14@gmail.com.

Wanted

• Jim Remijan, (765) 759-8158, is looking for a **graduation book for Platoon 1039, MCRD San Diego, 1967**.

• Mark Pacey, markp@mstn.govt.nz, is looking for **photographs, interviews, letters, and any other information on Americans stationed in New Zealand during WW II**.

Entries for "Reader Assistance," which include "Reunions," "Mail Call," "Wanted" and "Sales, Trades and Giveaways," are free and printed on a space-available basis. *Leatherneck* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission. Allow two to three months for publication. Send your email to leatherneck@mca-marines.org, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.



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In Memoriam

Compiled by Briesa Koch

Bill Allen, 80, of Elk Grove, Calif. He was a Marine who served from 1963 to 1967. While assigned to Naval Station Treasure Island, he was selected as a member of the honor guard for Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's funeral at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, Calif. He then was assigned to Camp Pendleton and served overseas in Vietnam before his discharge.

Cpl Ambrose "Cowboy" Anderson, 98, of Gloversville, N.Y. He was drafted in 1943 and intended to join the Navy but enlisted in the Marine Corps instead. He was a Montford Point Marine who served in the Pacific and saw action on Iwo Jima.

Ronald Critser, 90, of Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who served for three years and completed an overseas tour during the Korean War. After returning to civilian life, he worked as a salesman for 32 years.

Cpl Richard "Dick" A. Cummins, 83, of Sugarloaf, Pa. He served in the Corps from 1958 to 1961. He later had a 30-year career as a state trooper in Pennsylvania before retiring in 1992.

GySgt Charles Drerup, 73, of Boise, Idaho. He enlisted in 1969 and completed boot camp at MCRD Parris Island. He served as an administrative clerk and a Marine Security Guard in Panama, Denmark and Germany. His final duty station was at Headquarters Marine Corps in Arlington, Va. After leaving active duty, he served in the Marine Corps Reserve until retiring in 1981.

Garry W. Funk, 79, in Zephyrhills, Fla. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve after graduating from high school in 1962. He later worked for Siemens Medical Group in Milwaukee, Wis., before retiring.

James L. Gadbury, 96, of Monticello, Ill. He was a Marine who enlisted in 1942. After completing boot camp, he was assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division and saw action in the Pacific theater during World War II.

An experienced ironworker, he was tasked with assisting sculptor Felix de Weldon with the construction of the Iwo Jima Monument in Arlington, Va. After his discharge, he used his GI Bill benefits to attend Illinois State University in Normal, Ill., where he obtained a bachelor's degree. He later worked as a public school teacher.

John T. Gallagher, 91, of Laguna

Niguel, Calif. He was a Marine who served as a fighter pilot and an instructor. He also completed a tour in Vietnam.

Sgt Rudy Gutierrez, 76, of Las Cruces, N.M. After graduating from Las Cruces High School in 1966, he enlisted in the Marine Corps where he was assigned to the 3rd Marine Division before being sent to Vietnam. He was then re-assigned to 3rd Reconnaissance Bn after recovering from an injury sustained during an ambush. After returning stateside, he transitioned from active duty to the National Guard where he would serve for 17 more years. He later worked in customer service. His awards include the Purple Heart and the Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V."

James L. Harrison, 85, of Franklin, Ohio. He served in the Marine Corps after graduating from high school. After his service, he worked at Batelle, a research and development institute in Columbus, Ohio.

1stSgt John "DI John" A. Havey, 82, in Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who served during the 1970s. He later had a career with the U.S. Postal Service. He was also a longtime member of VFW Post 7534.

Cpl Pete G. Hamilton Jensen, 83, of Saint Maries, Idaho. He was a Marine who served as a helicopter mechanic and crew chief, and completed a tour in Vietnam. After returning to civilian life, he had a career in law enforcement and then joined the Coast Guard Reserve in 1981 where he was a machinery technician and boatswain's mate. He retired in 1989.

Gerald "Jerry" Kawula, 88, of Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who enlisted in the Corps during his senior year of high school and served from 1954 to 1957. After his discharge, he worked in manufacturing for 41 years before retiring in 2001.

LtCol John T. Komar, 89, of The Villages, Fla. He served from 1958 to 1978. After various assignments as a combat engineer platoon leader in Okinawa, he completed a tour in Vietnam as the captain of Co C, 1st Engineer Bn, 1stMarDiv, in Chu Lai. Other duty stations included Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Headquarters Marine Corps in Arlington, Va., where he was the head of facilities and maintenance. His awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V."

Laurence L. "Sliv" Lauer, 98, in

Findlay, Ohio. He enlisted in August 1943, and served in the Pacific theater. He was wounded during the Battle of Iwo Jima. After the war, he worked in vehicle manufacturing. His awards include the Purple Heart.

GySgt Merlin M. Machut, 73, in Highlands Ranch, Colo. After graduating from high school in 1968, he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served on active duty for over 23 years. He completed two tours in Vietnam and served in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Other duty stations included Camp Pendleton, MCAS Cherry Point, Twentynine Palms and Point Mugu. After his discharge, he worked at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics.

Donald Marshall, 83, in Campbell Hall, N.Y. He was a Marine who served from 1958 to 1962. He served as a machine-gunner with the 6th Marine Regiment. He later worked in finance.

Charles B. "Chuck" Mawhinney, 75, in Baker City, Ore. He's known as the Marine Corps' deadliest sniper with 103 confirmed kills and 216 probable kills during his 1968 tour in Vietnam. After returning to civilian life in 1970, he worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 27 years before retiring in 1997. His awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V."

Dan G. Morse, 73, of Flushing, Mich. He was a Marine who served during the Vietnam War. He later worked as a mail carrier for 35 years.

Col Lonnie M. Myers, 80, in La Grande, Ore. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1965 and served on active duty for 27 years. In 1962, he deployed to Vietnam as an artillery battery commander and tactical air observer with the 1st Marine Division. He would return to Vietnam again in 1972 with 1st ANGLICO. He held additional duty stations at Okinawa, Fort Sill, NAS Lemoore, Twentynine Palms, Camp Lejeune, and in San Francisco, Calif., before retiring in 1992. He later obtained his master's degree in education from Eastern Oregon University and began a second career as a social studies teacher before his final retirement in 2005. His awards include a Defense Superior Service Medal, Purple Heart and 24 Air Medals.

MSgt Ronald R. Nelson, 93, of New Windsor, Ill. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1949 and served overseas in the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

He remained on active duty for 21 years before retiring.

Cpl Eugene “Gene” L. Penberg, 87, of Austin, Texas. He was a Marine who served from 1957 to 1960. He later had a career with General Electric and IBM.

Richard P. Rossi, 77 of Orion, Ill. He was a Marine who later worked as a journeyman for utility companies until retiring in 2005.

1stSgt Lee Rux, 92, in San Antonio, Texas. He was a Marine who served with Baker Co, 7th Marines in Korea and saw action at the Chosin Reservoir. After returning stateside, he continued his military service for 30 years before retiring. He later worked with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service until his final retirement in 1992. He held national offices with the Chosin Few and was active with the 1st Marine Division Association and the Marine Corps League.

Sgt James A. Shipley, 90, of Odenton, Md. He was a Marine who served from 1952 to 1958 at Fort Campbell, Ky., guarding nuclear warheads during the Korean War. After returning to civilian life, he worked as a cabinet maker and later as a milkman for Wilton Farm Dairy.

Sgt Roy J. Sykes, 75, of Willow Spring, N.C. He was a Marine who served as a

radio operator with Company C, 3rd Recon Bn, 3rdMarDiv. He would later work in strategic communications and in NATO operations in Europe. His awards include the Bronze Star.

Virginia T. Walczak, 106, in Culpeper, Va. After earning a bachelor’s degree in education from Union College in Barbourville, Ky., she enlisted in the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve. After completing boot camp at MCRD Parris Island, she was stationed at Marine Barracks Washington and taught at the Marine Corps Institute where she helped Marines earn their GEDs.

James “Jim” Wanek, 90, of Allouez, Wis. He was a Marine who served from 1954 to 1956, and later had a career in insurance for over 50 years.

In Memoriam is run on a space-available basis. Those wishing to submit items should include full name, age, location at time of death (city and state), last grade held, dates of service, units served in, and, if possible, a published obituary. Allow at least four months for the notice to appear. Submissions may be sent to *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, Va., 22134, or emailed to leatherneck@mca-marines.org. 

Leatherneck

REFLECTIONS

While Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day are poignant moments of remembrance, *Reflections* keeps the spirit of honoring veterans alive year-round.

REFLECTIONS provides a venue in which individuals can celebrate and recognize the lives of their loved ones by sharing their Marine Corps stories with other Marines, friends and loved ones for a small fee.

Leatherneck will continue to run obituaries at no charge, but for those who want to further memorialize their loved one or themselves, *Reflections* is here to share those memories. This paid feature will run only in *Leatherneck*.

For more information on LEGACIES rates, please email us at advertising@mca-marines.org



SUGAR BEAR VIRTUAL CHALLENGE

Support Marines, Gold Star families and Surviving Spouses on **July 22nd**.



Text **SugarBear24** to **41444** to register, or scan this QR code

The first 250 participants to complete the event will receive an exclusive race pin with this year’s logo.

LtCol Mario “Sugar Bear” Carazo, USMC made the ultimate sacrifice on July 22, 2010 when his AH-1W Cobra was shot down while supporting Marines engaged in a firefight in Afghanistan.

Honor the memory of LtCol Carazo by running, walking, rowing, or biking 10 miles on **July 22, 2024**.

The proceeds from this virtual event will be split between the Marine Corps Association Foundation and the Sugar Bear Foundation, which supports **Gold Star families and Surviving Spouses**.





PLANTING A LITTLE PATRIOTISM—Old Glory has always held a special place in the hearts of leathernecks.

From the liberation of Guam (right) in 1944 to freeing a POW camp on Hokkaido Island (above) a year later, the United States flag flies wherever the Marines go. Even before the flag inspired the National Anthem during the British attack on Fort McHenry in the War of 1812, Old Glory was connected to the Corps. Presley O'Bannon's Marines stuck a flag atop a fortress in Derna on April 27, 1805, signifying the first time the U.S. flag had flown outside of the United States during a time of war.

On June 14, we celebrate Flag Day—a national tradition since President Woodrow Wilson declared it so 108 years ago. In 1949, Congress officially designated June 14 as Flag Day. In Philadelphia, Pa., Flag Day includes celebratory events at the birthplace of the American flag, the Besty Ross House.

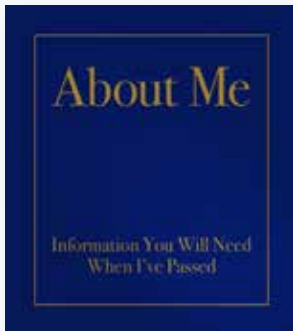
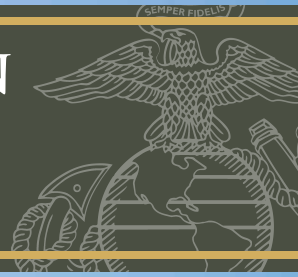
See *Passing the Word* on page 66 to learn more about U.S. Flag Code. 🇺🇸



USMC

COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

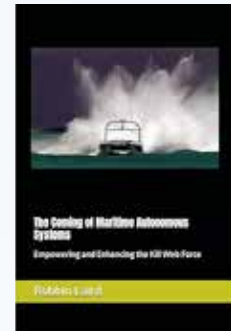
ENJOY YOUR DAYS IN THE SUN READING GREAT BOOKS FROM YOUR FAVORITE AUTHORS



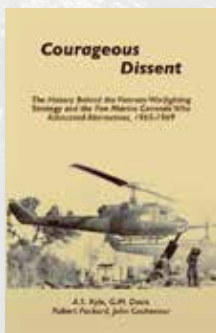
About Me: Information You Will Need When I've Passed
Robert Kabacy, Esq



Another Step up the Mountain
Dianette Wells



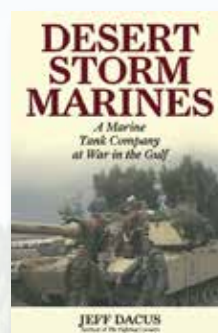
The Coming of Maritime Autonomous Systems:
Empowering and Enhancing the Kill Web Force
Robbin Laird



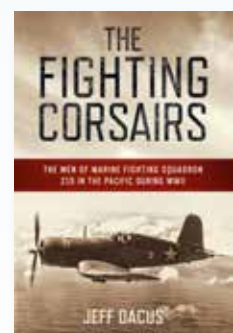
Courageous Dissent
A. S. Kyle, G. M. Davis,
Robert Packard,
John Cochenour



The Debilitating Tools of War
John Poole



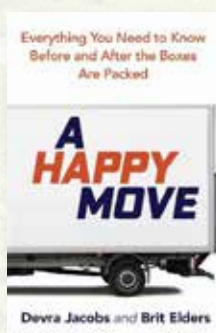
Desert Storm Marines
Jeff Dacus



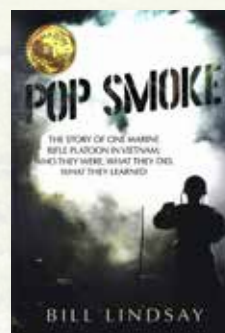
The Fighting Corsairs
Jeff Dacus



Exit the Maze
Dr. Donna Marks



A Happy Move
Devra Jacobs & Brit Elders



Pop Smoke
Bill Lindsay



Volume II - The Remains of
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Tom Hebert

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Contact Valerie Preletz at 703-640-0107 or email her at vpreletz@mca-marines.org • The deadline for the October Issue of Leatherneck is 14 August



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