

AUGUST 2023

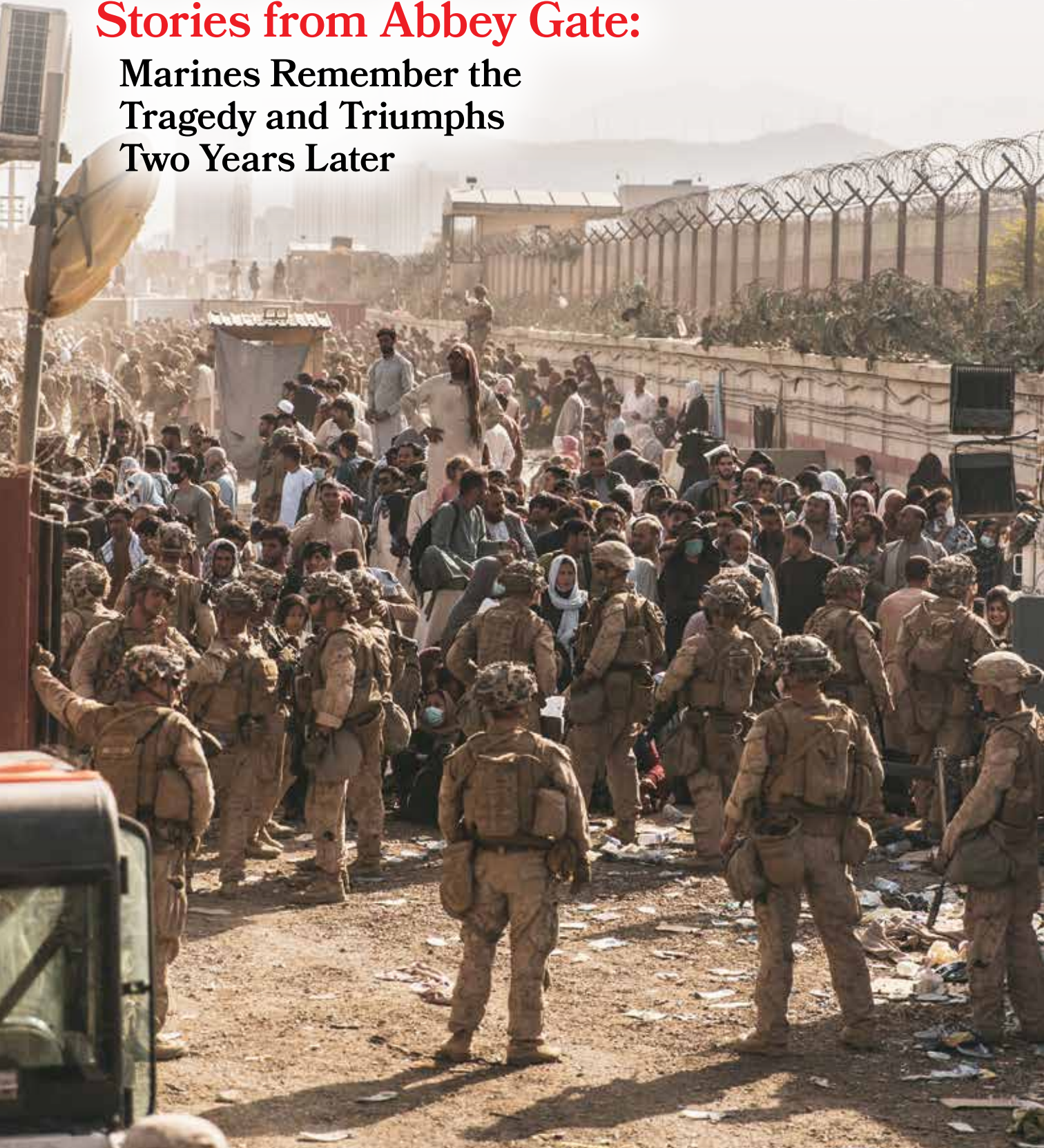
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# LEATHERNECK

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

## Stories from Abbey Gate:

Marines Remember the  
Tragedy and Triumphs  
Two Years Later





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# From the Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

**“I will continue to ensure our stories as Marines are preserved and shared.”**



First, I must say how genuinely honored I am to assume the duties as publisher and editor-in-chief of *Leatherneck*—Magazine of the Marines. Since 2016 I have served as the editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, and for the leadership of the Marine Corps Association to entrust me with our second flagship publication is truly humbling.

I must recognize the contributions of my predecessor, Colonel Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret), who for nine years and 109 monthly editions of *Leatherneck* brought her skills as an editor and her decades of experience as a leader of Marines to the pages of the magazine. As an infantry officer, my skills and experience are different, and over time I hope to continue to use them to the benefit of our readers and members of the MCA.

I also want to recognize the outstanding team we have on the *Leatherneck* staff and to congratulate Nancy Lichtman, who has worked her way up from copy editor to earn the position of executive editor. I am 100 percent confident Nancy will constantly strive to meet and exceed the standards set by all the previous editors of what is one of the Corps’ “family treasures.”

Going forward my commitment is to you, the *Leatherneck* readers. I will continue to ensure our stories as Marines are preserved and shared. Today’s Marines and veterans of our most recent wars need to hear from those who’ve gone before, and the “old breed” needs to hear more of the Corps’ recent history and what our Marines are doing today. I will contribute comments when I can

highlight “standout” features in the magazine and provide context as necessary.

As our cover illustrates, the standout article this month is a collection of reflections from Marines who were on the ground at Abbey Gate in Kabul in August 2021. *Leatherneck* staff writer Kyle Watts conducted numerous in-depth interviews to provide a close, personal view of the chaotic and deeply troubling ending to our nation’s war in Afghanistan. As I noted in the *Gazette* at the time, the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps’ letter to the force of Aug. 18, 2021, said it best:

“We both believe—without question—that your service was meaningful, powerful, and important. You answered the call to serve, proudly carrying the torch of so many generations of Marines before you. You put the good of others before yourself. You fought to defend your country, your family, your friends, and your neighbors. You fought to prevent terror from returning to our shores. You fought for the liberty of young Afghan girls, women, boys, and men who want the same individual freedoms we enjoy as Americans. You fought for the Marine to your left and the Marine to your right. You never let them down. You never, ever gave up.”

Semper Fidelis.

Colonel Christopher Woodbridge  
USMC (Ret)

**LEATHERNECK**  
MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

MARINE CORPS  
**Gazette**



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**COVER:** U.S. Marines with SPMAGTF–CR–Central Command, aid at an evacuation control checkpoint during an evacuation at Hamid Karzai International Airport, Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 21, 2021. See page 36 to read "Holding the Line: Marines Confront Abbey Gate Memories Two Years Later," and see page 72 for a tribute to those who were killed by a suicide bomber at Abbey Gate. Photo by SSgt Victor Mancilla 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.)

It is Memorial Day and I just finished reading the article "90 Days a Grunt" in the June 2023 issue of *Leatherneck*. This is my second letter to *Leatherneck* magazine about someone I knew being mentioned in an article. My first letter was about an article titled "Fire mission!" published in the May 2020 issue about Lieutenant Colonel "Rocky" Dunwell. He was my first Marine Option ROTC instructor at UC Berkeley. This letter is about my fellow Marine at Berkeley, Steven P. Broderick. In this article I found out for the first time where and when Steve was killed. After all these years, it was a shock to see his name in the article as the Marine leading the charge on objective Bravo and the fact that he was awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

Steve and I had traveled together by car in 1967 from California to Quantico to attend Marine ROTC summer camp, a six-week course similar to PLC and OCS at the time. We had a good time on the trip just talking about everything under the sun. We had only one misadventure when I almost ran the car off the road at night in Georgia. When we completed ROTC summer camp, Steve was immediately commissioned since he had graduated from Berkeley in June. He stayed in Quantico to attend TBS which ran for 20 weeks at that time while I returned to Berkeley for my senior year. I graduated from Berkeley in December and was immediately commissioned on Dec. 3.

In the article I was shocked to read that Steve died in action on Dec. 11. I did not find out that he had been killed until August 1969 when I was home in California waiting to fly out to Vietnam myself, there in our local paper was his obituary.

I have always kept Steve in mind as I worked, married, raised children, and

lived my life in a way to give honor to him for his sacrifice. He was a great guy who I would have loved to have a beer with again.

Dick Bass  
San Francisco, Calif.

*Thank you for sharing your memories of Lt Broderick, and everything you've done to honor him and all who served and sacrificed alongside him.—Publisher*

## Reader: I Appreciate Reading Sound Off Letters

I appreciate reading Sound Off every month and the stories are great! The poem "I Am a Marine" by Sgt Charlotte M. Ayers and the letter by Jim Grimes on his toy collection in the June issue were great! The letter by Jim Biegger, also in the June issue, made an excellent point on James Stogner and the nomination for Medal of Honor. I think a review and nomination is in hand. Stogner is a storybook example of a U.S. Marine: silence, do the unexpected, seek out the

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enemy, silence the enemy, and make sure they can no longer harm our troops.

John Sanchez  
USN, 1961-1966  
Hanford, Calif.

*Thanks for your decades of loyalty to our Blue-Green Team.—Publisher*

### Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep

I am an MCA member and have had articles and Sound Off letters published in the magazine. I've noticed in the last couple of issues some poetry appearing again. This short submission, "Now I lay Me Down to Sleep," is more prose than poetry:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,"

But sleep won't come. I have a steel helmet for my pillow, a poncho for my blanket, a rifle for my teddy bear, and hand grenades because we need them. The rain pitter patters on the rubber poncho. It's a cold rain that chills you, making your bones feel like rusty pieces of iron. Under my makeshift cave, I lie in the mud and the weeds. I worry about snakes and rats. I worry about the enemy who wants to kill us, and I clutch my teddy bear rifle closer to my chest. It rains harder. I try to pull my whole body under the poncho, but my boots stick out, and

my feet are soggy. I must get some sleep. I am hungry but I try not to think about it. I think about my girl back home and warm drowsiness creeps up on me like a hot bath. From the black, cloudy night, the sleep man steals my shivering body and takes me away from this country we call Vietnam.

"I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

Who will keep my soul if I even have a soul? I'm here because I want to be, I had to be. I had to be a Marine. If I die my mother will cry. I'll make the hometown paper, and the old men will read about me and say, "Oh yeah, I remember that kid, too bad."

"If I should die before I wake."

It would all be over then, the watching,



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the waiting, the wondering. The hands of fate hold us all. The Death Man comes stealing, walking quietly in the red mud and there is no sound save the gasping of that final breath. That's the time when your eyes are wide open staring at nothing, those vacant, dried out eyes, some blue, some green, some brown. We are careful, as careful as we can be but still, he gets us. He always gets some of us.

"I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Take me back home. Take me back to warm summer nights with the smell of orange blossoms in the air like thick perfume. Don't leave me here in this place; don't leave any of us here. Take us all back. Take our bodies and whatever else goes with them. Take us all back home. Take us back to our loved ones so they can cry over us and play "Danny Boy" at our funerals. Tell them to bury us on a hill overlooking the ocean.

Cpl Jerry D. Ennis

USMC 1966-1970

Fresno, Calif.

*Thank you for your membership in the MCA and for your moving words.—Publisher*

## Writing Contest Winner Receives High Praise

It is the people you know and learn from that shape you as a leader and a man. I am very blessed to call Colonel Mike Wyly a close friend and mentor ever since I first met him in 1995 as one of my teachers in graduate school. He is an unsung hero of assisting and implementing maneuver warfare in the Marine Corps. More importantly, he shaped my thoughts on how to teach it to others. Thank you, Sergeant Major Daniel Heider, first place winner of the 2023 *Leatherneck* Writing Contest, for his article featured in the June 2023 issue. He could not have picked a better Marine and leader to write about.

Donald E. Vandergriff

Woodbridge, Va.

*Here, here! Mr. Vandergriff is also a contributor to Marine Corps Gazette. He has written extensively and actively teaches classes on maneuver warfare and military history to today's Marine leaders.—Publisher*

## Advice for Dealing With PTSD

First, I would like to thank two of the Marine Corps Associations staff members, Briesa Koch and Jessica Chinchilla, for their outstanding efforts in getting my subscription problems straightened

out. Due to a move, I wasn't getting any new issues, and they sent the issues that I missed and ensured that I would receive future issues in good order.

That said, I have spent the last 12 years facilitating PTSD retreats for veterans. There were two letters in the March 2023 issue that brought up some memories from those retreats. First was Snuffy Jackson's letter about the F-4 Phantom called "Marine Phantoms." At one retreat, we had a former Air Force Academy graduate pilot and a former Navy pilot. They were arguing about who provides the closest air support, and I piped in that it was the Marine Corps. Our fighter jets had bayonets attached to the wings.

The second letter was from Gerald Carlson titled, "Formal Naval Aviator Shares His Story" in the March 2023 issue, where he made two points. He talked about receiving only warnings [for traffic stops] due to Marine Corps stickers on his car windows. That was the same for me. I have had Marine Corps emblem plates on my cars for over 40 years with a USMC Vietnam Veteran plate holder.

The second was about crying at his wife's funeral. The other PTSD retreat facilitators and I have found four simple words can release a lot of pent-up emotions from PTSD:

"It's OK to cry."

Sgt Joe Doyle

Howley, Pa.

*Thank you for your letter, your service and for continuing to help fellow veterans fighting "the war within." Semper Fidelis.—Publisher*

## Remembering Hodding Carter

I wanted you folks down there at Quantico to be aware of the passing of Hodding Carter. He died a few weeks ago at age 88 down in Chapel Hill, N.C. He was from Mississippi originally. He went to Princeton University in New Jersey.

He served in the Marine Corps after college. He was a newspaper man and a TV journalist on PBS and various news shows. He published many op-ed articles in major newspapers like the *Wall Street Journal*. During the Iranian Hostage Crisis, he became the symbol of the U.S. government. I urge *Leatherneck* to honor this former Marine.

Greg Paspatis

Alexandria, Va.

*Thank you for letting us know about Hodding Carter's death. We have included him in this month's In Memoriam department. See page 66.—Editor*

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## Reader Reunites with a Marine Corps Friend After 20 Years

In August of 1971, I got lucky and was transferred from Camp Lejeune to Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay. I was there for 15 months and made several lifelong friends. I left in December of 1972 and was discharged at Camp Pendleton.

Twenty years later, I was about a year into a new job that required me to travel a lot and was driving from Eau Claire, Wis., to Madison, when I stopped for gas in the town of Portage. I had been looking forward to stopping because I knew one of my best friends from the Corps lived there. I found a phone book, this was long before cell phones, the internet, and things like Google, and looked for my buddy's name.

To my surprise he was there. There was little doubt he was the same Jon Johnson because there was no H in his first name. I dialed the number and when he answered I said, "you'll never guess who this is."

Without skipping a beat, he answered "it's Jim Grimes."

I was shocked and asked him how he knew it was me after 20 years. He said, "I recognized your voice." I guess I have a slight Midwest twang and it was easily recognizable to someone from Wisconsin.



COURTESY OF JIM GRIMES

**Jim Grimes, left, reunites with longtime friend of 20 years Jon Johnson, right, while at Gold Rush Days Antique Flea Market in Rochester, Minn.**

We had a quick reunion as I had to get on down the road, but we both promised to stay in touch.

Jon and I have stayed in touch and we

both found out we have more in common than just the Marine Corps. It turns out we are both avid antique toy collectors. Jon collects quite a few things but mainly larger toy vehicles from the 1920s and 1930s while I collect metal toy soldiers and toys from the 1950s and 1960s.

We get together mostly at antique shows. Our last get together was in Rochester, Minn., at the Gold Rush Days show. We are getting up there in years but have made plans to get together in St. Louis at the next antique toy show this June.

You might not think about it when you are serving but you will make some lifelong buddies in the Corps, and it is a lot easier to find them now with social media. Just don't wait 20 years!

Sgt Jim Grimes  
Wathena, Kan.

*Thank you for this great story. One of the great things about the Corps is the chance we get to serve with such a remarkable group of people. One of the great things about being a veteran Marine is that we get to choose who we stay connected to. Many of us find the friends of a lifetime and it's great you and Jon have kept in touch.—Publisher*

[continued on page 69]

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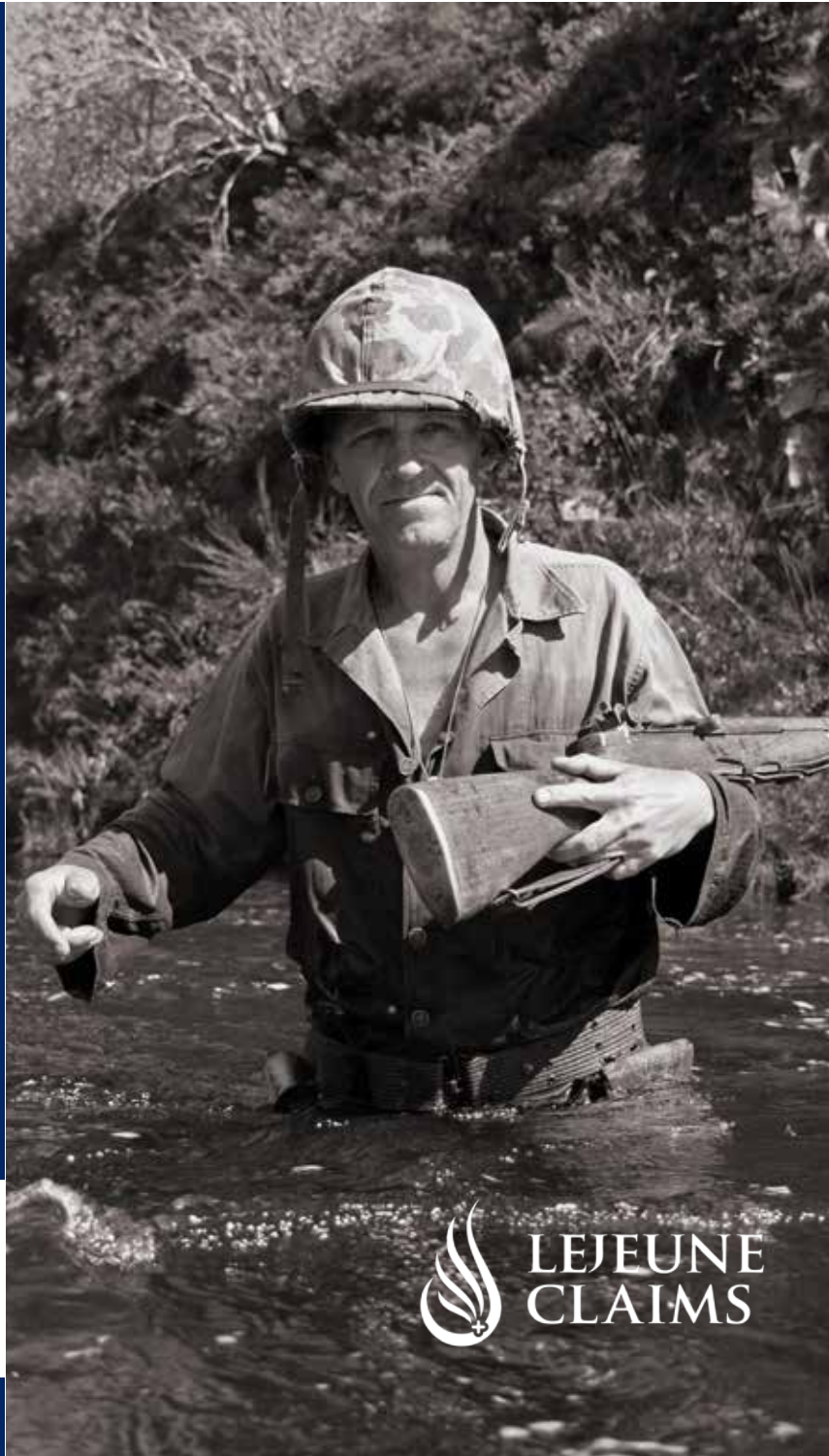
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CPL WILLOW MARSHALL, USMC

Marines and Sailors with 1stMarDiv accept the Corpsman Cup trophy at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 30.

## Camp Pendleton, Calif. First Marine Division Reignites Corpsman Cup Challenge

Navy corpsmen from 1st Marine Division completed the annual Corpsman Cup to practice and refine their critical capabilities in a realistic training environment on March 30, in Camp Pendleton, Calif. The Corpsman Cup is a long-standing tradition within 1stMarDiv. This year's event was modified to honor the 78th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima and Medal of Honor recipient, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class George E. Whalen. HM2 Whalen landed on Iwo Jima with Marines from 5thMarDiv and, while wounded during the fighting, remained on the battlefield to aid Marines in need, despite constant fire aimed in his direction. For decades, corpsmen from the Blue Diamond, and the entire Marine Corps, embodied that same fighting spirit and determination to take care of their Marines, without regard for their own welfare.

"The Corpsman Cup was created in 2011, and corpsmen from different battalions across the 1st Marine Division come to compete. This significance of this

year's competition is that it is the first one that has happened in seven years, due to operational commitments and the COVID-19 pandemic," said Chief Hospital Corpsman Robert M. Park, Leading Chief Petty Officer, 1stMarDiv, Navy Education and Training Office. "The team that wins the competition takes the Corpsman Cup home to their unit and keep it until the following Corpsman Cup. The winning team also adds their own tradition onto the trophy by placing a plaque with their unit logo and names of the corpsmen who were a part of the winning team."

This year's competition consisted of five stations over a 3-mile course, in which each station had various tasks relating to the capabilities organic to Navy corpsmen, and to simulate the mental and physical fatigue of combat. The stations consisted of casualty assessment, venipuncture, trivia, 78 burpees, and 78 tire flips.

The first station, casualty assessment, consisted of teams executing treatment on a casualty, applying a tourniquet correctly, and then fireman carrying the patient back to a safe location. If a tour-

net did not stop the bleeding, it would result in a one-minute time penalty for that team. Upon successful completion of the casualty assessment, the teams moved onto the venipuncture station, in which three members of the team had to conduct three successful consecutive "flash and flush" venipunctures with an approved IV catheter. Every unsuccessful attempt would result in a 30-second time penalty. The third station tested the corpsmen's mental abilities while under stress and fatigue through trivia questions, with every incorrect answer resulting in a 15-second time penalty. The teams advanced to the fourth station, executing 78 burpees for the 78th memorial of HM2 Whalen's sacrifice. Moving onto the final station, each team executed 78 tire flips before running back to the first station to stop their time.

Following the main event, a few camaraderie events took place where teams had the opportunity to shave off time from their scores from the main event, if they won. These events included tug-of-war, the obstacle course, and a track relay race.

In what became a very close competi-

Navy corpsmen from 1st Marine Regiment run with a simulated casualty during the annual Corpsman Cup at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 30.



CPL WILLOW MARSHALL, USMC



CPL WILLOW MARSHALL, USMC

A Navy corpsman with 5th Marine Regiment starts an intravenous line during the annual Corpsman Cup at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 30.

tion, the corpsmen of 11th Marine Regiment prevailed as the top team within the 1stMarDiv. However, every battalion and regiment should rest easy knowing their corpsmen put out the max effort and are more than capable of executing their abilities when the time comes. In recognition of going above and beyond what is expected, 1stMarDiv's HM2 Kasey Hales, one of the instructors at

the Navy Education and Training Office and at the Corpsman Cup, was the recipient of the I Marine Expeditionary Force Junior Sailor of the Year award. The Sailor of the Year awards are earned by Sailors who exemplify Navy core values by performing above and beyond what is expected of them in service and rank.

1stLt Noah Richardson, USMC

### Camp Lejeune, N.C. Infantry Immersion Trainer Simulates Combat Scenarios To Put Warriors to the Test

Twenty years ago, the conflicts heating up in the Middle East increased focus on the refinement of warfighting tactics in urban population centers. This led to the establishment of Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT) training locations on Marine Corps bases for Marines to practice room-clearing procedures and to strengthen unit cohesion. As combat situations evolved and more complex situations arose with civilian populations, the Marine Corps saw the need to develop facilities that exposed Marines to more realistic settings featuring combatants and noncombatants alike. Its solution was the Infantry Immersion Trainer, or the IIT.

The first IIT on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune opened in a repurposed warehouse located at the edge of Hadnot Point's industrial area in 2011. The facility gave Marines access to lifelike combat simulations and atmospheric conditions in order to enhance their leadership skills and put small unit standard operating procedures to the test.

Inside is a customizable town with shops, animals (props), decorated interior homes, trucks, and even a gas station.

Birds can be heard chirping as one walks through the sandy and rocky town where scent canisters emit smells one might experience in the nearby area or specific points of friction. For example, the trainer can provide smells of dead animals near the butcher shop or simulate the smell of an electrical fire right before cutting the power to the local area in order to force Marines to adapt to notionally blown-out streetlights.

The role players act out their daily lives in the IIT by walking around the town, running their shops, and reacting to the Marines' actions. In some scenarios they'll cause a commotion, introducing more friction into the Marines' missions as a result. A civilian role player might be seen running around a building and into the upper level of a house, firing AK-47 blank rounds and tossing a practice grenade down at the Marines. Scenarios are temperamental, and the combinations of cards may be shuffled further based on whichever way each Marine moves, reacts and decides in a slim time-frame. Ultimately, the strength of the immersion trainer lies in its ability to expose Marines to specific stressors they may experience during combat.

Also inside the warehouse is a camera room, with three large screens and multiple computer monitors displaying every camera angle of the training site. Each location of the IIT is equipped with cameras and microphones so the control room personnel can track the Marines' progress. IIT trainers wear wired headsets to communicate with and direct the role players during the scenarios.

"All of your controls are going from the control room," said Tim Seamon, operations officer, Marine Corps Installations East-MCB Camp Lejeune Range and Training Area Management. "That's great when you're working a platoon, the platoon staff could be in the control room working with the operators, seeing what they want to get for the after-action report (AAR)."

During the missions, squad leaders are pushed to make the right choices. Following the training, they conduct an AAR in a classroom and review footage from the cameras. This allows the squad leaders and their Marines to see what they accomplished and discuss areas of improvement for different possible outcomes of the scenarios.

Given the intrinsic value of the IIT for small units, a new outdoor IIT has been recently built that expands training capabilities beyond what the indoor version possesses. To start, it's big enough for platoon-sized elements where each squad can train with a unique mission

**Below: Marines with "India" Co, 3rd Bn, 2nd Marines, conduct training at the Indoor Infantry Immersion Trainer on MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 4.**



LCPL LORIANN DAUSCHER, USMC

that correlates with their surroundings. The outdoor IIT sits next to the MOUT complex area on MCB Camp Lejeune, so companies and battalions can use it as part of a larger MOUT operations scenario if needed.

"The outdoor site is a 13-acre site with 80 buildings, three roads splitting sections between an embassy area, midtown area and a lower income, 'slum' environment," said Seamon.

The facility contains a hospital, coffee and food shops, animal pens, multiple vehicles including a school bus, hanging laundry lines, a school classroom, and many other buildings including a police station with upstairs prison cells, and an embassy compound with ambassador, officer, and Marine Security Guard quarters. Many buildings have stairwells or a hatch to climb to the roof areas which have available hooks for Marines to use for rappelling. Like the indoor IIT, it not only has a control room where the staff operates, but it also has a Company Level Operations Center in its AAR facility that's designed to enable company staff to operate and exercise command and control of the platoon executing a mission. The first training scenarios in the outdoor IIT were conducted in May of 2023.

LCpl Loriann Dauscher, USMC

**The Indoor Infantry Immersion Trainer is designed to provide Marines with a realistic combat environment using sound, smell, atmospheric and role-players to increase combat efficiency.**





LCPL LORIANN DAUSCHER, USMC

Above: Marines and camera operators occupy a room overlooking the training area at the Indoor Infantry Immersion Trainer on MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 4.



LCPL LORIANN DAUSCHER, USMC



Marines with HMH-462, 1st MAW, III MEF, complete a vertical replenishment with the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Maine* (SSBN-741) in the Philippine Sea, May 9. Vertical replenishments enable naval vessels to receive critical resources without disrupting maritime security operations while underway.

LCPL EMILY WEISS, USMC

## Philippine Sea

### Marines Resupply Ballistic Missile Submarine in Philippine Sea

Marines from 1st Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), provided a vertical replenishment operation for a U.S. Navy ballistic missile submarine in the Philippine Sea on May 17. Two CH-53E Super Stallions from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, 1st MAW, carried mission-essential equipment to the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Maine* (SSBN-741) during its regularly scheduled patrol. Vertical replenishments enable naval vessels to quickly receive critical resources without disrupting maritime security operations while underway.

“1st MAW’s persistent and forward presence makes it the backbone of the Stand-in-Force’s expeditionary capability,” said Colonel Christopher Murray, the commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 36, 1st MAW, in Okinawa, Japan. “The intricacies of seamlessly sustaining the force through naval integration and aviation-delivered logistics is a testament to our adaptability, readiness, and ability to project power within the Indo-Pacific.”

The mission underscores the important role of the Marine Corps as part of a Stand-in-Force (SiF). The Marine Corps employs the SiF concept to persist within the Weapons Engagement Zone, em-



SSgt Joseph McDonnell, a crew chief with HMH-462, 1st MAW, III MEF, lowers a package to the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Maine* (SSBN-741) during a vertical replenishment in the Philippine Sea, May 9.

LCPL EMILY WEISS, USMC

ploying maneuver and logistics webs. This strategy enhances sea control and sea denial operations, integrates multi-domain operations, and ultimately strengthens regional security.

“The U.S. Navy’s ballistic missile submarine force has demonstrated, yet again, that we have the proven capability to work seamlessly alongside III Marine Expeditionary Force to execute our mis-

sion, allowing us to remain on station,” said *Maine*’s commanding officer, Commander Travis L. Wood. “Rotary-wing vertical replenishment such as this allow us to quickly resupply so that we can constantly maintain pressure against any adversary who would wish to do harm to the homeland.”

The Pacific Submarine Force maximizes our strengths—knowledge, stealth,

agility, firepower and endurance—and works as part of Joint and Combined Forces to maintain the international rules-based order and promote a free and open Indo-Pacific Region. Submarine-based strategic deterrence is the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad, and the endurance of our submarines means that the Submarine Force maintains a continual presence across the globe every day. III MEF is postured to support naval expeditionary operations within the first island chain as part of a SiF. Close, lethal integration between the Marine Corps and the Navy enhances regional security and stability alongside our allies and partners.

Capt Joshua Hays, USMC

### Suriname

#### Marines with 1/2 participate in Suriname Jungle Training

Marines with 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, 2nd Marine Division, accepted an invitation from the Commandant of the Netherlands Marine Corps to participate in a unique training experience in the Surinamese jungles in northern South America. The Suriname Army hosted

an eight-week jungle training course between March 27 and May 16. Four Marines participated in the training courses, called the Jungle Movement and Survival Course and the Jungle Warfare Instructor Course.

First Lieutenant Jacob Kanak, an infantry officer with 1/2, was the officer in charge of the Marine detachment while attending the training.

“Prior to the training, I was extremely excited to go to a new domain and environment and learn how to fight and win in the jungle,” said Kanak. “It was tough, realistic training and extremely valuable to experience what it takes not only to operate in the jungle but to lead a combat unit in a difficult environment.”

The training started with the Jungle Movement and Survival Course. This two-week course was used to teach and evaluate land navigation skills, survival exercises, classroom instruction, and how to use baseline gear in jungle terrains effectively. The latter portion of the training consisted of the Jungle Warfare Instructor Course. This course taught servicemembers to become jungle warfare instructors and gave them the

tools to conduct their jungle training and teach jungle warfare tactics and procedures. The participants of this course included a company of Dutch Royal Marines, a platoon from the Dutch Army Air Assault, a detachment from the Suriname Army, and four U.S. Marines.

Although Marine participation in the Suriname jungle training is unique, joint training between the U.S. and Dutch Marines is not. The U.S. and Dutch Marine Corps participate in multiple annual training exercises to improve interoperability.

“Being able to develop a plan and brief it to a group that does not speak English as their first language and see it come to fruition was an awesome experience and a testament to the ability of NATO’s partners to work together,” said Kanak.

The Jungle Movement and Survival Course and the Jungle Warfare Instructor Course provided challenging, realistic training that strengthened the bond between the U.S. Marines and the Dutch military, reinforcing the Marine Corps ideal of “in every clime and place.”

LCpl Deja Thomas, USMC



SSGT BRANDON THOMAS, USMC

Four Marines with 1st Bn, 2nd Marines, 2ndMarDiv, attended an eight-week jungle war-fighting and survival course with Dutch Marines in the Suriname jungle.



LCPL ANGEL PONCE, USMC

### THIRD-PLACE WINNER: *Leatherneck* Magazine Writing Contest

## There's a True Story Behind "A Few Good Men"

By 1stLt Jared M. Allyn, USMC

*Editor's note: This article is the third-place winner of the 2023 Leatherneck Magazine Writing Contest. Major Richard A. "Rick" Stewart, USMC (Ret) sponsored the contest through the Marine Corps Association Foundation. Upcoming issues of Leatherneck will feature honorable mention entries.*

There may be no greater moment in cinematic courtroom drama than the culminating sequence of the 1992 movie "A Few Good Men." When Lieutenant Junior Grade Daniel Kafee (Tom Cruise) contemptuously demands the truth from Ground Forces Commander, Guantanamo Bay, Colonel Nathan Jessup, played by Jack Nicholson, famously replies, "You can't handle the truth." Col Jessup's subsequent diatribe pummels us with the unfathomably difficult role of the Marine rifleman, a reality often misunderstood by the public. It ends with an enraged commander admitting to issuing an illegal hazing order that resulted in homicide. On the whole, the movie is certainly a favorite within the judge advocate community, but this scene in particular has endured both in cinematic and Marine Corps lore.

It may then come as a shock to learn that "A Few Good

Men" is based on a true story, to which the film parallels closely yet pays no tribute. Unlike the movie, however, this story runs deeper and darker before veering into the bizarre like a tailspinning "True Detective" nightmare. It is the tragically unknown story of one of the real Marines who helped form the inspiration for the film and then suffered a mysterious demise.

In 1987, a young playwright named Aaron Sorkin received a call from his sister, Deborah, a lawyer in the Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps. Deborah was on her way to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to defend a group of Marines. She told Aaron that her clients had nearly killed another Marine after receiving a hazing order from a superior officer. This inspired Aaron to write out an entire story on cocktail napkins that night. "A Few Good Men" was born and would launch Aaron's career. Today, he is considered one of the most talented active screenwriters with a resume that includes "The West Wing," "The Social Network," "Moneyball," and "The Trial of the Chicago 7."

"A Few Good Men" was a massive success, but it was never advertised as being based on a true story. Although the film's depiction of the Marine Corps was often disconcerting, it sparked popular interest in military justice (the popular television show "JAG" would debut in 1995 and lasted 10

seasons) and a cultural phenomenon in that one famous line. Then, as is often the case when a film has a large financial and cultural impact, someone filed a lawsuit. Claiming that their private stories were used without permission, a group of Marines filed suit in Texas against the film's production company. Very little came of the action and, sadly, the true story of "A Few Good Men" remained in relative obscurity.

In 1986, a group of Guantanamo Marines calling themselves "The Ten" hazed a fellow Marine. The victim, Private First Class William Alvarado ("William Santiago" in the film), was an odd-man-out of sorts. In the film, the character was sympathetically depicted as a bit slower and weaker than the other Marines. In reality, he was described as someone who did not carry his weight leaving more work for the rest of the platoon. Like the victim in the film, Alvarado had written letters to his congressman requesting a transfer from Guantanamo and disclosing information about illegal fence line shootings committed by his fellow Marines. The commanding officer of Guantanamo, a Marine colonel, learned of the PFC's letter. Despite command concerns that word of his conduct would reach the other Marines and endanger him, PFC Alvarado was not transferred. Sometime later, "The Ten" performed what they referred to as a "code red" on PFC Alvarado.

In September of 1986, in the early morning hours, "The Ten" entered PFC Alvarado's barracks room. They restrained him with tape and stuffed a pillowcase in his mouth. Then, they blindfolded, beat, and dragged him out of his room. One Marine proceeded to pull out a buzzer to shave Alvarado's head, but before that could happen, the Marine noticed something was going horribly wrong. Alvarado started choking and spitting up blood before turning purple and falling unconscious. The Marines immediately stopped and called emergency services. Unlike the movie's depiction of events, however, the victim survived.

None of "The Ten" ever denied what had happened. Most of the Marines accepted non judicial punishment (NJP) but three Marines refused to admit guilt to the charges. One was Lance Corporal David Cox, the Marine who held the buzzer and called 911. Cox elected trial by courts-martial, pleading not guilty, and claiming adamantly that the "code red" was not an act of retribution. Rather, it was ordered by a superior officer and therefore, he would not admit to legal fault. The case proceeded to trial.

Given the seriousness of the incident, Cox felt that accepting NJP would result in his separation from the Corps with at least an other than an honorable discharge. This was unacceptable to him. Cox loved being a Marine. He loved the Corps' structure and discipline. Until this incident, he had maintained a reputation as a model Marine, and he refused to admit to anything that would characterize his service negatively. He was eventually charged with attempted

**Given the seriousness of the incident, Cox felt that accepting NJP would result in his separation from the Corps with at least an other than an honorable discharge. This was unacceptable to him. Cox loved being a Marine.**



PHOTO BY SGT ESDRAS RUANO, USMC

murder and simple assault charges and taken to a general court-martial. When offered a plea deal, he refused, telling his lawyer that "being a Marine was all he had." If his career in the Corps was over, it was not going to be with his consent.

Cox was eventually acquitted of attempted murder but found guilty of assault. He would spend 30 days in the brig before finishing out his full tour of duty and remarkably received an honorable discharge. (This differed significantly from the film in which the accused are found guilty of conduct unbecoming a Marine and given dishonorable discharges.) For Cox, the courts-martial process left a bad taste in his mouth for years to come. Nonetheless, he retained his "once a Marine, always a Marine" attitude.

As is common for many Marines, Cox struggled with consistency and focus after exiting the Corps. He did odd jobs to make ends meet and had some success with earning a two-year paralegal degree, but nothing ever came of it. Things stabilized a bit when he settled down with his longtime girlfriend, Elaine Tinsley. Then, to Cox's consternation, he saw the movie "A Few Good Men."

Cox never maintained that "A Few Good Men" was a poor movie. In fact, he was quoted as saying that if he "hadn't known the truth, it probably would have been the best movie



LCPL ALISON DOSTIE, USMC

**That spring, a man canoeing down a nearby river discovered human remains. It was Cox. Medical examiners were quick to the scene, and it did not take long to determine the cause of death. Cox had been shot execution style.**

[he]’d seen in [his] life.” The apparent alterations, however, bothered Cox. He was upset not only because the real victim did not die, but also because he was portrayed as receiving anything but an honorable discharge. Cox felt his name had been dragged through the mud in the Corps only to have Hollywood portray him as a dishonorable Marine. Other Marines from The Ten felt the same and asked Cox to join when they initiated their lawsuit. At that time, however, Cox did not feel that he was at a place in his life where he wanted to deal with the immensity and stress of a lawsuit. He told his brothers he would take time to consider their offer. Unfortunately, he would never have the chance.

By January 1994, Cox started to feel a bit more optimistic. He had acquired a part-time position with UPS and expected to receive an offer for full-time employment within days. Cox was elated and even told Elaine that he now intended to join the lawsuit. On the night of Jan. 4, Cox went for a celebratory drink with his brother. He came home late and elected to sleep on the couch.

The following morning, Elaine left for work as Cox slept.

Around noon, she called back to the house, but there was no answer. At 1 p.m., she checked the voicemail, heard a message from Cox’s boss saying UPS had offered him the position, and called the him at home to congratulate him. Again, no answer. She returned home at 5:30 p.m., but Cox was nowhere to be found.

To Elaine, the home appeared to be fine. However, all the interior doors were open, and their pet rabbit was hopping around freely. Outside, Cox’s truck was still in the driveway. Strangely, the keys were in the ignition and an uncashed paycheck was on the dashboard. After a day, neither Elaine nor any friends or family saw or heard from Cox again. Elaine then filed a missing persons report.

That spring, a man canoeing down a nearby river discovered human remains. It was Cox. Medical examiners were quick to the scene, and it did not take long to determine the cause of death. Cox had been shot execution style with a bullet to the back of his neck and three more into his left torso. Three 9 mm shell casings were also found at the scene. Beyond a doubt, this was a murder.

Most troubling was determining how Cox came to be at the location of his murder. He was found wearing a military issued camouflage field jacket, his USMC scout sniper hoodie, jeans, and white sneakers. According to family and investigators, Cox never wore military-issued clothing outside. The white sneakers particularly threw off the investigators. Evidence indicated that Cox had walked to the location he had been found, a wooded area off the river. On the day of the murder, however, there was 8 inches of snow on the ground. This indicated to the investigators that Cox may not have left his home willingly despite no



apparent signs of a struggle. Beyond that, however, police could not elucidate any details about the killer. The case almost immediately went cold and remains unsolved.

No one knows exactly what happened to Cpl David Cox on Jan. 5, 1994. In 2019, two veteran Marines and current police officers announced their intention to re-open the case, but no new findings have been reported.

The true story behind “A Few Good Men” is tantalizing and layered. Like a forest, the further you venture into it, the harder it becomes to recall where you entered. In that sense, David Cox’s story, though compelling, illustrates greater points that can sadly be lost in Hollywood drama. True

stories, exactly the way they occur, are often too narratively imperfect to make a complete movie. Nonetheless, credit is almost always given even where the film is only a loose adaptation. Although “A Few Good Men” is very close from the transcript of Cox’s courts-martial, no credit has ever been paid to the truth.

Ultimately, the legacy of “A Few Good Men” has left no room for the true story. This is a shame. The real story contains the same themes: accountability in the face of unlawful orders, the perils of mismanagement from military leadership, and the potential dangers of clique-like “in”-culture within Marine units.

It also addresses the meaning of “honorable” service, the ever-present conflict between the necessity of the Marine Corps and the side effects of its existence, and difficulties those outside of the Corps have in trying to understand its culture. Is it better then for the public to believe that junior enlisted Marines like Cox are dishonorably discharged rather than given another opportunity? Is it best that the true story, with its incredibly grim ending, remains unknown? It is hard to say, but there is undoubtedly more to be learned than from the movie alone.

*Author’s bio: 1stLt Jared M. Allyn graduated cum laude from Michigan State University College of Law in 2020. He was commissioned in 2021 and is currently serving as the Deputy Station Judge Advocate for Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.* 🇺🇸

Denver, Colo.



COURTESY OF UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS MEMORIAL

## U.S. Ambassador Speaks at USMC Memorial Foundation Dinner

On April 17, the former U.S. ambassador to South Korea, Admiral Harry B. Harris, (left) presented a keynote address before an audience of military and business leaders, servicemembers, and public officials at a fundraising dinner hosted by the USMC Memorial Foundation in Denver, Colo. The dinner was preceded by a tour of the United States Marine Corps Memorial to raise funds for a major remodel of the memorial site.

Founded in 1974, the United States Marine Corps Memorial's mission is to honor Marines and all who served. The purpose of the memorial renovations is to increase the public awareness of veterans and patriots. More than 1,000 Marines, Sailors, soldiers, guardsmen and airmen were interviewed to help come up with the design, and the invitees were briefed on the renovation plans along with the list of donors and contributors helping bring the renovation plans to life.

Submitted by Kirk Monroe



COURTESY OF UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS MEMORIAL



NANCY S. LIGHTMAN

**Fredericksburg, Va.**

**MCA Staff Meet With Sponsor of Leatherneck Magazine Writing Contest**

Colonel Tim Mundy, USMC (Ret), the vice president of the Marine Corps Association Foundation, far left, and *Leatherneck's* former editor, Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret), far right, visited with Corie Stewart, second from left and Major Richard A. "Rick" Stewart, USMC (Ret), in Fredericksburg, Va., on May 19. The Stewarts have been the sponsors of the *Leatherneck Magazine* Writing Contest since its inception in 2016.

"Maj Rick Stewart has been a tremendous supporter of the Marine Corps Association Foundation for years. Rick and his wife Corie got involved in supporting the *Leatherneck* Writing Contest when it was established in 2016," said Col Mundy. "They loved the idea of sponsoring a contest specifically for enlisted Marines, giving them an opportunity to show their creativity and knowledge. Each year the entries are fantastic and Rick and Corie always asked me to send them copies of the magazines so they could read the winning essays. I think that showed that they cared about not just sponsoring a contest, but also about the Marines who participated and the ideas they shared," Mundy added.

"I can't thank Rick and Corie enough for their support over the years."

*Leatherneck*

**Wrightsville Beach, N.C.**

**OAR Foundation Hosts First Memorial Day Event**

On May 28, the Operation Allies Refuge (OAR) Foundation hosted their first Memorial Day event, honoring our nation's fallen and building a stronger community for the veterans of OAR. Eight participants attended the walk/run/ruck in person, with another 26 participating virtually.

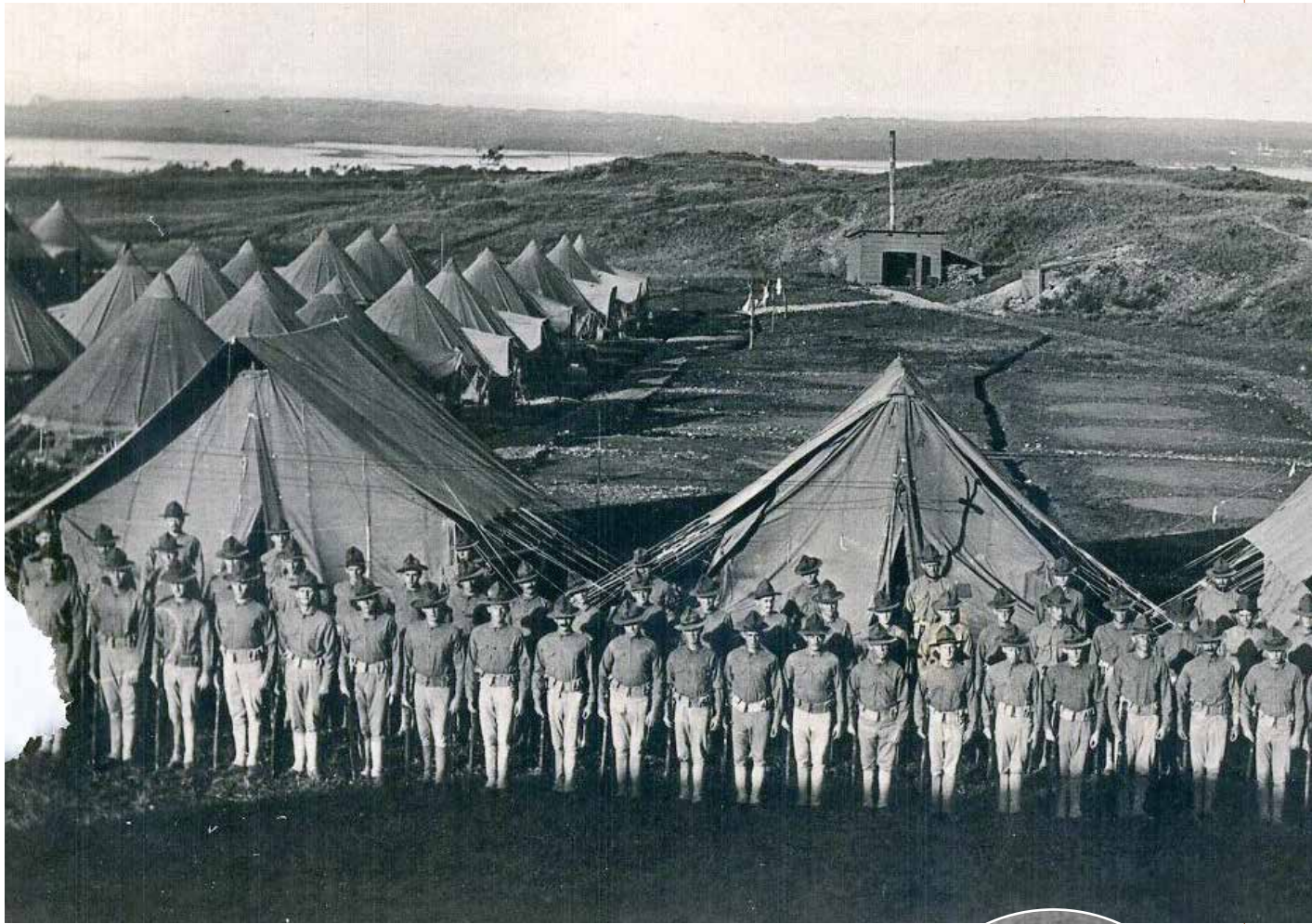
The foundation was established by OAR veterans in 2022, on the one-year anniversary of the evacuation of Hamid Karzai International Airport, and the attack at Abbey Gate. The organization plans to continue hosting events such as this in the future. See page 36 to read more about the Marines who were at the Abbey Gate in August 2021.

Submitted by Joe Laude



COURTESY OF OAR FOUNDATION

**"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](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org). Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos.** 📷



# Marine Fires the First American Shot Of World War I



Cpl Michael B. Chockie

By Mike Miller

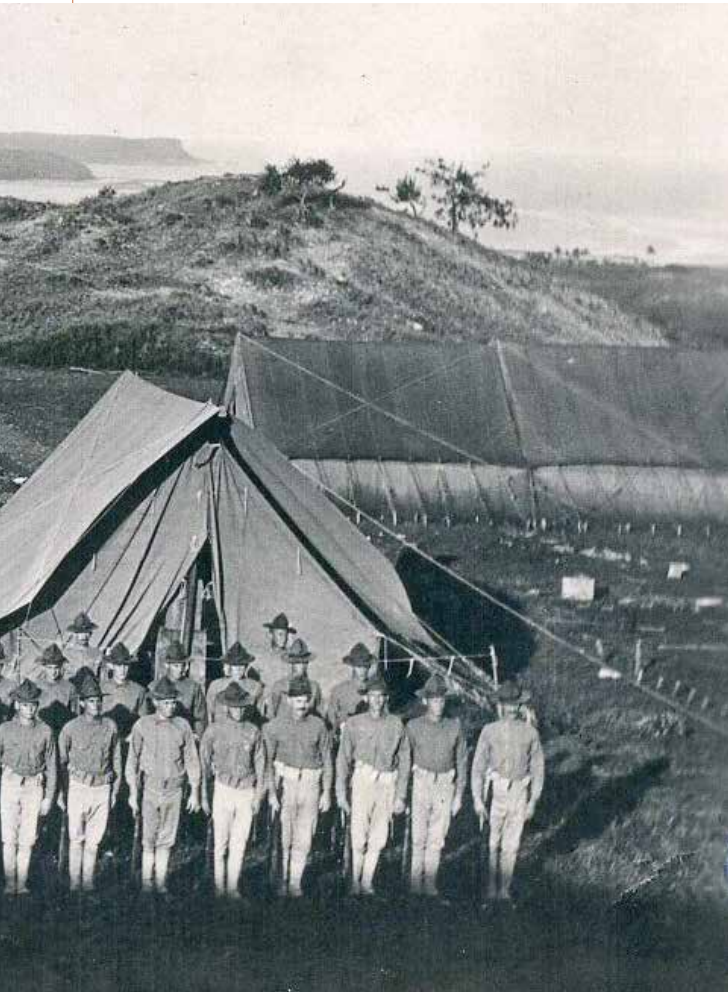
*"A right interpretation of the people's will and of duty cannot fail to ensure wise measures for the welfare of the islands which have come under the authority of the United States."*

—President William McKinley  
Dec. 5, 1889

**O**n Feb. 1, 1899, the American flag was raised by Marines and Sailors on Guam for the first time, marking the beginning of the island as a vital part of the United States. The American victory over Spain in 1898 propelled the United States to become a world power and, required a new emphasis on a world class Navy and Marine

Corps to support that role. The real consideration of the United States was a base which would support operations in the now American Philippines, China, and most of all, Japan. Guam lay on a direct route from the American West Coast to Hawaii and then to the Philippines, greatly simplifying the logistical link across the Pacific.

As a result, the new American governor on Guam requested that a battalion of Marines be sent to the island in support of the new government. On May 6, 1899, a detachment of 119 Marines led by Major Allen C. Kelton and First Sergeant Edward Clifford departed New York on board USS *Yosemite*, bound for Guam. Kelton's Marines sailed first to Gibraltar, then through the Suez Canal. Ports of call continued in India, Singapore and Manila before arriving at San Louis D'Apra, Guam on Aug. 17, 1899. The Marines'



USMC

**A Marine camp on Mount Tenjo, Guam, 1915. The United States established a presence in Guam to support operations in the Philippines, China and Japan.**

initial mission established the American naval coaling station in Agana, the capital of the island.

Major Kelton took possession of the now empty offices and quarters of the former Spanish garrison, as well as a large unfinished schoolhouse, which would have to be evacuated on the return of the students to class. Unfortunately, a typhoid epidemic ran rampant over the island in September, resulting in a lengthy sick list and the deaths of four Marines. After the construction of a parade ground and rifle range, the location of potable water, repairs to the government buildings and sewage system, the Marine detachment began garrison duty.

Despite the vast importance of Guam in American war planning, many Marines deployed to the Pacific Ocean area preferred duty in the Philippines and China, choosing in the big cities of Manila and Beijing to the beautiful natural splendor of Guam. “Guam is a beautiful island,” future Commandant John A. Lejeune recalled about his 1907 journey to Manila, “but too isolated and too lonely for me to have desired duty there.” Second Lieutenant Frederick M. Wise experienced Guam on his way to the Philippines in 1899, labeling the duty station as “the Hell Hole of the United States Marines ... there were

no hotels or clubs.” Wise added in his memoir, “If you were ordered there, you stayed for two years, unless you died.”

Marine Corps duty was never determined by preferences of liberty or circumstance, particularly as a European war threatened the balance of power throughout the world. The establishment of a Naval Base on Guam remained of the “utmost importance” for the United States at the turn of the 20th century and continues to be so to the present day. Guam became the responsibility of the Department of the Navy on Dec. 23, 1898, with Navy Captain R.P. Leary assigned as the governor of the island, beginning his administration on Aug. 7 of the following year. The primary consideration for the health of the Marine detachment was a recommendation that Marines be transferred to new duty after two years on Guam.

The first reverberations of World War I reached the Marines on Guam rather quickly with the 1914 appearance of the German 800 ton SMS *Cormoran* in the harbor. Part of the German Asian squadron based in Tsingtao, China, the SMS *Cormoran* could not keep pace with the larger German battlecruisers departing for the Atlantic Ocean. Instead, she remained behind on the coast of China to pick off any Allied ships encountered. Fortune smiled on *Cormoran* with the sight of the unarmed Russian passenger vessel, formerly the *Rjaesan* or *Ryland*, which was easily captured. Captain Adalbert Zuckschwerdt brought his prize back to Tsingtao, but quickly understood Japanese and British forces would soon capture the German base. Zuckschwerdt transferred his eight 5-inch guns to his prize and renamed her, *Cormoran*. The original forlorn *Cormoran* gunboat was scuttled, leaving only one *Cormoran* afloat.

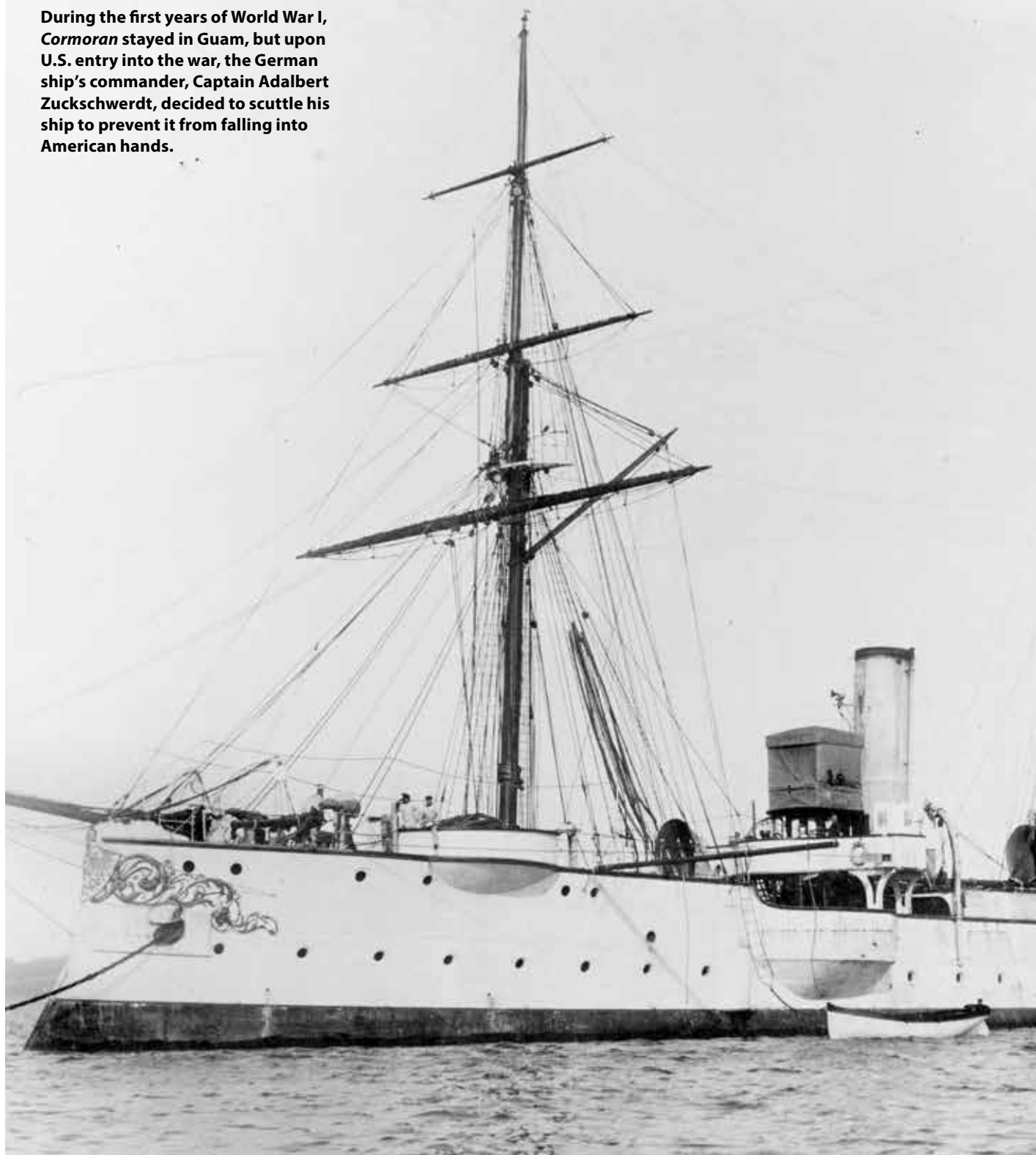
The revitalized German raider immediately became a successful man of war, sinking seven large Allied merchant vessels. The German successful ventures created much attention from the Japanese and British squadrons. Zuckschwerdt skillfully avoided the search of the Allies,

steaming to New Guinea where he hid in a crooked inlet, eluding British and Australian warships passing nearby. He also added 25 men from New Guinea to bolster his crew. The German small boat successfully reached Yap only to find a Japanese squadron in the anchorage. The Germans luckily detected the Allied ships and used a fog bank to escape yet again. *Cormoran* fled to Guam, chased by two Japanese destroyers dispatched to sink the German raider. The Germans hid near a small island near Guam where the critical lack of coal forced Captain Zuckschwerdt to seek shelter from the neutral Americans.

*Cormoran* entered Apra harbor on Dec. 10, 1914, closely followed by the Japanese destroyers. Now safely in the neutral American harbor Captain Zuckschwerdt requested a message be sent to German authorities in Manila for a resupply of coal, but the American officers refused, as aiding the Germans violated American neutrality. Zuckschwerdt then requested

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During the first years of World War I, *Cormoran* stayed in Guam, but upon U.S. entry into the war, the German ship's commander, Captain Adalbert Zuckschwerdt, decided to scuttle his ship to prevent it from falling into American hands.



Without coal, only internment remained a viable option. On Dec. 14, Captain Zuckschwerdt requested to be interned under American control until the end of the war to prevent capture. The German ambassador in Washington, D.C., also formally requested SMS *Cormoran* be interned



COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND



USMC

**Camp Tenjo, Guam 1915. Coal that could be used to supply *Cormoran* was held at the Guam Naval Base.**

1,500 tons of coal from the Guam naval base to make an escape to South Africa. Such an amount was not available, and the Germans were ordered to leave Guam in 24 hours, leaving Captain Zuckschwerdt no choice. A Japanese cruiser patrolling the waters off Guam made the decision much easier for the beleaguered German captain.

Without coal, only internment remained a viable option. On Dec. 14, Captain Zuckschwerdt requested to be interned under American control until the end of the war to prevent capture. The German ambassador in Washington, D.C., also formally requested SMS *Cormoran* be interned, which was granted the next day. Captain Roy Smith, the naval governor of Guam, informed Captain Zuckschwerdt, making the Germans a long-term guest of the United States while still under the watchful eye of the Japanese.

The large crew of *Cormoran* posed a problem for Smith and his Marines as their prisoners numbered 20 officers, 14 warrant officers and 360 sailors, supported by the ship's eight cannons aboard the ship. Lieutenant Colonel Randolph Berkeley and Sergeant Major Michael Kearny led three Marine companies numbering 354 men armed with small arms, machine guns and 3-inch guns to oppose the Germans and their crew. Guam's station ship USS *Supply* mounted only six small 6-pound and four 1-pound cannon while the harbor defenses consisted of six old 6-inch cannon, placed on hill tops overlooking the harbor.

Terms of the intern agreement changed in 1916, when the Americans removed all of the ammunition for the small arms and ammunition, along with the supplies for the more lethal 4.7-inch cannon and breech plugs. Coal was rationed to only the minimum necessary to maintain the SMS *Cormoran* in port.

However, the German crew soon established from that day a lasting friendship with the American Marines, particularly with the officers of both detachments. The German crew also developed relationships with rest of the Americans and the Chamorro people, "fostered by social and celebrations and idle days beneath the palms of the little tropical island."

Most of the SMS *Cormoran's* officers and petty officers were assigned quarters on land, but the rest of the crew lived aboard ship. The people of Guam bonded with their newly



USMC

**This 1915 image shows Marines at a shooting range on Guam.**

arrived guests; several of the sailors married local women.

The German crew held receptions for Marine and Naval officers aboard ship, offering a welcome diversion for the Americans. The Marines returned the civility with weekly events at the Arpa Elks Lodge, issuing visiting cards to the German officers for the sleeping accommodations in the lodge.

On Feb. 8, 1917, Governor Captain Smith issued Executive Order 225, establishing the Guam Militia to assist the Marine garrison should an enemy attempt a landing on the island. The unit would be composed of an Active Force composed of all young men on the island between 16 and 23 years of age and a Reserve Militia of men who were 23 to 40 years old. Each man reported to an Enrollment Committee composed of Major Kelton, the aide to the governor, a medical officer, and a secretary who kept the records of the enrollment. Approximately 2,000 eligible men reported for duty, demonstrating “much aptitude for athletics and all forms of military training.” Each man was armed with an '03 Springfield rifle, provided by the Marines.

Suspicion arose that the Germans were hoarding coal for a potential run for freedom. On Feb. 3, 1917, Captain Smith ordered Navy Lieutenant Owen Bartlett to go aboard SMS *Cormoran* to inspect the coal stores. Lieutenant Bartlett soon met Captain Zuckschwerdt, remembered as a “large, well-formed man, with jet black mustache and Vandyke, always spotlessly attired, spoke English with the elegance of the educated foreigner, was a gifted conversationalist, possessed a rare charm of manner.”

Although normally unflappable, Captain Zuckschwerdt’s “cheeks went white below the beard,” as he refused the inspection.

Captain Smith refused to permit a German refusal, ordering Lieutenant Colonel Randolph C. Berkeley’s entire Marine detachment to prepare to board the ship. The boarding party was composed of the First Lieutenant Cecil S. Baker’s 40th Company, Captain Dwight F. Smith’s 41st and Captain

Donald F. Duncan’s 42nd Companies, each with 116 Marines on their muster rolls.

Berkeley assembled all of the small craft necessary for the Marines to take the ship and force the Germans to submit the inspection. He made one more attempt to avoid confrontation, but Captain Zuckschwerdt refused once again. When Bartlett reported the German refusal, Captain Smith replied, “Very well, Bartlett! Confer with Colonel Berkeley. Go out and take the ship.”

Bartlett urged Smith by telephone to make a show of force instead, avoiding the bloodshed of a battle fought over the ramparts of SMS *Cormoran* and resulting in political ramifications between the two nations. Smith allowed Bartlett a chance to avoid bloodshed, but demanded, “Hurry, it is getting late and the inspection must be made before

dark!” Bartlett quickly made his third trip across the harbor to head off the approaching confrontation which could open hostilities between Germany and the United States.

Bartlett caught the Marines in small boats already in motion, led by a mahogany motor barge. A quick change in plans allowed the barge to continue to SMS *Cormoran*,

**Hall ordered Cpl Chockie to fire his '03 Springfield rifle across the bow of the craft to stop the enemy and prepare for capture of the German craft. At about 8 a.m., on April 6, 1917, Chockie brought his rifle to bear on the Germans, firing the first shot by the United States in World War I.**



**A view of the government house, post office and pay office at Agana, Guam, 1904. Guam was not a desired duty station for many Marines who believed it was far too isolated from the other Pacific islands. (Photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)**

while the rest of the small craft waited. Should the barge cast off from the ship, the Marines would make a full assault on the ship. Crisis was averted as the Germans finally agreed to allow the inspection, allowing the Marine barge to remain moored to the ship. The coal stocks were found to be accurate within a few tons of the navy count.

On April 6, 1917, the United States entered World War I, declaring war against Germany and her allies. A cable quickly arrived via underwater cable for Captain Smith to seize SMS *Cormoran* as a prize of war, which with the time difference was already April 7, 1917. Smith placed a detachment of Marines with a battery of 6-inch cannon and four machine guns along the beach of Cabras Island targeting *Cormoran*. Bartlett must now obtain the “immediate and unconditional surrender “of the SMS *Cormoran* and her crew.

At 6:30 a.m., Navy Lieutenant W.A. Hall departed USS *Supply*, anchored off Asan, in a small boat loaded with Corporal Michael B. Chockie’s prize detail of 15 Marine privates. Hall proceeded into the harbor to link up with Bartlett at the town dock, supporting the mission to take the surrender of the German ship peaceably or capture SMS *Cormoran* at the point of their bayonets.

Aboard SMS *Cormoran*, Captain Zuckschwerdt ordered

his crew on deck, supposedly for “drills” and to shift his anchorage within the harbor. Interestingly, all of the crew were on deck except for seven men sent below to be ready to ignite the gasoline “bombs” should the ship need to be scuttled. USS *Supply* took position standing off the Calalan Reef, ready to engage should SMS *Cormoran* get underway and escape the trap almost ready to be sprung.

As Lieutenant Hall’s Sailors and Marines proceeded down the Piti Channel toward their quarry in the harbor, they noticed a German launch with a cutter towed behind, proceeding at full steam for Piti. Hall ordered Cpl Chockie to fire his ’03 Springfield rifle across the bow of the craft to stop the enemy and prepare for capture of the German craft. At about 8 a.m., on April 6, 1917, Chockie brought his rifle to bear on the Germans, firing the first shot by the United States in World War I.

Disregarding the significance of the bullet as it snapped across their bow, the enemy commander refused to stop their journey. Hall then instructed Chockie to fire again, this time “where it would hurt.” Chockie fired again with no appropriate response until the entire Marine detachment blazed away with accuracy on both bow and stern of the launch. The German sailors wisely cut their engines and

**Curiously, the enemy sailors quickly rehoisted the flag a minute later and at 8:03 a.m., the silence in the bay was accentuated by an explosion which rocketed up with “a bright red flame, surrounded by a cloud of black smoke,” erupting as high as the mast of the ship.**

surrendered. After two years of internment, men who were previously friends were now enemies.

Unknown to the Marines and sailors, Captain Zuckschwerdt had previously received orders to destroy his vessel should war be declared between Germany and the United States.

Although all of the weapons of war were nullified, the Germans managed to obtain large amounts of gasoline, which they concealed in the bilges of the ship as well as the boiler and machinery within the ship. Except for the small number of men assigned to the demolition, the entire crew were mustered on the main deck to avoid the explosion which offered a quick jump into the bay to survive the ship sinking. The sailors performed drill to avoid American suspicion.

Bartlett arrived at the dock where Hall and Chockie stood by in their boat, near the governor’s lustrous mahogany barge which would transport Bartlett to the German ship. The steam whistle in Agana emitted five long blast at 7:40 a.m., marking the departure of Lieutenants Bartlett and Hall across the harbor to seize the enemy ship. Prominently displaying a flag of truce, the barge came ever nearer to their target, reaching SMS *Cormoran* at 7:55 a.m.

Lieutenant Bartlett left Corporal Chockie and 15 Marines on their craft in supporting distance and boarded the ship alone to take the capture of a crew of over 350 men. Fortunately for the Germans, Bartlett encountered no resistance. The Navy lieutenant soon faced Captain Zuckschwerdt and a few officers in the stateroom of *Cormoran*, delivering the terms of unconditional surrender. Bartlett handed the formal terms of surrender to the captain, which informed the officers of the ship they were now prisoners of war.

“I am willing to turn over the officers and crew of the *Cormoran*,” Zuckschwerdt replied, “but I cannot turn over the ship.” Bartlett again stressed the surrender must be unconditional, but the German captain replied, “I cannot and will not surrender the ship.”

Bartlett then departed the cabin to a celebration on deck with a now enemy band. Men were already leaping into the bay, with boxes, suitcases, and life preservers. The American barge came alongside SMS *Cormoran*. Captain Zuckschwerdt secretly ordered the ignition of a timed fuse to ignite the gasoline below decks.

Every Marine and sailor on the water or on shore watched the ship with great curiosity. They observed Bartlett going aboard the ship and then return to his craft and pull away from the ship. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary and certainly no reason to open fire on SMS *Cormoran*.

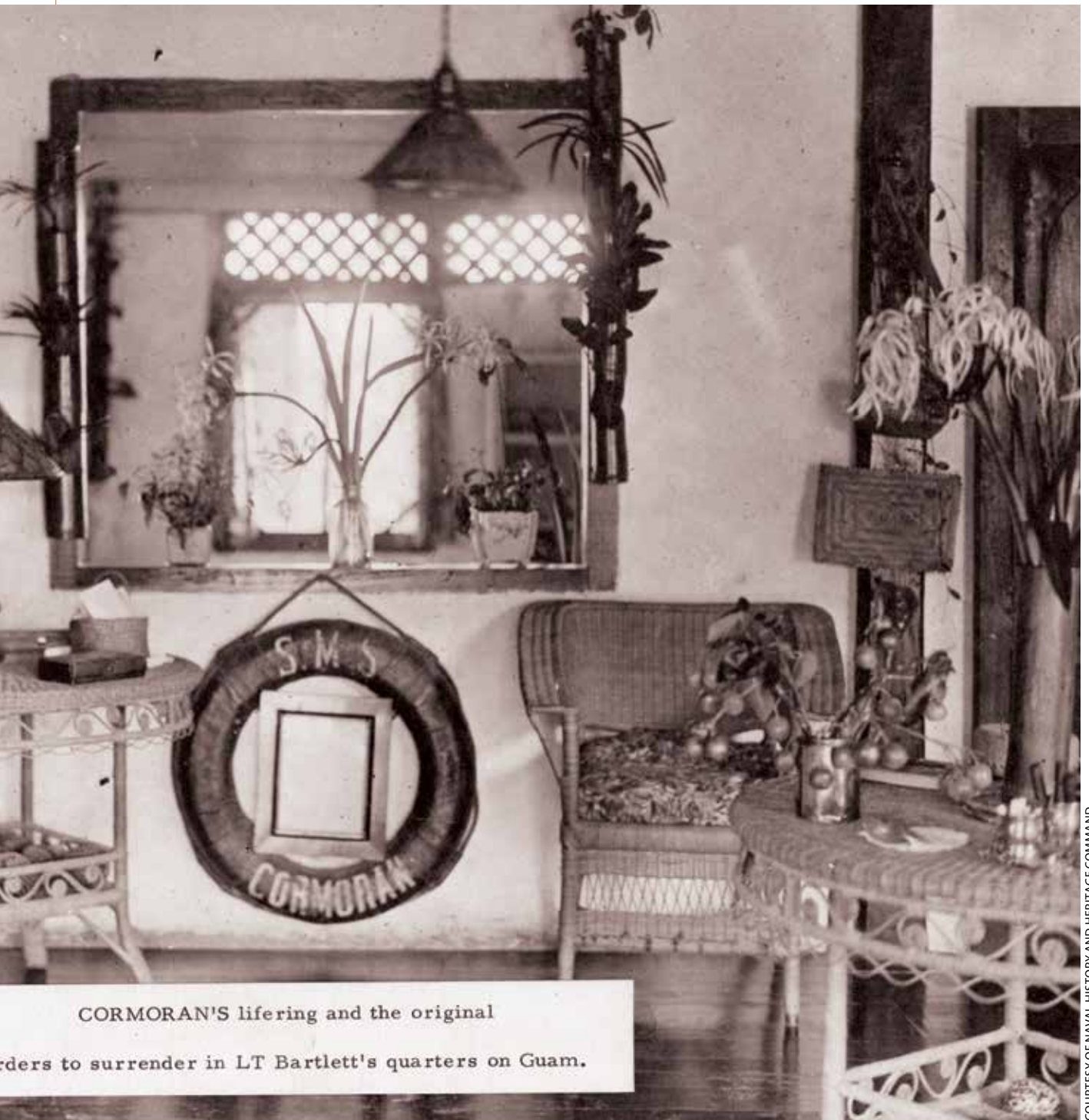
Curiously, the enemy sailors quickly rehoisted the flag a



**This SMS *Cormoran* life ring on the wall of LT Barlett’s quarters on Guam during WW I, contains the original orders of surrender given to Capt Zuckshwerdt framed in the center of the ring.**

minute later and at 8:03 a.m., the silence in the bay was accentuated by an explosion which rocketed up with “a bright red flame, surrounded by a cloud of black smoke,” erupting as high as the mast of the ship. This initial blast rocked the ship just forward of the bridge on the starboard side.

The German crew lost no time leaping from the deck into the safety of the harbor waters. Many of the Germans



COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

CORMORAN'S lifering and the original

orders to surrender in LT Bartlett's quarters on Guam.

shouted as they took the leap, their cries “Hoch Deutschland” and “Hoch de Kaiser” echoing across the harbor amid the splashes of water from more than 300 falling bodies and numerous boxes of possessions. “I was looking right at the ship when she went up,” Cpl Cox recalled many years later. “I saw the men start going overboard.”

The ship took a definite list to starboard as the water rose inside her hull, going gently down by the head as it slid quickly below surface of the harbor, again by her starboard side with only her stern remaining in sight. At 8:07 a.m., SMS *Cormoran* disappeared from the surface, sunk in less than five minutes, leaving the bobbing heads of the crew

mingled with the debris of the ship. The explosion brought USS *Supply* from her post into the harbor, this time to rescue the crew from drowning with their ship. Lieutenant Colonel Berkeley’s Marines rescued many of the crew, as did Cpl Chockie’s Marines from their launch.

The resulting explosion condemned the ship to the bay and the sinking inflicted the first German casualties of the war after America’s entry. Seven members of the crew died in the explosion or drowned by the resulting deluge of water within the hull of the ship before rescue. All were later buried with full military honors, with a monument to mark their sacrifice.

**Captain Zuckschwerdt was pulled from the water and taken aboard USS *Supply* where he formally surrendered to Captain Smith, who replied, "Sir, you are a brave man."**

Captain Zuckschwerdt was pulled from the water and taken aboard USS *Supply* where he formally surrendered to Captain Smith, who replied, "Sir, you are a brave man." More than 100 German ships were seized by the United States during World War I, most of which were undamaged. Several were passenger liners which became transports to transport Marines and soldiers to and from the war in Europe.

Zuckschwerdt and the remaining 20 officers, 12 warrant officers, and 321 sailors survived and were taken into captivity by the Marines. The German enlisted prisoners were first kept in confinement at Asan, while the officers occupied their own enclosure on the mountain at Camp Barnett. Both stockades were guarded by the Marine detachment.

On April 29, the crew of the SMS *Cormoran* were then transported to San Francisco. An exception was made for the 25 men recruited from New Guinea who were allowed to remain on Guam under Marine guard. A Japanese warship eventually returned the men to their homes.



COURTESY OF MIKE MILLER

**Cpl Michael B. Chockie famously tried to reenlist during World War II, however he was unable to get waivers for poor eyesight and his age. He died in 1980 and was buried at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, Colo.**

The Germans were first confined in the Presidio and later boarded trains to their permanent home at Fort Douglas, Utah. They were placed in wooden barracks, joining captured German spies and diplomats. Multiple barbed wire fences surrounded the captives who had little chance to escape.

American Navy Nurse Marian Gebhardt, a newlywed, followed her German husband to Utah but only allowed her a brief moment to speak to her husband through two walls of barbed wire. She requested she be interned as well to be with her husband but her request was denied.

Many of the Marines who were present when the United States fired the opening shots on Guam went to France to fight in Belleau Wood and the other battles of World War I. All three company commanders were assigned companies in France. However, the enlisted Marines on Guam faced a more difficult path to France. The huge influx of Marine recruits in 1917 found the Marine Corps short of experienced officers to command them. Officers came back to the United States from the Philippines, Hawaii, and Guam, but enlisted men were not granted passage to the units preparing for war unless they had less than four months left in their enlistments.

On Nov. 11, 1918, the end of World War I also ended the captivity of the sailors of SMS *Cormoran*. Captain Zuckschwerdt served on a committee with the Head of the Switzerland Legation in the United States to return all of the German captives to their homeland. On Sept. 28, 1,581 German nationals, including men, women, children, naval officers and enlisted men boarded USS *Pocahontas*, guarded by a detachment of 129 Marines commanded by Major Clayton Vogel.

The captain and crew of SMS *Cormoran* arrived at Rotterdam, Holland on Oct. 7, 1919, and disembarked the following day, ending their long-delayed voyage home, as well their relationship with the American Marines.

Cpl Chockie spent much of World War I at the Marine Barracks in Cavite, Philippines, as well as at the American Legation in Nicaragua. Chockie also returned to the United States for duty at Mare Island, New York, Quantico and then to the Norfolk Navy Yard where he was discharged from the Marine Corps on Oct. 5, 1919.

Chockie came to prominence once again in 1942 with America's entry into World War II. He entered the Denver Marine Corps Recruiting Office, bearing a faded newspaper clipping describing his exploits on Guam in 1917 and "Mike" Chockie requested to enlist once again, declaring, "I fired the first shot in the last war and I'll fire the last shot in this one." Major Clyde Roberts, commanding the recruiting station, filed a waiver for his 53 years of age and poor eyesight but the request was denied. Corporal Chockie died on Oct. 5, 1980, at the age of 91, and was buried with full honors at Fort Logan Cemetery, Colo.

SMS *Cormoran* still rests in the waters off Guam, marking the first American shots of World War I as well as the first enemy killed in action, and prisoner of war captured.

*Author's bio: Mike Miller has written five books and many articles about Marine Corps and Civil War History. A longtime Leatherneck contributor, he retired in 2016 after a 34-year career in the Marine Corps archival, museum and history programs. His latest book is "The 4th Marine Brigade at Belleau Wood and Soissons: History and Battlefield Guide."* 🍷

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# Terry Salman

## American Marine and Canadian Philanthropist



Canadian philanthropist Terry Salman, a veteran U.S. Marine, stands in front of a painting of a Marine by Attila Richard Lukacs. Salman's memoir, "What We Give from Marine to Philanthropist," recounts his time in the Marine Corps and how it influenced his life and philanthropic philosophy.

Salman recently sat down for an interview with *Leatherneck* to discuss his service and his focus on philanthropy after his highly successful business career in Canada. Decades after his time in the Corps ended, Salman remains a loyal *Leatherneck* reader and even referenced two of the magazine's articles in his recently published book, "What We Give From Marine to Philanthropist: A Memoir." The interview took place via Zoom which made it easy to see that Salman embodies the old adage, "Once a Marine, always a Marine." Behind his desk is a large portrait of a Marine waving the American flag, painted by famous Canadian artist, Attila Richard Lukas. It's clear that Salman is proud to be a Marine.

### Canadian by Birth

Growing up in a large family in Quebec, Canada, Terry Salman was a relatively mediocre high school student whose future wasn't clearly defined. Meeting a Marine recruiter over the border in Plattsburg, N.Y., Salman was intrigued listening to all the benefits of service, especially travel, but it was a photo behind the recruiter's desk that actually sealed the deal. "I had a fondness for JFK [John F. Kennedy], the commander in chief, and behind the recruiter's desk was a portrait of the

commander in chief." At that time, his only knowledge of the Corps came from reading the Leon Urin classic, "Battle Cry." Nevertheless, Salman decided the Marine Corps was for him. The recruiter expedited the required green card, and Salman was off to recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island.

Salman said "The DIs were very suspicious," about his citizenship but added that it was only at Parris Island that being a Canadian was ever an issue during his time in the Corps. "I was happy in the Marine Corps. They didn't really care if I was Canadian. It never came up after boot camp." And like many Marines, Salman considers his best day in the Corps to be the day he graduated from recruit training at MCRD Parris Island.

By Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)

Most Marines know that the fabric of our Corps is woven from throughout the nation. Marines join from every state and even from foreign countries, often with the goal of becoming a citizen of the United States. But a Canadian citizen who enlists during the Vietnam War with no desire to renounce his Canadian citizenship and become an American? That's pretty unusual, but even more rare is when that same Marine goes on to become a highly successful businessman and philanthropist. Veteran Marine, successful businessman, and generous philanthropist Terrance K. "Terry" Salman is such a rarity.

COURTESY OF TERRY SALMAN



COURTESY OF TERRY SALMAN

The Marines of 1st Bn, 4th Marines (above) in Chu Lai, Vietnam, in August 1965. Salman (below) was a lance corporal at the time.

**“It was really the foundation of my life because the Marines taught me everything was possible. You just have to be patient. You have to work at it.”**

### **Vietnam**

Salman was assigned to the infantry during his six years in the Marine Corps and he quickly advanced through the ranks to the grade of sergeant. He served in Vietnam with 1st Battalion, 4th Marines as a section leader. “I was an 0341, 81 mm mortars,” said Salman. “What mortars have to do to support a platoon is incredibly important and takes a lot of planning and training.” He later took the lessons he learned from his time as a grunt and applied them to both his business endeavors and philanthropy. “Keep your focus on the ultimate objective which the Marine Corps focuses on, whether a combat mission or training a unit or how to train individuals to become a better Marine. Teamwork is incredibly important.”

When asked about the impact his service in Vietnam had on him, Salman responded positively. “It gave me a much different view. I’ve tried to take a worldly view about what is right and



COURTESY OF TERRY SALMAN

**“Some of the core values that Marines learn apply in philanthropy. Marines taught me to help people, and philanthropy is all about helping mankind in a broad sense.”**



Salman, pictured here at the Britannia Mine Museum in 2018, was the honorary chairman of the museum’s fundraising project. His father worked as a mining engineer in the Britannia mines. Salman attributes his philanthropic success to the core values he learned as a Marine.

president and chief executive officer and where he raised funding for hundreds of companies in the mining and exploration fields. As the current president of Salman Capital and chairman of New Pacific Metals Corporation, Salman’s business successes have been numerous, and he credits his time in the Corps for setting him on the path to success.

“It was really the foundation of my life because the Marines taught me everything was possible. You just have to be patient. You have to work at it. The guiding principles of following procedures, having a good plan, your own plan, your unit’s plan, those are things that I learned from and used.” Salman referenced other lessons from the Corps including discipline, accountability and responsibility. “The many courses I attended in the Marine Corps helped me become sergeant in less than four years. They were incredibly helpful; they taught me a lot about what it takes to persevere, to look for higher goals.”

### **Philanthropy**

His philanthropic efforts grew in parallel to his business successes. According to Salman, philanthropy went hand in hand with his service as a Marine. “Philanthropy is not much different. Some of the core values that Marines learn apply in philanthropy. Marines taught me to help people, and philanthropy is all about helping mankind in a broad sense. I don’t see much difference.”

Veterans’ causes are just one of the many efforts upon which Salman has focused over the years. The Canadian organization, Veterans Transition Network, is especially close to his heart. The organization provides post-traumatic stress treatment to Canadian veterans and American veterans who live in Canada. Encountering one recipient of the organization’s programs and support, Salman was reminded again of the impact of helping others. The veteran told him, “They saved my life. I wouldn’t have seen my daughter graduate without them.” Salman strongly believes that for those who have been blessed with health or a good job, the challenge is to do more. “Veterans are the most marginalized in society in many ways. They suffer from so many things, including a large

what is wrong, that different countries have different ways of looking at things. Having lived in the United States, everybody called it Camelot, it was a high standard. Things are different today, not only in the United States but elsewhere. There’s more political uncertainty than there was in my time.”

### **Entering the Business World**

After leaving the Marine Corps, Salman returned to Canada and began working in the mining industry with a focus on finance. He achieved significant success at Nesbitt Thompson, a Canadian stock brokerage firm, and later at his own financial advisory firm, Salman Partners, where he was

COURTESY OF TERRY SALMAN



COURTESY OF TERRY SALMAN

**From the left: Christina Castell, the chief librarian at the Vancouver Public Library; Terry Salman; and Jenny Marsh, stand with the new electric BiblioBike in 2022. Salman’s work has raised millions of dollars for many organizations like public libraries and hospitals.**

portion of homelessness, which is a big North American and global crisis to be honest. There’s much more to do.”

Of the many ways Salman has given back, his support of those with AIDS at a time when many shunned them was perhaps most impactful. “When you saw people who had marks on their face and losing weight, I was at the forefront of a hospital that embraced them which was so enriching to see. In those days they were the most marginalized/ostracized people, everyone saw it as a gay man’s disease but of course, it wasn’t. It was uplifting to sit in an environment where you could do something.” According to Salman, his support of those suffering what was at the time an incurable disease is one of his greatest legacies, and again, his efforts to support that particular community also had some roots back to his time in the Corps.

“Philanthropy is about trying to overcome adversity; making the world a better place, more giving, more inclusive, and ironically, I learned that from the Marines—inclusion. We could be supportive in other ways. I learned not to turn my back on people who were different than me. That’s what enabled me to take the AIDS initiative, which was so important.”

Loyalty is vastly important to Salman and is a theme throughout “What We Give.” “That came from my time in the Marine Corps. The Marines are big on loyalty. That’s what Semper Paratus is all about. I never forgot that.” He continued, “One of the frustrations I have, not so much in philanthropy but in business, is getting the same kind of loyalty. Six years in the Marine Corps today would seem like an eternity to a young person. That’s a big thing with me.”

## Legacy

Like all good Marines, Salman has spent most of his life serving as an example to others. In addition to his philanthropic efforts, which include raising millions for everything from public libraries to hospitals, Salman wrote, “What We Give From Marine To Philanthropist: A Memoir,” in the hopes that his story would serve as inspiration. “The world is full of tragic stories and suffering people. So, for those of us who have the opportunity to give back, it just seems like the moral thing to do.”

He continues to look for opportunities to help others even today. “Giving back gets easier ... it has such rewarding characteristics. Small things go a long way. I’m always looking for new ways to help move my philanthropy forward.” And when asked to describe his legacy, Salman again focused on serving others. “I would hope that they would think about not just about how much money I made, helping to create a better world in the charities and philanthropies that I engaged with. There’s more things to do. That’s what I’m looking forward to for the rest of my life; trying to do more, like the Marines do with less.”

*Author’s note: More information on “What We Give From Marine to Philanthropist: A Memoir” and how it can be purchased can be found at [www.whatwegivebook.com](http://www.whatwegivebook.com).*

*Author’s bio: Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret) served 27 years on active duty and retired in 2014. She was the editor of Leatherneck and the vice president for strategic communication for the Marine Corps Association until earlier this year.* 🦁

# HOLDING THE LINE:

## Marines Confront Abbey Gate Memories Two Years Later



A Marine with 2/1 stands on the canal wall outside Abbey Gate amid civilians seeking evacuation from Afghanistan.

By Kyle Watts

The U.S. Air Force C-17 began its final descent in preparation for landing. Corporal Von Straight sat packed in among the 25 Marines of his stick. Gear of every sort filled the expansive interior of the aircraft, leaving barely enough room for the Marines, as Straight contemplated the mission ahead. What that mission was he did not fully understand, but it was Afghanistan. After watching Marines fight there for most of his life, Straight yearned to finally have his turn. Would it be a fight, though? Nobody seemed to know. The Marines aboard the plane could never have imagined the world in which they were about to spend the next two weeks.

The aircraft touched down at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) in the capital city of Kabul during the early morning hours of Aug. 14, 2021. A few other personnel from 1st Battalion, 8th Marines had arrived earlier, but as a combat engineer, Straight's squad arrived with the advance party.

Events on the ground outside the airport had decayed rapidly over the weeks prior. The Afghan government and military, propped up by the U.S., collapsed under a Taliban onslaught in every city and province. After vacating Bagram Air Base on July 1, the airfield at HKIA stood as the last American toehold in the country. U.S. soldiers and Marines from Joint Task Force-Crisis Response operated out of HKIA preparing for the possibility of a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO). The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, with 1/8 attached, and Central Command's Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, with 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines attached, were called in for support as the situation deteriorated.

As Cpl Straight prepared for the coming evacuation, the entire world watched events happening outside the perimeter wall. On Aug. 15, Taliban forces surrounded Kabul and Afghan President Ashraf Ghazi fled the city with numerous other officials of the American-backed government. Afghan army soldiers threw away their weapons and melted into the civilian populace. Taliban flooded the city and seized control of the country. American helicopters evacuated more than 5,000 personnel still on the ground at the U.S. embassy.

News of the takeover spread quickly, and civilians massed at the airport in fear for their lives. The sudden lack of Afghan soldiers left holes on the airfield perimeter, and crowds seized the opportunity.

Straight was working with his team



**A civilian family gives their baby to Marines on the wall at North Gate. Tragically, this desperate act was not isolated or uncommon during the evacuation from HKIA.**

processing civilian contractors for evacuation as night fell on the 15th when a frantic call suddenly rose over the radio. Someone across the airfield said they were under fire and civilians had breached the perimeter. The Marines joined forces with Turkish soldiers and moved out. Ambient city lights washed out all night vision devices so vehicles trailed the line of Marines pushing over the open ground, illuminating their way.

Sparks jumped off the tarmac in front of Straight. A vehicle-mounted machine gun behind him opened up on a shadowy figure hiding in a ditch. As they continued, a C-17 lumbered through the darkness down the runway. Marines dodged the aircraft and took cover as it throttled up on an emergency takeoff. Farther ahead, a line of black-clad men carrying AK-47s sprinted across the field. By the time the sighting made its way up the chain for permission to engage, the men disappeared into a distant crowd.

Two shots cracked through the air past Straight's head. He stopped in his tracks. He'd never been shot at before.

"My platoon sergeant standing next to

me started dying of laughter as he saw the thought process working through my head," Straight recalled. "My first thought was that I was not wearing my eye protection, like I was on another damn field exercise at Lejeune or something. We saw the guy who shot at us on the edge of a crowd, but he disappeared. Things just got progressively worse from there."

When dawn rose on the 16th, just a few hundred Marines and U.S. Army soldiers occupied the airfield amid a rising tide of civilians. Estimates range as high as 24,000 civilians breaching the perimeter. A brief and unintended firefight broke out between Marines and Taliban with two Taliban killed. Air Force airplanes made last-minute emergency takeoffs through the crowds on the runway. At midday, civilians on the ground recorded the now infamous footage of people clinging to the outside of a C-17 and bodies plummeting from the sky as they lost their grip after lifting off. Apache helicopters flew back and forth over the flight line mere feet off the ground, forcing people back with their rotor wash. Noth-

ing worked. The crowd proved largely peaceful but refused to budge.

The swell of people reduced as night fell. No planes would land or take off as long as they remained on the tarmac. Afghan special forces arrived and used extreme crowd control tactics, beatings and shooting civilians who stubbornly refused to retreat. Finally, after more than 24 hours of effort to regain control, U.S. forces reopened the airfield.

Cpl Mike Markland waited in Qatar with the remainder of 1/8 for a flight to Kabul as different news agencies reported the fall of the city to the Taliban. Some Marines were told to prepare for a landing under fire. No one knew what to expect or what was happening on the ground.

As Markland's C-17 waited for permission to take off, another aircraft landed nearby and stopped on the runway. The aircrew from Markland's plane exited and ran over. Marines stirred and grumbled over the delay as the C-17 crews gathered around the landing gear of the other plane. Markland eventually learned that the body of an Afghan civilian remained lodged inside the aircraft, crushed beneath the landing gear and frozen solid by the frigid temperatures at high altitude during the flight.

Markland's plane finally departed and

arrived at HKIA on the night of the 16th after the airfield was secure. Upon their arrival, the Marines from 1/8 set up around the north and east gates of the airport to process civilians for evacuation. Markland reached North Gate and climbed above the wall. People were spread out as far as his eyes could see. Strands of concertina wire placed outside the wall lay flat beneath discarded clothes, luggage, and bodies shoved over them.

Marines pushed outside the gate, fighting to create space between the wall and the crowd. They screamed at the top of their lungs for people to get back or sit down. Civilians screamed back at the Marines and at each other, holding aloft every kind of paperwork imaginable that they hoped could get them out of the country. Marines scanned for threats as civilians crushed in, and warning shots filled the air, originating from any nationality present with a rifle. Taliban soldiers lurked along a road running parallel to the wall less than 100 meters away beating and shooting people who didn't comply with their orders. Afghan army soldiers waded into the crowd outside the gate beating and shooting people for the same reasons.

"Nothing in your life gets you ready for something like that," reflected Markland.

"I was immediately met with something so different from anything I ever thought I would encounter; a situation I never even realized could happen with humanity. Everything you've learned as a man and as a Marine is constantly being used. It became exhausting very quickly."

The young Marines knew Afghanistan as a war zone for all of their lives. Many of the older Marines had fought there on previous deployments but were now there under the pretense of an NEO, not combat, and they expected some form of order to make that happen. The chaos that greeted them left everyone looking to each other to determine what was acceptable and what was not.

"We wanted so badly to help these people," Markland said, "but the only thing messing up the order and regulation of everything was the people. It's like a two-edged sword. Any time you help one person, everyone sees that, and they get all riled up."

In one example outside North Gate, Cpl Benjamin Lowther stood shoulder to shoulder with other Marines keeping civilians back. The crowd grew agitated and surged ahead. Warning shots and screaming filled the air. Suddenly, a can of tear gas erupted in the middle of it all. No one knew who threw it—a Marine,



Marines assigned to the 24th MEU await a flight to Afghanistan at Al Udeied Air Base, Qatar, Aug. 17, 2021.

ANA soldier, or one of the other nationalities present. Marines withdrew back toward the gate to shut down processing until the crowd settled. As Marines backed away from the gas, civilians pushed ahead into the void, crushing some of their own beneath the weight of an unstoppable mass.

Their momentum pinned Cpl Lowther against a thigh-high jersey barrier. He drew his service pistol and fired into the air but could not create enough space to free his legs. He shouted for help and two Marines grabbed hold of his gear. Pulling at his belt and flak jacket, they finally freed his feet and safely returned behind the gate.

Marines hardened themselves to maintain their sanity. One of the worst duties involved returning “rejected” civilians back outside the gate. With limited guidance from the Department of State (DOS) on what paperwork a civilian needed for evacuation, Marines ushered in people who did not meet the criteria. Other times, foreign nations brought in large groups without proper vetting and left them at the Marines’ entry control point. On one occasion, Cpl Markland helped bring in a man who had been shot in the genitals. They rushed him to medical care, but when he was stabilized, were forced to bring the man back outside the wall because he had no paperwork. Many other men, women, and children were forced back outside. Civilians resisted, begging Marines to let them stay, or pleading for the Marines to kill them. Unbelievably, they deemed this a more merciful death than being thrown out and left once more to the Taliban.

At the same time as 1/8 occupied North and East gates, 2/1 touched down in waves and moved to Abbey Gate. Unlike a typical combat deployment, the Marines arrived lacking much of the gear that normally came with them. They relied on whatever they could carry, but Marines being Marines, they quickly adapted.

“It’s like if Stephen King and Dr. Seuss got together and wrote a book, that would be all of HKIA,” recalled Gunnery Sergeant Melissa Marnell, a combat photographer attached to 2/1. “It was like the Wild West. Marines were doing anything they could to get by. I saw rifle squads traveling on bicycles, or entire sections moving on bulldozers or fire engines. I had no idea so many Marines knew how to hot-wire vehicles. If you found a vehicle and could get it started, spray paint your name on the side, and it was yours.”

Sergeant Dalton Hannigan served as the assistant team leader for a seven-man sniper team called Reaper 2. He went



**Taken from the U.S. Central Command investigation into the attack at HKIA, this unclassified photo offers a harrowing glimpse into the environment that 2/1 Marines occupied at Abbey Gate shortly after arriving. (DOD photo)**



**A Marine at HKIA travels on a commandeered bicycle. Having arrived with little more than the gear they carried, Marines adapted and “acquired” any means of transportation available around the airport. (Photo by GySgt Melissa Marnell, USMC)**

to work “acquiring” assets. An Army Ranger taught Hannigan how to hot-wire a vehicle, and he picked one out of many scattered around the airport. Now with wheels, the team made their way to the terminal.

Reaper 2 received the task of providing overwatch at Abbey Gate. The team set up in a two-story guard tower presiding over the outer gate and exterior wall of the airport. The position offered a unique perspective. A road led straight out from the gate below, and a high wall rimmed with concertina wire lined one side served as the airport’s outer wall. A shallow canal lined the other side of the road, running directly below the tower and continuing beyond the gate in the opposite direction. A pedestrian walkway ran along the opposite side of the canal with another tall, chain link fence separating the walkway from the

rest of the city beyond. In total, less than 50 feet stood between the tower and the fence beyond the canal.

Turmoil enveloped the world within the snipers’ view. A sea of people pressed toward Abbey Gate from up and down the canal. Other Marines from 2/1 held the ground outside, struggling to keep the peace. The canal proved to be an open sewer, and the Marines nicknamed it “shit creek.” The smells of feces, urine, blood and decaying bodies rose into the tower, creating a toxic and intolerable environment around the gate, but the filth and stench failed to dissuade civilians. They waded through the knee-high water up to the side nearest the gate. Marines stood on the wall preventing some from climbing out and helping up others who showed appropriate documents.

Less than 200 yards down the road, a bridge spanned the canal, leading out of

the airport toward the Baron Hotel. The British set up their base of operations there, processing people for evacuation. Maintaining the path of entry and exit for the Brits was critical.

Marines worked for hours clearing the road in front of Abbey Gate. The sheer weight of the desperate crowd seemed impossible to push back. After nearly 24 hours, 2/1 finally cleared the road out to the bridge over the canal. Engineers hauled in large shipping containers and placed them in a chevron-shape at the bridge, blocking vehicle entry to the gate.

The chevron morphed into one of the great incongruities representing those ending days of the war in Afghanistan. Taliban soldiers, operating in partnership with U.S. forces, occupied the chevron as an outer checkpoint. Their armed presence at this blocking position prevented the possibility of vehicle-borne impr-

**A view from Reaper 2’s sniper tower at Abbey Gate. The Taliban checkpoint at the “chevron” of shipping containers can be seen in the distance on the right side of the photo. (Photo courtesy of SSgt Dalton Hannigan, USMC)**



vised explosive devices (VBIED) from reaching Abbey Gate. In theory, the Taliban also provided an initial screening of civilians for evacuation. To the Marines of Reaper 2 observing the Taliban from their sniper tower, reality appeared quite different.

“We saw people getting beaten and executed, but there was nothing we could do,” remembered Sgt Hannigan. “At different points, we’d see the Taliban sit down on the shipping containers and grab a couple kids and the kids would just sit up there with them. What the Taliban were doing with their families I don’t know. But it was just weird seeing a toddler holding their baby brother or sister, sitting up there in the heat alone with the Taliban.”

Random shootings at the chevron drove civilians into the canal, where they bypassed the Taliban checkpoint. The Taliban presence left everyone on edge although the crowd remained mostly peaceful.

Marines arriving at Abbey Gate found themselves in a position no training could prepare them for. DOS officials appeared sporadically and in short intervals over the first several days. They alone made the determination on “acceptable” documentation for evacuation. They operated inside the gate, however, and Marines outside acted independently to determine who should be let in. Every Marine recognized an American passport or green card and identified those rare individuals to be let in but what does a German work visa look like? Or an Australian visa? What if a civilian handed you a cellphone and an English-speaking voice on the other end claimed to be a congressman or a colonel or someone else “important” enough to vouch for the person who handed you the phone?

Complicating matters, guidance on acceptable documentation shifted constantly. Just like 1/8 experienced at North Gate, 2/1 Marines grew frustrated and exhausted as they processed civilians through to safety, only then to discover the papers they possessed were unacceptable. Hundreds of civilians fit inside the inner holding area at Abbey Gate awaiting DOS approval. Sometimes, more than 2/3 of these groups were forced back out.

Desperation grew as time passed. Families stood on the road or in the canal for days. Many succumbed to thirst and

**The Marines of Reaper 2. Top row: Sgt Andrew Valencia, left, and Cpl Adam Santos. Bottom row, left to right: Sgt Charles Shilling, Sgt Dalton Hannigan, HM3 Jorge Mayo, Sgt Tyler Vargas-Andrews, LCpl Caden Coop.**



**A Marine with 2/1 holds a baby that had been entrusted to the Marines at Abbey Gate on Aug. 26, 2021. (Photo by GySgt Melissa Marnell, USMC)**

heat exhaustion. Whenever DOS personnel left or the airfield shut down flight operations, processing halted. The crowd grew agitated and teetered on the brink of rioting. Marines witnessed unimaginable scenes as men, women, and children trampled each other to death, were crushed against concrete barriers, or were left for dead in the canal.

Marines clung to a sense of decency. They wanted to help but felt incapable in the wake of so much terror and tragedy. Even so, opportunities arose. Without clear guidance, young Marines acted in-

dependently, making decisions that meant life or death for people outside the gate.

“The first couple days I was looking around to see everybody else’s reaction, or to see how they handled things, but eventually I realized it doesn’t come down to me asking somebody if I can do something if it’s going to help,” said Cpl Markland. “It came down to understanding that right now, no decision is the worst decision for these people.”

Markland found a distraught family at North Gate one day, just after they made it through the initial screening. The



COURTESY OF SSGT DALTON HANNIGAN, USMC

**Female Marines from across the commands present at HKIA formed Female Engagement Teams. These Marines performed a critical function, and endured much emotional hardship in their roles processing women and children for evacuation.**

family of five entered HKIA, prepared to leave their entire lives behind with a single blue backpack. It contained all their money, documents, and whatever other possessions they could fit inside. Somehow, the backpack disappeared. The frantic mother approached Markland with broken English, explaining their bag went missing during the initial search. As Marines held the family off to the side, Markland backtracked into the holding area looking for the bag. He spotted a blue bag in the crowd, but another civilian claimed it. Markland finally gave up and returned. The mother begged Markland to take her with him to search a second time.

He knew the uncleared civilians presented a security risk and taking her back through the entrance created a problem for everyone else trying to get in. He also understood that without the backpack, the family would not have the required documents and would be kicked out. He took the risk. They walked 100 yards back towards the gate. The woman immediately identified her bag as the one Markland had noticed before and retrieved it from the other civilian, who offered no resistance. They returned to the rest of the family, who wept with joy and thanked Markland for his help.

At another point near North Gate, Cpl Straight received the task of guarding an Afghan interpreter named Reggie. Reggie served with U.S. forces as an interpreter in 2012, then immigrated to the U.S. and enlisted in the Marines. After serving



SSGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC

his time on active duty, he returned to Afghanistan as an interpreter once more. Now, Reggie sought evacuation to the U.S., and Straight helped him search the crowds for his wife and children. Miraculously, they found Reggie's family and got them on a plane.

In the personnel terminal, GySgt Marnell learned firsthand how the smallest of gestures meant the world to the civilians. She found a refrigerator full of water bottles and took several out to a crowd waiting to board their plane.

After enduring the heat with no food or water for days, the people beamed with gratitude. Marnell and one of her Marines made trip after trip, emptying the fridge for the people outside.

"I've never seen someone so thankful for something so minor in my life," she remembered. "That was the one time I was happy over there, doing something so small for those people."

Of all the Marines immersed in the good and the bad playing out at HKIA, the Female Engagement Teams (FETs)



CPL MIKE MARKLAND, USMC

**This screenshot from Cpl Mike Markland's GoPro video depicts the gratitude a family showed to Markland after he helped them find their blue backpack at North Gate. Without the backpack, and the documents inside, the family would have been rejected for evacuation by the Department of State.**



SGT BENJAMIN AULICK, USMC

**GySgt Melissa Marnell stayed with these three sisters as they awaited evacuation from HKIA. Visible on Marnell's right wrist are the bracelets given to her by the youngest of the girls.**

off her bracelets and handed them to Marnell.

"You can have these," the girl said. "I won't need them when the Taliban kill me."

Marnell stared, taken off guard. How could this be the thought of a 5-year-old? She noticed the girls all wore a cross on a necklace. She learned the girls' parents were English teachers at a school. Marnell reassured the girls they were safe now, held them, and stayed with them until they boarded their flight.

As days passed, units at the gates adopted rest plans to finally relive those who had been on guard for days. Many Marines endured 72 hours or more without sleep. They cycled back for rest and witnessed some results of their work; C-17s loaded with civilians taking off.

By Aug. 25, the situation declined from bad to worse. The President's deadline to withdraw from HKIA by Aug. 31 approached and the crowds understood their chances of evacuation diminished rapidly. Their desperation increased proportionally. Marines felt the pressure, not just from the crowd surrounding the airport, but from desperate people around the world. An avalanche of "special requests" overwhelmed the Marines. Thousands upon thousands arrived in every way imaginable; from the White House to the Vatican, from congressmen to retired colonels, foreign officials, or anyone with someone they knew still outside the airport. The senior officers at HKIA received emails from the highest levels of government. Lance corporals at the gates who still had working phones found their numbers somehow had gotten out, and they received texts or phone calls about specific people to look for in the crowd. Sometimes the special requests helped identify individuals in the sea of people. More often than not, the special requests, and corresponding efforts to act on them served only to disrupt or even cripple the mass evacuation efforts.

Credible threat streams reached the intelligence community. VBIEDs threatened North Gate with the civilian road running parallel to the wall. Suicide vest IEDs (SVIEDS) were suspected as well with detailed descriptions of bags and people to watch out for. The threat at North and East Gates increased so dramatically that both entrances permanently closed operations. Abbey Gate

held a unique role. Afghan culture dictated women and children could only be handled by females. Female Marines across the commands on deck formed together to support processing operations. The significant number of women and children present and the limited number of female Marines available required the FETs to work non-stop.

"They were being worked to a degree where they didn't have any down time," said Markland. "We at least changed between the gate, the airfield perimeter, and rest. They didn't have that as much, it was just gate to gate to gate. And the things they were being used for, with the women and kids, was very emotionally draining."

Some of the most widely publicized

photos to come out of HKIA featured FET members caring for babies. Many desperate families handed their babies to Marines over the gates or left them lying outside where they knew Marines would rescue them, just to give the kids a chance at life. An orphanage was formed on the airfield to care for and protect all the children separated from their parents. Marines cherished the moments playing with all the kids, while wrestling inside with the terrifying reality surrounding them.

Marnell waited with three young girls for their flight out of HKIA. The girls and their parents were cleared and approved for evacuation, but the youngest of them was still unaware of their circumstances. The girl, only 4 or 5 years old, pulled



COURTESY OF 62ND AIRLIFT WING, USAF

**One of numerous Air Force C-17s packed with civilians for evacuation out of Afghanistan. Some of these massive aircraft took off with nearly 650 people aboard.**

remained the only operational entrance for civilians to enter. By nightfall on Aug. 25, commanders decided to also close Abbey Gate for good.

Cpl Straight arrived at Abbey Gate the morning of Aug. 26 with the task of barricading the gate once Marines from 2/1 pulled back inside. The morning wore on and operations continued as normal, but no word came to shut it down. Straight asked around about the delay. The Brits continued operating out of the Baron Hotel with the road from Abbey Gate as their only means of reaching the airport. Until they ceased processing civilians, the Marines needed to keep Abbey Gate open.

The closure of North and East Gates forced an influx of people toward Abbey. Civilians filled the canal and walkway.

The frustrated crowd boiled over, throwing trash left on the ground, and grabbing at the Marines' gear. Marines used flash bangs and other crowd control measures but found little success. Some Marines witnessed one man hold a baby over his head as a tiny human shield when a flash bang exploded nearby. Other civilians threw their children at the wall in a last hopeless act.

"Moms were trying to give away their kids. They would throw the kids to us," stated one Marine in an interview from Central Command's declassified investigation into the attack at Abbey Gate. "We didn't have a choice then because the kids would be hurt. You'd be surprised how many people threw babies. You have no idea."

"They would throw the kids over the

fence, hitting the ground," stated another Marine in the investigation. "Throwing like baseballs. It was crazy."

IED threats poured in, adding to the mayhem. Marines were told to look for a black backpack with white arrows, but bags and suitcases littered the entire area. Intel provided a full description of a clean-shaven man as a possible suicide bomber. Snipers from Reaper 2 spotted a man matching the description in the crowd and reported the sighting. Other Marines spotted suspicious individuals acting far too calm amid the chaos, observing the gate and taking pictures.

Several reports of an imminent attack arrived throughout the day. On at least one occasion, an incredibly specific IED report arrived with a countdown. Marines received the warning with 10 minutes until detonation, then reiterated at five minutes. Snipers in the tower took shelter and the search platoon outside the gate knelt behind a concrete barrier. Everyone remained sheltered well beyond the expired timeline before resuming operations. The substantial increase in threats led the Marines to collapse back from the road leading to the chevron and hold a small perimeter around the outer gate.

First Platoon from Golf Company, 2/1, assumed duty outside the gate, lining the canal wall directly below the sniper tower. Three FET members exited the gate helping to pull women and children from the canal. A U.S. Army psychological operations (PSYOPS) vehicle arrived at the gate to assist with crowd control. One official estimate placed 2,000 to 3,000 civilians at Abbey Gate. At around 5:40 p.m., roughly 30 minutes after the PSYOPS team arrived, a bomb detonated.

The suicide bomber stood on the opposite side of the canal, directly across from the Marines. The explosion immediately killed or wounded hundreds of people packed into the area beneath the sniper tower. Tear gas canisters held by Marines closest to the blast ruptured, spreading their contents in a cloud over the scene. Screaming civilians fled the area along the canal. Bodies piled against the canal wall, blocking their path and restricting escape.

Cpl Straight stood inside the gate nearly 200 feet away. Even at that distance, the blast wave knocked him off his feet. Sgt Hannigan had just returned to the sniper tower and parked his truck inside the gate less than 100 feet away. He immediately climbed up the tower and found several of his Marines dazed and concussed. He learned one team member, Sgt Tyler Vargas-Andrews, was wounded on the ground outside.

Marines sprinted from every direction



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

Encounters with children at HKIA are some of the best memories, as well as some of the most painful, for many veterans who served there. The children displayed resilience and courage through the chaos and, for many, separation from their families. They profoundly impacted the Marines who looked after them.



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

toward the unfolding mayhem. Some assumed security positions, expecting a complex ambush or follow up IED. Gunfire filled the air after the blast. Several Marines interviewed for the CENTCOM investigation reported armed men in a building on the opposite side of the canal. Others witnessed men on their cellphones or taking pictures.

In the sniper tower, Sgt Hannigan ducked as three rounds struck a window facing the canal. The bulletproof glass splintered but stopped the incoming fire. Marines outside on the ground opened fire briefly, some at perceived targets, others blasting warning shots into the air to keep people back from the casualty evacuation efforts.

Marines grabbed stretchers, riot shields, and anything else that could carry the wounded. Navy corpsmen and Marines applied tourniquets and plugged puncture wounds with their fingers. The number of civilians, dead, alive, and wounded, piled up or running for their lives, complicated all efforts to help. The individual decisions of Marines on the ground remained the only thing holding the situation together.

A chain link fence separated the majority of the casualties from the Marines

attempting their rescue. Thinking quickly, Reaper 2 team leader, Sgt Charles Schilling, grabbed a pair of bolt cutters and cut a hole in the fence. This single action dramatically reduced the time it took to reach the wounded.

Sgt Jonathan Painter received shrapnel wounds from the explosion but overcame the chaos and pain to set his squad in a security position along the canal before running into the tear gas to help evacuate the wounded. Cpl Wyatt Wilson was blown through the air with ball bearings peppering his entire body. Somehow, in spite of his own grievous injuries and the cloud of tear gas enveloping him, Wilson found another critically wounded Marine lying nearby and dragged him to safety until blood loss prevented him from going farther. Wilson passed the Marine off but refused care for his own life-threatening wounds. Numerous other Marines, corpsmen, and Army medics put themselves at risk to help their brothers and sisters, as well as the wounded civilians.

As of this writing, the majority of them have gone unrecognized. Sgt Schilling's life-saving initiative making the hole in the fence is just one example of unrecognized actions. Sgt Painter received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation

Medal with combat "V." Cpl Wilson received a Bronze Star with combat "V."

In less than 15 minutes, all American casualties, both dead and wounded, were evacuated to the initial casualty collection point. Medical facilities at HKIA overflowed. Aircraft departed with the most severely wounded. The rapid evacuation of casualties no doubt prevented more Americans from losing their lives. In fact, it happened so quickly that those responsible for patient tracking struggled to keep up, temporarily misidentifying some of the dead or wounded. In total, the explosion killed 13 U.S. servicemembers and initially wounded close to 30. This number grew in the following weeks as concussions and traumatic brain injuries connected to the blast were identified. More than 150 Afghan civilians died in the attack with an untold number wounded.

Following the evacuation, Abbey Gate fell eerily quiet. The civilian crowd disappeared, leaving stacks of bodies piled against the canal wall or floating in the water. The ground attack alarm blared from speakers across HKIA, providing the only background noise. Taliban soldiers remained at the chevron, where they observed and filmed the attack in silence.



GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC

**The Marines of 1st Platoon, Golf Company, 2/1, on Aug. 26, 2021, immediately prior to taking over responsibilities as the search platoon outside Abbey Gate. Many of the Marines in this photo were among the killed or wounded in the attack that day.**



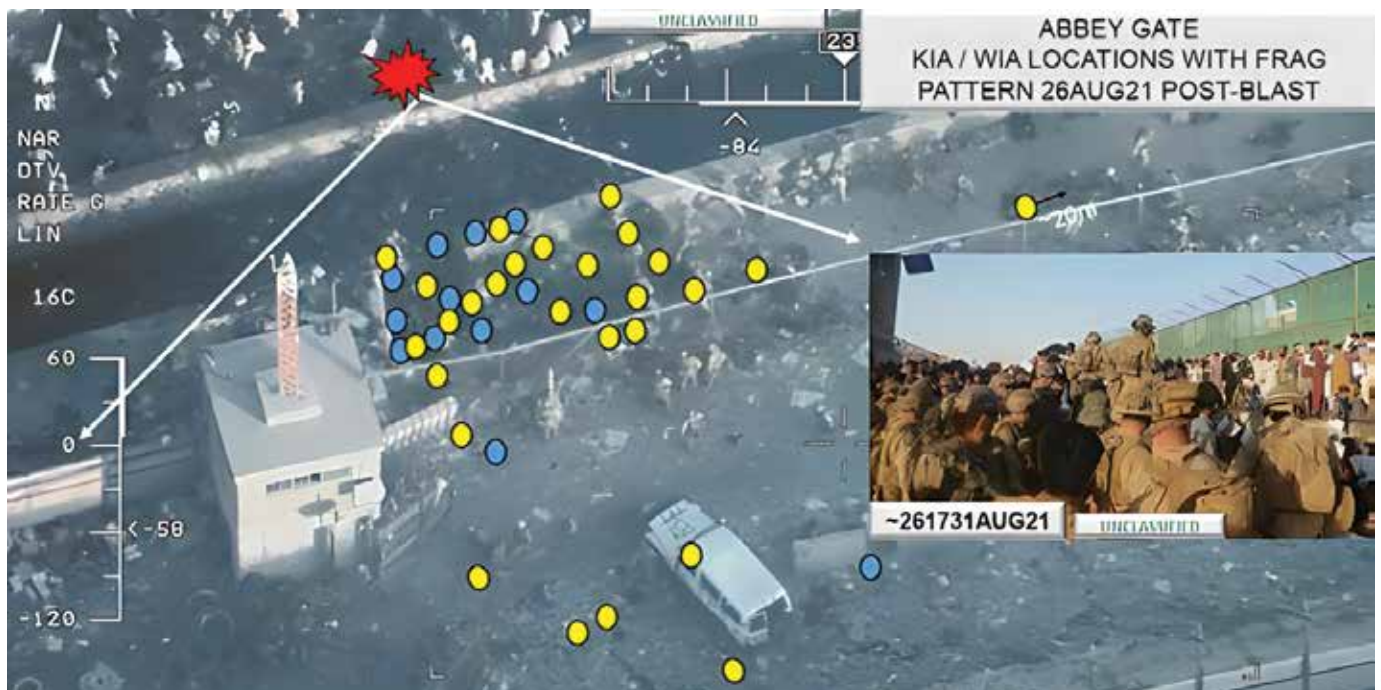
The unclassified photo above from the investigation into the attack at Abbey Gate shows the vantage point of the suicide bomber who attacked Abbey Gate on Aug. 26, 2021. The photo imposed over the graphic below shows the Marines and civilian crowd packed into the area surrounding the bomber approximately 10 minutes before the blast occurred. The graphic (below) created from a screenshot of drone footage over Abbey Gate immediately after the attack, depicts casualty locations in relation to the blast. Blue dots represent killed in action. Yellow represent wounded.

Engineers blockaded the gate. From then on, apart from special requests, evacuation operations ceased.

On the morning of Aug. 27, explosive ordnance disposal Marines conducted a post-blast analysis. They concluded the bomber utilized a suicide vest or backpack containing 20 pounds of explosives and hundreds of ball bearings. He detonated the device from the canal wall opposite the Marines outside the gate, only 20 feet away.

At noon, U.S. servicemembers gathered on the runway at the ramp of a C-17. One by one, pallbearers escorted 13 flag-draped caskets onto the aircraft. The lives claimed by the attack ranked as one of the highest numbers of U.S. fatalities in a single incident from the entire 20-year war in Afghanistan.

Marines spent the final days before the Aug. 31 deadline preparing to leave. Many engaged in the “demilitarization” of the airport. The intent was to deny the Taliban use of any military equipment. Hundreds of vehicles, aircraft, weapons, computers, radios, and every other type of gear imaginable would be left at HKIA. Commanders tasked the Marine and U.S. Army units with destroying all of it. Marines dropped thermite grenades through engine blocks, slashed tires, and smashed control panels to pieces. Sledgehammers, halligan bars, axes, and anything else they could find replaced rifles as their chosen weapons of opportunity. However, the “demil” order originated, the expectation of what should be destroyed swiftly expanded in its translation down to those carrying it out. At the gates, Marines were often left on their





GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC

**Two Marines help a wounded civilian to safety following the attack at Abbey Gate on Aug. 26, 2021.**

felt helpless in the face of ongoing horror outside the gates. They thirsted for revenge in the wake of the attack that killed 13 of their brothers and sisters. Every window begged to be smashed. Every blank wall space looked naked without “F--K ISIS” in spray paint. Before them lay an entire base full of cathartic opportunity.

HKIA reserved a final bad memory for many Marines. In their last hours on the ground, Marines were ordered to police call the airport and clean up the destruction just completed. They were told that they took the order too far. They returned to specific areas to pick up the pieces and flip vehicles back onto shredded tires. Some unlucky few were stuck policing the areas where civilians waited in groups to board aircraft. Without adequate facilities, civilians defecated in whatever container they had or directly on the ground. Trash and filth of every kind imaginable remained. The police call seemed a fitting end to their time in Afghanistan.

The final American aircraft lifted out of HKIA before midnight on Aug. 30, completing the largest NEO airlift in U.S.

own to make life and death decisions for civilians. Now, throughout the airport, Marines were left on their own to decide what items warranted destruction.

“The Turkish military left their barracks, and we were standing in their living quarters,” remembered Cpl Markland. “We just thought OK, if we aren’t going to be here to use it, then certainly not the Taliban. We were going to do everything

we could to make it uninhabitable for them. We were going to take away the amenities that anyone would appreciate.”

Marines smashed TVs and refrigerators. They broke apart tables and chairs. They forced open every locked door and demolished anything found on the other side. Across the airport, Marines everywhere unleashed nearly two weeks of pent-up anxiety and aggression. They



CPL MIKE MARKLAND, USMC

**An injured civilian at North Gate is carried to medical treatment on a ladder, the only suitable object available at the time. Throughout the evacuation at HKIA, and especially in the wake of the attack at Abbey Gate, litters proved in short supply and Marines evacuated casualties on ladders, riot shields, and anything else that could serve the purpose.**

**U.S. soldiers and Marines carry the body of a fallen servicemember to a waiting aircraft for transport home on Aug. 27, 2021. (Photo by 1stLt Mark Andries, USMC)**



history. Officially known as Operation Allies Refuge (OAR), 800 military or civilian aircraft evacuated nearly 125,000 civilians over a 17-day period.

The impressive numbers did little to assuage the feelings of the Marines who endured HKIA. Now two years later, the memories are ever-present, and reminders are constant. Tyler Vargas-Andrews, the Reaper 2 team member severely wounded by the blast, gave a compelling testimony before Congress in March, highlighting the questions and concerns about the operation echoed by many Marines. As recently as April, the Taliban announced they killed one of the key ISIS-K players who planned the bombing at Abbey Gate.

In August 2022, on the one-year anniversary of the attack at Abbey Gate, Cpl Joe Laude worked through the contact list on his phone, checking in with everyone he knew from HKIA. Laude served as a machine-gunner with Echo Co, 2/1, working at Abbey Gate and rushing 100 meters to the scene of the attack to evacuate casualties after the bomb went off. An idea arose; rather than contacting everyone individually, what if he created a hub where everyone could come for community when they needed it?

“At that one-year anniversary, I already knew OAR veterans had a lot of unanswered questions, a lot of guilt and shame about their service,” Laude said. “I needed to do something.”

He formulated a plan and worked with others to develop the idea. The group founded a 501(c)(3) called OAR Foundation with the mission to provide a community for OAR veterans, preserve the history of the evacuation, and explore the operation’s “moral injury” on those who were there.

“Moral injury is a guilt or shame-based ailment,” Laude explained. “It can be co-occurring with post-traumatic stress, but I think the biggest difference is the guilt. I think many times, the guilt is what can more quickly lead someone toward suicide. We are slowly researching all of these things and recently brought on a psychologist into the organization to help us build up that research.”

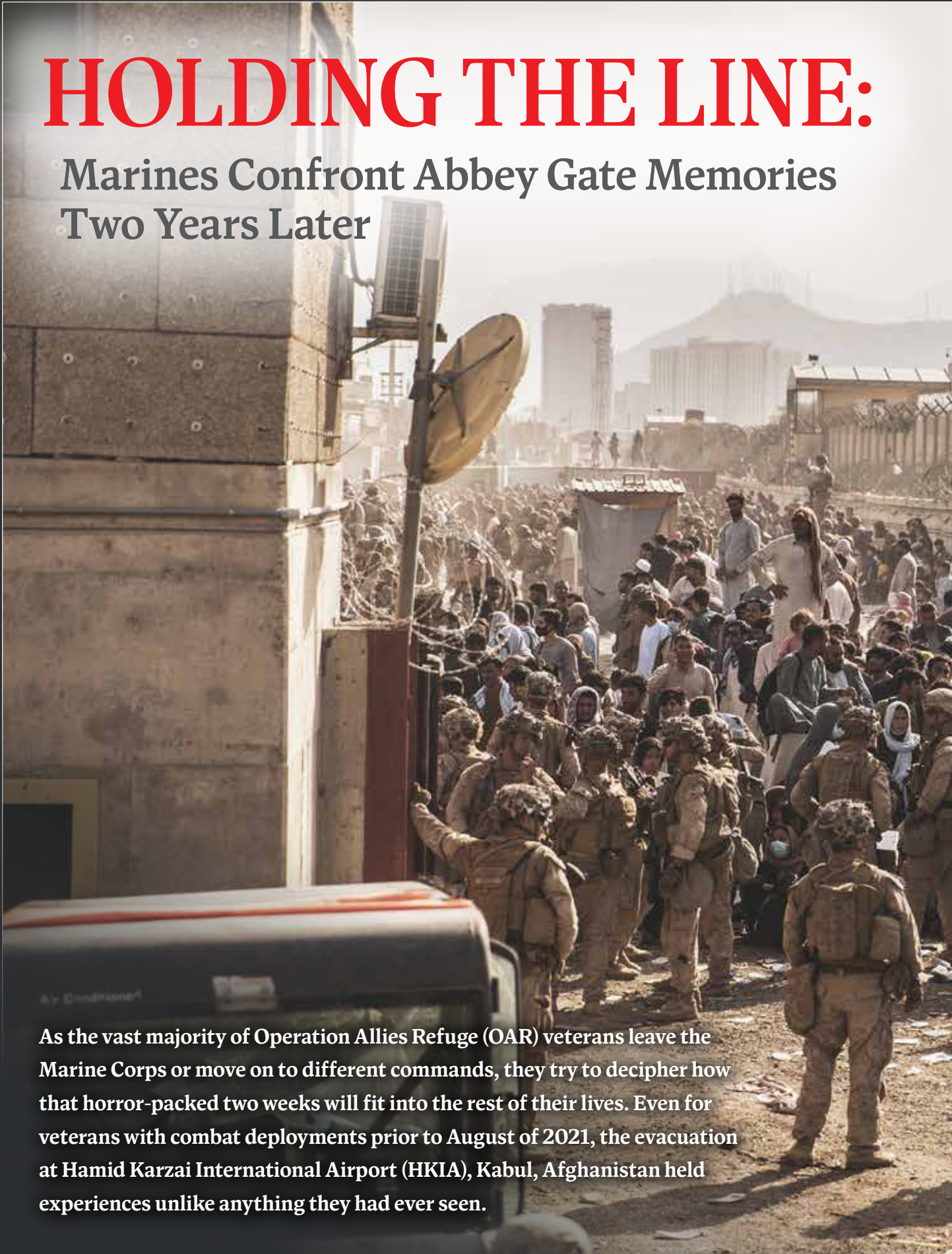
As the vast majority of OAR veterans leave the Corps or move on to different commands, they try to decipher how that horror-packed two weeks will fit into the rest of their lives. Even for veterans with combat deployments prior to August 2021, HKIA held experiences unlike anything they had ever seen before. OAR Foundation hopes to play a key role in finding answers and accountability, while providing a forum for veterans to share their experience. As they forge ahead, those stories will shape the legacy of the Marines and Navy corpsmen whose lives were changed at HKIA and preserve the memories of the 13 servicemembers killed in action.

The lessons learned from this tragedy remain in infancy, even two years later. Most will only be revealed as more truth comes to light. When something horrific occurs, the duality of man emerges. The evacuation of HKIA brought out the worst that humanity has to offer. It also brought out the best. No matter how bad it gets, no matter how completely evil holds the day, there will always be someone willing to act for good, even in the face of chaos and utter exhaustion. Someone will always be willing to hold the line. At HKIA, Marines held.

*Author’s note: Our tribute to the fallen servicemembers from HKIA is on page 72. For the Marines who served at HKIA, thank you for allowing me to share a glimpse into your experience. Each of you has a story worth telling. I encourage you to do so. It would be impossible to capture everything that happened there in one article. I hope my efforts have done you justice. For more information on OAR Foundation, visit [www.operationalliesrefugefoundation.org](http://www.operationalliesrefugefoundation.org). For additional photos and information about HKIA and the attack at Abbey Gate, see the expanded version of this story at [www.mca-marines.org/magazines/leatherneck/](http://www.mca-marines.org/magazines/leatherneck/).*

# HOLDING THE LINE:

## Marines Confront Abbey Gate Memories Two Years Later

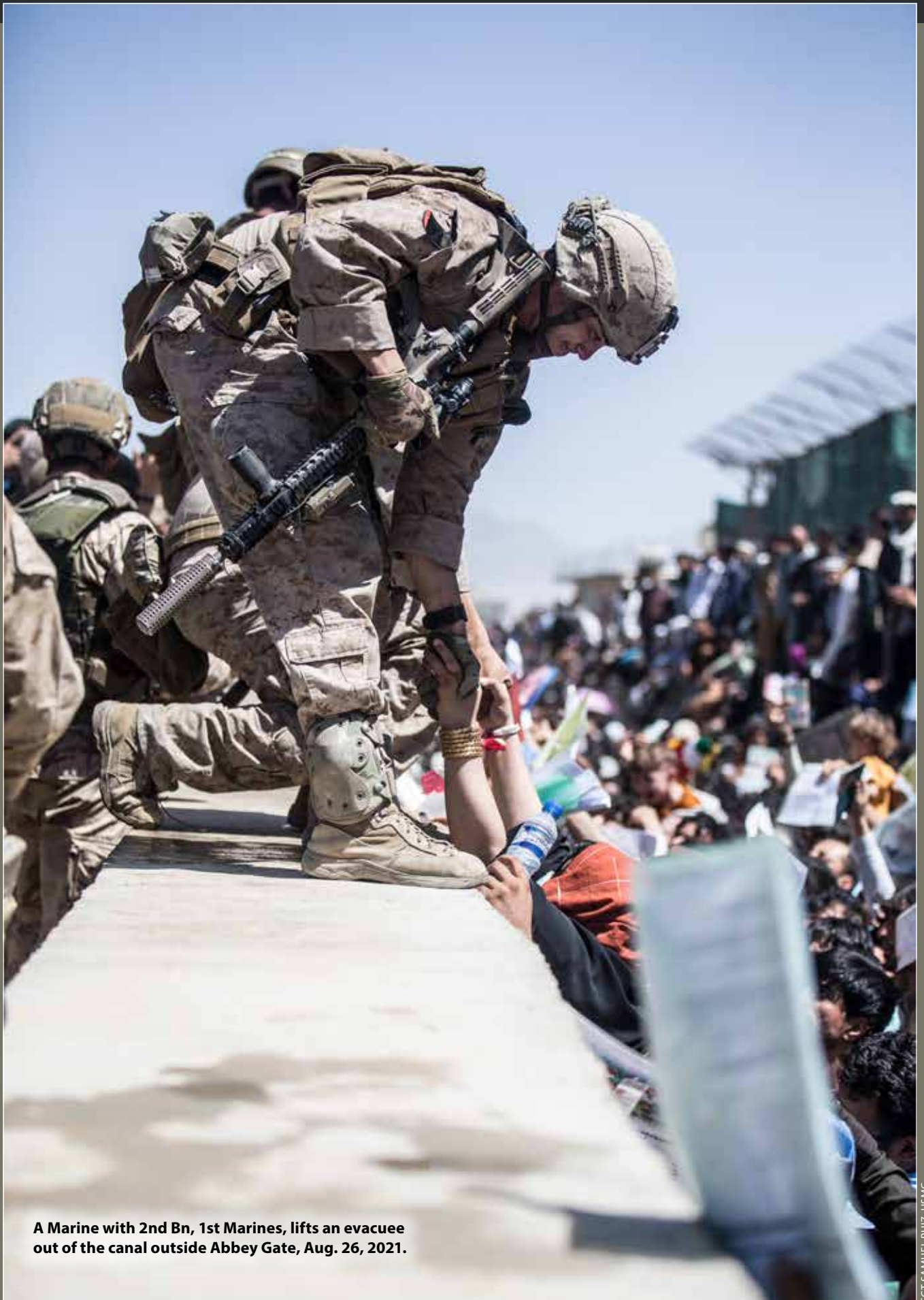


As the vast majority of Operation Allies Refuge (OAR) veterans leave the Marine Corps or move on to different commands, they try to decipher how that horror-packed two weeks will fit into the rest of their lives. Even for veterans with combat deployments prior to August of 2021, the evacuation at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA), Kabul, Afghanistan held experiences unlike anything they had ever seen.

Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response-Central Command guard the outer entrance to Abbey Gate during the evacuation at HKIA, Aug. 21, 2021. The sniper tower occupied by Reaper 2 dominates the left side of the photo. The “chevron” of shipping containers, with three Taliban soldiers standing on top, can be seen in the distance.



SSGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC



**A Marine with 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, lifts an evacuee out of the canal outside Abbey Gate, Aug. 26, 2021.**

SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC



SSGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC

**Above: Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response-Central Command control the entrance to Abbey Gate, Aug. 26, 2021.**



GYSGT MELISSA WARNELL, USMC

**Afghan civilians wait outside Abbey Gate to be processed for evacuation on the day of the attack. Note all the different types of paperwork being presented in their efforts to be accepted for evacuation.**



**Turmoil enveloped the world within the snipers' view. A sea of people pressed toward Abbey Gate from up and down the canal. Other Marines from 2/1 held the ground outside, struggling to keep the peace. The canal proved to be an open sewer, and the Marines nicknamed it "shit creek."**



In a view looking down from the sniper tower outside Abbey Gate, civilians pack the walkway on the opposite side of the canal, and brave entering the canal itself. As time passed, the crowd cared less and less about the conditions in the canal and stood in the sewer water for hours, hoping to be pulled up the other side by Marines. (Photo by GySgt Melissa Marnell, USMC)



SSGT VICTOR MANGILLA, USMC

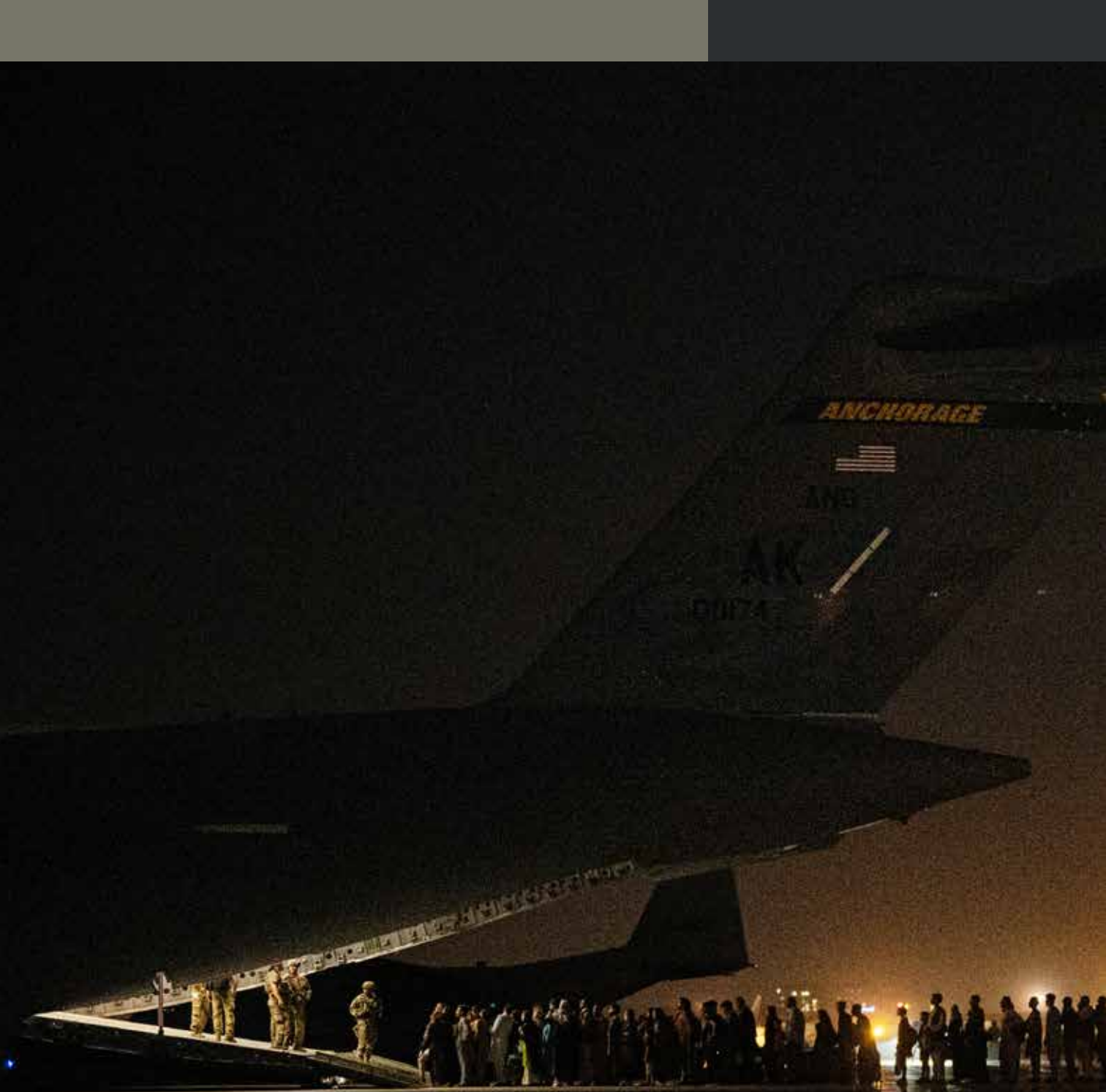


SSGT VICTOR MANGILLA, USMC

**Marines with Joint Task Force-Crisis Response assist evacuees out of the canal outside Abbey Gate on the day of the attack. The packed conditions in the canal persisted, and worsened, up to the time of the bombing.**



**Civilian families board a U.S. Air Force Boeing C-17 Globemaster III, Aug. 24, 2021.  
(Photo by Sgt Samuel Ruiz, USMC)**



**U.S. servicemembers worked around the clock evacuating civilians. Over a 17-day period, 800 military and civilian aircraft evacuated nearly 125,000 civilians from HKIA. (Photo by SSgt Brandon Cribelar, USAF)**

**Inset: Some of these massive aircraft took off with more than 650 passengers aboard.**



SGT BRANDON CRIBELAR, USAF



**As days passed, units at the gates adopted rest plans to finally relieve those who had been on guard for days. Many Marines endured 72 hours or more without sleep. They cycled back for rest and witnessed some results of their work; C-17s loaded with civilians taking off.**

**A Female Engagement Team member cares for a baby as the family processes through the Evacuation Control Center at HKIA, Aug. 28, 2021.**



SSGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC

**Of all the Marines immersed in the good and the bad playing out at HKIA, the Female Engagement Teams (FETs) held a unique role ... Female Marines across the commands on deck formed together to support processing operations. The significant number of women and children present, and the limited number of female Marines available, required the FETs to work non-stop.**



1STLT MARK ANDRIES, USMC

**Left: A Female Engagement Team member assists a woman and child during the evacuation, Aug. 18, 2021.**

**Below: In one of the most widely recognized photos from HKIA, two Female Engagement Team members, including Sgt Nicole Gee, left, care for babies separated from their parents, Aug. 20, 2021.**



SGT ISAIAH CAMPBELL, USMC

Many desperate families handed their babies to Marines over the gates or left them lying outside where they knew Marines would rescue them, just to give the kids a chance at life ...  
Marines cherished the moments playing with all the kids,  
while wrestling inside with the terrifying reality surrounding them.

Right: A Marine assigned to 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit comforts an infant while they wait for the mother, Aug. 21, 2021.

Below: In another viral photo from HKIA, a Marine assigned to the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit calms another infant separated from the parents, Aug. 20, 2021.



LCPL NICHOLAS GUEVARA, USMC



SGT ISAIAH CAMPBELL, USMC



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC



GYSGT MELISSA WARNELL, USMC

**Above: A Marine interacts with children away from their parents at HKIA.**

**Left: A Marine passes off a baby turned over by his parent at Abbey Gate. This desperate act was tragically common at HKIA.**



**This screenshot from a GoPro video shows the conditions outside of North Gate during a lull in crowd activity and after the Marines of 1st Bn, 8th Marines had successfully pushed the crowd back to the concertina wire in the distance. This created a much-needed standoff.**



CPL MIKE MARKLAND, USMC



In an effort to fulfill numerous special requests from around the world, Marines had to look for specific civilians in the sea of people outside HKIA. Many unique methods were devised to help Marines identify the people they were looking for. In this case, this family held a sign with their name written in contrasting colors.



GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC

Right: A grateful boy is processed through an Evacuee Control Checkpoint at HKIA, Aug. 18, 2021.



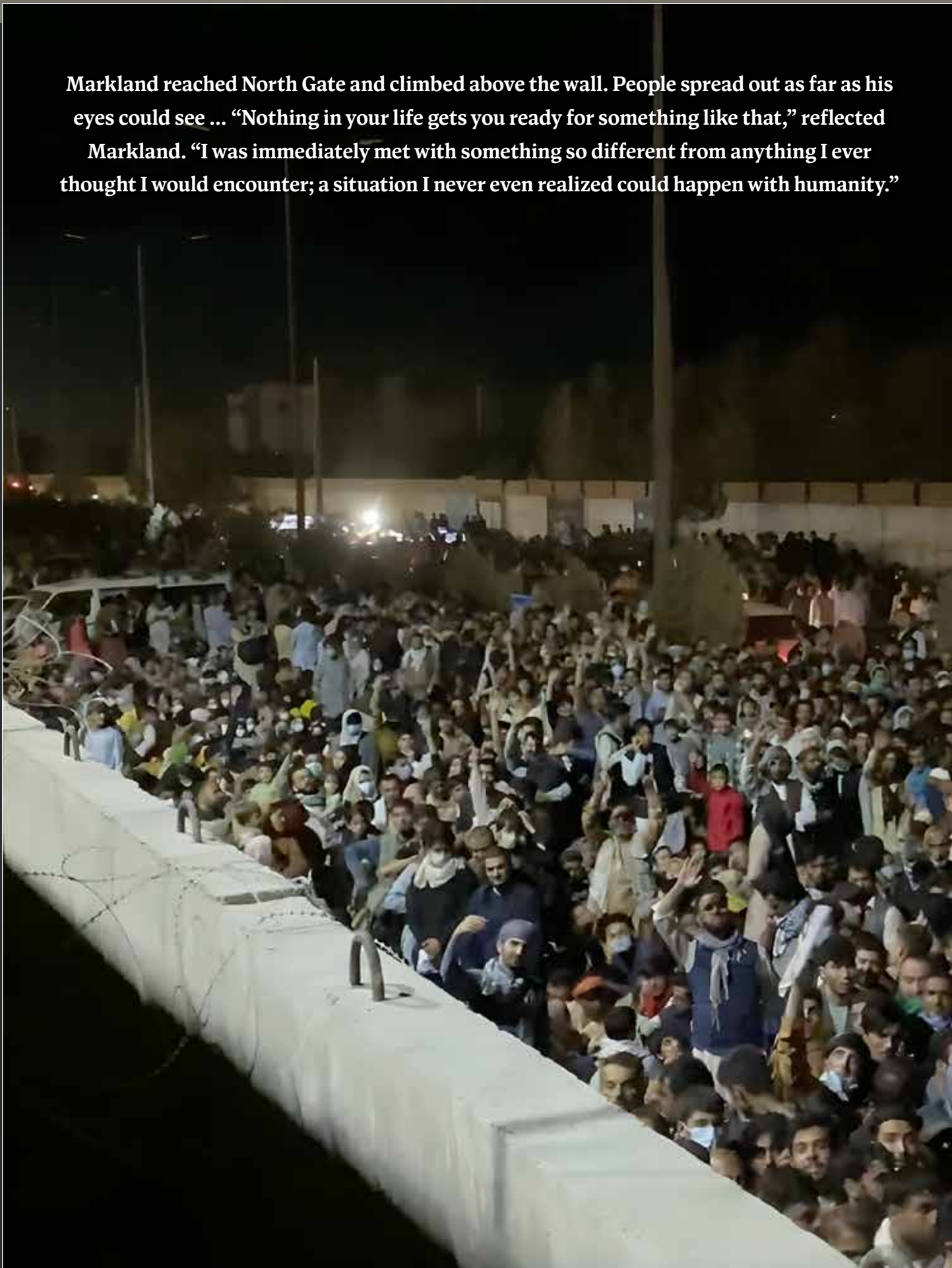
SSGT DALTON HANNIGAN, USMC

Above: Sgt Dalton Hannigan, left, the Reaper 2 assistant team leader, and HM3 Jorge Mayo, right, ride in the back of the sniper team's commandeered vehicle.



SSGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC

**Markland reached North Gate and climbed above the wall. People spread out as far as his eyes could see ... “Nothing in your life gets you ready for something like that,” reflected Markland. “I was immediately met with something so different from anything I ever thought I would encounter; a situation I never even realized could happen with humanity.”**



In a harrowing view from the wall at North Gate, a desperate crowd waits for evacuation. Note the road along the wall in the distance, still open to vehicle traffic. The threat of vehicle-borne IEDs and the inability to maintain space to operate outside North Gate, eventually led to the gate's permanent closure.



CPL MIKE MARKLAND, USMC



1STLT MARK ANDRIES, USMC



GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC

Above: Marines assigned to Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response–Central Command serve as pallbearers for one of the 13 servicemembers killed in action at HKIA, Aug. 27.

Left: A Marine with 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, kneels in respect for the battalion's fallen at a remembrance ceremony in Saudi Arabia, held following their departure from Afghanistan.



GYSGT MELISSA WARNELL, USMC

Prior to deploying to HKIA, combat photographer Sgt Samuel Ruiz took updated portraits of all 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, Golf Co personnel. Tragically, nine of the 13 killed in action served in Golf Co, 1st Platoon, which assumed duties outside Abbey Gate on the day of the bombing. Ruiz's portraits provided a powerful tribute to the slain Marines at the battalion's memorial in Saudi Arabia.



Ten of the 13 U.S. servicemembers killed at HKIA belonged to 2nd Bn, 1st Marines. The remembrance ceremony in Saudi Arabia provided the battalion a chance to reflect, grieve and honor the fallen.

\* See page 72 for the portraits of the servicemembers who were killed at Abbey Gate.

In total, the explosion killed 13 U.S. servicemembers, and initially wounded almost 30. This number grew in the following weeks as concussions and traumatic brain injuries connected to the blast were identified. Over 150 Afghan civilians died in the attack, with an untold number wounded ... The lives claimed by the attack ranked as one of the highest numbers of U.S. fatalities in a single incident from the entire 20-year war in Afghanistan.



GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC

GYSGT MELISSA MARNELL, USMC



## SECNAV Awards MSGs For Successful Evacuation From Embassy in Khartoum

Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, visited Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (MCESG) Headquarters at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., on May 19 to thank the Marines with Marine Security Guard (MSG) Detachment Khartoum for

their exceptional performance during the evacuation of the U.S. Embassy Khartoum, Sudan.

The primary role of MSG is to protect personnel, classified information, and government property at U.S. diplomatic facilities around the globe. When fighting occurred within Sudan between two militant groups on April 15, the Marines continued their daily duties.

As the conflict drew nearer and became more aggressive, the Marines received their orders to begin preparation for evacuation.

Throughout the operation, the Marines stood their posts, which are manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Additionally, the Marine standing Post One provided command and control for the evacuation and provided real-time updates to and from the chief of mission and embassy personnel. When the evacuation was completed on April 23, the Marines said the feeling was bittersweet.

“It’s a humble feeling being back in the heart of it all, and it reminds you that the greater mission of MCESG is ongoing and we must continue to support that mission,” said Staff Sergeant Derek Ferrari, the detachment commander for Detachment Khartoum. “The detachment is deactivated but not disbanded yet, and I continue to be impressed with my Marines’ ability to remain engaged and take care of one another the same way they did in Khartoum.”

During his visit, Del Toro not only thanked the Marines for their heroism in Sudan, but also presented each of them with military decorations. The detachment commander, SSgt Ferrari, received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal. Each of the watchstanders was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

“The example that you have set protecting the life of the ambassador, and the lives of all the people who were at the embassy, has been nothing short of extraordinary,” said Del Toro. “I wanted to make sure that before you left this building and head onto other assignments, that I came here today to look you in the eye and say, ‘Thank you.’”

After pinning medals on each Marine involved in the evacuation, Del Toro spoke to the Marines’ family members who were present and thanked each of them for allowing their loved ones to serve in every clime and place.

“It is a great honor and a great privilege to be awarded by the Secretary of the Navy,” said Sergeant Komlan Akli, a watchstander with Detachment Khartoum. “The detachment did exactly what is expected of Marines during times of uncertainty, and being awarded for that by the [Secretary of the Navy] means a lot to myself and the rest of the detachment.”



SGT BRADEN HALE, USMC

**The Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, presented 11 Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals and one Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal to Marine Security Guards at Marine Corps Embassy Security Group Headquarters in Quantico, Va., May 19.**



SGT BRADEN HALE, USMC

**The Secretary of the Navy awarded the 12 Marines with Detachment Khartoum for their efforts in safely evacuating embassy personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, amid surging conflict.**

The Marines who still have time left to serve on the MSG program have received new assignments and will begin heading back overseas to continue serving at more than 180 diplomatic facilities around the world.

GySgt Matthew Bragg, USMC

### **Reserve Marine Foils Human Trafficking Ring**

What was supposed to be a normal drill weekend turned a Marine lieutenant colonel into a hero for finding and saving young teenage girls allegedly forced into sexual slavery.

The Marine Corps is withholding the identity of the Marine, due to an ongoing

investigation to bring down more of this criminal organization, as well as sensitivities surrounding his civilian job in law enforcement.

On May 5, the Marine Corps Reserve officer saw what he presumed to be indications of human trafficking inside his hotel, in Alexandria, Va. He returned to the hotel after a day training with his Reserve unit, headquartered on Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. The officer is assigned to Marine Advisor Company A, Force Headquarters Group with the Select Marine Corps Reserve.

“I came back from drill and noticed a young girl acting strangely and dressing out of place in the hotel lobby we were

staying at,” the infantry officer recalled.

Upon looking closer, he noticed the numbers “13” tattooed on each arm and the blue and white colors on her clothes—telltale signs of the violent transnational criminal gang MS-13, also called Mara Salvatrucha.

“They often ‘brand’ or ‘mark’ their ‘human property,’ ” he explained.

Units like his constantly send Marines around the world to advise and build partnerships. According to the unit’s commanding officer, “We constantly educate our personnel on how to spot and respond to suspected human trafficking situations. I never stop reminding Marines that human trafficking often manifests as



USMC

**Marines of Marine Advisor Company A, Force Headquarters Group, take part in a military awards ceremony on Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling in Washington, D.C., May 7. One of the four Marines being recognized thwarted a transnational human trafficking organization while drilling with his unit that weekend, by identifying the signs of exploitation and freeing a handful of young teenage women with the Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force.**

prostitution and if Marines are against it, the criminals cannot win,” said Col John D. Cowart, Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Advisor Company A.

Early the next morning, the unit was scheduled to take the Marine Corps Physical Fitness Test (PFT), and according to the Marine, “All I wanted to do was get back to my room, relax, stretch and get some sleep to be ready for the test.”

Selfishness crept in as he debated just looking the other way. He recalled the inner dialogue going through his head as he struggled to take action, even talking himself out of it at one point. But, being a father himself to a girl roughly the same age and a United States Marine, he knew his own comforts should be put aside.

“The way she was walking back and forth, in and out, it almost seemed like she was hoping to be noticed by someone,” he said.

Over the next seven hours going late into the evening, he watched, followed, and ultimately freed the young girl, along with a handful of others, with the help of the Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force. He explained how he noticed alleged MS-13 “handlers” on a bike also

keeping the girl in their sights. When a car came to pick her up from the hotel, the officer ran to his own car to pursue. He followed the vehicle for a short distance until it came to an upscale condominium building in Alexandria.

“The driver and girl definitely seemed out of place at this building,” he recalled.

The Marine stayed in place and talked local law enforcement to his position. Disregarding his own safety and despite the late hour, he and other law enforcement entered the building and spoke with the bellhop confirming suspicions that the girl and handler were out of place. They proceeded to the residence where the driver and girl were, in order to perform a welfare check. What they found inside confirmed suspicions of human trafficking and other criminal activity.

“Inside we found a handful of young teenage girls,” he said, with one believed to be as young as 13.

They also found suspected drugs and drug paraphernalia, which is often used to keep the young women controlled, sedated or dependent, he explained.

Nearly seven hours later, around 1:30 a.m., he made it back to his hotel, only to wake up in a few hours to complete the

PFT. Despite the late night of disrupting an alleged MS-13 criminal operation right outside the nation’s capital, the lieutenant colonel achieved a first-class PFT score and continued with his unit’s drill weekend.

For his quick-thinking and selfless actions, his commanding officer presented him with a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal before the drill weekend was over.

“His judgment and initiative in this situation are perfect examples of how Marines should feel about human trafficking,” Cowart said. “He demonstrated that Marine leaders are part of the solution to the world’s problems. Marines are always on duty, observing everything that takes place within sight or hearing; and this Marine exemplified that.”

According to the award summary of action, his attention to his environment, keen observations, commitment to justice, and dedication to service directly disrupted a suspected transnational criminal organization conducting human trafficking and directly impacted the lives of the individuals affected, and indirectly, on the community at large.

MGySgt Jeremy Vought, USMCR

LCpl Aiden Morey, an unmanned aerial system (UAS) operator, left, LCpl Colton Allen, a reconnaissance Marine, middle, and LCpl Christopher Butemeyer, a reconnaissance Marine, right, with Task Force 61/2.4 (Mobile Reconnaissance Company) received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medal in Tallinn, Estonia, on May 15. The Marines were awarded for their fast thinking and direct involvement in saving an Estonian man's life while out on liberty. (Photo by Cpl Christopher Doughty, USMC)



**Marines in Estonia Receive Recognition for Lifesaving Actions**

America and her allies work hard to develop strong bonds between each other. Three Marines; Lance Corporal Colton Allen, LCpl Christopher Butemeyer, and LCpl Aiden Morey, helped accomplish the goal of earning trust with the Estonian people, when they saved an Estonian man's life. These Marines were decorated with the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, signed by Vice Admiral Thomas Ishee, Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet, and presented by Col Ryan Hoyle, Commanding Officer, Task Force 61/2, on the May 15.

“These Marines were out on liberty,

and identified a threat or a situation that needed some Marines to respond to it. They were there and responded appropriately. They did good work and I'm proud of each of the Marines for their actions.” Hoyle said. “Any other Marine would have done the same in our shoes.” Butemeyer said.

The Marines were deployed with Task

Force 61/2.4, Mobile Reconnaissance Company, conducting training with Estonian partners. Task Force 61/2 is a rapidly deployable and scalable coordination cell that commands Fleet Marine Forces and assigned Naval Forces in support of Sixth Fleet operations.

Cpl Christopher Doughty, USMC



# Are You Ready?



**Mike & Kay Ross**

Albert E. Shockey Detachment #960  
Kokomo, Indiana



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- Toys For Tots
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# Battle of Tenaru

By Eric Hammel

*Editor's note: We went to the Leatherneck archives for this piece written by Eric Hammel about the August 1942 Battle of Tenaru. Hammel, who died in 2020, was a military historian and talented author who wrote about combat with such authenticity that he was sometimes mistaken for a veteran. This article is an excerpt from his book, "Guadalcanal, Starvation Island."*

The 1st Marine Division opened the Allied Pacific War offensive at Guadalcanal on Aug. 7, 1942. The landing and capture of a partially completed air base were fairly routine. However, four Allied cruisers were sunk in a naval battle off Savo Island on the night of Aug. 8. The amphibious fleet supporting the Marines withdrew the next morning, leaving the newly landed Marine force isolated and without support.

On the afternoon of Aug. 19, a patrol from Company A, 1st Marines ran into a group of freshly landed Japanese Imperial Army officers who were scouting the eastern flank of the Lunga Perimeter, the Marine defensive cordon around newly completed Henderson Field. Many of the Japanese officers were killed in the brief skirmish, and Marine intelligence officers deduced from captured documents that a major assault was imminent. The Marine line was strengthened throughout Aug. 20, and the reinforced Marine battalion holding the area around the mouth of Alligator Creek, mistakenly identified as the Tenaru River, awaited the assault.

The Japanese unit was merely the first half of a larger Imperial Army force that planned to undertake a coordinated assault a week later. However, the Japanese commander, Col Kiyano Ichiki, felt obliged to mount an immediate assault with the troops on hand.

Private George Turzai, an 18-year-old serving with Co E, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, was sound asleep in his foxhole when the Japanese vanguard of scouts attacked or blundered into Marine listening posts near the mouth of Alligator Creek, about 200 feet to the north. Turzai and his foxhole buddy, a closed mouthed, older private named Moser, were exhausted after digging their fighting hole about 20 feet from the west bank of the sluggish creek. Neither Turzai, who was asleep, nor Moser, who

was on watch, knew a thing about the Japanese advance until a piercing scream wrenched them to full awareness.

Everything went quiet for a moment. Then the sky was lighted, clear as daylight, and rifle and machine-gun fire erupted from within and in front of the strongpoint Marines had built up at the sandspit at the creek's mouth. A flare landed on the bank directly in front of Turzai's fighting hole. Pvt Moser urged his partner to crawl into the open and douse the light. Turzai affixed his bayonet to his '03 Springfield and crawled forward to knock the flare into the water. As Turzai lay still, recovering his night vision, he saw a sword-wielding Japanese officer leading nearly 200 soldiers from the stand of coconut palms on the east bank.

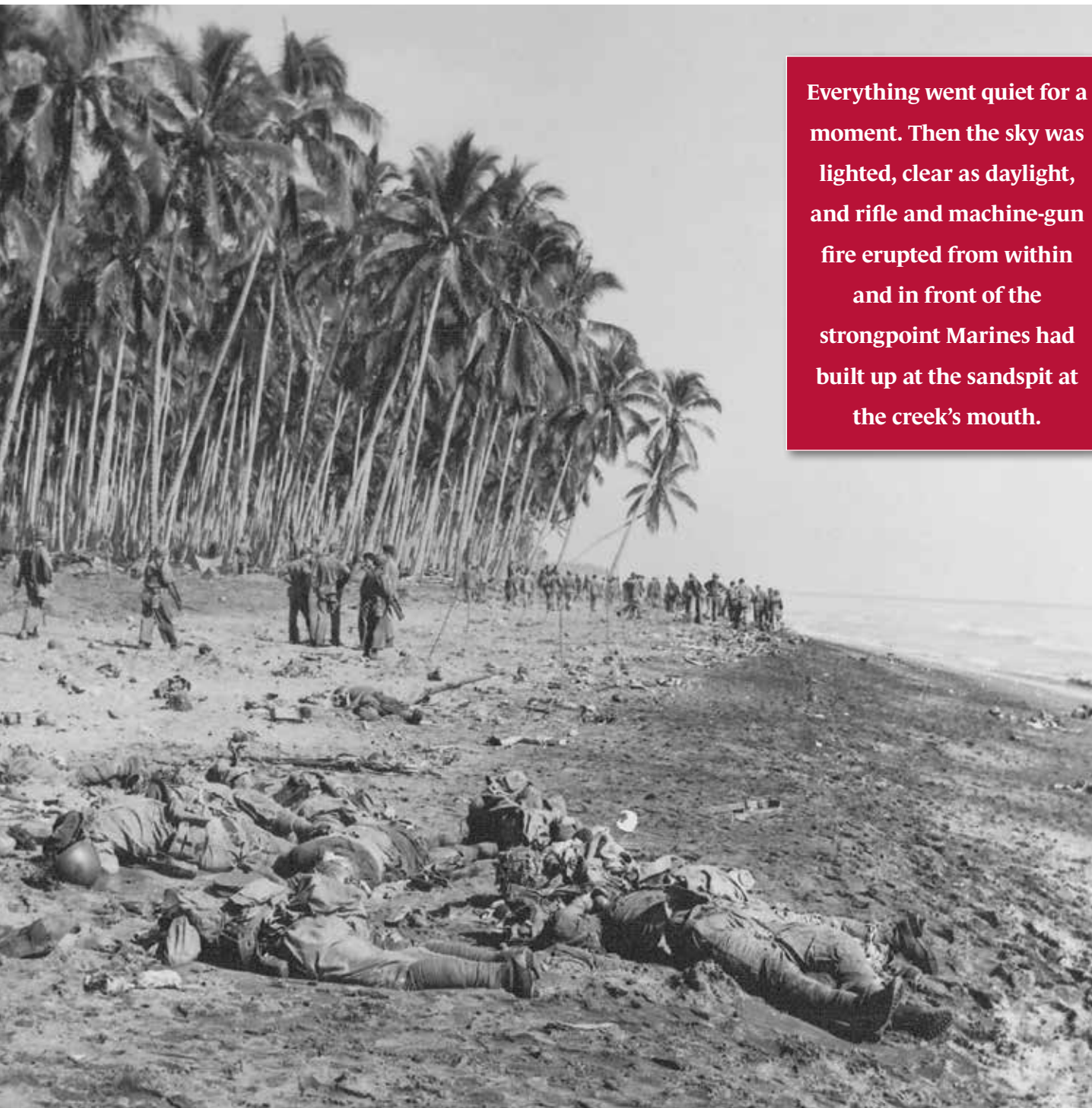
A machine gun momentarily stopped most of the Japanese, but at least six who were racing directly at Turzai kept coming. The young Marine snapped his rifle to his shoulder and put out the five rounds in its magazine as quickly as he could work the bolt and trigger. He had no idea if he was hitting anyone, and two Japanese were soon upon him. Turzai stood in time to parry a bayonet thrust; the Japanese steel clanged against the American rifle barrel, nearly severing Turzai's left pinky. The second Japanese, confused or overexcited, felled his countryman with a well-directed bayonet thrust; then his face splintered under the impact of Turzai's heavy rifle butt. George Turzai beat a hasty retreat.

Pvt Johnny Rivers was manning the .30-caliber water-cooled heavy machine gun in the log-and-earth emplacement only yards from Turzai's foxhole when the Japanese burst from the trees on the opposite bank. A promising welterweight whose reactions had been honed to perfection during a year's training as both a gunner and a boxer, Rivers snapped his weapon onto the first target he saw and squeezed the trigger. Japanese soldiers



**Following the battle, the beach was covered with dead Japanese soldiers.**

in the arc upon which the gun could bear scattered or dropped, but several who approached from the sides got to within arm's length of the burly boxer and had to be punched to submission. The instant the gun cut loose again, a bullet from the far bank passed through the firing embrasure of Rivers' bunker and killed the young gunner. Dying fingers froze upon the trigger, and nearly 200 rounds were pumped into Japanese bodies before Rivers toppled over. Cpl LeRoy Diamond



Everything went quiet for a moment. Then the sky was lighted, clear as daylight, and rifle and machine-gun fire erupted from within and in front of the strongpoint Marines had built up at the sandspit at the creek's mouth.

fired his machine gun until he was wounded.

The Japanese appeared to the third man in the dugout, Pvt Al Schmid, as hysterical cattle charging into the water in massed waves. His bucking machine gun mowed down the lead rank, but Japanese to the rear pressed into view, and fell under Schmid's well-directed bursts. Within minutes, however, a hand grenade exploded at the embrasure and blinded the gunner.

Pvt Whitney Jacobs heard shouts for help from within the dugout. He dashed through heavy Diamond and Schmid took

stock. The corporal could see, but his wounds prevented him from firing the gun. Al Schmid was blind, but otherwise able to operate the weapon. Schmid resumed his position behind the gun, squeezed the release and, with LeRoy Diamond issuing directions in his ear, lifted the trigger and resumed his job of killing and wounding Japanese soldiers.

Nine hundred Japanese in all, the half of Ichiki Butai that had been landed only days earlier, attacked Lieutenant Colonel Al Pollock's reinforced 2nd Battalion at Alligator Creek. Most of them made for the sandspit, right into the teeth of

a pair of 37 mm antitank guns manned by members of Battery B, 1st Special Weapons Bn. The gunners fired canister into the packed Japanese, momentarily halting them, as riflemen and machine gunners fought to recover from the shock of first contact.

The 2nd Bn's reserve, posted about 300 yards west of the sandspit, was Second Lieutenant George Codrea's 1st Platoon, Co G. It was formed into a column of squads and moved toward the sound of the firing within minutes of the opening exchanges. The last 100 yards were traversed on hands and knees under



**A Marine machine-gunner exits a newly dug trench near the Guadalcanal front line to locate some chow. Jammed weaponry or faulty ammunition during the fight were detrimental to the Marines holding the front line.**



**A mortar squad readies to fire at the enemy from a gulley taken during an offensive west of the Matanikau River, Guadalcanal.**

an umbrella of Japanese machine gun fire which was overshooting the Marine defenses at the front.

As the platoon approached the embattled sandspit, Codrea formed his men into a skirmish line and ordered them forward. When the tall officer was hit twice in the arm, he dropped back, prepared to sit the fight out. However, when Cpl John Spillane's squad was stopped by a nearby mortar round, Codrea sensed the need for some drastic action. He yelled, "Follow me!" and headed directly for the apex of the sandspit, a spot that

would come to be known as "Hell's Point."

Cpl Spillane was at the lieutenant's heels when three rounds penetrated his helmet in quick succession. Stunned but unscathed, he grabbed a helmet from a dead man, and thrust himself back into the attack.

Pvt Harry Horsman was bathed in blood when the platoon's first fatality fell with a head wound. Horsman dropped to the sand and opened fire on anything that even seemed like a target.

As eerie shadows played death games

in the light of colored flares, yellow and pink tracers arched across the water and between the pitch-dark stands of palms. Two rifle companies, most of a weapons company, and two antitank guns withstood the repeated blows of nearly a battalion of crack Japanese infantry.

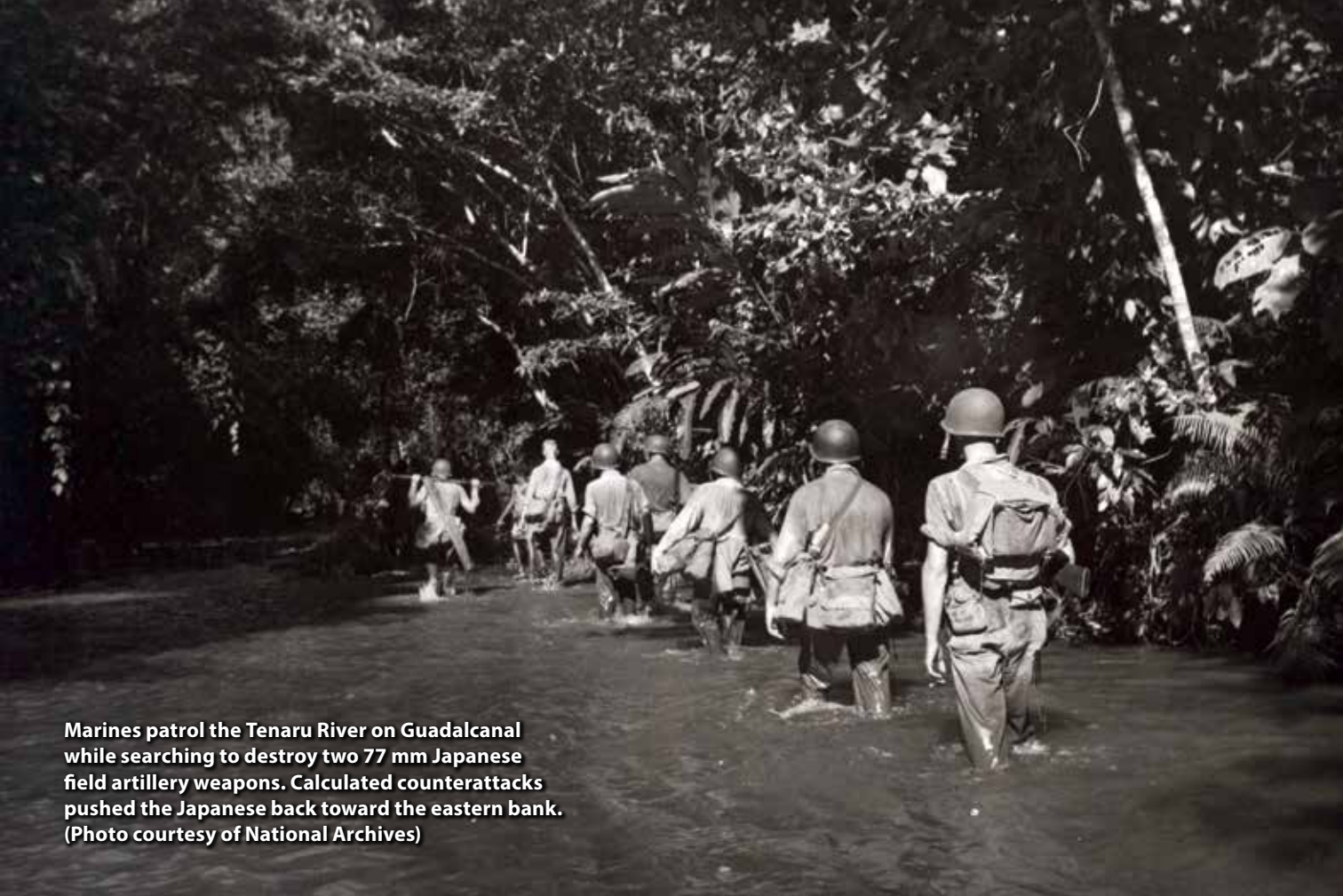
Jammed or balky weapons seriously hampered the Marines. Old ammunition and the excitement of the fight were at the root of the trouble. When Cpl John Shea's Thompson submachine gun jammed, he rolled over to fix the weapon. He felt someone hacking at his left leg with a bayonet. Astounded, Shea pinned his assailant against the wall of his fighting hole with his injured leg, released the bolt of the weapon, and pumped five rounds into the attacker. Pvt Joe Wadsworth, who was manning a foxhole on "Hell's Point," fired into the Japanese until his BAR jammed. He picked up a discarded '03 and fired it until several Japanese got within bayonet range. Wadsworth parried and jabbed for some moments but was overwhelmed and left for dead. Pvt Ray Parker wriggled out across the sand, sheltered by a low dune, to a position from which he could place enfilade fire upon a Japanese machine gun emplaced on the east bank. His Browning Automatic Rifle jammed within minutes, and he had to continue with a slow-firing '03 he found.

Cpl Dean Wilson's BAR jammed just as three Japanese loomed out of the darkness and charged his foxhole. He threw aside the useless automatic rifle and grabbed a machete, with which he took a swipe at the nearest attacker. The man reached for his belly, but too late. Wilson also hacked the other two Japanese to death.

Unable to fully assess the Japanese assault force, LtCol Pollock would hold back the remainder of his reserve company for as long as he could, using whatever supporting arms the regiment and division could direct to his aid.

As Ichiki Buttai's effort subsided in the face of unexpectedly strong and determined opposition, Colonel Ichiki ordered his officers to reform the troops while his mortars and light 70 mm guns softened up the sandspit.

Maj Bob Luckey, commander of 1st Special Weapons Battalion, rushed to the First Marines regimental command post as soon as the attack developed to coordinate the 2nd Battalion's supporting arms. Messages from the line convinced Luckey that fire from 81 mm mortars and the 75 mm howitzers of the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines, was falling on friendly troops. Luckey was about to order corrections when, the commander of the First Marines, Col Clifton B. Cates,



**Marines patrol the Tenaru River on Guadalcanal while searching to destroy two 77 mm Japanese field artillery weapons. Calculated counterattacks pushed the Japanese back toward the eastern bank. (Photo courtesy of National Archives)**

told him, “That’s an old trick, Bob. Keep right where you are.” Cates was right; the Japanese were firing their mortars in such a way as to give the illusion that friendly fire was falling short.

The lull gave Pollock a few free moments to talk to observers on the line and dope out the best use for the uncommitted portions of Co G, which he had held back for 45 of the longest minutes of his life. After consultations with his company officers, sundry observers, and regiment, Pollock ordered the uncommitted remainder of Co G to attack the Japanese who were trying to force his line at the sandspit.

The attack slowly forced the Japanese toward the east bank and seemed assured of success when several hundred Japanese waded into the breakers to attack Pollock’s flank. Marines met the threat with everything they could bring to bear. All 12 of the pack howitzers opened as did a pair of halftrack-mounted 75 mm antitank guns that had been rushed forward. A ghastly toll was exacted before the survivors tumbled over one another in headlong flight for the coconut grove.

The Japanese launched no other significant massed assaults, but hours of intense exchanges ensued.

Pvt Andy Brodecki of Co G fired his BAR for so long that he had to stop to

allow it to cool down. Still, he was in a good spot to do something. He asked Marines in the rear to pass forward a weapon and was amazed when someone handed him a Thompson and 10 magazines of .45-caliber ammunition. That seemed to start an avalanche of fresh weapons and

**He felt someone hacking at his left leg with a bayonet. Astounded, Shea pinned his assailant against the wall of his fighting hole with his injured leg, released the bolt of the weapon, and pumped five rounds into the attacker.**

ammunition from the rear to the hands of the men in the best firing positions. Brodecki and his buddies received dozens of hand grenades, which they lobbed whenever they wanted to stir things up across the way.

The Marines kept the sandspit bathed in flare light, but Japanese snipers in the coconut grove used the light to zero in on their most dangerous adversaries, the 37 mm gun crews. One after another, the gunners were felled by the patient snipers.

Second Lieutenant Jim McClanahan, the 37 mm platoon leader, took rounds in the arm, leg, and buttocks before becoming convinced that he could no longer take part in the exchange of gunfire. He refused evacuation and went to work fixing numerous jammed automatic weapons. His second-in-command, Gunnery Sergeant Nelson Braitmeyer, launched a one-man assault against several Japanese who were setting up a machine gun which would be able to sweep the antitank gun emplacements. He was shot to death. Pvt Elmer Fairchild, who was manning one of McClanahan’s .50-caliber air-cooled machine guns, had the three middle fingers of his right hand shot away. Nevertheless, despite shrapnel wounds in both legs, Fairchild wrapped his bleeding right hand in his shirt and carried on.

It was near dawn when Pvt Harry Horsman of Co G noticed that the 37 mm gun adjacent to his fighting hole had gone silent. He and another rifleman found that no one was manning the weapon. The two riflemen decided to give it a try.

**These four Marines carry their wounded comrade to safety while under fire on Guadalcanal. After the battle of Tenaru concluded, there were 34 dead and 75 wounded Americans. (USMC photo)**

While the other Marine loaded, Horsman aimed and fired by trial and error. When Sgt James Hancock, their squad leader, came over the wall, the riflemen became a real gun crew for Hancock had been an artilleryman before the war. The ad hoc crew fired the 37 mm gun with adequate results until an explosion engulfed the gun pit and severely wounded Hancock.

Dawn was breaking over the palms on the east bank of Alligator Creek when Pvt Turzai rose to meet several Japanese who had crossed the sluggish stream. Turzai quickly emptied a five-round magazine and watched five of the Japanese drop, not knowing or caring if he or other Marines had hit them. One of the attackers met Turzai's bayonet lunge with a well-timed parry. Turzai tried to jab the man head-on, but the Japanese soldier pressed his rifle's muzzle against the Marine's neck and fired a round. Turzai passed out and fell to the ground, where he would be found and cared for hours later.

The sparring continued past sunrise. Neither side was able to muster a decisive blow, but while the Japanese had been spending their limited resources on futile efforts to unseat the Marine line, the Marines had been readying their reserves.

Together with Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Thomas, 1st Marine Division operations officer, and LtCol L.B. Cresswell, commander of I/1, Col Cates had been planning a counterattack. Cresswell's companies had been shaken from their bivouacs in the dead of night and were ready to move as soon as the best direction for the attack had been ascertained from conflicting reports.

As the fighting around "Hell's Point" subsided, an engineer company arrived to help Pollock's troops dig antitank obstacles and install a minefield across the sandspit, which was littered with Japanese dead. But for desultory sniper fire, the creekfront was quiet. Ichiki Butai had drawn back to lick its wounds.

While the 2nd Battalion, and its support retrenched along Alligator Creek and "Hell's Point," Cresswell's battalion was ordered to envelop what remained of Ichiki's command.

The battalion crossed Alligator Creek at 7 a.m., well south of the coconut grove that sheltered Ichiki Butai. While posting most of Co D along the way to cut possible escape routes, Cresswell pushed his



riflemen toward the enemy. Crossing Alligator Creek well south of the coast, the battalion angled slightly to the west to arrive behind the Japanese arid pin them between the beach, Alligator Creek and itself.

Pvt Andy Poliny, a Co A BARman, was in agony. His ammunition belt, loaded with 240 .30-cal. rounds, had chafed the skin from his hips; when Poliny dropped his pants during a rest

**Though the Marines had clearly won the battle, the Japanese survivors were not about to concede defeat until they had drawn as much American blood as they could. That meant a battle to the death.**

break to check on the injury, he found that he was actually bleeding.

Pvt Adam Sowa, a Co C 60 mm mortarman who had enlisted within days of Pearl Harbor, was happily surprised when he emerged from the rain forest and found the beach on his right. Co C had gone completely around the Japanese in secrecy. He was particularly impressed at the way Marine artillery simply shut itself off the moment his infantry battalion opened its attack.

The onset of the battle was startling. As First Lieutenant Nick Stevenson's Co C broke out of the forest directly into the coconut grove, a Japanese infantry platoon holding tiny Block Four Village opened fire on the Marine point. Cresswell ordered Stevenson to withdraw a bit, encircle the huts, and isolate the Japanese rear guard from the main body, which was farther to the west. The eager riflemen drew first blood when the Japanese guarding Block Four Village charged head-on. The Americans, deployed in a loose skirmish line, blasted the attackers into submission, and turned the survivors toward the beach. The trapped Japanese ran into the surf and tried to breast the incoming tide. Marines standing on the beach casually squeezed off rounds at bobbing heads.

Pvt Poliny of Co A forgot his bleeding hips as he stepped out of the rain forest and saw enemy soldiers turn to fight. Marines cheered as they closed on the enemy, but their spirits were rapidly subdued when several of them were shot. The action turned grim when a dozen Japanese broke from cover to escape along the beach. They were felled, one after another, as Capt Charlie Brush, the Co A commander, coolly directed the fire of his rear guard.

The Japanese in the coconut grove were contained by 2 p.m.

As Pvt Poliny's squad was about to drag two Japanese corpses from a shallow depression among the palms, an officer ordered them to bayonet the bodies. Two Marines moved to undertake the grisly order, when one of the Japanese rolled over and shot one of them in the face.

Poliny leveled his BAR and fired on full automatic. Later, two Japanese emerged from the trees carrying a wounded comrade. The company gunnery sergeant bellowed, "Cut 'em down!" The two uninjured Japanese pulled hand grenades from their tunics, but died in a hail of gunfire before the missiles could be armed.

Though the Marines had clearly won the battle, the Japanese survivors were not about to concede defeat until they had drawn as much American blood as they could. That meant a battle to the death.

The action was transformed into a hunt. Japanese and Marines used every trick to stalk one another. Bullets whizzed through the coconut grove from every direction, tearing up trees and American and Japanese flesh.

Poliny was caught flatfooted when a machine gun opened fire as his squad crossed a small open space. Poliny sank to his stomach in front of the nearest palm. While his heart pounded heavily, splinters rained down on his helmet as the Japanese gunner tried to chew the palm to pieces, inches over his head. But the gunner never depressed the barrel of his weapon and Poliny was released from his cruel prison when other Marines destroyed the machine-gun nest.

The heat of the day took its toll. Exhausted, dehydrated Marines fell under the impact of the close air; experienced NCOs stalked among young charges, admonishing them to conserve water by merely wetting their lips and mouths rather than gulping from their canteens. Some men obeyed; most did not.

When a large group of Japanese broke through the Marine skirmish line and headed down the east bank of Alligator Creek, a Co B platoon stood fast and wiped out the opposition. Another group ran head-long into a blocking position built around a machine gun section and it, too, was eliminated.

When the encirclement had been completed and tightened, several Marine F4F Wildcat fighters lifted off the muddy runway that was the object of the battle and mounted the first close air support operation of the campaign. They hit the main body of Ichiki Butai in the coconut grove.

A platoon of six light tanks, which had been unable to accompany Cresswell's battalion overland in the morning, was ordered across the sandspit in the middle of the afternoon. One tank was wrecked by a Japanese who died placing magnetic mines on its steel hull, and two others were damaged in accidents brought

on by limited visibility and the broken ground. The last three were ordered by Cresswell to simply reconnoiter the Japanese position in the coconut grove.

When the three surviving tanks had formed up on the sandspit, the tank platoon leader, 1stLt Leo Case, ordered them to drive forward and direct pointblank fire at the Japanese. The armored attack flushed numerous survivors into the sights of waiting riflemen.

The fight was pretty much over by 5 p.m., fully 16 hours after it began. When the shooting stopped, earth movers were brought forward to scrape out a common grave for the decaying Japanese bodies.

Considerable amounts of food, equipment, weapons, ammunition, and data were scavenged from the 871 dead and 15 captured members of Ichiki Butai. The cost was 34 dead and 75 wounded Americans.

Late that evening, Col Kiyano Ichiki buried his unit's colors in the coconut grove and went out to the beach. There, he kneeled, drew a ceremonial dagger, and disemboweled himself in the soft sand. He was the first Japanese infantry force commander in the nine-month-old Pacific War to be decisively defeated in direct combat by an American infantry force. 🇺🇸

# RED DRAGON'S GAMBIT

By C.R. Buonanno

A sensational new thriller—a mash-up tone of a Tom Clancy novel mixed with the feel of the movie Red Dawn.

## China's economy is collapsing!

In desperation, China makes plans to gain control over Taiwan to harness its wealth.

## So begins "Red Dragon's Gambit".

With a very public military show of moving on Taiwan, China lures the U.S. 7th Fleet far away from their real target: San Francisco! The plan is to hold this American city hostage until the world allows China to annex Taiwan and then retreat from the U.S. West Coast while the Chinese invasion force slips across the ocean toward San Francisco; a crack team of CIA analysts try to convince the President of the real danger. Dismissed and not believed, this team has to save the U.S. in any way they can, offering aid to enemies and breaking the law in order to save our West Coast.

## About the Author

C.R. Buonanno is a U.S. Marine Corps & Vietnam Veteran, 9/11 First Responder & retired Electronic Engineer



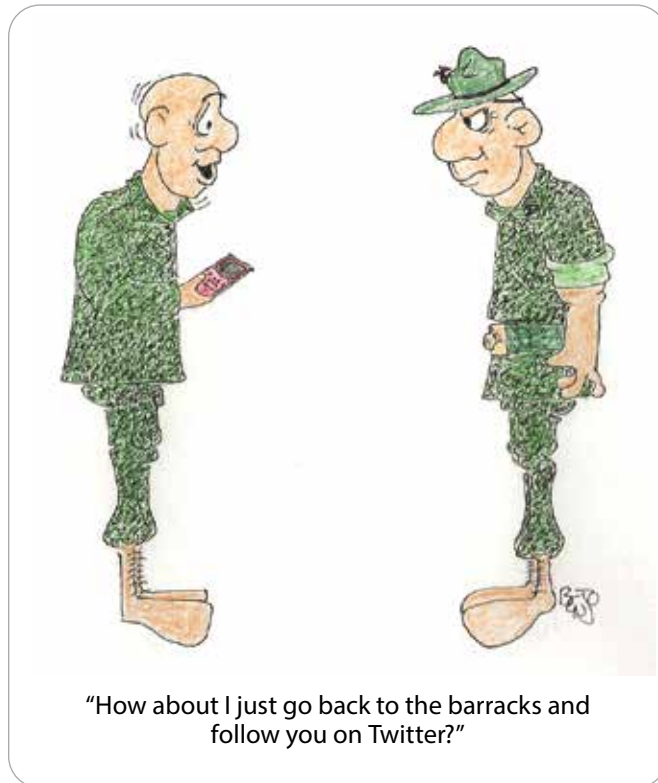
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# Leatherneck Laffs



"We use barbers, officers use stylists."



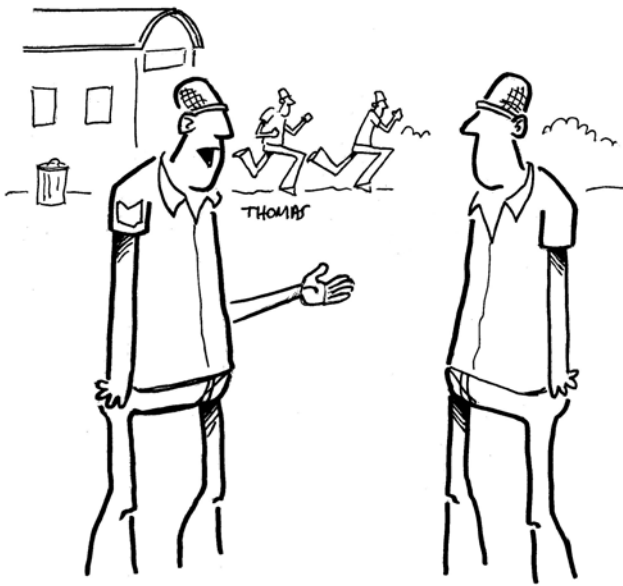
"How about I just go back to the barracks and follow you on Twitter?"



"And after bed and breakfast, they take hikes."



"It's the latest in IEDs ... loaded with LEGO bricks to cause maximum foot injuries."



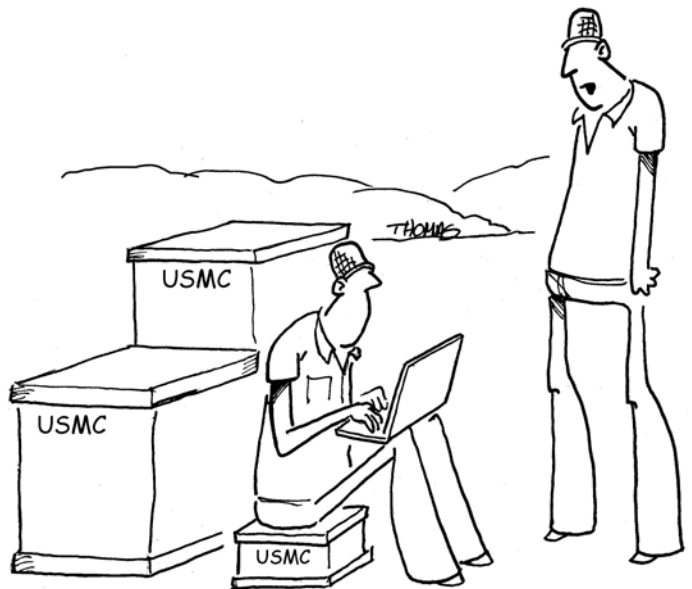
"We found a more effective punishment than doing push-ups. It's called give me your cell phone."



"It's the Russians. They want permission to use 'A Few Good Men' in their new recruiting campaign for Ukraine service."



"I'm pretty popular, Mom, since I'm not a snorer."



"I've seen battles slow because of supplies being cut off, never because of slow internet speeds."



**This Civil War cannon, which is being loaded for transport to a conservator in Maryland, was restored through the National Museum of the Marine Corps. The cannon is linked to the history of MCB Quantico. (Photo courtesy of National Museum of the Marine Corps)**

# Preserving History

## Cannon Helps Tell the Story of MCB Quantico's Past

By Kater Miller

**I**n late 2012, while I was the assistant ordnance curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, my boss told me that my next assignment was to complete a contract to have a Confederate Civil War cannon conserved. The assignment caught me off guard. We were about to begin the planning phase of our big expansion at the museum. Plus, Civil War-era artillery was not really my area of expertise. A big question that came to mind was, “why in the world does the National Museum of the Marine Corps own a Confederate cannon with no obvious association to the Marine Corps?” The story I uncovered was pretty fascinating. It led me to research cannon manufacturing of the antebellum United States as well as during the early days of the Civil War.

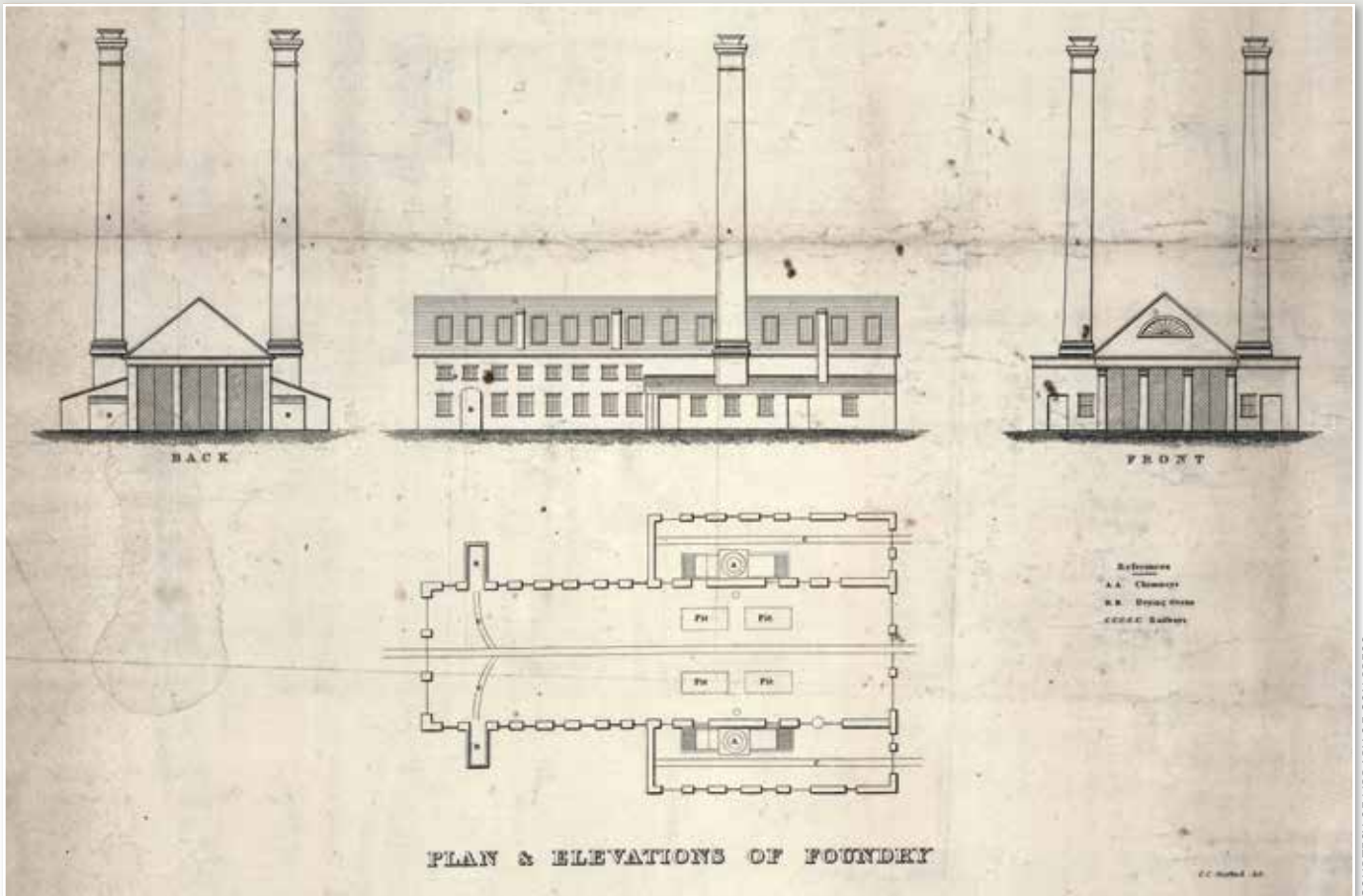
During the 1930s, the Marines at Quantico built Turner Field at the mouth of Chopawamsic Creek. Two smaller airfields built in the 1920s were no longer adequate to facilitate the larger, heavier, and faster airplanes in development. The airfield required that the marshy mouth of the creek be filled with earth

and concrete. The land was so marshy that at one point during the process, a tractor allegedly sank in the mire and was never seen again. According to lore, they dredged up a pair of guns when they were trying to build enough stable ground to build an airstrip and hangars.

Both guns are now in the National Museum of the Marine Corps’ collection. They are nearly identical. One is situated in a display on Waller Hill overlooking the town of Quantico. It is missing both trunnions and the knob and breaching loop of the cascabel. The other, the one I was tasked with having conserved, had been in storage for decades. It was only missing one trunnion and its breaching loop and knob were intact. Someone had painted it black, but the paint was oxidized and flaking off. Other than the missing trunnion and old paint, the gun looked to be in pretty good shape. There were no obvious chunks of missing metal or aggressive corrosion.

Restoring or conserving an older artillery piece is often quite a bit easier than modern ones. There are no recuperators or

We had a lot of questions about the gun that we were hoping Lane and his crew could uncover during the conservation process and we were excited to see what the crew could find.



**Drawings of Columbia Foundry as it appeared in 1860. The foundry was the most prolific cannon manufacturer in the United States for more than two decades becoming a near monopoly in heavy arms manufacturing. In addition to producing 300 heavy guns per year, it manufactured approximately 30,000 cannonballs a year.**

hydraulic systems. There are no wheels or axels to worry about. There are no moving parts, rivets, or bolts to remove. The major obstacle is the ability to move a large hunk of cast iron to completely treat all the surfaces. For these artifacts, corrosion mitigation is a must, and we try to do that through non-invasive means, such as storing them in climate-controlled environments and coating them in microcrystalline wax, paints, or polyurethane.

We had to deliver it to Maryland to have the conservation work done. After forklifting the cannon onto a flatbed trailer, my colleague Bruce Allen drove the truck and trailer up I-95, through the Washington, D.C., beltway en route to the conservation shop in Forestville, Md. We were getting all sorts of strange looks from the other D.C., drivers. The beltway was an unforgiving road to drive down with a nearly maxed-out trailer. Every bump and dip that we hit sent the trailer bucking and weaving. Bruce did an amazing job keeping it together; my fingers dug divots into the dashboard because I was white-knuckling so hard.

A company called Conservation Solutions (they have since changed their name to Evergreene Architectural Arts) performed the work on the gun. Daniel Lane served as the project manager. We had a lot of questions about the gun that we were hoping Lane

and his crew could uncover during the conservation process and we were excited to see what the crew could find.

Lane's crew carefully removed the chipping and oxidized paint using a chemical paint stripper, then once the paint was softened, used a waterjet to fully remove it. They used high pressure water jets to remove the active corrosion present on the gun. They did not discover any deeply embedded corrosion. Since the Potomac River is brackish near Quantico, they tested the iron for chloride levels which were fortunately pretty low. Finally, Lane's team coated it with a rust inhibitor to keep it from flash rusting, then painted it with a direct-to-metal paint to keep the metal from being exposed to the elements. Happily, they did uncover some markings on this artifact that told us some of its history.

At the end of the day, we have to speculate a bit about our guns. This is some of what we can positively conclude. The conservationists uncovered the letters "CF IM" at the breech of the gun. The gun manufacturer put these markings there during the casting process. CF indicates that it was founded at the Columbia Foundry in Georgetown, and the IM stands for John Mason, son of founding father George Mason. (At the time, the letter J was still not in widespread use.) Guns cast at Columbia Foundry had the date



**Henry Foxall**

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## Since our gun had one trunnion, we were fortunate that it had ... the year 1823 stamped into it. The barrel's diameter measured just a shade bigger than 6 1/4 inches. We were able to conclude that it was a 32-pounder naval gun.

of manufacture stamped into one trunnion, and the caliber of the gun stamped into the other one. The gun had one trunnion, and the manufacture date has been etched into it. The other trunnion traditionally has the size of the gun stamped on it, but that is much easier to determine. Since our gun had one trunnion, we were fortunate that it had the date stamped into it instead of the size. The size is fairly easy to determine, but the date would be more difficult. The trunnion had the year 1823 stamped into it. The barrel's diameter measured just a shade bigger than 6 1/4 inches. We were able to conclude that it was a 32-pounder naval gun. We know that 32-pounder guns already had been a standard caliber size for naval guns dating from the 18th century. Because the Waller Hill gun is missing both trunnions, we will never be able to positively identify its year of manufacture, but it is likely within a few years of its twin due to its near identical construction.

Columbia Foundry was the most prolific cannon manufacturer in the United States for the first two decades of the 19th century. Henry Foxall founded it in 1800. He was regarded as one of the best iron workers in the United States during the early Federalist Era. Born in Wales, he immigrated to the United States in 1795, and partnered with Robert Morris in founding the Eagle Ironworks in Philadelphia, Pa. He moved to Georgetown at the invitation of President Thomas Jefferson, who believed that the new capital city should have an arms manufacturer.

Foxall employed a new European gun casting technique. In the 18th century, most guns were cast with a hollow center. This left the guns weaker and prone to explosion because of the way the iron hardened and there could be imperfections on the interior parts of the metal. Workers at Columbia Foundry cast their guns in one solid piece, then, they drilled out the bore on a giant lathe. The new technique meant the bore was harder and had less imperfections, and therefore, could handle bigger powder loads more safely.

The Columbia Foundry enjoyed a near monopoly on heavy arms manufacturing until the foundation of three more foundries in the United States. In addition to producing 300 heavy guns per year, it manufactured upwards of 30,000 cannonballs per year and thousands of smaller cannons for the Army and Navy. Foxall even helped the state of Virginia set up a competing foundry in Richmond, Va., which opened in 1809. In 1815, Foxall sold his foundry to John Mason for an unknown amount of money. Mason did not keep up with new manufacturing techniques, so he did not receive contracts for cannons in the 1830s. The foundry was relegated to producing solid shot and shells until it folded after Mason's death in 1849.

During Jefferson's presidency, the fledgling nation doubled in size after the Louisiana Purchase. Now, the country needed

to protect its vast interior, and its vast coastline. Ever the government spendthrift, Jefferson believed that small gunboats, armed with one or two large cannons and powered by oars, could swarm and overwhelm intruding vessels and would be capable of defending the nation from foreign interlopers. The War of 1812 proved that the concept was not good enough for adequate protection. The British Navy easily gained access to the Chesapeake Bay, marched on Washington and attacked cities in Maryland and Virginia before their bombardment of Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor.

The Columbia Foundry, located on the north bank of the Potomac River, narrowly avoided destruction during the burning of Washington. As with the Marine Barracks, it somehow escaped the British torches as they tore through the rest of the city. According to the Architect of the Capital, the detachment of soldiers dispatched to destroy the foundry turned back in the face of a severe thunderstorm. Foxall, a highly religious Methodist layman, attributed the foundry's salvation as divine intervention and funded the construction of a church to give thanks.

After seeing the inadequacies of the gunboat navy defenses during the War of 1812, the nation decided to defend itself with the Third System of Coastal Fortifications which needed heavy seacoast defense guns. Unlike the forts of the Early Republic, which were less sturdy, the forts of the Third System were sturdily constructed affairs, sometimes comprising a complement of 100 heavy guns. Many of these forts remained in use through the Civil War. Congress also determined that the United States needed a large navy. The large navy and seacoast forts needed heavy guns. By the 1820s, both ships and coastal defense forts used a combination of 24-, 32-, and 42-pounder guns. Wooden, wind-powered vessels of the time could not withstand the withering firepower of the new, well-protected Third System forts until ironclad vessels with more powerful ship-board weapons became the norm.

Naval guns and seacoast guns shared a lot of similarities. They were designed to shoot a heavy, solid ball at a flat trajectory into a ship. Because they would be mounted on special carriages and were not expected to be as mobile as field artillery, these guns were big. They required a team of oxen to transport them overland on the poor roads of the American interior. Once in place, they would be fixed to massive, sturdy carriages that weighed nearly as much as the gun itself. The emplacements were considered to be semi-permanent.

As cannon manufacturers improved their techniques, they tended to focus on making sure the metal was in the right place. The guns produced later in the 1830s were more streamlined and the majority of the metal in the guns was nearer to the breech than the muzzle. The first record of a purpose-built seacoast



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**Thomas Rodman was the pioneer of a casting technique that improved gun strength. Cool water was pumped into the cavity of the gun being cast, cooling it down from the inside.**

defense gun is the M1829 32-pounder, which was slightly more streamlined than our two examples, but it still had a breeching loop. The breech was a little thicker and the muzzle is a little thinner because the ordnance department figured that was where the gun needed the most protection from catastrophic failure. In 1841, they refined the 32-pounder again, with an even thinner muzzle. This model did not have a breeching loop.

In the 1840s, cannon manufacturers revolutionized their cannon casting processes, allowing them to make artillery much more reliable and more powerful than the solid cast cannons of George Foxall and the Columbia Foundry. Thomas Rodman perfected a technique that allowed him to cast a gun with a hollow barrel that was stronger than the lathe-bored guns. He pumped cool water into the cavity of the gun being cast, cooling it down from the inside. This made the gun compress from inside out, which made it much stronger than any gun before. Rodman's technique allowed artillery to become truly massive. Likewise, Robert Parker Parrot created a gun that could shoot massive shells through a rifled gun with huge improvements in accuracy and at long ranges. Parrot guns also featured a large cast iron band at the breech to keep it from exploding with the larger charges it shot. John Dahlgren developed a gun for the U.S. Navy that was very distinctive, having a very large breech and rapidly tapering down to the muzzle in a shape reminiscent of a soda bottle. A Dahlgren 32-pounder weighed 6,500 pounds, nearly 1,500 pounds less than the 32-pound naval gun of 1823. One of the things these guns had in common was that the designers started to design guns with more metal at the breech to withstand larger explosive pressures. The muzzles of the guns tended to be much thinner to save weight. They were also all muzzle-loaders. Breech loading guns were also becoming practical by the outbreak of the Civil War.

The naval guns of the 1820s may have been obsolete by 1860, but with the United States hurtling toward a crisis, most of the guns from the era were still in storage or in use. When Confederate forces captured Gosport Navy Yard in Portsmouth, Va., not only did they capture the USS *Merrimack* (which they rebuilt as the CSS *Virginia*), but they also captured more than 1,000 naval guns. These guns were distributed throughout the south and were normally installed in Confederate seacoast defense locations. It is likely that the Quantico guns came to this location via Gosport. By looking at photographic records, we know that the Confederates used a mix of old naval guns and seacoast guns. We also have a written description by Brigadier General Samuel French, commander of the seacoast defense batteries at Quantico referring to "naval guns."

We also know that when the Confederate Army abandoned most of northern Virginia, they could not take the extremely heavy guns emplaced on the Potomac River because of the poor conditions of the road. Additionally, the U.S. Navy's gunboats made river travel for Confederate vessels impossible. Before evacuating the area and leaving the heavy guns behind,

the Confederates burned the gun carriages and broke off the trunnions and sometimes the knobs of artillery to render them less functional. Breaking off a trunnion with a sledgehammer was difficult work and they had to do it under the bombardment of Major General Joseph Hooker's division at Budd's Ferry, Md. and the same U.S. Navy vessels plying the Potomac. I speculate that after breaking the trunnions off of the Waller Hill gun, the Confederate soldiers figured that one trunnion was good enough to achieve their objective and broke one trunnion off of its twin. Though primary sources diverge about who rolled the guns into the river, I also speculate that it was Hooker's soldiers, coming across the river after it was clear that the Confederates were gone, who rolled the guns into the river, where they remained for the next 70 years.



**John Dahlgren, pictured here in front of a Dahlgren gun. The gun's large breech drastically tapered down into the muzzle to withstand larger explosive pressures. The guns were nicknamed soda bottles because of their distinctive shape. (Photo courtesy of Library of Congress)**

These two guns tell an interesting story about the history of Quantico, which at one time was one of the most strategic locations that the Confederacy had, but ultimately, could not defend.

In an upcoming article, I will outline the history of Quantico during the Civil War. Between the Quantico Creek and Chopawamsic Creek sat a little settlement called Evansport, and the Confederate Army brought these two guns to Evansport in late summer 1861 to blockade the Potomac River from traffic to cut off Washington, D.C., from its major supply route.

*Author's bio: Kater Miller is a curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps and has been working at the museum for 12 years. He served in the Marine Corps from 2001-2005 as an aviation ordnanceman.* 🦋

**Robert H. Adcock**, 76, of Beaufort, S.C. He was a Marine who served in Vietnam and was a member of the Vietnam Tankers Association. His awards include a Bronze Star with combat "V" and a Purple Heart.

**Michael F. Basile**, 97, of Albuquerque, N.M. After graduating from high school, he joined the Marine Corps in 1943 and saw action in Guam and on Iwo Jima.

**Hodding Carter III**, 88, in Chapel Hill, N.C. After graduating from Princeton University in 1957, he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served for two years. He later had a career as a journalist and was the Department of State's spokesperson during the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979.

**GySgt William Cornelison**, 70, in Barstow, Calif. After graduating from high school in 1969, Bill joined the Marine Corps and served two tours in Vietnam and during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm before retiring in 1991. His awards include the Purple Heart.

**Cpl Ken E. DeNamur**, 75, Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who served from 1968-1970.

**Cpl Robin Marie (Aragon) Erner**, 53, of Frederick, Colo. She joined the Marine Corps in 1989. After graduating from boot camp at Parris Island, she was stationed at Camp Pendleton.

**Thomas "Tom" Esparza**, 75, of Moline, Ill. He served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War from 1965-1969.

**Sgt Joseph L. Font**, 86, of Saugerties, N.Y. He enlisted in the Marine Corps when he was 17 and was a drill instructor at Camp Lejeune. He also served in the Korean War. In his return to civilian life, he was a member of the Marine Corps League and the Marine Corps Association. He was also the commander of the American Legion Post 72.

**Cpl Thomas S. Fradet**, 31, of West Fargo, N.D. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at 17 served as an infantryman with 1stMarDiv from 2009 to 2014. He also was a volunteer at the Veterans Warrior Foundation.

**Cpl Howard W. Frank Jr.**, 98, of Butler, Pa. He served in the Marine Corps in the Pacific theater during WW II and saw action during the Anguar Island Campaign and on Peleliu. After his discharge in 1946, he worked as a machinist for 37 years.

**Robert Gleason**, 92, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served in the Marine Corps and was a member of the Marine Corps League Jerry Murphy Detachment.

**Donald L. Gutmann**, 89, in Maryland Heights, Mo. He served in the Korean War with the 1stMarDiv and saw action at the Chosin Reservoir. He was an active member of the St. Louis chapter of the Korean War Veterans Association, the Gateway Chapter of the Chosin Few, the Marine Corps League, the American Legion, and the 1st Marine Division Association.

**Samuel Harle**, 98, in Mineola, Texas. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1943 at the age of 19. He served in the Pacific during WW II with 1st MAW on Bougainville. Following the war, he attended the University of Missouri and graduated with a degree in journalism in 1948.

**Col Michael M. Kephart**, 75, of Lorton, Va. He served in the Marine Corps for more than 30 years and he was the commanding officer of 1st Tank Battalion during the Gulf War. From 1992 to 1996, he was stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as the Marine Corps liaison to CINCPAC Fleet where he led numerous Marines assigned to serve with the Pacific Fleet. Shortly after, he completed an assignment at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, D.C., before retiring in 2000. His awards include a Bronze Star.

**Maj Robert Louis Kumpe III**, in Dale City, Va. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1985 while attending Southwest Baptist University. Upon graduation he was commissioned as an officer and continued his education at The Basic School in Quantico, Va. He became a ground supply officer and was assigned to Okinawa, Japan.

Later, he went to flight school in Pensacola, Fla., earning his naval aviator wings in 1994. He was selected to fly an AH-1W Cobra and deployed to the Mediterranean in 1997 in support of Operation Silver Wake in Albania and Operation Guardian Retrieval in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 1988 he left active duty but continued to fly in the Marine Corps Reserve. After retiring, he worked as a defense contractor for the Pentagon as well as a training coordinator for the Joint Strike Fighter office.

**Carlyle T. Lanham**, 85, of Port Byron, Ill. He joined the Marine Corps in 1955

and served for 23 years. After retiring in 1978, he worked at John Deere in Davenport, Iowa, for 18 years. He was a life member of VFW Post 5083 in Geneseo, Ill.

**PFC Ernest "Glenn" Larson**, 97, in Missoula, Mont. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 18 and served as a mortarman during WW II. He later had a career as a heavy equipment operator.

**Michael Moran**, 97, Moline, Ill. He was a Marine who served during the Vietnam War and later had a career in long-haul trucking.

**Sgt Thomas C. Morton**, 34, in Nashville, Tenn. He was an infantry squad leader with Kilo Co, 3rd Bn, 3rd Marines stationed at MCB Hawaii. He served two tours in Afghanistan in Helmand Province.

**Lee A. Michaletz**, 80, of De Pere, Wis. He was a Marine who served during the Vietnam War. After his discharge in 1963, he worked as a machinist in the Green Bay area.

**Adolpho Naravaiz**, 81, of Santa Fe, N.M. He was a Marine who served during the Vietnam War. After his discharge in 1963 he served in the Air Force and the New Mexico Air National Guard (NMANG). He was a member of the American Legion, DAV and the VFW.

**Bennie F. Petty Jr.**, 87, of Galveston, Texas. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at 18 and served as an infantryman before being stationed at MCRD San Diego where he served as a drill instructor.

**Richard "Rod" Rodriguez**, 82, of San Clemente, Calif. He was a Marine who served from 1957 to 1963. After his service he started a business in Orange County, Calif.

**Cpl Roy T. Rogers**, 78 of Cameron, Texas. He was a Marine who served from 1961 to 1966. He was stationed at Camp Pendleton with Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Marines, in Okinawa with Co K, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines and in Chu Lai Vietnam.

**Carlos "Charles" A. Sanchez**, 93, of Albuquerque, N.M. He was a Marine who served during the Korean War. He later had a 42-year long career as an insurance agent at State Farm.

**Cpl Marion "Wayne" Saucerman**, 97, of Monrovia, Ind. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 17 and served in the Pacific with the 4th Marine Division. His awards include a Purple Heart.

**MAJ William Schumate**, 100, of Palm Springs, Calif. He was a Marine aviator with VMSB-345 and VMTB-144 during WW II. He later served with the Ohio National Guard for 31 years. He was a member of VFW and the American Legion.

**Goeffrey A. Scott**, 41, of Chesterfield, Mich. He enlisted in in 2003 and was assigned to Co C, 1st Bn, 24th Marines. He deployed to Fallujah, Iraq, in 2006 as a rifleman and radio operator in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Richard L. "Dick" Scott**, 82, of Oconto Falls, Wis. He was a Marine who worked as an aircraft mechanic during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

**Bernard "Bud" Simon**, 101, in Dale City, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps during WW II and saw action during the Battle of Midway, on Bougainville and in the Philippines. He was a founding member of the Marines Memorial Club in San Francisco.

**Michael E. Simpson**, 71, of Milford, Conn. He was a Marine who served with 3rd Tank Bn during the Vietnam War.

**Gerald "Jerry" A. Siudzinski**, 75, in Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who served during the Vietnam War. He later worked in the paper industry for 39 years.

**George R. Thompson Jr.**, 78, in

Currie, N.C. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1962 and was stationed at Camp Lejeune as a welder. He was also stationed in Okinawa and later served a tour in Vietnam. After his service, he became a farmer.

**Capt Robert Traill Jr.**, 100, in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. He served in the Marine Corps Reserve with the 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv during WW II in the Pacific theater. He saw action in Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa. His awards include a Bronze Star.

**Billy K. Venable**, 96, of Oxford, Ohio. He was a Marine who served in WW II and the Korean War.

**Jeffrey "Woody" Woods**, 58, in San Diego, Calif. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in aerospace and mechanical engineering from the University of Arizona, he joined the Marine Corps in 1986. He was a graduate of the USAF Test Pilot School as well as the MAWTS-1 Weapons and Tactics Instructor Program. He logged nearly 6,000 hours in 44 different types of aircraft. He commanded VMFA-225 during combat operations in Iraq. He was also CO of VMFAT-101.

After his retirement from the Marine Corps, he continued his career in aviation as a chief test pilot at Northrop Grumman.

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](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org).

*Leatherneck* introduces REFLECTIONS—a quarterly special section commemorating Marines and other servicemembers. 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 quarterly in *Leatherneck*.

For more information on REFLECTIONS rates, please email us at [advertising@mca-marines.org](mailto:advertising@mca-marines.org).

"Throughout my time in the Corps, I have repeatedly been part of battlefield studies supported by the Marine Corps Association Foundation. With your support we were able to introduce 20 Non-Commissioned Officers to the concept of a battlefield study and use the historical example of the Chancellorsville battle to reinforce tactical decision-making concepts that they have been exposed to throughout their time in the unit.

Your support truly highlighted the Corps' honest and steadfast commitment to the education of our young Marines. I could not be more proud to be a member of your organization knowing that, in a small way, I help make these types of events a reality."

LtCol E.T. Clark  
Commanding Officer  
1ST Battalion, 7TH Marines



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[mca-marines.org/foundation](http://mca-marines.org/foundation)

MARINE CORPS  
ASSOCIATION  
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Gen "Stonewall" Jackson,  
mortally wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville



**SgtMaj Carlos A. Ruiz**

## **USMC Announces the 20th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps**

Sergeant Major Carlos A. Ruiz has been selected to serve as the 20th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps.

SgtMaj Ruiz formerly served as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader for Marine Corps Forces Reserve and Marine Corps Forces South. He will replace Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Troy E. Black during a relief and appointment ceremony on Aug. 8.

SgtMaj Black has served as the 19th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps since July 26, 2019. Following the ceremony, he will relinquish his post as the highest-ranking enlisted Marine and principal enlisted advisor to the Commandant.

SgtMaj Ruiz is a native of Phoenix, Ariz. He joined the Marine Corps on Nov. 2, 1993, and attended recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) San Diego, Calif. He began his career as a Marine Corps warehouse clerk with 3rd Supply Battalion, 3rd Force Service Support Group, in Okinawa, Japan. He continued his career as an enlisted leader serving across the Corps to include 1st Service Support Group; 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines; 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines; and 4th Marine Logistics Group.

He has deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and operations with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Outside of the Marine Corps operating forces, SgtMaj Ruiz served as a recruiter in Los Angeles; a drill instructor with 3rd

Recruit Training Battalion, MCRD San Diego; and as an instructor, drill master and chief instructor for Drill Instructor School, MCRD San Diego.

SgtMaj Ruiz will serve as Commandant of the Marine Corps' enlisted advisor. The Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps typically serves a four-year term, though service in the position is at the discretion of the Commandant.

The post of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps was established in 1957 as the senior enlisted advisor to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the first such post in any of the branches of the United States Armed Forces.

MSgt Michael Cifuentes, USMC

## **Veterans and Transitioning Military Get Free Year of LinkedIn Premium**

LinkedIn offers veterans a free one-year premium career subscription, including one year of access to LinkedIn Learning.

The one-year free upgrade to premium includes an incredibly valuable resource—a library of more than 16,000 business, technical, and creative courses on LinkedIn Learning. This means that courses on software development, graphic design, leadership, data science, photography and more are all available to eligible veterans. Almost every professional skill has a course on LinkedIn Learning.

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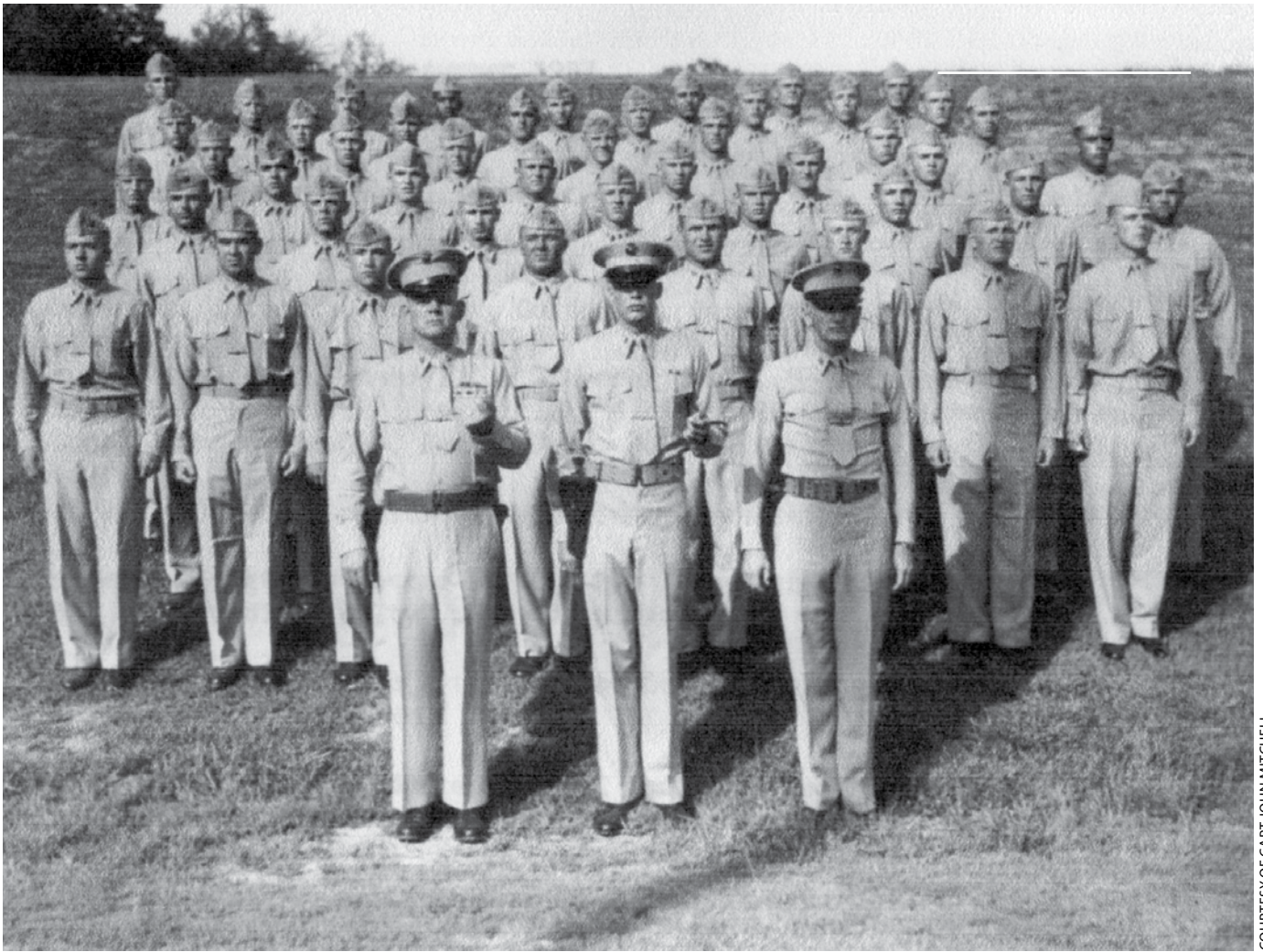
premium search filters, ability to view expanded profiles, and more. These are great for finding new career opportunities or developing new business leads.

Specifically for the veteran community, LinkedIn has created two learning paths. The "Transition from Military to Civilian Employment" path will help you navigate your job search, build your professional identity, prepare for interviews, negotiate salary, and even get promoted once you've been hired. The "Transition from Military to Student Life" path covers everything from ACT/SAT/GRE test prep to essay writing, study skills, time management tips, and how to land an internship.

To make the most of LinkedIn, other veteran-specific courses are available. "LinkedIn for Veterans" provides a "LinkedIn 101" tutorial for everything from selecting and uploading the right picture to searching and applying for jobs. "Translating Your Military Skills to Civilian Employment" will help you understand the civilian hiring process and empower you to demonstrate your best self to potential employers. "Finding Your Purpose After Active Duty" is all about the intangibles of transition—understanding your value to civilian employers, dealing with the uncertainty of transition, and wrestling with some of the challenges inherent in this process. For more information, visit [socialimpact.linkedin.com/programs/veterans/premiumform](https://www.linkedin.com/programs/veterans/premiumform).

VA News





COURTESY OF CAPT JOHN MITCHELL

A graduation photo of Company D, 4th Platoon Jr PLC, 1957. Among the graduates is Capt John J. Mitchell.

**SOUND OFF**  
[continued from page 8]

**Marine Veteran Shares  
PLC Graduation Photo**

Here is a picture of me and my buddies at the Jr. PLC graduation ceremony in 1957. From left to right:

Row 1: SSgt Brock, 2ndLt Shillinglaw, Sgt Sheets

Row 2: P. Glick, F.Finney, Gerry Murchie, Jim Crowley, A. Toorock, Riordan, Kennan, B. Sherman

Row 3: N. Deusebio, J. Curtin, M. Karon, Gustavon, Bob Schwarz, Roth, Crockett, Quinones

Row 4: Keane, O'Connor, D. Kennedy, C.T.S. Harper, Duff, Spies, Galloway, Garugilo

Row 5: Daniel, Paul Puletz, Wright, Pitlak, J. Kerpiel, J.J. Doonan, Dave Hagan

Row 6: "Scoop" Johnson, Bruder, Bopko, Tate, John J. Mitchell, Bryson, Cullen, McCarney

Row 7: Woodruff, Bledsoe, Donaldson, W. Johnson, Domzalski, Fink, Binns, Mayfield

SSgt Brock was an instructor at TBS when I went through with class 2-62. He was an outstanding, salty and tough World War II Marine. Bryson was famous for making u-turns on the George Washington Bridge during liberty when we drove to New York City.

Capt John J. Mitchell  
Indio, Calif.

*Thanks for sharing your memories. We'd love to hear more about liberty in New York (if the stories aren't "classified!").—Publisher*

Feel like sounding off? Address your letter to: Sound Off, Leatherneck Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or send an email to: leatherneck@mca-marines.org. Due to the heavy volume, we cannot answer every letter received. Do not send original photographs, as we cannot guarantee their return. All letters must be signed, and emails must contain complete names and postal mailing addresses. Anonymous letters will not be published.—Editor 🍷

**WAYS TO SOUND OFF**

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 **EMAIL** | [leatherneck@mca-marines.org](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org)

## Reunions

• **USMC Motor Transport Association**, Sept. 17-22, Savannah, Ga. Contact MSgt Bruce Green, USMC (Ret), (910) 577-4230, secretary@usmcmta.org.

• **U.S. Naval Disciplinary Command**, Sept. 11-16, Portsmouth, N.H. Contact Don Ferry, (972) 334-0609, don.ferry1942@gmail.com.

• **Plt 2064, San Diego, 1965**, is planning a reunion. Contact Gary A. Gruenwald, (434) 609-3433, usmcgman74@aol.com.

• **TBS Class 3-67/41st OCC**, Oct. 26-29, Arlington, Va. Contact Paul Disario, (559) 273-9549, pdisario@comcast.net.

• **1st Marine Division Assn.**, August 13-20, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact June Cormier, (760) 763-3268, June.oldbreed@fmda.us.

• **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Sept. 13-18, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact John Wear, (719) 495-5998, johnwear2@verizon.net.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn. (MCEA)**, Sept. 18-20, Branson, Mo. Contact LtCol George Carlson, USMC (Ret), (931) 307-9094, treasurer@marcorengasn.org or visit: www.marcorengasn.org.

• **USMC Scout Sniper Assn.**, Aug. 18-20, Quantico, Va. Contact Tim Parkhurst, (833) 976-4737, reunion@scoutsniper.org.

• **VMO-6**, Oct. 24-28, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Ed Kufeldt, (703) 250-1514.

• **Marine Corps Music Assn.**, Oct. 19-23, Temecula, Calif. Contact Krista Hackler, (843) 941-3693, aprilh5500@gmail.com.

• **Co G, 2/7**, Sept. 20-24, Beaufort, S.C. Contact Dave Kling, (267) 718-0419, dkling1969@yahoo.com or Bruce Guthrie, (760) 363-6141, bgguthrie@gmail.com.

• **Kilo Co, 3/7**, Oct. 5-9, Springfield Mo. Contact Bill Gerke, (631) 433-8575, msggerke@aol.com.

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• **MAG-46 Det E/C/A and HMLA-775**, Aug. 4-6, Oceanside, Calif. Contact Deniese Hickmon Elosh, (480) 442-7002, katkuntre@gmail.com

• **VMFA-115 Reunion Assn.**, Oct. 11-15, Portland, Maine. Contact Patti Kaas, (717) 422-6796, P.O. Box 170, Aspers, Pa., 17304.

### Mail Call

• GySgt Walter Washington, (760) 724-9269, wileywash@att.net, is looking to hear from **Richard "Oscar" O. Brown**, and **Ron "Hawk" Ward**, assigned to **VMGR-152, Futenma, Okinawa**.

• Louis "Monday" Monoscalco, (312) 439-5253, is looking to hear from **LtGen Robert B. Johnston**, former platoon commander of **Company M, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines, Vietnam 1967**.

• Alfredo Alvear, (956) 793-6642, freddyalvear2743@gmail.com, is looking to hear from **SSgt Mattocks**, **Sgt Fresquez**, **Sgt Barriga** and **Sgt Jackson**,

graduating from **Platoon 1050 at MCRD San Diego in 1989**.

### Wanted

• Louis "Monday" Monoscalco, (312) 439-5253, is looking for a **Marine Corps Security Guard Bn, HQMC, graduating class photo, 1970, class number unknown**.

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. 📧





Courtesy of the Marine Corps History Division, Historical Reference Branch

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# Saved Round

By Kyle Watts



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**LCpl David L. Espinoza, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 20



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**Cpl Daegan W. Page, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 23



SSGT MARK MORROW, USMC

**Sgt Nicole L. Gee, USMC**  
CLB-24, 24th MEU, age 23



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**LCpl Jared M. Schmitz, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 20



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**LCpl Dylan R. Merola, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 20

**SO THAT OTHERS MIGHT EXPERIENCE PEACE**—We honor the 13 servicemembers killed in action on Aug. 26, 2021, while conducting noncombatant evacuation operations in Afghanistan. (See page 36 for the story and photos.) They were brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, and parents. They were soldiers, Sailors, and Marines. They went to Afghanistan, not in the name of combat, but to help their fellow man. They held the line in the face of chaos and danger, and sacrificed their lives so that others might experience peace. We honor their memory, and offer our most sincere condolences to their loved ones. May we uphold their legacy and cherish the freedoms they protected. Until we meet again, Semper Fidelis.



SGT VICTOR MANCILLA, USMC

**Sgt Johanny Rosario Pichardo, USMC**  
JTF-CR (TF 51-5th MEB), age 25



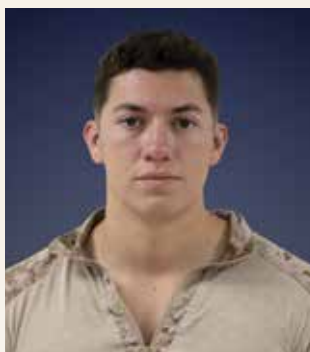
SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**LCpl Rylee J. McCollum, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 20



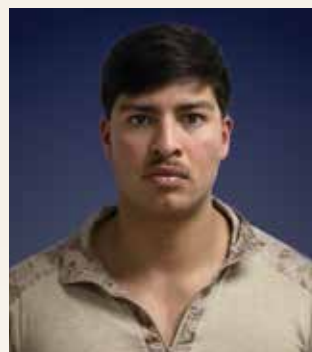
SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**HM3 Maxton W. Soviak, USN**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 22



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**Cpl Hunter Lopez, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 22



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**Cpl Humberto A. Sanchez, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 22



SGT SAMUEL RUIZ, USMC

**LCpl Kareem M. Nikoui, USMC**  
Golf Co, 2/1, age 20



USMC

**SSgt Darin T. Hoover, USMC**  
Echo Co, 2/1, age 31



USA

**SSG Ryan C. Knauss, USA**  
Bravo Co, 9th PSYOPS Bn, age 23



# THANK YOU

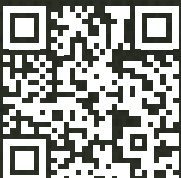


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