

JANUARY 2018

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COVER: Capt Jacob Dunn, a forward air controller with 2d Bn, 3d Marines, makes a call for close air support at an observation point as part of the Fire Support Team during Exercise Bougainville II, Pohakuloa Training Area on the island of Hawaii, Oct. 21, 2017. Read *In Every Clime and Place*, beginning on page 8, for more about Exercise Bougainville II. Photo by Sgt Ricky Gomez, USMC. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

Letter of the Month

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

My wife and I used to celebrate our wedding anniversary on a trail bench located at Lands End in San Francisco, Calif. Our bench has a perfect view of the Golden Gate Bridge. Linda passed away last year and to honor her and our history together, I went back to Lands End this past Labor Day weekend.

While I looked at the bridge and remembered our time at the trail, a gentleman asked if he could share the bench. He introduced himself as Mike. I told him why I was there, and he was most sympathetic. As we sat together we started talking about family. Mike told me his family was one of the last groups of Vietnamese refugees to be rescued by American Marines in 1975 when he was six years old.

Mike also told me that his parents had escaped Hanoi in the 1950s to find help and support from the French just north of Hue before ending up in Saigon where his mom worked for the American Embassy. Mike, at age 6, would wake many times hearing rocket attacks in his neighborhood. As a small child he was scared most of the time except when his family was invited to the embassy for birthday and holiday

parties. He said the Marines and embassy staff made him feel happy and safe. He thanked me for my service and welcomed me home.

I served in Vietnam from 1965 to 1966. Our unit operated near the DMZ. I told Mike that many times we stationed ourselves in native villages and grew to respect the people of Vietnam who were expecting an invasion from their historical enemy, China. The village families would tell us that they would join America in any fight against China invading Vietnam and wished we could stay. We felt welcome and oddly safer around them.

Through our talk I was impressed with the bravery of Mike's family and apologetic to him for leaving his country to the Communists to which he said, "America is my home, and America will always defend me."

Wow. What would we do as Americans if our villages and towns were being overrun by an invading force? How would we protect our children from the carnage of war? Are we brave enough? America is my home. Thank you, Mike, for making America your home. And, to my dear Linda, thank you for sending me Mike to lift a little guilt off of me from losing you and losing Vietnam.

Tom Isenburg
Livermore, Calif.

Kudos to *Leatherneck's* 100th Anniversary Issue

I wish to thank you and your hardworking staff so very much for the outstanding 100th Anniversary issue of *Leatherneck*. A number of the articles evoke fond "past memories," as well as some of the intriguing advertisements. I recall when *Leatherneck* was published on newspaper copy and my battery (120 men) in Vietnam received a copy or two now and then.

When I discovered this issue in my mailbox, I began thumbing through it and immediately began reading it in the road (yes, in the road), in front of my home—totally absorbed! My wife had to call me from my insanity.

As my own personal way to sincerely thank you and your staff, please find enclosed Devil Dog Challenge Coins for you and your staff. By virtue of your dedication and hard work, you folks give a new meaning to the term Devil Dog.

Damon E. Gates
USMC, 1969-1975
Williamsburg, Va.

My compliments to the staff of *Leatherneck* on the work that obviously went into preparing the 100th Anniversary issue of the magazine. I'm sure it will become a collector's item.

When I saw the name of Ron Lyons, a former editor of *Leatherneck*, I was reminded of a day more than 30 years ago, when he invited me to join him for lunch at Major Rick Spooner's Globe & Laurel restaurant. Ron introduced me to Lou Lowery, who had photographed the first flag raising on Mount Suribachi. Lou joined us at our table and it was a very interesting experience listening to him discuss his time on Iwo Jima. He gave me an autographed copy of a black and white photograph he had taken of the flag raising. I have it on the wall in my den, next to a movie poster for "Sands of Iwo Jima."

SSgt Jack M. Sands
USMC, 1952-1962
Waldorf, Md.

Outstanding November anniversary issue! Not only is it a good read for all Marines, it's a good primer for any and all—a quick read that truly shows the "whys" and the "hows" of Marine Corps pride.

God bless the Corps and all the other branches, as well.

Alan R. Penberg
USMC, 1962-1968
Washington, D.C.

As a longtime reader/contributor (67 years), I have to say the November issue was simply outstanding! It brought back so many memories both from story content as well as from serving with so many of *Leatherneck's* staffers over the years. BZ to current staffers for bringing 67 years of Marine lore to life again.

Jack. T. Paxton, Executive Director
USMCCCA & USMCCCA Foundation
Wildwood, Fla.

Inspection Trombones

The Twentynine Palms base band began as a small "pick-up" drum and bugle corps in 1955 thanks to an artillery captain. By the summer of 1957, that small group had evolved into a small band of about 25-30 members under the direction of Technical Sergeant J.O. Cressonnie. The decision was made to augment to a normal table of organization of about 50 musicians. I was one of 25 bandsmen from the 1st

WAYS TO SOUND OFF



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LtGen W. Mark Faulkner, USMC (Ret)

Vice President/COO,

Marine Corps Association & Foundation
Col Daniel P. O'Brien, USMC (Ret)

Publisher: Col Christopher Woodbridge, USMC (Ret)

Editor: Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)

Senior Editor: Nancy S. Lichtman

Copy Editor: Jessica B. Brown

Staff Writer: Sara W. Bock

Editorial/Production Coordinator
Patricia Everett

Art Director: Jason Monroe

Publisher's Advertising Representatives

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New York: (212) 588-9200
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EDITORIAL OFFICES

Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134
Phone: (703) 640-6161, Ext. 115
Toll-Free: (800) 336-0291
Fax: (703) 640-0823

Email: leatherneck@mca-marines.org
Web page: www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

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Marine Division band at Camp Pendleton who transferred to Twentynine Palms. By the time we arrived in late August 1957, Brigadier General Randall M. Victory had taken command.

BGen Victory was a colorful character who was an old China Marine from before World War II. During WW II, he had been awarded the Legion of Merit medal for meritorious actions in the Pacific theater. Even as late as 1957, he still wore jodhpur-style uniform trousers tucked into shiny, knee-high brown leather riding boots and carried a riding crop instead of a swagger stick.

Earlier in his career when then-Colonel Victory was stationed in Hawaii, legend has it that Bernie Farr, noted Marine Corps band arranger and composer, wrote a march in his honor and titled it, "The Colonel Victory March." Needless to say, when we began practicing upon arrival at the base, that sheet music was third in line in our music pouches right behind "The Marines' Hymn" and "Semper Fidelis."

During our first few days aboard Twentynine Palms, we squared away the band hall, rehearsed our music under Master Sergeant Varley and also our marching techniques under Drum Major TSgt Roubal. Then, on the first Monday in September, we proudly stepped out and assembled at the flagpole in front of base headquarters for morning colors. After the national anthem we marched up to the front of the headquarters building and reformed into a concert formation. Knowing where our bread was buttered,

the first march we played was, "The Colonel Victory March."

The general came out on the front steps as the march was played, slapping that riding crop against the top of his highly polished knee-high boot. When we finished, he approached TSgt Roubal and they started toward the right hand end of the line of bandsmen. Since I played trombone (front row) and marched as right guide, I was the first one they came to. Drum Major Roubal called the band to attention and I thought to myself, "He's surely not going to troop the line for inspection is he?" Well, he was and he did. He stopped directly in front of me and not knowing the protocol for inspection of trombones, I brought my shiny new chrome-plated Conn Constellation horn up from my side in some sort of simulation of "Inspection Arms." I looked into the bell to be sure it wasn't loaded with some errant notes, hoping all the while he wouldn't take it from me and also being glad I had locked the slide in case he did. He reached out, and I handed it to him. He turned it this way and that, looked into the bell, inspected the engraving, tubing and mouthpiece then handed it back and moved on. I brought it back down to "Order Arms" and heaved a sigh of relief that he and I, as well as my beautiful horn, had survived the ordeal.

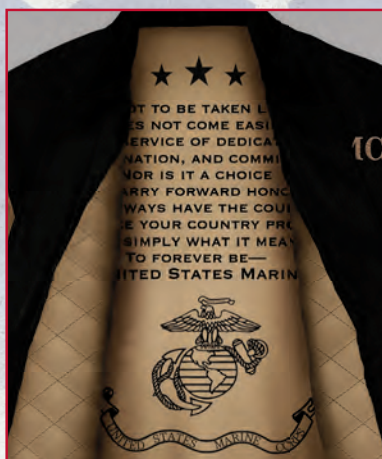
After looking at one or two more instruments, he retired to the headquarters steps, and we serenaded him again with another stirring march, reformed into parade formation and marched away while playing



MajGen Victory received the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in the Pacific theater during June through August 1944.

COURTESY OF PFC STEVE SHAW, USMC

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the ever popular "6 Bits and the Commercial" (Drum Major Roubal's term for "Semper Fidelis" and "The Marines' Hymn").

In May of 2015, 58 years after that day in September 1957, I was on a veterans' tour of the Washington, D.C., monuments sponsored by Vets Roll of Beloit, Wis.

Also on that trip was another of the old Twentynine Palms band trombone players, Sergeant Bruce Johnson of Rockford, Ill. Our bus was parked in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., when Bruce and I debarked and walked up a grassy hill. Directly in front of us was a gravestone

marked "Randall Mamre Victory, Major General USMC." That was surely a blast from the past and provoked the telling of the above story to the others on the bus that day.

PFC Steve Shaw, USMCR
Lebanon, Ind.

Camp Matthews Rifle Range

I was a member of MCRD San Diego, Calif., Plt 306 from January to March 1964. Our series was one of the last to qualify at the range located at Camp Matthews.

One of the memories that I have was of

an older Marine corporal of possibly World War II, Korean War vintage, who was, I believe, the camp property noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC), or something similar. We were told that he was an old veteran and that because of his service to the Corps, he was being taken care of by the Corps until he was finally able to be retired. In other words, "The Corps was taking care of its own."

Reading some of the letters to *Leatherneck* caused me to often wonder what that Marine's history was and what finally happened to him.

MSgt Rod T. Gasche, USMC (Ret)
Carrabelle, Fla.

Buckingham Palace Marine

Recently I viewed a video of Prince Phillip's last public appearance. He was reviewing the British Royal Marines at Buckingham Palace for the last leg of the 1664 Global Challenge. It is a fundraiser where Royal Marines, active and retired, run 16 miles for 64 days for the Royal Marine Association. The Royal Marine Association helps Royal Marines and their families. The challenge ended at Buckingham Palace with a review by Prince Phillip.

As he reviewed the Royal Marines in their dress blues, I noticed a U.S. Marine captain in the group. It caught my eye since all the Royal Marines had pith helmets and the U.S. Marine had a dress white cover on his head. I did not know there was a Marine stationed at the palace. Can you give me some insight on this?

Cpl Bradley S. Barton, USMC
Tualatin, Ore.

• We checked with the Officer Assignment Branch who informed us that there are 15 Marine officer billets assigned to the British military. Most are part of the Personnel Exchange Program with the bulk of those billets being pilots. There are four officers assigned to the British Royal Marines so the Marine you saw in the video was probably one of them.—Editor

Okinawa, August 1959

One evening I received word that a C-119 (Flying Boxcar) from Iwakuni, Japan, was inbound with the commanding general of 3d Marine Division who needed a ride to Camp Courtney. I introduced myself and told him it would be my pleasure and honor to be his driver.

During the drive I told the general that he was the commanding general of MCRD San Diego, Calif., when I went through boot camp. I said, "My drill instructor, Sergeant T.J. Rush, told us of your experience in the bloodiest battle in the South Pacific and that you were

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awarded the Medal of Honor. Sir, I salute you.”

He asked where I was from and how I felt being a Marine. He said, “If you want to be a Marine, you have to devote your life to the Corps and the rewards will come.”

I couldn’t believe I was having a one-on-one conversation with the general. What a moving experience for a PFC. We arrived at Camp Courtney, and he invited me in where he introduced me to his wife. There were packing boxes all over and she said they were going to Washington, D.C.

On the way back to Kadena Air Base I had a big head and a swollen chest, and from my gut I felt that Marine Corps pride.

In 1960 that general became the 22nd Commandant of the Marine Corps—David S. Shoup.

SgtMaj H.J. Gruber, USMC (Ret)
Ocala, Fla.

Honor Flights

I would like to commend and acknowledge the organization called New England Honor Flights from Hooksett, N.H.

The Honor Flights are charter aircraft that are taking applications of World War II veterans, many of whom are well into their 90s, to visit the war memorials

in Washington, D.C., for a full day of activities. They supply wheelchairs, tour guides and chaperons if needed. The organization is funded by private donations.

They are a tremendous organization. Contact them at: <https://www.honorflight.org/> for information.

Cpl John Messia Jr., USMC
Brockton, Mass.

• For more about Honor Flight, read the article “Remembering Vietnam” on page 37.—Editor

Landing Craft, Ship Misidentification

In the October 2017 edition of the *Leatherneck* you have made an error in the identification of the landing crafts on page 6. That is not a picture of LCUs but a picture of two LCM-8s that we called, “Mike Eights.”

In my Marine career of 36 years I have ridden in them many times. You do a great job, keep it up.

Col John D. Carr, USMC (Ret)
Belfast, Maine

Great letter [October 2017] on what could have been a fiercely opposed Navy/
[continued on page 66]

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In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock



SGT LAURA GAUNA, USMC

Marines with MASS-2, 1st MAW, participate in Exercise Midori Guardian 17, which was held in South Korea just a few miles from the DMZ, Sept. 5 to Oct. 15, 2017.

CAMP STORY, SOUTH KOREA **Marines Rehearse Air Support** **Near DMZ**

More than 130 Marines and Sailors with Marine Air Support Squadron (MASS) 2, Marine Air Control Group 18, Marine Aircraft Group 36, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, deployed a Direct Air Support Center (DASC) and an Air Support Element to Camp Story, South Korea, for Exercise Midori Guardian 17 from Sept. 5 to Oct. 15, 2017.

Midori Guardian, a unit-level training event aimed at enhancing squadron readiness while in a field environment, utilizes simulated real-world scenarios focused on DASC and ASE operations, live-fire ranges and Marine Corps common skills training to prepare the unit for future operations.

"After spending 30-plus days in the field together, the unit has really grown closer," said Gunnery Sergeant Robert Giossi, a DASC chief with MASS-2. "We've had to rely on everybody else in the unit to do their job and to do it well, and I think we've done just that. I can see a greater confidence in every Marine's ability to do their job. We certainly set the standard for future Midori Guardians."

The DASC, the Marine Corps' principal aviation command and control system and agency responsible for air operations directly supporting ground forces, facilitates and expedites the Aviation Combat Element's ability to support the Ground Combat Element's fight on the ground.

"We try to stay as integrated as we can with the ground troops so that we know when things are shooting and where they are shooting so we can warn pilots and keep everyone safe while still integrating everything the Marine Corps has into a small piece of air space," said Captain Matthew Paull, MASS-2 assistant operations officer. "If there are Marines on the ground that need to be integrated with the air, they need some kind of DASC capability to make that happen."

The DASC processes requests for immediate air support, including joint tactical airstrike requests, casualty evacuation and assault support requests. By integrating weapons capabilities on the ground with the aviation assets nearby, the DASC controls the airspace as well as managing terminal control assets.

"This is one of those jobs in the Marine Corps that doesn't get a lot of attention," said Paull. "The mission or

capability that we provide to the Marine Air-Ground Task Force as a whole really makes it an efficient warfighting machine. The warfighting functions are certainly enhanced by what we bring to the fight. We are one of the few countries in the world that have this kind of capability."

Throughout the exercise, participants experienced a high operating tempo, conducting 30 to 40 immediate request scenarios each day. More than 60 Marines were qualified on various positions within the DASC, significantly improving the unit's readiness.

"Being able to set up the DASC and run continuous operations day after day for more than 30 days was a big win for us," said Paull. "Just the sheer magnitude of hours and training that the Marines were able to get in the system themselves was remarkable."

The unit also was effective in growing individual unit readiness with respect to Marine Corps common skills. They successfully completed five live-fire ranges and multiple iterations of squad- and platoon-level defensive and offensive operations.

"It's important to remember that today you may be in the DASC but tomorrow you might be called upon to something much different," added Paull. "You can never forget that you've got to keep your Marines well-rounded. You can't overly emphasize one area because it will be to the detriment of a different area that they need to maintain and focus on. Getting Marines at the small-unit leader level back into the warfighter mindset was key."

Since the beginning, this iteration of Exercise Midori Guardian stood out from those previously conducted when motor transportation Marines successfully completed the largest-ever convoy on the peninsula during a single exercise, driving more than 7,000 tactical miles from Pohang to Warrior Base.

"To physically move your own stuff and to be self-supportive in a country you haven't been to before was new to us," said Gunnery Sergeant Donald Marsh, a Motor T chief with MASS-2. "We proved that we as a unit can do this with little outside help. This exercise was like my Super Bowl and our commanding officer was our coach. He put faith in us to do it and we achieved it and then some."

A second significant milestone was reached when U.S. and Republic of Korea

Marine and Air Force leadership met to discuss a growing aviation command and control capability for ROK forces.

“Being 3 miles from the [Demilitarized Zone] certainly adds a layer of realism that they absolutely won’t get back in the rear,” said Paull. “As much as you try to simulate the training there is nothing better than going out to a location where you have active minefields around you, a very heavily guarded DMZ 3 miles north, and ROK Army and ROK Marines training right alongside you.”

Sgt Laura Gauna, USMC

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

Air, Land and Sea: Recon Marines From U.S., U.K. and Mexico Conduct Helocasting Operations

U.S. Marines with 2d Force Reconnaissance Company, Royal Marines with British Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron and Mexican Marines participated in a helocast exercise during Exercise Bold Alligator 17 at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., Oct. 19, 2017.

Helocasting is an operation in which a unit inserts into water from a helicopter, boards a combat rubber raiding craft and continues by boat to the on-shore objective. As part of Exercise Bold Alligator, a multinational amphibious exercise, the training simulated a unit inserting into a contested environment to execute complex



LCPL ASHLEY MCLAUGHLIN, USMC

Marines carry a Zodiac combat rubber raiding craft ashore at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Oct. 19, 2017, as part of Exercise Bold Alligator 17, a large-scale, multinational amphibious exercise designed to improve U.S. and coalition ship-to-shore capabilities.

shaping operations, carry out an amphibious landing and attack to enhance the force’s expeditionary capabilities.

“To do this kind of insert, there’s a progression of training you have to complete,” said Captain Joseph Accountius, a platoon commander with 2d Force Recon Co. “It begins in the pool. Everyone has to be qualified for intermediate water survival at a minimum; for reconnaissance Marines,

they have to complete advanced water survival. From there we move to tower entries, then we have to practice our small boat handling skills—that includes surf passages, operating an outboard motor and then maneuvering. From there we can put it all together.”

There are potential concerns when working with multiple nations during an exercise, from procedural differences to



LCPL ASHLEY MCLAUGHLIN, USMC

Force Recon Marines jump from a CH-53 Super Stallion during a helocast conducted with British Royal Marines and Mexican Marines as part of Exercise Bold Alligator 17 at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Oct. 19, 2017.

A U.S. Marine advisor observes as ANA soldiers with Artillery Brigade, 215th Corps execute a gun drill on a 122 mm howitzer D-30 during an artillery course at Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, Oct. 21, 2017.



SGT LUCAS HOPKINS, USMC

linguistic concerns. Through training and cooperation, the unit was able to work through it all to accomplish their mission.

“Helocasting is something we do on a regular basis, but to do it with two other nations is quite an experience and we got a lot of good training out of it,” said Sergeant Eric Walraven, a radio team operator with 2d Force Recon Co.

Each team was able to share specific tactics involved in the insert itself and the reconnaissance that gets them past the beach and to the next objective. The experience forced the Marines to adapt to each other as the exercise was happening.

“In the event we work with allied nations again, this has definitely been a stepping stone into bigger operations,” said Walraven. “Our three nations coming together has made us improve and work effectively together.”

II MEF

CAMP SHORABAK, AFGHANISTAN Artillery Course Strengthens Fight Against the Taliban

More than 20 Afghan National Army soldiers with Artillery Brigade, 215th Corps began an artillery course at Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, in October 2017.

Several U.S. Marine advisors with Task Force Southwest led the eight-week course, taking a “crawl, walk, run” ap-

Below: ANA soldiers listen as a U.S. Marine advisor with Task Force Southwest teaches proper map-reading techniques during the eight-week artillery course at Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, Oct. 21, 2017. The program was designed to enhance the ANA’s employment of artillery assets.



SGT LUCAS HOPKINS, USMC

proach with their Afghan counterparts throughout the evolution.

“Right now the emphasis is on the basics, and trying to foster the mindset of ‘shoot, move and communicate’ while employing this skill within the brigade,” said Gunnery Sergeant Dellon Arthur,

an artillery advisor with the Task Force.

Not all soldiers who participated in the course learned the same skills. Artillery crewmen, forward observers and a fire direction control team worked to enhance their respective skills in order to bring an enhanced capability to the battlefield.

“Our goal is to remove the enemy and to achieve the skills necessary to do that,” said Captain Hijratullah, ANA, a battery commander with Artillery Brigade. “Our experience here is getting better and better. We feel a lot better already about firing artillery.”

As the course progressed, the forward observers and fire direction control personnel incorporated map reading and other skills during in-field training, while the crewmen conducted increasingly advanced dry-fire drills and procedures on the 122 mm howitzer D-30. The training culminated in the final week during a live-fire exercise testing the ANA soldiers’ newfound skills in a fire support scenario.

According to Arthur, the capability that artillery provides throughout the battlespace can be crucial to defeating an enemy.

“As artillery, one of our primary missions is to support the ground forces,” said Arthur. “When those forces are seizing an objective or neutralizing the enemy, fire support can play a pivotal role in that unit’s mission accomplishment.”

Proper employment and firing of artillery is a challenging task, but the advisors and the Afghan soldiers are ready to bring this lethal asset to the fight against the Taliban.

Sgt Lucas Hopkins, USMC

LUZON, PHILIPPINES

Exercise Prepares U.S., Philippines For Humanitarian Crisis

Approximately 100 Marines with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing joined forces with the Armed Forces of the Philippines to support the first-ever iteration of the Philippines-led Exercise Kamandag at various sites on the island of Luzon, Philippines, Oct. 2-11, 2017.

Four MV-22B Ospreys with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 262 and two KC-130J Super Hercules with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152 provided aerial support through transportation of personnel, food and supplies.

The four Ospreys transported members of the joint humanitarian assistance survey team, which is the first echelon of response for the Marines at Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, in the event of a disaster. The Ospreys allowed the team to quickly reach the Philippines from Okinawa and make an immediate assessment of the scope of a simulated disaster.

Exercise Kamandag, an annual bilateral exercise, enabled military-to-military exchanges between the U.S. and Philippine forces with a focus on enhancing counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and



MV-22B Ospreys with VMM-262 prepare to take off from MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, Japan, Sept. 29, 2017, in support of Exercise Kamandag in the Philippines. The Ospreys served as transportation for 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade’s joint humanitarian assistance survey team. (Photo by Sgt Laura Gauna, USMC)

disaster relief (HADR) capabilities and conducting humanitarian and civic assistance projects. It allows participants to work together during multiple combined events in order to enhance techniques and procedures, enabling them to learn and grow both through tactics and personal relationships.

“Our main mission is to continue to promote bilateral training and operations with the Filipino military,” said Major Ethan Learmonth, operations officer for

VMM-262, during the exercise. “We’re here to learn how two different forces can integrate and work together in an event of a humanitarian crisis.”

“We are offering transportation,” Learmonth added of the role of the aircraft in the exercise. “This could mean transportation for food, troops, water, medicine and medical personnel in the event of a natural disaster.”

Exercise Kamandag allowed service-members to identify their weaknesses and



Marines with VMM-262 load and prepare MV-22B Ospreys for a flight from MCAS Futenma to the Philippines, Sept. 29, 2017, to support Exercise Kamandag. The bilateral Philippines-led exercise increased the ability of the U.S. and the Philippines to rapidly respond and work together during terrorist or humanitarian crises. (Photo by Sgt Laura Gauna, USMC)



Leathernecks with CLB-5 conduct a training exercise at Range 114, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., during ITX 1-18, Oct. 21, 2017. The training included evacuating personnel from a vehicle that had been struck by a simulated IED and moving a convoy through a kill zone. (Photo by LCpl Isaac Cantrell, USMC)

build vital skills for HADR missions in order to be better prepared for them in the future. This and future iterations of the exercise will improve combined responsiveness to crises in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region and further reinforce a decades-long partnership.

“[Exercise Kamandag] has a greater focus on the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief aspect,” said Learmonth. “Working directly with the Filipino military to create a scenario that will closely mimic what we would face if there was a large disaster that hit the Philippines. The training there is fantastic, the people are welcoming; the environment is very friendly to our training and mission here.”

LCpl Andy Martinez, USMC

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF.

CLB-5 Conducts IED Sweeps, Evacuates Casualties During ITX

Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 5, based at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., conducted training at

Scott Wheeler, a counter-IED instructor with Marine Corps Engineer School, demonstrates the use of a compact metal detector as Marines from CLB-5 look on at MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., Oct. 21, 2017 during ITX-18.

Range 114, Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., as part of Integrated Training Exercise 1-18, Oct. 21, 2017.

Each ITX is a 29-day evolution made up of intense training cycles, which involve multiple live-fire exercises that assess the ability and adaptability of each unit. The iterations focus on the tactical application of combined-arms maneuver warfare

during global contingency operations.

For ITX 1-18, CLB-5 focused training on evacuating personnel from a vehicle that had been struck by a simulated improvised explosive device (IED) and using compact metal detectors to detect IEDs. The culminating event for the training was a motorized fire and maneuver exercise.

“This training event was important because it helps us to boost our survival



LCPL ISAAC CANTRELL, USMC

bility and adaptability as a platoon,” said Captain William Pendergast, transportation services company commander, CLB-5. “The platoon simulated movement through an unblocked ambush, taking contact from the east and engaging while moving logistics vehicles and gun trucks out of kill zones. They were effective in suppressing the targets and moving the whole convoy out of the kill zone.”

According to Sergeant Devin Crawford, the assistant operations chief for CLB-5, this training is vital in teaching Marines how to respond in real-life scenarios. Whether it’s receiving contact, being hit by IED strikes or evacuating casualties, training like this benefits not only individual units but also the Corps as a whole.

LCpl Isaac Cantrell, USMC

POHAKULOA TRAINING AREA HAWAII

Improving Lethality: 2/3 Calls for Fire

Marines with 2d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment rehearsed fire support coordination during Exercise Bougainville II at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii, Oct. 21, 2017.

The purpose of the training was to efficiently coordinate various types of fire support ranging from artillery barrages to airstrikes while maintaining caution.

“We have the fire support teams (FSTs) integrating fires with the 81 mm mortar

platoon, and aircraft assigned to the Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367, also known as Scarface,” said Captain Brian Smith, an infantry officer with 2/3. “The FST leaders are working on integrating those fires through quick fire plans, prosecuting targets of opportunity and coordinating those fires in a manner that is most effective and lethal.”

Smith said that it’s important for the Marines to get ordnance on target, but they also need to maintain a constant concern for safety.

“The Fire Support Coordination Center is monitoring those fires to make sure that it’s executed in a responsive, but also safe, manner—especially toward the aviation assets involved in the operation,” Smith said.

Lance Corporal Jeff Hoffman, a forward observer with 2/3, said each individual in the FST has a specific job.

“You have your FST leader, the forward air controller—they’re responsible for the air assets and you have Marines like me who provide observation and coordination for the 81 mm mortars,” Hoffman said. “We make timelines for the supporting fires so the aircraft involved can fly safely, suppress targets with mortars and artillery, and this way if there’s any anti-air in the area we can put those down, paving the way for the air assets.”

Hoffman said it takes teamwork and organization to conduct a fire support

coordination exercise.

“We speak with each other on the radio and use a system to adjust the placement of the fires,” Hoffman said. “My job is to get mortars and artillery on target while the other members of the team coordinate with their assets.”

“We’ve integrated fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft alongside the mortars and artillery,” said Capt Josh Horman, a forward air controller with 2/3, adding that the aircraft included UH-1Y Hueys, AH-1 Cobra and F/A-18 Hornets.

According to Horman, it’s important for the aircraft to integrate alongside the other fire support assets to avoid friendly fire.

“There’s a 12-step process called the execution template that we run through,” Horman said. “We utilize a detailed coordination with the mortar team so that our aircraft can safely provide air support.”

Smith said he’s glad the Marines completed the exercise, which will improve the unit as a whole.

“It’s really a great opportunity to get the FSTs trained and ready so they can go back to their companies and make them even more [deadly] than before,” Smith said. “It allows [us] to improve at integrating fires and get better at the combined arms that make the Marine Corps lethal.”

LCpl Isabelo Tabanguil, USMC



2ndLt Carter Collins and LCpl Jeffrey Hoffmann, both with 2/3, act as part of the Fire Support Team at an observation point during Exercise Bougainville II, Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii, Oct. 21, 2017.

SGT RICKY GOMEZ, USMC



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Afghanistan and Iraq Engravings Added to U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial

The U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and the United States Marine Corps recently added new engravings to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial to include the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns.

The names and dates of major Marine Corps campaigns and battles are engraved at the base of the memorial as is the Corps' motto, "Semper Fidelis." The memorial also features the phrase, "Uncommon Valor Was a Common Virtue," the iconic quote from Admiral Chester W. Nimitz in honor of the Marines' action on Iwo Jima. While the statue depicts the famous photograph of the second flag raising on the island of Iwo Jima in World War II, the memorial is dedicated to all Marines who have given their lives in defense of the United States since 1775.

"As the Deputy Commander of Special Forces in Iraq and a retired Navy SEAL, I saw the commitment, patriotism, and fortitude that American service members and their families display while serving our country. It's a great honor to be a part of memorializing the Marines of the

Global War on Terror," said U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. "Our warriors who serve in Iraq and Afghanistan see more frequent deployments as our nation has been at sustained combat for longer than in any previous point in our nation's history. The Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are warriors in the field and leaders in the community. I salute them and am grateful for their service."

"These engravings represent the 1,481 Marines to date who gave all, as well as their surviving families and a Corps who will never forget them. The U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial is a living tribute to warriors. It is a sacred place that symbolizes our commitment to our nation and to each other," said General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Made possible by a \$5.37 million donation from businessman and philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, the rehabilitation project also included cleaning and waxing the memorial, brazing bronze seams and re-gilding letters and inscriptions on the sculpture base. During the past four months,

every inch of the 32-foot-tall statues of Marines raising the flag was examined. Holes, cracks and seams on the bronze sculpture were brazed to prevent water damage.

"Today we're simply adding two words to the Marine Corps memorial—Afghanistan and Iraq—but what they stand for is historic and should make every American pause and give thanks for the sacrifices of life and limb that our Armed Forces have made to protect our freedoms. It is the greatest of privileges to be able to honor our troops and military by helping to restore this iconic memorial," David M. Rubenstein said.

Rubenstein's donation, announced in April 2015, was a leadership gift to the National Park Foundation's Centennial Campaign for America's National Parks.

The next phase of the project will replace lighting, landscaping, and specially designed educational displays about the significance and importance of the memorial. The project is expected to be completed by fall 2018.

Compiled from NPS media releases





COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

A contractor brazes a portion of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial during renovations that took place in the fall of 2017.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Park Service staff inspects the Memorial during the renovation which included cleaning, waxing and re-gilding the letters and inscriptions.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Scaffolding was erected around the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial for the initial phase of the renovation. The second phase of the project will replace lighting, landscaping and specially designed educational displays.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The words "Afghanistan" and "Iraq" were traced on the Memorial prior to the actual engraving of the Corps' two latest campaigns.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



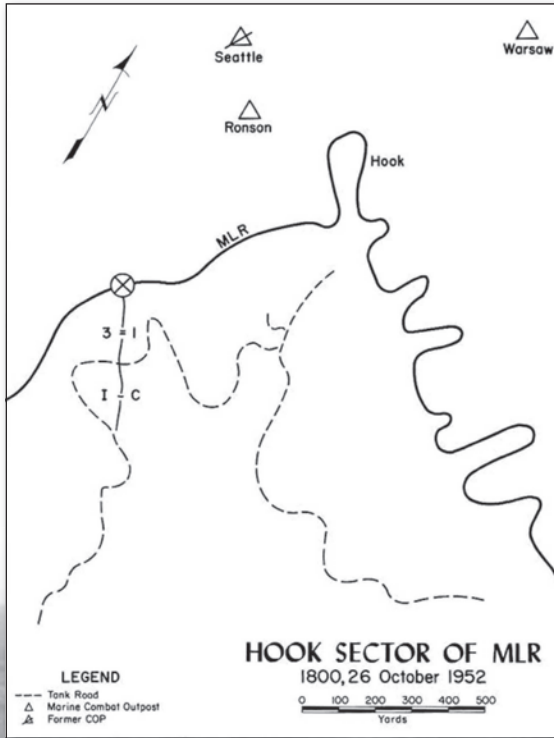
COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Korea 1952: The Hook

By Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret)

"We had to cover two, maybe three times as much line as would normally be assigned to a defensive company. ... So, there you have two platoons covering a two company area with one platoon out in front."

Capt Fred McLaughlin
Commanding Officer
"Able" Co, 1st Bn, 7th Marines



As the summer of 1952 gave way to autumn, the war in Korea had been a war of position for one year. The war that had begun in 1950, a war of movement and maneuver that saw American forces fight their way along almost the entire length of the Korean Peninsula, was long over. Now, two contending armies occupied a continuous line of trenches, bunkers and strongpoints across Korea, from the Sea of Japan on the east to the Yellow Sea that lapped Korea's western shore. It was war in the style of the Western Front in France, circa 1916.

For Major General Edwin A. Pollock's 1st Marine Division this meant a frontage of 31 miles from the Kimpo Peninsula eastward to the Samichon River, an extraordinarily long piece of territory. Even with the addition of the Republic of Korea Marine Regiment, MajGen Pollock's division was stretched thin, frighteningly thin. Thus far, though, the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) that had assumed the main role in western Korea, had not tested the 1stMarDiv's main defenses. The war in the western region had until now been characterized by fighting along the 1stMarDiv's combat outpost line (COPL). The main line of resistance (MLR) had been relatively uninvolved.

That was about to change on a rather unremarkable hill along the Samichon River. In geological terms the hill wasn't actually a hill but a relatively low, somewhat flat ridgeline protruding from the higher hill behind it. When seen on a map, the immediate



Marines on The Hook have a clear view of Chinese shells exploding in the valley below.

USMC

mental image that came to the viewer's mind was that of an upside down letter J, somewhat of a hook. If the hill had ever carried a name, that name was long forgotten as the autumn days of October 1952 began to have a bit of a chill to them. The Marines who fought on the hill then knew it by the name they gave it, a name that always will be a part of their memories. Marines dubbed the hill The Hook, and none of them cared overly much for it.

That lack of affection might have grown out of the hill's very nature. An integral part of the 1stMarDiv's MLR, The Hook bulged out into the contested ground directly in front of it to the north. Tactically that allowed the CCF, who eyed The Hook as a pathway to greater things, to fire into the Marines holding the hill from two sides, concentrating their fires on the defenders. Marines on the receiving end were left with the unenviable choice of having to distribute their defensive fires against attackers from two directions.

No less desirable was the fact that access to The Hook or out of it required going downhill or uphill from its larger neighbor behind it in full view of the Chinese out in front all the while. Access to The Hook or out of it was almost always done under fire.

The Hook may have been the least enviable piece of ground Marines ever have been ordered to hold; tactically it was a nightmare. Why, then, hold it? First, because The Hook was all that was available. Second, because it was an extremely valuable piece of ground. From where it stood, The Hook was the sole position that commanded the best CCF avenue of attack through the Samichon Valley. The Samichon Valley in turn lay like an arrow pointing to 1stMarDiv's rear area and the direct route to the South Korean capital of Seoul. The Hook was also the right limit of the 1stMarDiv's defense sector. To the right, across the Samichon River, the line was taken up by the 1stMarDiv's "brother" division, the British Commonwealth Division.

But why not run the MLR along the larger hill behind The Hook? What, in full view of the Chinese across the way? Fully exposed to the direct fires of Chinese self-propelled, flat-trajectory 76 mm artillery so thoughtfully provided by the Soviet Union? No, the Hook was what there was. Were it to be lost, as MajGen M.M. Austin-Roberts-West, whose Commonwealth Division held the east bank of the Samichon, summarized the situation by observing that "a withdrawal of 4,000 yards would have been necessary." Unlovely though it was, The Hook had to be held.

The CCF high command, on the other hand, felt no misgivings about The Hook. The CCF high command wanted The Hook. If The Hook could be taken, the CCF would be able to create a penetration between 1stMarDiv and the Commonwealth Division, the very type of a decisive engagement that could determine the outcome of the Korean War. The CCF high command very much wanted The Hook and wasn't the least bit hesitant to spend the lives of its soldiers in taking it.

In the late afternoon hours of Thursday, Oct. 2, the Chinese made their first move. A curtain of incoming fire, mixed 120 mm mortar and 122 mm artillery, began pounding the positions of the reinforced platoon from Lieutenant Colonel Gerald F. Russell's 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment holding Combat Outpost Warsaw 600 hundred yards forward and slightly east of the MLR. Strongly reinforced, the CCF's 9th Company, 357th Regiment, 119th Division, advancing through its own supporting fires, taking casualties as it came on, was almost immediately into the defensive positions of Warsaw. Fighting was hand-to-hand and face-to-face, but there were too many Chinese and not enough Marines.

Warsaw could not be held, but the Chinese could be made to pay a stiff price for its capture. One Marine in particular, Private Jack W. Kelso, was adamantly determined to exact that price.

When both his platoon leader and platoon sergeant fell dead,



Pvt Jack W. Kelso



The President of the United States in the name of the
The Congress takes pride in presenting the
MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to
PRIVATE JACK W. KELSO
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
For service set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a rifleman of Company I, in action against enemy aggressor forces. When both the platoon commander and the platoon sergeant became casualties during the defense of a vital outpost against a numerically superior enemy force attacking at night under cover of intense small arms, grenade, and mortar fire, PFC Kelso bravely exposed himself to the hail of enemy fire in a determined effort to reorganize the unit and to repel the onrushing attackers. Forced to seek cover, along with four other Marines, in a nearby bunker which immediately came under attack, he unhesitatingly picked up an enemy grenade which landed in the shelter, rushed out into the open, and hurled it back at the enemy. Although painfully wounded when the grenade exploded as it left his hand, and again forced to seek the protection of the bunker when the hostile fire became more intensified, PFC Kelso refused to remain in his position of comparative safety and moved out into the fire-swept area to return the enemy fire, thereby permitting the pinned-down Marines in the bunker to escape. Mortally wounded while providing covering fire for his comrades, PFC Kelso, by his valiant fighting spirit, aggressive determination, and self-sacrificing efforts on behalf of others, served to inspire all who observed him. His heroic actions sustain and enhance the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Kelso and four other Marines found themselves trapped in a bunker, under fire by Chinese from apparently every direction. Everything the Chinese did to eliminate them, Jack Kelso threw back with a vengeance. Whether it was small arms fire or grenades, Jack Kelso had a reply. On one occasion he picked up a Chinese grenade and threw it back, only to have the grenade explode just as it left his hand.

The severe wounds Kelso suffered didn't deter him. Still able to use a rifle, he used it to deadly advantage, sending more attackers sprawling in the dirt. There were too many Chinese. Keeping up his fire, Kelso called his fellow Marines to get out and make a run for it while he covered for them. As the other

three Marines ducked and dodged their way down the trench line, Jack Kelso fell in a hail of Chinese fire. For his selfless actions and complete disregard for his own safety on Outpost Warsaw that night, Pvt Jack W. Kelso posthumously would be awarded America's highest commendation for military valor, the Medal of Honor. Perhaps his squad leader, Sergeant Keith Yarnell, had the best memorial for him. "Jack Kelso was the bravest man I ever met."

Even as Jack Kelso was locked in his doomed battle, Staff Sergeant William D. "Denny" Weisgerber was bringing his I/3/7 platoon forward from battalion reserve to retrieve the situation, not knowing that already, it was too late. Taking casualties even before it arrived on Warsaw, the platoon found the outpost blanketed by Chinese fire. Minutes after arriving, the platoon was ordered to withdraw.

It was then that one of Weisgerber's Marines fell wounded in an open area that would have meant certain death to enter. Denny Weisgerber didn't hesitate. Running to the downed man while Chinese artillery churned up every foot of Warsaw, Weisgerber hoisted the wounded Marine to his shoulders and started back out of the kill zone. He almost made it.

A stunning blow struck Weisgerber's right leg, knocking him to the ground. Never one to give up, Denny Weisgerber, crawling as best he could, dragged the wounded Marine like a sack of potatoes until other Marines from the MLR came forward to bring Denny and his charge to safety.

For his courage in the face of certain death, SSgt Denny Weisgerber would be awarded the Navy Cross. The medal came with a price tag—his right leg—but as Denny explained it: "That was one of my people out there. I couldn't just leave him."

The Chinese assault on Warsaw that had begun so suddenly ended in the same manner. What had been a flaming cauldron short minutes before was now a smoldering silence. The few Marines who managed to get out of Warsaw before being overrun were neither fired upon nor pursued as they made their way back to the MLR. A platoon from Captain John A. Thomas' I/3/7 quickly and easily recaptured Warsaw. Where only minutes before Warsaw had been covered by Chinese, there were now no living Chinese on the outpost.

The Chinese had achieved their objective. That objective was not to take and hold Warsaw; rather it was to determine what would be necessary to eliminate Warsaw before the main attack on The Hook could go forward. If doing that required expending Chinese soldiers, it was bad luck for the soldier in the ranks, many of whom were now putrefying corpses littered about Warsaw. No matter, there were more than enough others for the main attack to go in.

What followed was a period of several weeks of relatively minor actions as Marines and Chinese traded ambushes and



Marine bunkers were severely damaged by Chinese mortar and artillery fire throughout the battle for The Hook in October 1952.



Marines from Bttry I, 4th Battalion, 11th Marines load their howitzer in preparation for a fire mission.

raids that had little effect on the overall situation. Unfortunately, this activity occurred at a time when American forces all across Korea were experiencing serious artillery and mortar ammunition shortages that limited their ability to undertake anything decisive. The Chinese, who had no such problem on their hands, were stockpiling massive amounts of such ordnance in preparation for the main attack on The Hook.

That attack, after a few days of preparation, would be directed at LtCol Leo J. Dulacký's I/7 that assumed that sector of the MLR from 3/7. The least enviable task of all, defense of The Hook itself, fell initially to Capt Paul B. Byrum's C/1/7. The company had barely had the opportunity to become familiarized with the situation when the Chinese launched their all or nothing effort to take The Hook and open the pathway of the Samichon Valley.

When the Chinese launched their all-out attack on The Hook,

they launched it in what was by now becoming an all-too-predictable fashion. Beginning on Oct. 23, Chinese artillery began an accurate plastering of defensive positions on The Hook. The Chinese forward observers were doing a very professional and methodical job of directing fire against key points all along The Hook's forward trenches and command bunkers. They were doing a very effective job as well.

Entire sections of trench line were collapsed, bunkers caved in. As quickly as they were repaired, they were wrecked again. Trenches that had been 6 feet deep were now leveled. Timber reinforced bunkers ceased to exist. Any movement on The Hook brought an instant rain of Chinese fire. At the same time Chinese heavy artillery, 152 mm howitzers, were constantly active, seeking out priority targets in 1stMarDiv's rear areas.

It went on and on and on for three days. In the midst of it, LtCol Dulacky, anticipating what was coming, put in his last reserve. Capt Frederick C. McLaughlin's A/1/7, took over the defense on The Hook while C/1/7 sidestepped to the left to strengthen the left shoulder. Each company reached its new position just short minutes before the Chinese main attack came in as the Chinese artillery fire fell in ever increasing intensity. First Lieutenant Charles C. Mattingly remembered it years later as his worst experience in one year in Korea.

On Oct. 26, out in front of the MLR, it was even worse than that as the Chinese infantry, the 3d Battalion of the 357th Regiment, came on in an assault that was intended to break through the 1stMarDiv and open the road to the Samichon Valley. The Chinese had already determined what would be necessary to eliminate Outpost Warsaw.

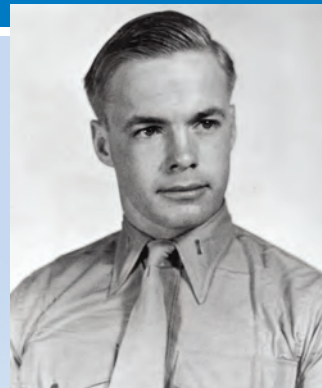
Within minutes Warsaw and the squad-sized outpost dubbed Ronson fell beneath a human avalanche of Chinese. Outpost Ronson vanished without a trace. One final radio transmission from Warsaw told that the outpost was being overrun. Three Marines from Warsaw managed to avoid being killed or captured and made their way back to the MLR, where the situation and the MLR itself were fast deteriorating.

The forward defenses on The Hook were systematically being minced and churned into nothing resembling a defense system by a rain of incoming fire. Even as The Hook's forward positions were torn apart, Chinese infantry, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 357th Regiment, had reached what had moments before been the forward positions of A/1/7. The Chinese were on The Hook.

Private First Class James Yarborough, a machine gunner, found himself with but one other member of his squad, all that remained of what had been a complete machine-gun squad short minutes before. Squeezing through the firing port of a half-wrecked bunker as the Chinese flung grenades at them and Chinese artillery continued to plaster the area, the pair crawled their way back to the second line of defenses.

A forward observer team from 2/11 wasn't that fortunate. Second Lieutenant Sherrod Skinner Jr., the forward observer, radio operator Corporal Franklin Roy and wireman PFC Vance Worster, all were soon trapped in a bunker within minutes, fired upon by Chinese from what seemed like all points of the compass. Undeterred, 2ndLt Skinner continued to call in fire missions until his radio went dead. He and his team then fought as infantry, fighting as demons until a Chinese grenade landed in their midst. With Cpl Roy and PFC Worster already wounded, Skinner threw himself atop the grenade, absorbing the full force of the explosion. Cpl Franklin Roy and PFC Vance Worster each would receive the Navy Cross for their actions. For Sherrod Skinner there would be a posthumous award of the Medal of Honor.

As daylight gave way to dusk, the situation on The Hook had become critical. Fully aware of the seriousness of the situation, MajGen Pollock released LtCol Sidney J. Altman's 3/1 from division reserve to operational control of 7th Marines. In addition,



2ndLt Sherrod Skinner Jr.



The President of the United States in the name of the
The Congress takes pride in presenting the
MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to
SECOND LIEUTENANT SHERROD SKINNER JR.
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE
For service set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as an artillery forward observer of Battery F, in action against enemy aggressor forces on the night of Oct. 26, 1952. When his observation post in an extremely critical and vital sector of the main line of resistance was subjected to a sudden and fanatical attack by hostile forces, supported by a devastating barrage of artillery and mortar fire which completely severed communication lines connecting the outpost with friendly firing batteries, 2ndLt Skinner, in a determined effort to hold his position, immediately organized and directed the surviving personnel in the defense of the outpost, continuing to call down fire on the enemy by means of radio alone until his equipment became damaged beyond repair. Undaunted by the intense hostile barrage and the rapidly-closing attackers, he twice left the protection of his bunker in order to direct accurate machine-gun fire and to replenish the depleted supply of ammunition and grenades. Although painfully wounded on each occasion, he steadfastly refused medical aid until the rest of the men received treatment. As the ground attack reached its climax, he gallantly directed the final defense until the meager supply of ammunition was exhausted and the position overrun. During the three hours that the outpost was occupied by the enemy, several grenades were thrown into the bunker which served as protection for 2ndLt Skinner and his remaining comrades. Realizing that there was no chance for other than passive resistance, he directed his men to feign death even though the hostile troops entered the bunker and searched their persons. Later, when an enemy grenade was thrown between him and two other survivors, he immediately threw himself on the deadly missile in an effort to protect the others, absorbing the full force of the explosion and sacrificing his life for his comrades. By his indomitable fighting spirit, superb leadership, and great personal valor in the face of tremendous odds, 2ndLt Skinner served to inspire his fellow Marines in their heroic stand against the enemy and upheld the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



2ndLt George H. O'Brien Jr.

The President of the United States in the name of the
The Congress takes pride in presenting the
MEDAL OF HONOR to
SECOND LIEUTENANT GEORGE H. O'BRIEN JR.
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE
For service set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a rifle platoon commander of Company H, in action against enemy aggressor forces. With his platoon subjected to an intense mortar and artillery bombardment while preparing to assault a vitally important hill position on the main line of resistance which had been overrun by a numerically superior enemy force on the preceding night, 2ndLt O'Brien leaped from his trench when the attack signal was given and, shouting for his men to follow, raced across an exposed saddle and up the enemy-held hill through a virtual hail of deadly small-arms, artillery, and mortar fire. Although shot through the arm and thrown to the ground by hostile automatic-weapons fire as he neared the well-entrenched enemy position, he bravely regained his feet, waved his men onward, and continued to spearhead the assault, pausing only long enough to go to the aid of a wounded Marine. Encountering the enemy at close-range, he proceeded to hurl hand grenades into the bunkers and, utilizing his carbine to best advantage in savage hand-to-hand combat, succeeded in killing at least three of the enemy. Struck down by the concussion of grenades on three occasions during the subsequent action, he steadfastly refused to be evacuated for medical treatment and continued to lead his platoon in the assault for a period of nearly four hours, repeatedly encouraging his men and maintaining superb direction of the unit. With the attack halted, he set up a defense with his remaining forces to prepare for a counterattack, personally checking each position, attending to the wounded and expediting their evacuation. When a relief of the position was effected by another unit, he remained to cover the withdrawal and to assure that no wounded were left behind. By his exceptionally daring and forceful leadership in the face of overwhelming odds, 2ndLt O'Brien served as a constant source of inspiration to all who observed him and was greatly instrumental in the recapture of a strategic position on the main line of resistance. His indomitable determination and valiant fighting spirit reflect the highest credit upon himself and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

LtCol Dulacký's 1/7 was given sole priority of supporting fires and air strikes. In like manner it was also given like priority for all ammunition resupply.

On the other side of the Samichon, the Commonwealth Division wasn't quite sitting on its hands. Every direct fire weapon in the division's left sector that could be brought to bear was directing a constant stream of fire into the flanks of the Chinese elements assailing The Hook. Guns of the Commonwealth Division's artillery were ranging on any and all Chinese assembly areas that could be brought under fire. Still, in what seemed to be in inexhaustible numbers, the Chinese came on. It went on in that manner throughout the night.

With the arrival of daylight on Oct. 27, elements of A/1/7 and C/1/7 had been pushed back almost off The Hook by the human tide that seemed to have no end. Years later Capt Fred McLaughlin, commanding A/1/7, remembered it: "We went up on the high ground and started a concerted advance down toward The Hook. I was able to bring in 81s and 60s, and even got a 4.5 ripple [4.5" multiple launch rockets] during that period of two or three hours, enough to keep them down.

Leading the counterattack of A/1/7 was 2ndLt Stanly Rauh, who had only recently rejoined the company after recovering from wounds sustained in August. At one point Rauh's hands sustained severe and painful burns caused by a Chinese white phosphorous grenade. The chemical adhered to Rauh's hands "like glue." With no water available to suppress the oxygen white phosphorous required to keep it burning, Lt Rauh resorted to a field expedient, urine. Having several of his men urinate on his hands, while others made urine mud to cover the burning white phosphorous, Rauh continued in action.

"My Marines were great and most of the time maintained a superb sense of humor," Rauh later recalled. "At one point I heard one of them call out, 'Hey, you guys—come up and piss on the lieutenant.' I knew then that they would follow me anywhere ... probably laughing as they did."

A short time later, a corpsman came forward and applied zinc oxide to Rauh's hands. Lt Rauh continued in action, although he needed another weapon. The white phosphorous had fused the bolt of his carbine to the receiver.

Incredibly, the Marine counterattack was ever so slowly pushing the Chinese back. With many of their officers killed and



A wounded leatherneck from 7th Marines is escorted to the rear. (USN photo)

Marines hike up a trail to bring ammunition to machine gunners on The Hook.



for the most part leaderless, the Chinese didn't know what to do with the victory that was almost within their grasp. They were, however, tenacious and had to be rooted out foot by foot yard by yard.

That rooting had to be done by Marines like PFC Enrique Romero-Nieves, who attacked a Chinese position in the midst of a blizzard of fire, flinging grenades as he came on. Hit and knocked to the ground, his left arm rendered useless, Romaro-Nieves continued his one-man attack. Able to use only his right arm, he used his belt buckle to pull the pins from the grenades he continued to fling at the Chinese, eventually killing every last one. For his actions in the melee on The Hook, PFC Enrique Romero-Nieves would receive the Navy Cross.

Slowly the noose was tightening on the Chinese on The Hook. Much of that tightening was done by H/3/7, released from regimental reserve to take over from A/1/7 and C/1/7, both now all but exhausted from hours of constant combat. In the forefront of the H/3/7 assault, 2ndLt George O'Brien was almost instantly wounded and knocked to the ground. Regaining his feet, O'Brien was confronted by five Chinese who had seemingly popped up out of nowhere. With five shots from his Colt Model 1911A1 service pistol he killed each of them. He would be wounded again, refuse evacuation and continue fighting. He later received the Medal of Honor.

As the fighting on The Hook flared and roared, Marines in the sky were no less busy than their brothers on the ground. Throughout the day of Oct. 27, Marine aviators punished the Chinese below with more than 90 tons of bombs and napalm.

It remained for I/3/1 and B/1/7 to complete the eviction of the Chinese from The Hook. Closing in on the Chinese from two directions, as the calendar clicked over from Oct. 20 to Oct. 28, both companies initially encountered stiff resistance. Ferocious Marine artillery strikes pounded the Chinese, allowing both companies to go forward. By 0600 The Hook was once again firmly in Marine hands. Patrols to Outposts Warsaw and Ronson found them unoccupied.



Marines rest before jumping off into "no-man's-land" on The Hook.

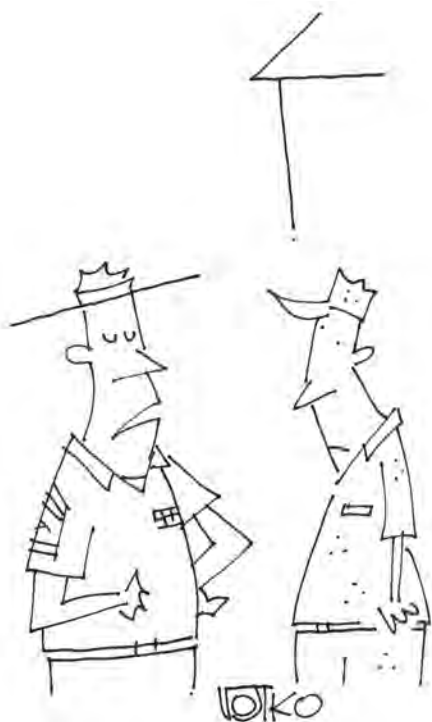
The Chinese had thrown everything they had into an offensive to seize the key terrain feature of the Western Front in the Korean War. Its goal was nothing less than total victory in Korea. It had failed, stopped dead in its tracks by Marines with names like Skinner and Weisgerber, McLaughlin, Byrum, Romero-Nieves, Kelso and O'Brien, Roy and Rauh and Worster and Yarborough, ordinary American names that may be found in any telephone directory. On The Hook in the autumn of 1952, they and others like them were United States Marines who refused to yield, and who turned defeat into victory.

"But the man who can fight to Heaven's own height is the man who can fight when he's losing."

Robert Service

Author's bio: Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, a Leatherneck contributing editor, is a former enlisted Marine who served in the Korean War and the Vietnam War as well as on an exchange tour with the French Foreign Legion. Later in his career, he was an instructor at Amphibious Warfare School and Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va. 🇺🇸

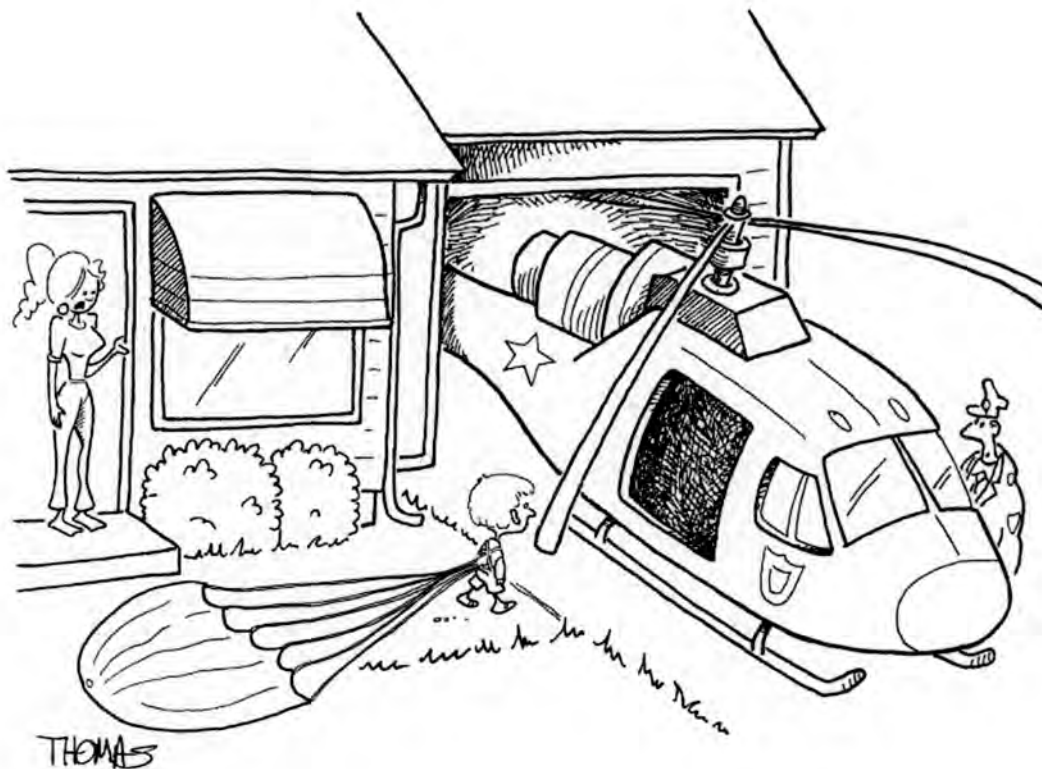
Leatherneck Laffs



"Life is simple. I'm right and you're wrong."



"It's called, 'map reading.'
That's GPS without batteries."



"He's being home-schooled in a Marine family."



"Is that organic?"



"Try to avoid a tight grouping."



"Gollyyyyyeee ... Sergeant Carter, fancy meeting you up here."



"Have I ever taken anyone out while in the Marines?
Probably. I was a cook."



Training the Maintainers Of Marine Aviation

By 2ndLt Matthew Decker, USMC
Photos by
LCpl Jose Villalobosrocha, USMC

Somewhere in Helmand Province, a 500-pound Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) hits its target and a Taliban machine-gun position is destroyed. While it may have been a Marine fighter pilot with an interesting call sign who dropped the bomb, it required the expertise of support personnel to put the pilot in that position.

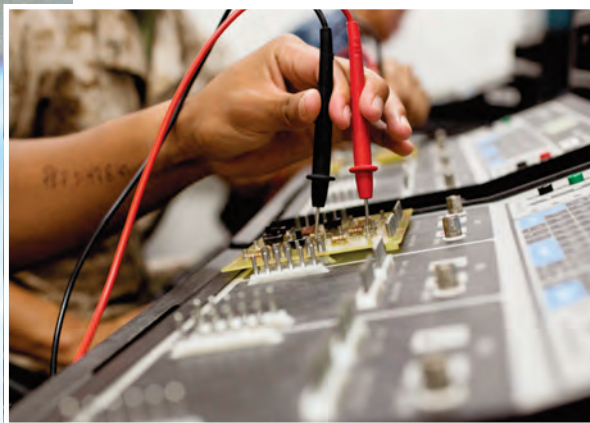
In the last fiscal year, for every hour Marine pilots have spent in the air, enlisted maintainers and technicians have averaged 17.5 man-hours of direct maintenance. For

some platforms like the MV-22B Osprey and CH-53E Sea Stallion, the numbers of recorded direct maintenance man-hours per hour of flight are as high as 25 and 34 respectively, and veterans of the community actually estimate these numbers to be far greater. For this reason, maintainers, technicians and aviation support personnel are the unsung heroes of Marine Corps aviation. These Marines work long hours in difficult jobs in all environments and are continually asked to do more with less in support of the mission of the aviation combat element (ACE) of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF).

The Aviation Logistics (AVLOG)

community of the Marine Corps encompasses the military occupational specialty (MOS) fields of ordnance, maintenance, supply, avionics, information systems and facilities and engineering.

While pilots typically spend one and a half to three years in flight school and are constantly working on qualifications for professional progression, AVLOG personnel spend as little as two months to a year in school and obtain the remainder of their learning through on-the-job training. With more than 75 percent of these Marines leaving the Corps after their first enlistment, the vast majority of maintainers and support personnel have less than five years of experience;



Left: Marine students assigned to MATSG-23 troubleshoot circuit boards at NAS Pensacola, Fla., April 20, 2016. MATSG-23 is responsible for providing students with aviation logistics entry-level and intermediate training.

Opposite page: A Marine with MATSG-23 conducts practical application training using an air traffic control tower simulator at NAS Pensacola, April 20, 2016.



Practical application is used in addition to classroom instruction. Here, Marines conduct practical application training on a jet engine at NAS Pensacola, April 21, 2016.

therefore, it is critical to Marine aviation that entry-level training consistently and efficiently sends out the best trained Marines to the operating forces.

The command responsible for providing all new AVLOG personnel is Marine Aviation Training Support Group-23 (MATSG-23), the first and only AVLOG O-6 level command of its kind. Since its establishment aboard Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., in 2014, MATSG-23 has added immense value to Marine aviation as a functional training advocate for all Marine AVLOG entry-level training. While it does not control schools' curriculums, it is administratively responsible for all Marine students, instructors and support staff in AVLOG entry-level training. It supplies the operating forces with the fuel to drive the Marine AVLOG machine.

The instructors, students and support staff of MATSG-23 enable Marines across

the Corps to develop the skills and knowledge in all disciplines required to support the MAGTF. MATSG-23 processes more than 5,500 Marines each year through "A" and "C" schools, qualifying them for initial jobs in the operating forces.

There are three essential elements of the MATSG-23 command that allow it to send

**In the last fiscal year,
for every hour Marine pilots
have spent in the air, enlisted
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have averaged 17.5 man-hours
of direct maintenance.**

competent and reliable Marines out into the fleet, adding immense value to Marine aviation. First is MOS assignment through the Enlisted Aviation Maintenance Training Management Unit (EAMTMU), a section within MATSG-23. Second is the continuous optimization of AVLOG

training and processes through what are known as Command Advocacy Issues. Last, is the command's commitment to "Sustaining the Transformation" of the new Marines that arrive in NAS Pensacola from Marine Combat Training (MCT).

The primary responsibility of MATSG-23 is student throughput. This encompasses receiving new Marines from MCT, assigning them an MOS, putting them through the required schools for appropriate MOS training, and sending them to the operating forces. Recruits joining the Marine Corps sign a Program-Enlisted-For (PEF) contract with recruiters. This guarantees the Marine a MOS from a list based on the PEF code they agreed upon when recruited; however, the Marine's specific MOS on the list is decided by commands with MOS classification authority. The number of possible entry-level MOS classifications in each PEF code varies greatly. For example, the PEF code "BA, Aviation Electronic Technician," contains 31 different MOS classifications under three separate fields: electronics main-

tenance, avionics and logistics.

MATSG-23 is one of only five commands across the Marine Corps with MOS classification authority. This authority is exercised through the EAMTMU. In a sense, it is the heart of MATSG-23 and maintains directly responsibility for the primary aspect of the command's mission.

The successful operation of the EAMTMU requires a great deal of foresight and communication with agencies both in and outside the Marine Corps. More than half of the Corps' entry-level MOS training takes place in schools owned by other services. In the AVLOG community, all training school curriculum is owned by Navy commands, although their Marine instructors and students are made up of MATSG-23 Marines.

Other services typically require reports of the number of Marine Corps students they will be receiving at least 18 months ahead of time in order to plan for their own students' training. This, combined with the time each Marine student must first spend at boot camp and MCT, means

that manpower decisions enacted in the AVLOG community, according to EAMTMU officer in charge (OIC) Major Michael Costa, usually take a minimum of two years to produce any real effect.

The EAMTMU must take into account

The MATSG-23 command is a voice for the thousands of AVLOG Marines across the Corps. Advocating for these issues ensures the skills Marine squadrons need most make their way out to the fleet.

MOS attrition rates, training times, First Term Alignment Plan population, retention and promotion opportunities, as well as changes in recruiting forecasts to ensure manpower decisions are made well in advance of the needs of the Marine Corps. This ensures vacancies in

squadrons are filled in a timely manner.

MATSG-23 is the only O-6 command held by an officer who has grown up in the AVLOG community. The MATSG-23 commanding officer, Colonel Donald C. Chipman, is an aviation maintenance officer by trade. Col Chipman and his team are strong advocates for the AVLOG community in the Marine Corps. He is in a unique position to essentially be the community's voice to Headquarters Marine Corps, the Deputy Commandant of Aviation and the Navy schools that educate Marine Corps maintainers, technicians and support personnel. Col Chipman accomplishes this through what he calls command advocacy issues.

Command advocacy issues are specific shortfalls or inefficiencies, primarily in training, identified by anyone from enlisted maintainers to commanding officers to improve the fleet's readiness. At any time, 10 to 15 issues require the command's attention running the gambit of changes to curriculums to the administration of different schools. Through concurrent

MATSG-23 Marines camp during an air traffic control field exercise at NAS Pensacola, April 21, 2016.



Students with MATSG-23 inspect a parachute at NAS Pensacola, April 21, 2016.

communication to HQMC, and laterally to the Navy training elements who dictate school curriculums, changes to the AVLOG training pipeline are made. The MATSG-23 command is a voice for the thousands of AVLOG Marines across the Corps. Advocating for these issues ensures the skills Marine squadrons need most make their way out to the fleet, despite the MATSG not having direct authority over the schools' curriculums that Marines attend.

Recruit training and MCT are the first two legs of the entry level training pipeline where Marines begin and start to sustain the transformation but it is at the MOS producing schools, including MATSG-23, where Marines learn their actual jobs for the first time. A significantly higher degree of freedom is experienced for the first time by the Marines in their careers and the MATSG commander and senior enlisted advisor personally interact with each class to ensure the Marines know exactly what is expected of them and the pitfalls that unfortunately will prevent a small percent of them from going on to serve in the fleet.

MATSG-23 makes lasting impacts on the Marine Corps through the thousands



of Marines whose lives it touches and the issues it champions. Every enlisted Marine in Marine aviation is affected by MATSG-23. The command is the voice of the AVLOG community and MATSG-23 Marines ensure that Marine aviation is always ready for whatever mission the nation directs.

Author's bio: 2ndLt Matthew L. Decker was commissioned in November 2016 through the NROTC program, and is a recent graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and The Basic School. He is currently serving as an executive assistant to the MATSG-23 CO while awaiting further training. 🇺🇸



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COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY

“A Battlefield Was Our Goal” The 6th Marines Journey to France

By J. Michael Miller

Americans soldiers are in formation on the dock in Saint-Nazaire, France, June 1917. Despite an agreement that the Marines and soldiers would disembark at the same time, the Army's 28th Infantry went ashore earlier than expected.

Two months after the United States entered World War I, a U.S. convoy left for France, carrying the first combat units of Marines and soldiers slated to join the Allied forces. The convoy arrived in Saint-Nazaire on June 26, 1917. Trouble began almost immediately after docking. The senior officers of Transport Group 1, including Major General William L. Sibert, commanding the Army's 1st Division, and Colonel Charles A. Doyen, commanding the 5th Marine Regiment, gathered aboard USS *Seattle* (ACR-11), congratulating Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves on the successful crossing. “While . . . the officers were in my cabin,” RADM Gleaves later wrote, “Colonel Doyen asked if the Marines might land first.” Sibert then declared that his Division should have that honor.

Faced with a decision sure to anger one service or the other, Gleaves ordered the Marines and soldiers to land simultaneously, “thus dividing the baby, like Solomon.” At 7 a.m. the following day, Major Julius S. Turrill's 1st Battalion mustered on deck, beginning to officially disembark from USS *DeKalb*. The Marines were surprised to see the proud soldiers of the 28th Infantry Regiment already ashore, having stolen a march on the unsuspecting Marine Corps. This heated moment of disembarkation set in motion the Marine Corps' fight to enter combat in World War I.

The opening shots of this skirmish actually had taken place earlier, in Washington, D.C., before the Marines left for France. Major General Commandant George Barnett wanted to increase the size of the Marine Corps, including a full Marine brigade in France. He sent a telegram through the



MG John J. Pershing



Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels



MajGen Commandant George Barnett

Secretary of the Navy's office to Major General John J. Pershing, commanding the American Expeditionary Force, asking if he desired more Marines in France. No answer was returned for more than a week. MajGen Barnett finally appealed to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, who then spoke with the Assistant Secretary of the Army. The Assistant Secretary promised an answer by 4 p.m. the following day. "I do not believe the original telegram was ever sent," Barnett recalled, "I think they intended to forget it."

In July, MajGen Barnett formed a new Marine regiment under the command of Colonel Albertus W. Catlin at the also new Marine base at Quantico, Va. Almost all of the enlisted men sent to Quantico were new recruits, with the same in experience of the junior officers, with many arriving directly from their studies in officer training. The backbone of the new regiment was made up of the veteran company commanders and noncommissioned officers, many offering at least 10 years of service experience gleaned from deployments to locations such as China, the Philippines, Mexico and Nicaragua. Perhaps half of the new recruits were college students who dropped out of school, while half were workers with little formal education. Private James R. Scarbrough had a third grade education. He described the regiment, saying "there was a little friction ... I'd have to say that after just a short while with any of those fellows it didn't matter. We all got along fine."

The fledgling base was still under construction, with only a few wooden bar racks completed for the influx of Marines from the recruit depots. The newly formed regimental band camped on the new drill field, unaware that the Naval range in Indian Head, Md., used the Potomac River just offshore from the Marine base as an impact area for the testing of 14-inch battleship cannons. "The detonation is something terrific and it is marvelous how near the same spot each shell explodes," wrote one of the bandmen. "The water goes hundreds of feet in the air." The blast caused some in the band

"to miss several beats," before recovering to continue their practice.

MajGen Barnett's immediate mission was to get the new regiment to France to join the 5th Marines. Without the apparent knowledge of the Army, Secretary Daniels wrote to President Wilson on Aug. 4, 1917, requesting an additional regiment of Marines be formed and sent to France to be brigaded with the 5th Marines. The President approved the request and the same day, Daniels then ordered Barnett to "organize

a force of Marines, to be known as the 6th Regiment of Marines, for service with the Army in France." MG Pershing still asserted that an additional regiment would spoil the 1st Division organization of four regiments per division. "Its uniform, certain features of supply, inability to meet hospital expenses, and this odd replacement organization do not assimilate with Army organization ... If Marines can be spared from the customary duties for which maintained," MG Pershing wrote, "it is believed that their force thus surplus should become part of the [A]rmy and that no more Marines be sent to France." Army headquarters informed him that "the President has directed an additional regiment (the Sixth) to be sent and it is now impossible to change the arrangements ... you will form a brigade and become part of the Second Division."

On Sept. 23, Major John A. Hughes' 1st Battalion, 6th Marines embarked for duty in France. Many Marines wrote their last letters home before departure. Private Albert Ball of the 75th Company wrote, "if my life is necessary to help win this war, I am ready to die doing my duty ... Time is up so I will have to close ... Always keep in mind that



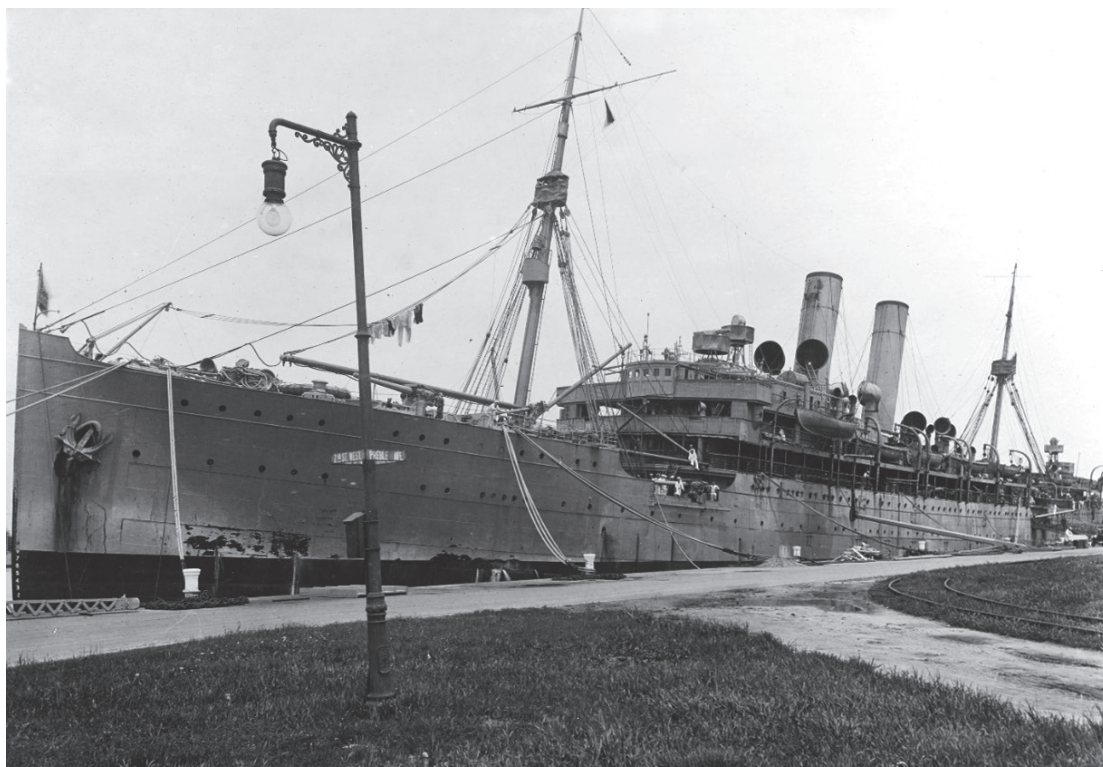
Col Charles A. Doyen

COURTESY OF USMC HISTORY DIVISION



Above: Marines direct traffic in Saint-Nazaire, France, in 1917. Initially assigned to unload ships and stand guard duty, the Marines spent the Christmas season of 1917 far from the battlefield. (Courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)

Right: USS *DeKalb* transported the 6th Marine Regiment to France in 1917.



COURTESY OF LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

you have a boy somewhere in France who dearly loves you.” The battalion reached France on Oct. 5 and MG Pershing created the 4th Marine Brigade on Oct. 23.

Although he could not prevent Marines from arriving, Pershing scattered the 5th and 6th Marines along the Army line of supply. This purgatory meant the two Marine regiments would not only miss essential combat training but were also caught in a rear area mission with no end. With only complete divisions sent to France, there was little

chance of Marines being assigned to a new unit. General Pershing insisted later that the assignment was a “compliment to their high state of discipline and military bearing.”

On Oct. 31, Major Berton W. Sibley’s 3d Battalion, 6th Marines left New York for France. The trip across the Atlantic proved uneventful until Nov. 9, when their transport collided with another ship. Pvt Scarbrough was on deck at the time of impact, which knocked him off his feet, along with everyone else around him. “I remember screaming

from the nurses and a general state of confusion.” He later wrote, “There was a huge crashing, tearing of steel that drowned out nearly everything but the yelling right around me.” The impact ripped open the bow of USS *DeKalb*, forcing the ship to slow, becoming an easy target for German submarines. None were encountered.

On Nov. 10, MG Pershing personally explained his thoughts about Marines to MajGen Barnett. While he regarded them highly for their “excellent standing with their brothers of the Army and their general good conduct,” he felt that their lack of “transportation and equipment” made them a logical choice for the needed security and police duty. Pershing believed this to be “highly complimentary to both officers and men, and was so intended.” However, he promised MajGen Barnett that once sufficient Army units arrived in France to replace the Marines, they would all be returned to the 4th Brigade so that they could fulfill their intended role with the newly formed 2d Division.

Major Sibley’s Marines arrived in Brest, France, on Nov. 12, remaining aboard ship for two weeks unloading cargo. The Marines then marched through the city over cobblestone streets, expecting adoring crowds to welcome them. Instead, “Everybody was trying to sell us something. Children would run up and tug on our pants and beg for cigarettes, or money. Some begged for bread,” recalled Pvt Scarbrough. “Shop owners came right out on the street and tried to sell us bottles of “Vin Rouge.” Once in camp, the Marines celebrated Thanksgiving with a traditional meal and best of all a distribution of mail from home after the feast. “I wish you could have seen the dinner table we sat down to,” Pvt Ball related. “Turkey, cranberries, fruits, peas, beans, plum pudding, pumpkin pie, canned peaches and pineapple, and goodness knows what else.”

Pershing’s orders still made certain the Marines remained separated. Rather than train for combat, Hughes and Sibley’s Marines were given guard duty, and unloaded ships. Two hundred Marines were provided each day to build an outsized dam near Bordeaux and docks at Bassena. Christmas arrived with celebrations and a growing confidence in the abilities of the 6th Marines, no matter how divided. “All Christmas evening and night we had games, boxing, wrestling, music. And all sorts of stunts pulled off,” Pvt Ball wrote home, “One of the funniest was feeding a few of these French kids a real [Christmas] dinner. Take it from me they went after it too.”

Scarbrough drew guard duty on Christmas Eve. He recalled “It was dark by 6 p.m. and as cold can be. We didn’t have proper clothing and we just froze. There was about 8 inches of snow on the ground and it rained after that, and froze.” During the night, he noticed an officer on horseback approaching his post, slumped over as if wounded. When challenged, the officer made no reply so the Marine private took the horse’s reins and shook the man’s leg and demanded, “Hey, who are you?” The smell of alcohol

indicated the man was drunk with Christmas cheer as he answered, shouting, “I’m Colonel Catlin!” Scarbrough was skeptical at first until he saw the unmistakable mustache and colonel’s eagles on the man’s coat. The private turned the horse back into town and returned to walk his post in the frigid cold of Christmas Eve.

The New Year came with long awaited orders as General Pershing made good on his promise of 1917. The two battalions of the 6th Marines entrained for the 2d Division training area to stand up the 4th Brigade. Three companies from 1st Bn, 6th Marines left Saint-Nazaire by train in the evening of Jan. 8, during a day-long snowfall. The Marines climbed into the infamous 40-men or four-horses boxcars, enduring the ride “like a bunch of sardines” with little or no sleep for three “lousy, smelly, rotten” days before arriving in their final destination, the town of Damblain.

Major Thomas Holcomb’s 2d Bn reached France on Feb. 8, arriving in Damblain two days later. The weary Marines trudged over snow and icy roads to their billets, where bottles of wine allowed them to celebrate a united 6th Marines. “A battlefield was our goal,” Pvt Levi Hemrick remembered. “We were an egotistical bunch of men who believed we could whip anybody and wanted an opportunity to prove it.” On March 16, the 6th Marines with the rest of the 4th Marine Brigade entered a quiet sector of the Western front, beginning Marine Corps combat in World War I.

Author’s bio: J. Michael Miller retired from the Marine Corps History Division in 2016 after more than 30 years of service, and is now writing a multi-volume history of the Marine Corps in World War I. The first volume of the series will be published in summer 2018, covering the battles of Belleau Wood and Soissons. 🍷



Col Albertus W. Catlin

Marines traveled across France in the infamous French 40-men or four-horse boxcars. Packed in “like a bunch of sardines,” the Marines endured “lousy, smelly, rotten” accommodations throughout the ride.





SGT W.F. DICKMAN, USMC

A Marine from 2d Platoon, Co H, aims an M-16 out the bathroom window of a house during the battle for Hue.

House to House

When the Viet Cong shattered the Tet truce to enter South Vietnam's most revered and ancient city of Hue, Marines left their war in the mountains, jungles and rice paddies to fight house to house. For both sides, it was a costly, bitter engagement.

By SSgt Bruce Martin, USMC

It was the dirtiest kind of warfare.

Marines swapped the war in the rice paddies for the streets of South Vietnam's most beautiful city—Hue. Here Marines fought North Vietnamese regulars and Viet Cong in house-to-house combat.

To retake the city which had fallen into the hands of the enemy at the outset of the Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet), the Marines would have to meet a threefold challenge: first, destroy as many of the enemy as possible; second, keep their own casualties to a minimum; and, third, spare as much of the city from destruction as was humanly possible.

Initially, elements of the First and Fifth

Marine Regiments were sent into the city to relieve pressure on the U.S. Military Advisory Command (MACV) compound located on the southern side of the Perfume River, which divides Hue. The Marines, spearheaded by tanks, pushed the Red invaders away from the MACV compound, then turned to securing the southern half of the city.

Fighting was slow, hard, street by street, house by house.

Civilian refugees flooded the streets, often walking into the middle of a firefight between Marines and Communists.

From the rooftops, snipers fired on Marines. From street barricades, the Communists fired rockets at Marine armor. And the enemy gunners indiscriminately

mortared and rocketed Marines giving aid to civilian refugees.

For the Marines, it was the first time that they had been involved in street fighting since Santo Domingo in 1965, and the first major fight in a large city since they recaptured Seoul during the Korean War in 1951. Their memory was soon refreshed as they carried the fight to the enemy.

Marine snipers, like Sergeant William L. Hardey who was credited with killing five enemy soldiers in 10 minutes, inflicted severe casualties on the enemy.

Tenacity was the byword for Marines taking the shattered buildings one by one. Private First Class Norman Estelle led the way for one of the numerous assaults to dislodge the enemy from once-peaceful





SGT W.F. DICKMAN, USMC

homes turned into strongpoints. His own assault routed five of the enemy from their position, forcing them to leave behind a variety of weapons, including machine guns, rocket launchers, rifles, pistols, grenades, satchel charges and several boxes of ammunition.

There were cases when just a hunch on the part of a Marine paid dividends in keeping Marine casualties low. PFC Bill Tant figured that sniper fire he and his buddies had been receiving came from a harmless-looking tree. His friends laughed when he fired his M-79 grenade launcher at its branches. They stopped laughing when a dead enemy soldier tumbled from the tree.

There were times when the Marines

found themselves momentarily outgunned by the enemy. But they responded with determination as did, for example, PFC Donald R. Bergman, who noticed an enemy 57 mm recoilless rifle aiming in on his company from only 100 meters away. The gun barrel protruded slightly from a recessed embrasure. Bergman knocked the weapon out with a light antitank weapon—the hard way.

Because of the angle of the gun to Bergman's position, the Marine had to ricochet his missile off a pole to make it hit the enemy position. One dead VC was found at the gun site and blood trails indicated two others manning the gun were also wounded. The enemy gun never had a chance to fire its first shot.

Leathernecks of Co H, 2d Bn, 5th Marines were equipped to meet any type of resistance as they combed the streets and alleys of battle-torn Hue in February 1968.

The spirit of the Iwo Jima flag raisers also prevailed during the fight when a trio of Marines from Co H, 5th Marines, replaced a VC flag with the Stars and Stripes shortly after they had recaptured the Thua Thien Province headquarters.

The VC flag was hauled down by PFCs Walter R. Kaczmarek and Allan V. MacDonald. Gunnery Sergeant Frank A. Thomas joined the pair to raise an American flag he had been given by another Marine.

It was shortly after the American flag



Marines of the 2d Plt, Co F, 2/5, take a smoke break after securing a battle-scarred building during the Battle of Hue, Feb. 18, 1968.

USMC



Two Marines hustle a 106 mm recoilless rifle tripod down a rubble-strewn street during fierce fighting to rout VC infiltrators in Hue.

USMC

was raised that the southern half of Hue returned to allied control. Only small pockets of enemy resistance remained to be mopped up.

On the northern banks of the Perfume River stood the centuries-old Citadel, built to halt invading hordes of Chinese hundreds of years ago. Its 12-foot-thick walls surrounding the ancient Imperial Palace from which Vietnam's emperors once ruled were commanded by well-entrenched VC holding out in a fight to the death against attacking Republic of Vietnam forces.

It was only after the Marines had assured the allied command that the enemy no longer posed a serious threat to the southern half of Hue that they were sent to battle in the 6-square-mile redoubt. Again, the challenge to the Marines was to carefully measure their destructive power and use only minimum means to destroy the enemy.

The long, straight streets of the Citadel left the Marine armor open to virtually unchecked frontal attacks from Red rocketeers. The thick stone walls harbored impregnable machine guns and automatic weapons emplacements. Even the weather favored the enemy during the Marines' initial attacks—in the low ceiling, supporting aircraft could not provide cover.

Yet, the Marines fought man to man, rifle to rifle, against the Reds, marking progress on some days by mere feet. When the monsoon rains broke, Marine aircraft flew in to give the riflemen the support needed to dislodge the last of the aggressors, permitting the Marines to capture the Imperial Palace without inflicting any serious damage to the treasures and artifacts stored within.

For the second time, Marines hoisted another American flag, this one on the ramparts of the Citadel. Hours later, the rest of the Citadel fell to ARVN forces who had been fighting on the Marines' flank. Only isolated snipers remained throughout the entire city.

Marines pondered over the devastation caused during the 22-day-long battle. Allied air support, artillery fire and Naval gunfire had been held to a minimum. The VC apparently had hoped that destruction caused by the fighting would be blamed on the Americans and incite the city's 145,000 inhabitants to rally to the Communist cause. However, the vast majority of the Vietnamese were incensed by the audacity of the VC in bringing the war to their peaceful city.

One Hue resident rushed to a Marine rifleman to inform him that a North Vietnamese sniper was using his home as a sniper post. The Marine accompanied the Vietnamese to the house where the



USMC

Heavy enemy automatic weapons fire rakes a team of riflemen during savage fighting at point-blank range in Hue, Feb. 19, 1968.

sniper was dispatched following a brief fire fight. There were countless other cases where the Hue citizens, often at the risk of their own lives or those of their families, helped save the lives of Marines by pointing out enemy positions.

In one known case, a mass grave containing the bodies of 140 Vietnamese was uncovered by the allies. The dead had refused to aid the Communists.

When the battle was over, among the rubble and debris were more than 3,000 dead enemy soldiers who had given their lives for nothing more than the dream of obtaining a propaganda victory. Undeniably, they had fought well in a hopeless cause.

But the Marines had defeated the enemy in the place he had chosen to fight. It was the Marine, with his rifle in his hand, and, perhaps, a tight knot in the pit of his stomach, who had routed the invader from Hue. 🇺🇸



USMC

A Marine of the 2d Plt of F/2/5, fires at a strong point of the North Vietnamese Army resistance in the Citadel during the battle of Hue.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: Exhibit curator Alice Kamps, right, speaks with a Vietnam veteran who attended the exhibit opening as part of Utah Honor Flight's visit to Washington, D.C., Nov. 10, 2017.

Top: The National Archives Museum in Washington, D.C., unveiled the new "Remembering Vietnam" exhibit in the Lawrence F. O'Brien Gallery on Nov. 10, 2017. (Photo by Nancy S. Lichtman)

Below: The Senate roll call tally sheet from the Aug. 7, 1964, Tonkin Resolution is one of the featured records on display in the exhibit.

520 Leaf

AUG 7 - 1964, 1964

Mr. *Al J Res 1145*

YEAS		NAYS
1	Aiken	
2	Allott	
	Anderson	
3	Bartlett	
	Bayh	
4	Beall	
	Bennett	
5	Bible	
6	Boggs	
7	Brewster	
8	Burdick	
	Byrd, Va.	
9	Byrd, W. Va.	
	Cannon	
10	Carlson	
11	Case	
12	Church	

COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

“Remembering Vietnam”

Honor Flight Veterans Welcomed, Honored At National Archives’ Exhibit Opening

By Sara W. Bock and Nancy S. Lichtman

It was a crisp, clear morning in Washington, D.C., as 48 veterans of the Vietnam War and their accompanying family members and friends filed into the stately rotunda of the National Archives Museum, Nov. 10, 2017. They quietly and reflectively took their places alongside America’s sacred founding documents, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and then were greeted by fellow Vietnam veteran David S. Ferriero, the Archivist of the United States, who had several opening remarks—among them, most notably, were two simple yet utterly poignant words: “Welcome home.”

The sight of a large group of war veterans is not uncommon in the nation’s capital in recent years due in large part to the efforts of the Honor Flight Network, a national nonprofit organization. In 2016 alone, Honor Flight brought more than 20,000 veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War to Washington to visit and reflect at their memorials. But this stop at the Archives was a one-time

addition and an unforgettable opportunity for these Vietnam veterans, whose trip was made possible by Utah Honor Flight and a sponsorship by Subaru Corporation and Nate Wade Subaru in Salt Lake City.

In an overwhelming gesture of gratitude for their service during the Vietnam War, they would become the very first visitors to the National Archives’ new “Remembering Vietnam” exhibit on its opening day. It seemed only fitting, given that those who served in the long, controversial and brutal conflict are the ones who still “remember” the war every day. The exhibit is an invitation for the entire nation to remember and honor the sacrifices of those who gave so much and often returned home only to be met with insults and sneers.

“Our history comes alive through our records,” Ferriero told the veterans, adding that each item in the Archives’ carefully curated new exhibit is a representation of a greater story—one that until now has not widely been told. Even for Ferriero, who

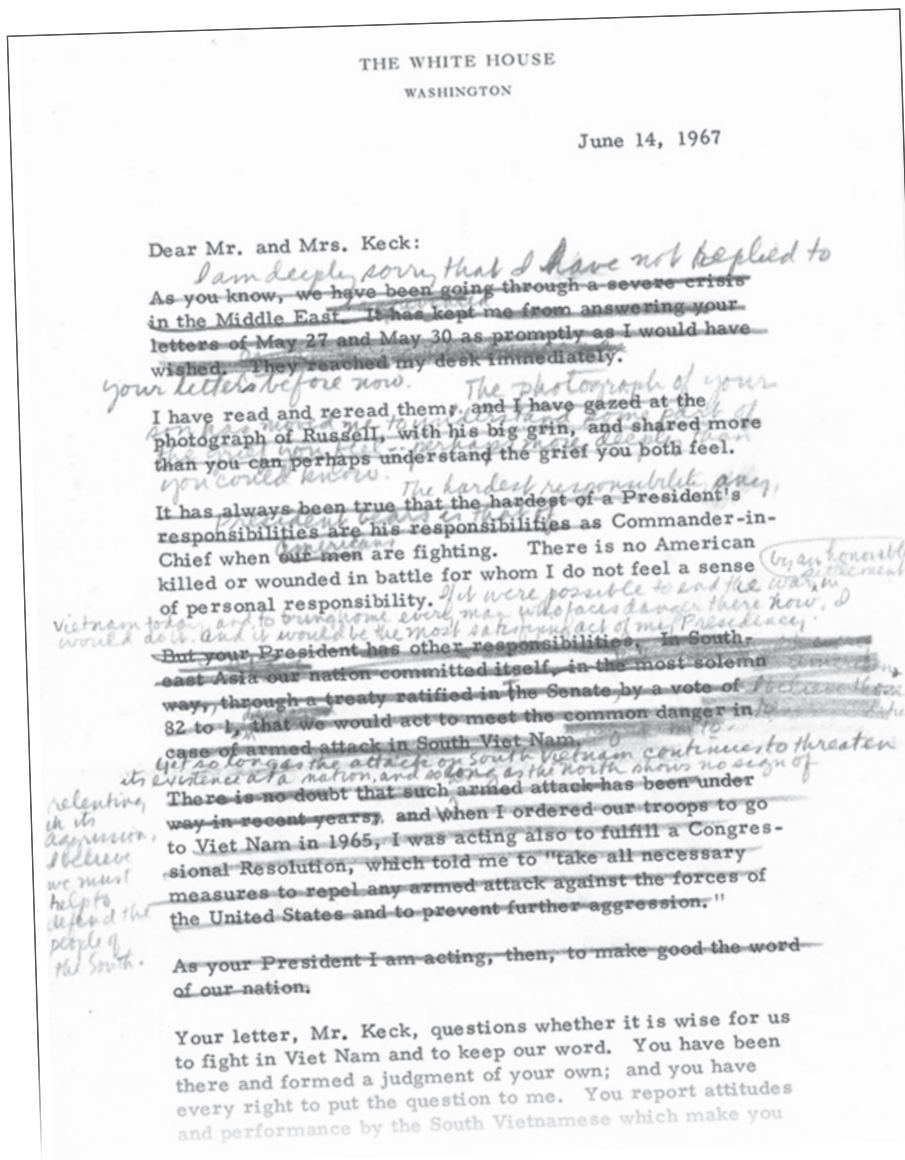
served as a hospital corpsman assigned to First Marine Division and later aboard USS *Sanctuary* (AH-17), the exhibit, which contains both well-known and newly discovered documents, “filled in some of the gaps” of his own knowledge about America’s involvement in Vietnam.

It’s a subject that is still polarizing—and equally confusing—for many Americans, even today, half a century after the war. But “Remembering Vietnam” aims to change that narrative by encouraging a multigenerational audience to learn an unbiased history of the war based on the facts presented in more than 80 original records, many of which have never before been on display. It’s designed to inspire visitors of all ages and backgrounds to reflect on what they saw and read, formulate their own opinions and answer three critical questions: “Why did the U.S. get involved?” “Why did the war last so long?” and “Why was it so controversial?”

Curator Alice Kamps spent more than two years forming the collection and



“Remembering Vietnam” is organized into 12 “critical episodes” in the war. Among them is Episode 5: America Goes to War, pictured here with a large photo of Marines landing at Da Nang in 1965. (Photo courtesy of National Archives)



Left: A draft of President Johnson's letter to the parents of Cpl Russell Forest Keck is displayed in the exhibit alongside a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Keck. Cpl Keck, a machine-gun squad leader with the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, was killed in action during Operation Beau Charger in May 1967.

consulting historians for their opinions about which records warranted inclusion in the exhibit. During the Honor Flight tour of the exhibit, Kamps welcomed the veterans and was on hand to answer any questions they might have.

Divided into 12 "critical episodes" of the Vietnam War with titles like "Eisenhower Backs Diem," "Johnson Sets the Stage," "America Goes to War" and "Fighting While Talking," the exhibit spans six presidencies, from Truman to Ford. Located in the Archives' Lawrence F. O'Brien Gallery, "Remembering Vietnam" provides a largely unemotional approach to the history of the war, with the exception a few heart-wrenching items—like an angry and heartfelt letter to President Lyndon Johnson from the mother of Corporal Russell Forest Keck, USMC, after her son was killed in 1967. A draft of President's Johnson typed reply, displayed alongside the letter, shows the myriad of edits he made in pencil and is indicative of his struggle to find the right words to respond to a grieving mother.

There's something to be said about the impact of viewing original documents that changed the course of American history,

COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

This poster, circulated by the United States Information Agency in the recently divided Vietnam of 1954, is on display in the exhibit. Its words translate to "Communism Means Terrorism."



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

National security advisor Walt Rostow, right, shows President Johnson a model of the Khe Sanh area in Vietnam, Feb. 15, 1968. This and other featured photographs in the "Remembering Vietnam" exhibit depict what Archives officials call the "architects of the conflict."



COURTESY OF UTAH HONOR FLIGHT

Vietnam veterans with Utah Honor Flight explore the “Remembering Vietnam” exhibit during its opening day, Nov. 10, 2017. The group had the unique honor of being the first visitors to enter the exhibit. They also toured the Vietnam War Memorial Wall and other locations around the nation’s capital.

and also somewhat surreal to see papers on which former Presidents scrawled their thoughts or comments. In keeping with the essence of the National Archives, the exhibit is elaborate and well-designed but by no means ostentatious: rather, it acts as a medium by which the records of the United States can speak for themselves.

The 3,000 square-foot exhibit, which is enhanced by audio and video components, is a platform on which the records take center stage and tell the story of the Vietnam War, inviting visitors to examine the evidence and formulate their own conclusions about a conflict that remains marked by controversy more than 40 years after the end of the war. Supported by photographs and artifacts that provide context and background information, the documents are the true focal point.

Described by Archives officials as a “resource for refreshing our collective memory,” the exhibit’s chronology begins in 1946 during the presidency of Harry S. Truman, outlining his support of France during the French-Indochina War and the rise of Ho Chi Minh as president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

There’s a 1954 letter from President Dwight Eisenhower to Ngo Dinh Diem, president of the Republic of Vietnam, pledging America’s financial support in

the fight against Communism; President John F. Kennedy’s 1961 notes from a meeting of the National Security Council; and the Senate tally sheet from its 1964 vote on the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, giving President Lyndon Johnson the authority to take “all necessary measures” against Northern Vietnamese aggression. All of these documents—among many others—help visitors gain a clear picture of what transpired on the Commander in Chief level during the war.

There’s a CIA model of the Hoa Lo Prison (also known as the “Hanoi Hilton”) along with a brick from the prison itself; items from the National Park Service collection of mementos left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall; baby shoes from the Saigon airlifts, and a CIA analysis of the Tet Offensive, outlining the “psychological victory” the attacks provided for the North Vietnamese. Visitors can view films of interviews and personal stories

of individuals who experienced the war firsthand in a variety of roles. There are audio recordings, including one from President Eisenhower’s famous “Domino Theory” press conference in 1954, propaganda posters and many striking photographs—some of U.S. servicemen, others of antiwar protests in the U.S., but largely, the photos depict the pivotal moments of the presidencies that defined and shaped the war.

Among the Honor Flight veterans at the opening day of “Remembering Vietnam” was Vernon Denman, who served as an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment, in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam in 1969. Then a lance corporal, he had very little grasp, he said, of the historical background of America’s involvement in Vietnam or the political forces at work.

“When you were over there, you didn’t see the big picture,” said Denman. “Seeing

Admission to the National Archives is free and open to the public, and “Remembering Vietnam” will be on display through Jan. 6, 2019. The National Archives Museum is located on the National Mall on Constitution Ave. at 9th St., NW, Washington, D.C., and is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. To apply for an Honor Flight or read more about the organization’s mission, visit www.honorflight.org.

this [exhibit] expands the picture I have of what was going on.”

In 1969, his focus wasn’t on what was happening in Washington; it was on jumping out of helicopters into firebases and on mere survival the night his “Rat Patrol” was hit by enemy fire on the road between Dong Ha and Quang Tri where he was wounded and the Marine in front of him was killed. Denman describes the war as a terrible experience—“a bloody mess”—and he said he continues to deal with the impacts that post-traumatic stress disorder has had on his life.

The most effective therapy for his PTSD, he said, is riding his motorcycle with the Patriot Guard Riders of Utah, a group that attends funeral services for fallen servicemembers to show respect and act as a non-violent “shield” against any interruptions or protests. They also escort veterans traveling to and from the airports on Honor Flights, and for years, Denman has been escorting Honor Flights for World War II and Korean War veterans. But this time, it was his turn to be honored.

“It’s affected his life so profoundly,” said Kristie Brown, Denman’s daughter, of the Vietnam War. “It changed everything for him. Hopefully this can bring him some peace.”

Ross Haycock was a Marine sergeant serving with a medical battalion in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. As a motor vehicle operator, he transported the

wounded and killed in action off the battlefield. For him, the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., on the Honor Flight and experience the exhibit—on the birthday of the Marine Corps, no less,—meant more than words could express.



Vernon Denman, a Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, and his daughter, Kristie Brown, sit together after viewing the exhibit. According to Denman, “Remembering Vietnam” allowed him to understand the “big picture” of the war, which he did not grasp while on the ground in 1969.

“I can’t say enough about this ... I can’t thank this program enough, what an opportunity,” said Haycock.

He described the feelings of “survivor’s guilt” he has dealt with for nearly 50 years, wondering why he returned home when so many of his brothers in arms did not.

“I have a lot of names to look up on the Wall,” Haycock said. After finishing their visit at the exhibit, there was a busy and emotional day ahead: a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, the

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the World War II Memorial and other notable sites on the National Mall.

For the Honor Flight veterans in attendance, it seemed that what meant the most to them was not the records and artifacts

on display, although they surely learned and benefitted from the exhibit. Rather, it was the fact that after so many years of pretending, in many ways, that the war in Vietnam never happened and ignoring the sacrifice that they and so many other Americans made there, their nation was finally giving their war the recognition it deserved.

“It healed them, finally,” said John Pierce, a board member with Utah Honor Flight who attended the opening. “They went in there with wounds and open sores and it finally healed them ... I look at those guys—they left our country to go to another country that wasn’t theirs and to fight for their independence. When they came home, they didn’t have a country

either so they’ve been in limbo. Finally for those guys to be recognized—all they wanted was the ‘welcome home,’ ” he added, expressing the gratitude that the veterans felt about being given such a life changing opportunity.

It’s moments like these that provide Pierce with affirmation that he is supporting the right organization. In addition to Pierce’s involvement as an Honor Flight board member, his employer, Nucor Steel, sponsors a flight each year.

Among the many original records found in “Remembering Vietnam” are a 1968 map documenting defense efforts for the U.S. Embassy in Saigon after its attack and a photograph of Marines on patrol duty in Vietnam in 1965. (Courtesy of National Archives)



Earl Morse, co-founder of Honor Flight and a retired Air Force captain, also delivered remarks to the Utah veterans at the Archives, telling the story of his own experience with the Vietnam War. He was 9 years old, living on Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho, when his father was serving in Da Nang. He would rush home from school every day, turn on the news and stare at the TV hoping to catch a glimpse of his dad. He relayed his vivid memories of the school principal calling classmates out of the room to deliver the bad news that their dad had been killed in Vietnam. The day his dad finally returned, he went with his family to greet him at the airport—and there, he noticed that many in the airport looked at his father with disgust. It was a moment that had a huge impact on his life.

After retiring from the Air Force, Morse, a physician assistant, was working at a Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic in Springfield, Ohio, in 2004, when the World War II Memorial was completed. He was determined to find a way to help his aging World War II veteran patients see their memorial, and using his resources as a private pilot, he began to personally fly them there, one by one, on his own dime. He soon recruited other private pilots to join in his efforts and donate their time and resources for an undeniably rewarding

cause. In 2006, he partnered with Jeff Miller of North Carolina's HonorAir organization to create the Honor Flight Network.

Today, Honor Flight operates 141 "hubs" in 45 states across the U.S., chartering commercial flights to transport veterans to Washington, D.C., through a partnership with Southwest Airlines. Veterans of World War II, the Korean War and, more recently, the Vietnam War can apply through their local hub and receive a priceless gift: an all-expense paid trip to visit their memorial, be recognized for their sacrifice and pay tribute to those who never returned home.

For many Vietnam veterans, whose war remains mired in controversy, this opportunity means the world, as does the opening of an exhibit that helps answer the questions, solve the mysteries and truly "remember" Vietnam.

"Many of those that served didn't get the recognition for their service and valor that maybe happened in other wars," said General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (Ret), a veteran of the Vietnam War and member of the exhibit's honorary committee. "I think with something like this, where they can actually physically see it and there's a chance for people to understand what they went through, what the war was about, their courage, their commitment to their

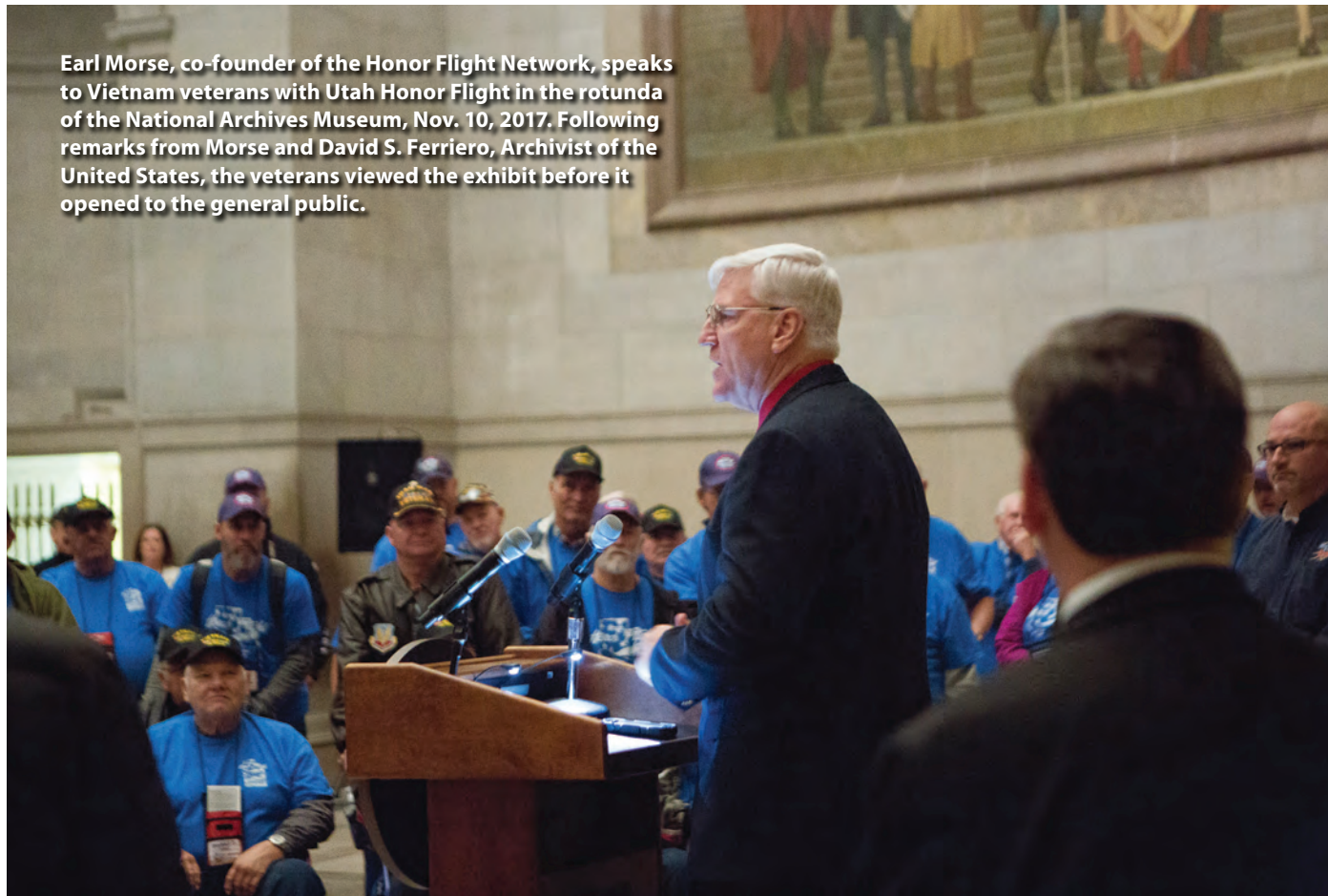
duty ... it's important that that recognition be there," he added.

There's a sort of collective healing that takes place at the nation's war memorials—it's what makes the Honor Flight Network so meaningful to veterans and their families. And an exhibit like "Remembering Vietnam" inspires the same sort of healing, while at the same time providing clarity about the intricacies of the war. This renewed sense of awareness will, at the very least, provide future generations with a deeper understanding of the sacrifice made by those who came before, and an appreciation for those whose "welcome home" came much later than it should.

Author's bio: Sara W. Bock joined the Leatherneck staff in 2008 and is presently the magazine's only full-time writer. She has a bachelor's degree in English and is the wife of a Marine aviator.

Author's bio: Nancy S. Lichtman is the Senior Editor for Leatherneck magazine. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of West Florida. Before coming to Leatherneck as a copy editor in 2007, she previously worked as the assistant editor/art director for Foundation magazine, the publication of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation in Pensacola, Fla. 🇺🇸

Earl Morse, co-founder of the Honor Flight Network, speaks to Vietnam veterans with Utah Honor Flight in the rotunda of the National Archives Museum, Nov. 10, 2017. Following remarks from Morse and David S. Ferriero, Archivist of the United States, the veterans viewed the exhibit before it opened to the general public.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

We—the Marines

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Deployed to the Middle East, Marines Participate in 42nd MCM

On Oct. 22, 2017, more than 30,000 participants tested their mental and physical fitness by hitting the pavement to run the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon, one of the largest 26.2-mile races in the world. But for those servicemembers deployed in the Middle East who were unable to run the marathon in and around the nation's capital, a Marine Corps marathon "Forward" allowed them to participate in the race and earn its coveted medal.

"Setting a goal of a physical achievement, making a plan of how to reach that goal, then putting that goal into action is fulfilling in itself and makes for a great excuse to keep oneself active," said race participant Lieutenant Commander Jeffrey Cook, USN, force surgeon for Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command.

The mobility officer for SPMAGTF-CR-CC, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonathan Eaton, ran the forward marathon because he wanted to inspire his Marines and show them that it's important to maintain a high level of physical fitness.

Captain Michael Nordin, the SPMAGTF-

CR-CC adjutant, trained about two days a week for six weeks leading up to the marathon.

"I've run a marathon every year since 2014 and I didn't want to miss a year. Half marathons and marathons are my hobby," said Capt Nordin. "There's nothing like getting to mile 18-19 and hitting the wall and pushing yourself through and over it, discovering another part of you that you didn't think you had a couple miles ago."

Whatever their source of personal motivation, the Marine Corps Marathon challenges each participant—and not everyone can say they ran it while deployed. It is the largest marathon in the world that does not offer prize money, but instead provides runners with the chance to demonstrate honor, courage and commitment. Despite the demands of deployment, runners with the SPMAGTF-CR-CC made the time to employ those values and run the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon.

"I love to run marathons, and what a great opportunity not just to run any marathon while deployed, but the 'People's Marathon,' the Marine Corps Marathon," said Cook.

SSgt Jacob Osborne, USMC

Surf Therapy: Injured Marine Is Healing, Fulfilling Dream

As a young boy growing up in Gardena, Calif., Corporal Leighton Anderson's father, who served in the Navy, would take him to military airshows. At the time, Anderson said he wanted to be a fighter pilot.

"I [later] realized I can't do that because of my eyesight. But my dad took me over to [Marine Corps Air Station] Miramar, and I saw all of the aviation things and the people flying. I always wanted to be a part of the Blue Angels with their jets," Anderson said.

While he didn't get assigned to the Blue Angels maintenance and support team, he did have an opportunity to serve in Marine aviation as an MV-22B Osprey crew chief in Okinawa, Japan. He was responsible for inspecting the aircraft, repairing the engines and replacing worn parts.

In December 2016, Anderson was severely injured in an Osprey crash during a training mission. He suffered a concussion and injuries to his jaw and eye, a broken hand and foot, broken ribs and a collapsed lung, among other injuries. He has a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder from the crash.



SSGT JACOB OSBORNE, USMC

CWO-2 Jonathon Eaton reaches the 10-mile marker of the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon "Forward" while deployed to an undisclosed location in the Middle East, Oct. 22, 2017.



CPL JOCELYN ONTIVEROS, USMC

Runners of the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon "Forward" begin the 26.2-mile race in the Middle East, Oct. 22, 2017. One of the largest marathons in the world, the Marine Corps Marathon is also conducted in forward locations to allow servicemembers outside the U.S. an opportunity to participate.



E.J. HERSON

Cpl Leighton Anderson surfs a “closed out” wave during a surf therapy clinic held by Naval Medical Center San Diego in Del Mar, Calif., Sept. 14, 2017. The benefits of participation in the therapy clinic for patients like Leighton include pain management and PTSD treatment.

Today, Anderson is a patient at Naval Medical Center San Diego, where he’s learned how to surf as part of his recovery. Anderson said he looked at the other recreation programs that the center’s health and wellness department offers, but the surfing clinic stood out to him the most.

“I’ve always wanted to learn how to surf since I’m from California,” he said. “I tried it three times in my life and never did it. And I was like, ‘Let me try it through the program here.’ And then after that, I was hooked. It was pretty sweet.”

Anderson said the surfing clinic has helped him both physically and mentally.

“I had so many barriers because once I was injured I was like, ‘I don’t know if I can do that. I might hurt myself,’ ” he said. “I have a little bit of PTSD and I didn’t think I would enjoy anything.”

Anderson added, “Once I tried it, I broke down a lot of barriers I had mentally and physically. I had weak tendons in my hand and foot, but with surfing they’re starting to get better. And mentally, it makes me happy. I love it. Everybody’s really supportive. It’s just something everybody should take on.”

Shannon Collins, DOD News

Corps Reaches Final Stage Of Tropical Boot, Uniform Testing

The Marine Corps wrapped up its fourth and final field user evaluation (FUE) for a prototype tropical utility uniform and boots in late September 2017.

Between June and September, 400 Marines from 3d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment put the new uniform and three types of boots to the test in a tropical climate. The testing was done in various locations on the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

“About four years ago, then-Commandant General James Amos directed us to explore tropical uniforms and boots for Marines,” said Todd Towlers, program analyst for the Clothing and Equipment Team, Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC). “When he became Commandant, General [Robert B.] Neller followed up on the initiative, which brings us to where we are today.”

As of Oct. 26, 2017, MCSC had tested five different fabric types and four boots, narrowing them down to the single uniform fabric and three boot options that the Marines of 3/3 tested. The goal of the final FUE was to collect feedback about the durability, fit and function of the prototypes that will be included along



MONIQUE RANDOLPH

An infantry Marine with 3/3 conducts patrols wearing a prototype tropical utility uniform during a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise at Kahuku Training Area, Hawaii, Oct. 5, 2017. More than 400 Marines from the unit wore the prototype uniform and boots to test the durability, fit and function of the items in a tropical environment.

with other data in a decision package during the second quarter of fiscal year 2018.

“When our program office goes out [to conduct a FUE], we talk to the Marines about what we’re testing and why,” Towles said. “We ask them to wear the uniform every day, whether they’re in the field or a classroom. At the end of the FUE, we conduct surveys and focus groups where we inspect the uniforms and talk to the Marines about wear and tear, how the uniform feels on the body and whether or not they could conduct their mission. If it interferes with the mission or training, we want that feedback as well.”

The tropical uniform prototype is made from a more lightweight material than the current Marine Corps Combat Utility Uniform. The fabric is also designed to dry faster and keep Marines cooler in warm climates than the current utilities.

“The tropical uniform is made with the same fiber blend—nylon and cotton—as the MCCUU, but the fabric construction and weight are different,” Towles said. “The tropical uniform is approximately 30 percent lighter than the MCCUU.”

The uniform also has a slightly heavier, reinforced fabric in the elbow, knee and groin areas to provide higher abrasion resistance against the mountainous terrain and dense vegetation found in tropical environments.

“I prefer to wear these over the [current uniform] because they have thinner, lighter material,” said Lance Corporal Kyle Herzog, an infantryman with 3/3. “It’s hot and humid here, and the current ones are thick and not as breathable. Once it’s wet, it’s damp or wet for days at a time. The [new uniform] dries within an hour. For Marines stationed in this environment, new ‘cammies’ are a must.”

The boots, designed by three different manufacturers, are intended to have a self-cleaning outsole and dry faster than the current boot. They are also a half-pound to one pound lighter than the current boot, and thus much lighter when wet, Towles said.

“We had several different types [of boots], and all of them dry much faster than the regular boot, and they’re really light, so that’s been a huge combat multiplier for us,” said Major Evan Ota, operations officer for 3/3.

Marines could know as early as this year whether new tropical uniforms and boots will make their way to the fleet. If so, Marines slated to deploy or already stationed in tropical climates will be the first to have access to the items. The tropical uniforms and boots will be issued by the Marine Expeditionary Forces. Uniforms and boots could be available for optional purchase by Marines, pending certification.

“What we see throughout the Pacific is it’s a very hot, humid and wet environment with a lot of jungle and mountainous terrain,” said Ota. “So, anything you can do to lighten the load, dry yourself out quicker, take care of your feet and take care of your body definitely adds to your combat effectiveness.”

Monique Randolph, MCSC

USNS *Hershel* “Woody” Williams Christened During Ceremony

Expeditionary Sea Base USNS *Hershel* “Woody” Williams (ESB-4) was christened by the U.S. Navy during a ceremony at General Dynamics NASSCO, San Diego, Oct. 21, 2017. The ship bears the name of Marine Corps Chief Warrant Officer Hershel Woodrow “Woody” Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II.

Major General Eric M. Smith, Commanding General, First Marine Division, delivered the ceremony’s principal address. Williams’ daughters, the ship’s sponsors, broke a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow to formally christen the ship, a time-honored Navy tradition.

“This ship honors a man who dedicated his life to service—heroic service as a Marine and continued service to his fellow veterans,” said the Honorable Richard V. Spencer, Secretary of the Navy. “This



The Expeditionary Sea Base USNS *Hershel* “Woody” Williams (ESB-4), shown here in an artist’s rendering, was christened during a ceremony at General Dynamics NASSCO, San Diego, Oct. 21, 2017.



MICHAEL L. EMERSON

WW II Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima, Hershel “Woody” Williams, speaks to attendees at the christening ceremony for the Expeditionary Sea Base ship named in his honor, Oct. 21, 2017.

dedication will live on in USNS *Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams* as the ship is deployed around the world bringing additional capability to our growing fleet.”

The *Hershel “Woody” Williams* is optimized to support a variety of maritime-based missions and designed around four core capabilities: aviation facilities, berthing, equipment-staging support and command and control assets. ESBs can be enhanced to meet special operations force missions through increased communications, aviation and unmanned aircraft system support.

“Like every Marine, this ship is adaptable. Like its namesake, this ship is a force multiplier. We could not be more honored and more proud to design, build and soon deliver the USNS *Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams*,” said Kevin Graney, NASSCO President, who was one of several individuals who spoke during the ceremony.

The platform has an aviation hangar and flight deck that include two operating spots capable of landing MH-53E equivalent helicopters, accommodations, workspaces and ordnance storage for an embarked force. The platform will also provide enhanced command and control, communications, computers and intelligence capabilities to support embarked force mission planning and execution. The reconfigurable mission deck area can store embarked force equipment including mine sleds and rigid hull inflatable boats.

“For all of us there at the ceremony,

we are very honored and proud to just know and be friends with such an amazing patriot and American,” said Marine veteran Michael L. Emerson, a friend of Williams’ who attended the christening.

Built by General Dynamics NASSCO, the *Montford Point* class is comprised of five ships across two variants: expeditionary transfer docks and expeditionary sea bases. USNS *Montford Point* (ESD-1), USNS *John Glenn* (ESD-2) and USS *Lewis B. Puller* (ESB-3) have been delivered to the fleet. ESB-4 is scheduled to join the fleet in 2018, with ESB-5 to follow in 2019. On Nov. 5, 2017, the SECNAV announced that ESB-5 would be named in honor of Marine Corps Vietnam veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Miguel Keith.

Compiled from reports by DOD SECNAV Public Affairs and Michael L. Emerson



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



LCPL COLBY BROWN, USMC

“Raise your hand if you think you’re drowning.”

Submitted by
James E. Schemelia, Blackwood, N.J.
and
Walter E. Smith Jr., Philadelphia, Pa.

This Month’s Photo



LCPL MARTIN EGNASH, USMC

Dream up your own Crazy Caption. *Leatherneck* will pay \$25 or give a one-year MCA membership for the craziest one received. It’s easy. Think up a caption for the photo at the right and either mail or email it to us. Send your submission to *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email it, referencing the number at the bottom right, to leatherneck@mca-marines.org. The winning entry will be published in two months.

(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____



CARLOS GUERRA

Railway Operations Continue to Expand at MCLB Barstow

By Laurie Pearson

Above: Sgt A.J. Heins from Combat Logistics Battalion 15 participates in rail operations training aboard MCLB Barstow, Calif., Aug. 15, 2014.

Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow is home to the only schoolhouse in the Department of Defense (DOD) equipped to instruct Intermediate and Advanced Railway Operations (RailOps) courses, a little-known component of the United States Marine Corps. Marines utilize their leadership skills and expertise to also train other branches of service in RailOps through this innovative, award-winning program. A steady flow of railcars provide mobile classrooms upon which students hone crucial skillsets. Railway Operations plans to expand its course offerings aboard the Yermo Annex of MCLB Barstow, Calif.

The original 80-hour course was first offered in the Marine Corps Training Information Management System in January 2015, with the first class graduating in February 2015. Since that time, 23 classes have graduated from the course, including 670 personnel. One of the most recent additions includes the Special Operations Forces Railhead Training Course, which was developed in conjunction with the Army's United States Special Operations Command. The team has also developed a

new course in OCONUS (Outside Contiguous United States) rail movement, working with U.S. Army counterparts in Korea and Europe.

"We've also added Mobile Training Teams to our repertoire," said Chad Hildebrandt, the railway operations supervisor. "This gives us the ability to send a highly qualified team of trainers to a unit, wherever they may be, to conduct training on site."

The goal is to maintain a six- to 10-person team of subject matter experts available for worldwide deployment. The team will be made up of instructors at the schoolhouse located aboard MCLB Barstow who will be ready to assist in rail operations with Marine Expeditionary Force units anywhere in the world.

The students are provided with classroom training and the ability to practice what they have learned with hands-on experience on railcars. Students must then pass a practical application portion of examinations by demonstrating their knowledge to staff and peers.

"Through the hard work of several Marines and civilian Marines, we have been operating this course for four years and have provided detailed training to service members from the Marine

"This gives us the ability to send a highly qualified team of trainers to a unit, wherever they may be, to conduct training on site."

**— Chad Hildebrandt
Railway Operations Supervisor**



Students and instructors from the Railhead Operations Group Training Course work on railcar spanners in the hot desert sun, on the Yermo Annex aboard MCLB Barstow, June 29, 2017. (Photo by Laurie Pearson)

“This operation saved the using units hundreds of thousands of dollars and was the first major rail operation to come out of Yuma, Ariz., in 10 years. I highly recommend this course for logistics Marines.”

— SSgt Michael Espinoza, USMC

Corps, the U.S. Army, multiple reserve components, National Guard units, and civilian personnel,” Hildebrandt said.

“When I went through the course, it didn’t feel like a course—it felt like a mission,” said Staff Sergeant Michael Espinoza, Landing Support Chief, Combat Logistics Battalion 24, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit. “An Army unit just happened to be moving all of their equipment through the depot at the time. This really helped the class to get hands-on training and feel that urgency of accomplishing the mission in a timely manner to meet a deadline.”

Two of the many benefits of using rail to transport equipment are logistical efficiency and cost savings. By shipping equipment via railcars rather than other modes of transportation, the DOD saves millions of dollars per year. “This course helped my team to properly execute railhead operations and complete an essential mission for multiple units supporting Weapons and Tactics Instructors course at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma,” Espinoza said.

“This operation saved the using units hundreds of thousands of dollars and was the first major rail operation to come out of Yuma, Ariz., in 10 years. I highly recommend this course for logistics Marines. It’s great knowledge for the Marines ... [and provides] units a cost-effective option when moving large forces over distance.”

The training team and crew provide a wide spectrum of training to ensure that each student receives a fully functional skillset that can be immediately utilized upon return to the home unit. “The program is constantly updated to keep students on the leading edge of training,” Hildebrandt added, “providing for the 04XX and 30XX (Logistics and Supply Administration) communities something that they are unable to obtain anywhere else within the DOD.”

One key aspect of the training is empowering students, or “yellow hats”—so named for the yellow hard hats they wear during training—to take leadership roles. It ensures that they know the material, the standards and procedures so well that they are able to teach it to someone else.

“Our soldiers were forced to make decisions on the ground while tasked with instructing the rotational training unit in proper operating procedures on the railhead,” said Army Lieutenant Conner Farley, Executive and Mobility Officer, 152nd Movement Control Team, 4th Sustainment Brigade. “The ‘Yellow Hats’ were seen as the subject matter experts and had to provide the correct

Below: Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 15 practice securing a humvee to a railcar while aboard MCLB Barstow on Aug. 15, 2014. The Marines learned how to load, tie down, and prepare vehicles for transport via rail.



CARLOS GUERRA

information to their fellow soldiers from the Rotational Training Unit (RTU) with confidence, which visibly developed each of their leadership ability.”

Hildebrandt and his team of experts also provide a wide variety of support to the Marine Corps, such as unit level training in accordance with training and readiness standards.

“The unit’s collective understanding of the content covered in this course is paramount to successfully training in our overall mission-essential tasks as we move forward to conduct railhead operations at home and abroad,” Farley said. “We have a confidence about us, derived from the hands-on instruction and diligence of the instructors that will allow us to be successful on any railhead in the world. Undoubtedly, we will reach back to Chad and his team for future training and as a source of information, knowing they are always ready to provide support.”

This support also extends to mission-critical testing and as well as logistical planning and coordination. They are the only facility within the Marine Corps that can provide Rail Impact Test Training to Marine Corps Systems Command. They also routinely provide detailed mission-planning assistance across the enterprise for strategic logistics and rail operations support.

This attention to detail and focus on service and support, locally or in any field or theater, is why Railway Operations on MCLB Barstow are the proud recipients of multiple awards. The many accolades include designation from Headquarters Marine Corps, spearheaded by Master Gunnery Sergeant John Freitag, occupational field sponsor, as the Center for Excellence for Rail Operations Individual and Collective Training, 2016. According to Freitag, “For units wishing to become proficient and effective in rail operations, there are no higher standards than what is taught at MCLB Barstow. If one can learn it here in Barstow, one can execute it anywhere!”

Another recent award is the Commander in Chief’s Annual Award for Installation Excellence, the first time MCLB Barstow received this award.

Hildebrandt was honored with Logistician of the Year and Employee of the Year for the Marine Corps, but credits his entire team for his success. “It’s not about me,” Hildebrandt said. “My team is what makes this work! It’s their hard work, dedication to excellence in everything they do that makes this installation—to include railway operations—shine.”

The team has also received multiple recognition awards from rotational units. In fact, they have received so many that they have had to become creative in how to display the certificates and plaques.

“Some are really unique and hand crafted out



Marines training at the Rail Operations School tighten railcar hardware prior to loading Army vehicles, Feb. 4, 2016.



of special wood, while others are really creatively designed certificates,” Hildebrandt said. “They are special to our team though because it recognizes all of their hard work.”

Author’s bio: Laurie Pearson’s family has a long history of military service to include her grandfather (Army), uncle and father (Air Force), brother (Navy), and she herself served in the U.S. Army Reserve. Prior to working in public affairs aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., she served with the Forest Service where she was attached to Interagency Incident Management Team-NorCal Team 2, responding to large fires as a public information officer. She is also a former law enforcement officer with Norfolk Police Department. Laurie owns three small in-home businesses and serves on the Board of Directors for Desert Sanctuary/Haley House, a nonprofit which provides a full range of services to victims of domestic violence. 🐾

PFC Andrew Eckhardt of Combat Logistics Battalion 7 guides a humvee onto railcars while participating in rail operations training aboard MCLB Barstow, June 6, 2016.

SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

The Apple Core on the Road to Parris Island

Six months after graduating from high school in June 1965, I found myself on a Greyhound bus headed to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C. It was 10 p.m. when I reached the small town of Beaufort just outside the base. Up to this point I had been a solitary traveler but with a two-hour layover, I met others on the same journey to become Marines.

As a bunch of 18- and 19-year-olds, we covered up our nervousness with a lot of bluster and bravado. I was a Midwesterner who ended up with a group of smart-aleck New Yorkers whom I immediately liked.

As the bus entered the darkness of the South Carolina night, we could see magnolia trees with hanging moss along the road. It was spooky. And as we traversed the causeway linking the base to the mainland, it occurred to us we were headed to a place that offered little chance of retreat.

One of the New Yorkers was sitting across from me as we entered the base. We were bantering back and forth, making wisecracks about all kinds of things. I was eating an apple and after finishing it, I shouted across the aisle, "Hey, Rosten, open your window." He did and I launched what was left toward the opening. I am no athlete, and certainly no pitcher, but as luck would have it, it sailed right out.

Almost immediately we observed flashing police lights behind us. We just assumed it was part of the normal process of receiving

new recruits. The bus stopped and we disembarked to the snarling shouts and insults of drill instructors that seemed more like rabid dogs than human beings.

We were routed into a large room, lined up in front of long tables, told to stand at attention and empty our pockets. Suddenly two fierce-looking Marines burst into the room with armbands showing the letters MP; the angriest and most hostile of the two shouted, "Which one of you maggots hit my car with an apple core?" He then declared that if the person responsible did not step forward immediately, the whole group would be punished severely until he did. At this point, everybody started looking in my direction. Oh great! Even the New York boys wilted like daisies in the hot sun. I had no choice, so I stepped forward and into a firestorm.

First I was told I would be cleaning the street with a toothbrush then I was going to take a walk behind the building to "learn" a few things about proper Marine Corps behavior, and finally, for the remainder of the night, I was subjected to every invective and epithet known in the world.

So began my Marine Corps career.

Now, five decades later, I realize how much I gained from that experience so long ago. The Marine Corps steered me off what might have been a rough road and onto one with fewer bumps and ruts. Even though I didn't think so then, the training, confidence, and, yes, the discipline I received helped me go on to a satisfying life of career, family, and material well-being.

Ken McBride
Palmyra, Va.

Last Laugh

After graduating from Sea School in Portsmouth, Va., in June 1970, several of us received orders for the Marine detachment aboard USS *Enterprise* (CVAN-65). After being aboard for a few days, some of the "old salts" decided it was time to "snap in" the boots. Another Marine and I were called to the sergeant of the guard for our assignment. He told us we had to search the ship, find and come back with a skyhook, a bulkhead stretcher and six fallopian tubes. He did not care how long it took us as long as we were back to stand watch in approximately four hours. Up the ladder we went as we heard the salts laughing.

The Marine who was with me was somewhat worried that we could not find these objects. I assured him that we could not and they were trying to pull a fast one on us. We killed four hours by goofing off and then returned to the sergeant of the guard empty-handed. We explained to him and the other salts how we went to every supply station all over the ship and no one had any of the objects. He gave us a dressing down and told us that we were useless. He told us to go get ready for duty and when we were out of sight, they started laughing.

Little did they know we had the last laugh.

Kyle Price
USMC, 1969-1972
Johnson City, Tenn.

The Day I Stole Second Base

Our Marine squadron was stationed in Omura, Japan in the days following the end of World War II. The period of time between 1400 and 1600 on Wednesdays was supposed to be for rest and recreation. Sports of one

kind or another were usually the order of the day.

On one occasion we decided to start up a game of baseball between the officers and the enlisted men. The game was going well. We scored, they scored. At one point I got on base. Next thing I knew there was a squabble at third base and many players from both teams gathered to state their opinions.

I was still standing on first base watching what was going on when I noticed no one was guarding second base so I took off. When that happened it changed the whole scene. Some of the officers started yelling, "Where do you think you're going? What do you think you're doing? You can't do that. We're having a discussion here."

I kept one foot on the base and said, "The pitcher is standing on the mound holding the ball and no called time out." That started another round of arguments.

Finally, a whistle blew and someone said, "Time's up. Four o'clock. Game's over!"

I think we stripes won over the bars.

TSgt William Tuthill
USMC, 1941-1947
Plainfield, N.J.

No Boots in Khe Sanh

I take the liberty to tell a true story, with permission, related to me by Marcel Andre Desaulniers, an American chef, host of TV cooking shows and cookbook author.

Desaulniers' Vietnam service put him at Khe Sanh at a time during one of the lulls prior to the major siege. The unit sergeant major told him to pack his gear for a trip to Da Nang. There was no explanation other than he had a seat on the next

plane out. Upon arrival, a driver transported him to III MAF Headquarters. Still no explanation. He was escorted to the office of General Lewis W. Walt. Desaulniers was distressed, in awe, and just plain scared. The general leaned over the desk and focused on the Marine's footwear and said, "You have boots. Why does your mother think you don't?"

Desaulniers explained he had sent his family a group photo of him with his buddies, which showed him barefoot. His mother, knowing her son always had trouble finding adequate boots and shoes because of his large feet, assumed the photo was evidence he had no boots at Khe Sanh.

His mother forwarded the photo to her congressional representative who forwarded it to Headquarters Marine Corps and it finally landed at III MAF where Gen Walt took a personal interest. After a short interview, the general issued him an additional new pair of boots.

LtCol C.G. "Jug" Gerard
USMC (Ret)
Brevard, N.C.

Stolen Gas

Platoon 212, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, Calif., commenced training on Feb. 9, 1965 and graduated on April 21. The platoon commander and senior drill instructor was Staff Sergeant C.E. Johnson with Sgts C.G. Schleusner and P.I. Silva as junior DIs.

One evening Sgt Schleusner summoned me to the duty hut. Having no idea what I had done, I centered myself in front of his desk.

The following conversation took place:

DI: "You maggot (or worse), you stole gas as a civilian."

Pvt: "Sir, no sir."

DI: "Don't lie to me puke (or worse)! You stole gas."

Sensing the good sergeant was nearing the end of his

rope, I offered, "Sir, no sir. We had a system."

DI: "What kind of %\$#& (or worse) system?"

Pvt: "Sir, we would drive into the rural countryside and stop at a farmhouse telling the farmer we ran out of gas and could he spare a gallon or two in this five gallon can, Sir."

DI: "Well, I'm out of fuel oil and it's getting cold tonight. I happen to know the platoon next door is on the obstacle course."

Handing me a tin can and a small siphon hose, he continued, "Here, get me some gas. And if you get caught, I don't know you."

As I slowly headed for the Quonset huts next to ours, I knew one of the DIs was Sgt Lukenbill but wasn't sure if he was the senior. Approaching the duty hut, I listened intently for any noise within. Not hearing any, I quickly entered. Knowing I didn't have much time, I stuck the hose into the stove's tank, sucked a mouth-full of kerosene and placed the other end into the tin can.

I didn't want to get caught inside so I stood outside while the can filled. After a short while I re-entered the hut. Holy crap! The can was full and fuel was running all over the floor!

Hurrying back to my own area I had to kick the duty hut door and request permission to enter.

DI: "You got it! Gosh darn (or worse)! You got it!"

Serving with Delta 1/5 in Vietnam our platoon sergeant had rotated home. Rumor was that our replacement had a tour of duty as a DI at San Diego. I thought nothing of it as my rotation date was getting close. The day came when he arrived and sure as heck (or worse) it was Lukenbill. He was a great leader and I am proud to have served with him but I never had the nerve to tell him who stole his fuel oil.

Jon Johnson
Sidney, Ohio

The Golden Broom

When I was a brand new captain, I arrived at Camp H.M. Smith, Oahu, Hawaii, with my brand new bride on July 25, 1962, to become the camp adjutant and the FMFPAC honor guard commander. In October, the commander called me to his office. Upon reporting to the colonel, he informed me that the outside stairwell leading to his office was full of leaves and he directed me to do something to keep the stairs clean.

I returned to my office a bit perplexed. Was it the adjutant's job to keep the stairs clean or would that be more in line with the headquarters commandant's job? But the colonel had spoken. I called the lead corporal into my office and said, "Here's \$20. Go to the PX and get a push broom, a bicycle bell and gold paint. Paint the broom gold and mount the bicycle bell midway down the handle. We are creating the "golden broom" detail within the adjutant's office. Take the rest of the day off and accomplish this task."

The next day the corporal reported with the golden broom. It was a magnificent piece of equipment; all bright and shiny. The corporal asked, "Sir, what's next?" I responded: "At 0730, 1130 and 1600 each day, Monday through Friday, you or one of your Marines in the outer office will appear before my desk with the golden broom at port arms, ring the bell twice and report: 'Sir, golden broom prepared to sweep.' I will say 'sweep' which will be the command to sally forth to sweep the colonel's steps outside his office. After sweeping the steps, report back to me by the same method, ring the bell twice and report: 'Sir, mission complete.' I will respond, 'Carry on, stow the golden broom.'"

For the next three months, the troops had a

ball with this very unusual assignment, literally fighting over who would perform the ritual.

One day the colonel was in my office when the corporal appeared before my desk and proclaimed, "Sir, golden broom prepared to sweep." I dutifully replied, "Sweep."

The colonel returned to his office without comment. Over the squawk box came the urgent command, "Capt Rilling, come in here."

As I stood at attention in front of his desk, he asked, "What the hell was that all about?" I explained that the system had been put into place after receiving his order to "keep the stairs clean," some months back.

He said, "I think I will give this assignment to Capt Shumacher, the headquarters commandant. What do you think about that idea?"

"That would be excellent," I replied. The troops in the adjutant's office were sad but I was elated. Mission accomplished after only three months and quite by accident.

LtCol David S. Rilling
USMC (Ret)
Gaffney, S.C.

Do you have an interesting story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? Maybe it's a boot camp tale or a good old sea story that will have us in stitches? We would love to hear your stories and see any accompanying photographs. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Patricia Everett, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to p.everett@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or a one-year MCA&F membership for the "Sea Story of the Month." Spread the word! 🍷

Diamondhead, Miss.

Weekly Breakfast Tradition Continues For More than a Decade

For the "Diamondhead Marines" of Diamondhead, Miss., staying connected to the Corps means fostering a close-knit Marine community in the town they call home. The group has gathered for breakfast every Friday or Saturday morning for more than 13 years. From the left, Neal Nadler, Dutch VanDevort, Wes Melton, Gary Gilmore, Bob Walker, Leonard Alderveld, Tom Dempsey, Nolin Briley and Harold Dawley gathered for a photo during their weekly breakfast, July 28, 2017. In June, Walker, a veteran of the Battle of Iwo Jima, turned 97—a milestone that brought the Diamondhead Marines together for a celebration.

Submitted by SgtMaj Wes Melton, USMC (Ret)



COURTESY OF SGTMAJ WES MELTON, USMC (RET)



COURTESY OF W. JEAN LAMB

Wheeling, W.Va.

Recipient, MCL Detachment Share Purple Heart With Cancer Patient

On April 26, 2017, members of the Jones, Wolin & O'Brien Marine Corps League Detachment 771 in Wheeling, W.Va., presented a "Purple Heart" to 8-year-old Dominic Michael Alexander, who recently had been diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma. Steve Duncil, a member of the detachment, received several Purple Hearts during his time in the Corps, and upon hearing about Dominic's courageous struggle to overcome cancer, decided that Dominic should have a Purple Heart of his own. He and fellow detachment members put together a special ceremony and presented Dominic with a certificate of courage and bravery, which read, "In admiration for his Marine spirit and determination while facing one of life's toughest battles," and one of Duncil's own medals.

Submitted by W. Jean Lamb



COURTESY OF BILL FORTUNE

Devil Pups Recognized for Physical Fitness Performance

Members of the Marine Corps League Utah Dixie Detachment 1270 hosted a breakfast at the St. George Dixie Elks Lodge 1743 in St. George, Utah, Sept. 9, 2017. It was an opportunity for them to recognize the hard work of 10 local participants in the "Devil Pups" youth program following the Devil Pups completion of a physical fitness program that ended with a 10-day competition at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Among the participants was Alena Lorentzen, pictured here being congratulated for her perfect score of 400 points on the physical fitness test at the Camp Pendleton event. She was presented with a \$100 scholarship award by Colonel David Waters, USMC (Ret), left, Commandant of the Utah Dixie Detachment 1270, and Les Covey, right, the assistant liaison representative for the Devil Pups Program.

Devil Pups is a nonprofit organization based in Southern California that offers a demanding physical fitness and academic citizenship program designed for young people from California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah who are between the ages of 14 and 17.

Submitted by Bill Fortune

Brooklyn, N.Y.



SCOTT DINKEL

Hometown Hero: LtGen Toolan Returns As Parade's Grand Marshal

Pictured here with his wife, Helen, Lieutenant General John A. Toolan, USMC (Ret), served as one of the grand marshals at the 150th Kings County Memorial Day Parade in Brooklyn, N.Y., May 29, 2017. After serving as the Commanding General of Marine Corps Forces Pacific, LtGen Toolan, a native of Kings County, retired in 2016 from a 40-year Marine Corps career. The Kings County Memorial Day Parade is a longstanding tradition that began just after the Civil War, making it one of the oldest parades of its kind in the U.S.

Submitted by Scott Dinkel

Kings Point, N.Y.



COURTESY OF BILL OBER

Passing the Torch: MCL Foundation Presents Sword To Future Marine Officer

William Ober, left, a national staff officer of the Marine Corps League, presents Midshipman Justin Lindstrom with a mameluke officer's sword—a gift from the Marine Corps League Foundation—at the commencement exercises at the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y., June 17, 2017.

Submitted by Bill Ober

Washington, D.C.



COURTESY OF COL TIMOTHY S. MUNDY, USMC (RET)

Tribute to 30th Commandant Unveiled At Army and Navy Club

On Sept. 28, 2017, a portrait of General Carl E. Mundy Jr., 30th Commandant of the Marine Corps, was unveiled at the Army and Navy Club in Washington, D.C., where Gen Mundy was a longtime member. Colonel James A. Bracken, USMC (Ret), a classmate of Gen Mundy from The Basic School Class 3-57, came up with the idea to commission the portrait. With the help of the Mundy family, Bracken raised the funds and commissioned portrait artist Mark Carder to paint a replica of the original official portrait he painted of Gen Mundy, which hangs in the Home of the Commandants, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C.

Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Col Timothy S. Mundy, USMC (Ret), Director of the Marine Corps Association Foundation; Gen Alfred Gray, USMC (Ret), 29th

Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Major General Carl E. Mundy III, Commanding General, Marine Special Operations Command, unveiled the portrait during a special ceremony. Also in attendance were several general officers, Marines, friends of the Mundy family and members of the Army and Navy Club.

Submitted by Col Timothy S. Mundy, USMC (Ret)

"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: Sara W. Bock, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to s.bock@mca-marines.org. Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos. 🇺🇸



Long Live the Red, White and Blue!

Story and photos by MSgt Tom Bartlett, USMC (Ret)

Because the Iranian militants couldn't read Spanish, Sgt James M. Lopez got away with posting a patriotic slogan on his cell wall while he was being held as a hostage in Tehran.

President Ronald Reagan welcomed the former hostages back to the United States during ceremonies on the White House lawn in January 1981. The president singled out Marine Sergeant James M. Lopez, who had written on his Iranian cell wall, "Viva La Roja, Blanca Y Azul!"

"Now the Iranians couldn't read Spanish," President Reagan said, "and so they permitted the sign to remain. They may not understand what it means in Iran, but we do, Sgt Lopez, and you've filled our hearts with pride."

Translation? "Long live the red, white and blue!"

Many of the former hostages gave their captives digs, and some suffered as the result of their defiance. Sgt John D. McKeel Jr., in true Marine fashion, gave only his name, rank, social security num-

ber and date of birth. The Iranians wanted "secret information."

They kicked out one of McKeel's teeth. They got a tooth, but no information.

Heroes? The hostages don't consider themselves "special."

"I never felt I deserved this," remarked Sgt William Gallegos, referring to the hostages' welcome home. "And I still don't. There are many men who have endured much more."

"I know it's impossible," admitted Sgt Lopez, "but I'd like to get back to leading a normal life. Your arm gets tired from waving after a while."

The Marines were noticeably embarrassed by the welcome home they received. Heroes? Not in their minds, although it is possible that some will be decorated for bravery and the heroic acts they performed during their 14 months as hostages.

Lopez was on duty at the consulate when Iranian militants stormed the compound on Nov. 4, 1979. For almost three hours he prevented the invaders from entering, despite having been ordered not to fire his rifle.

"At one point, the students tried to break into the consulate through one of the windows, but [Lopez] beat them back," said Mark Lijek, a consular official.

When the militants regrouped, Lopez guided 14 Americans and 46 Iranians who were in the consulate, upstairs to the second floor. He divided them into small groups, and then eased them out of the compound through a side door.

Five Americans, including Lijek, made their way to the Canadian Embassy, where they were hidden. Another American managed to sneak into the Canadian Embassy, and all were smuggled back to the U.S.

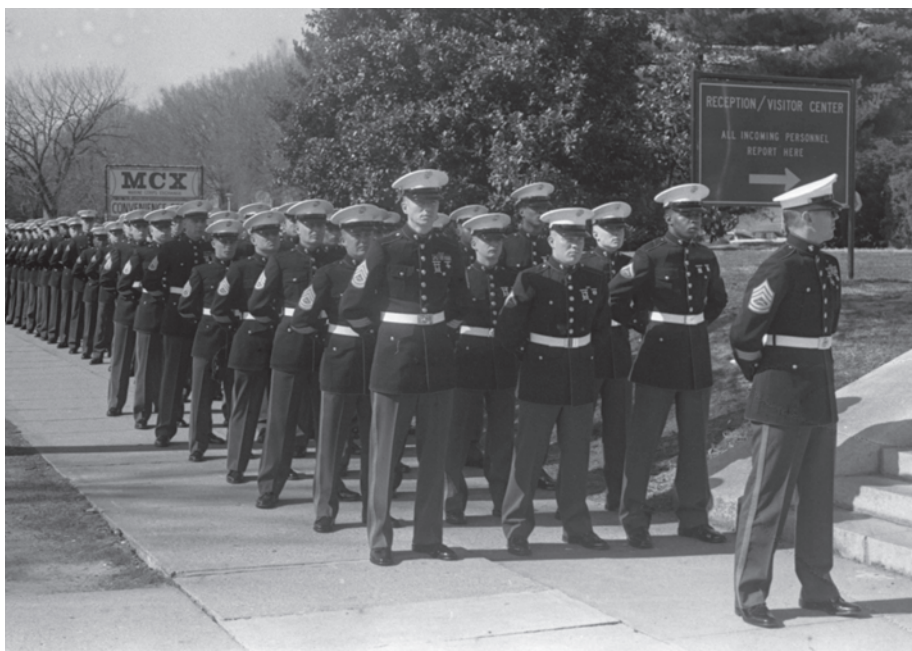
Lopez continued sending small groups out of the compound, and finally it was his turn. He had smashed all of the official visa stamps, removed the stripes from his dress blue trousers and made it to a nearby side street, but that was the end of his journey.

He was captured.

During the 14 months of his captivity, Lopez said he was "kept in some really bad-hole places, like closets." He had been beaten several times.

But he denies being a hero. He and the other former hostages became a symbol of the entire nation being held in bondage;

The March 1981 MSG School graduating class stood in formation before entering the base theater at Quantico, Va., where they would hear a speech by LtGen Richard E. Carey and meet with the Marines who had returned from Iran.



The former hostages attended an MSG School graduation ceremony at Quantico, Va., which was covered by the major TV networks and many newspapers.



with their release came the venting of pent-up emotions and a spontaneous outpouring of patriotism.

The yellow ribbon became the banner alongside the red, white and blue.

Who are these former hostages, the Marines?

Sgt William A. Gallegos was born on Sept. 12, 1958, in Pueblo, Colo. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1977 and graduated from recruit training at MCRD, San Diego, Calif. He is a 3051 (general warehouseman) who served with the 3d Force Support Service Group on Okinawa prior to applying for the Marine Security Guard (MSG) Program at Quantico, Va. Following graduation from the MSG School in July 1979, he was assigned to Company B, MSG Battalion, American Embassy, Tehran, Iran. He joined the unit in Tehran on Aug. 6, 1979.

Sgt Kevin J. Hermening was born on July 14, 1959, in Milwaukee, Wis. Enlisting in the Marine Corps Reserve in November 1976, he received recruit training at MCRD, San Diego, Calif., and was assigned as a 3061 (subsistence supplyman) with Marine Aircraft Group 36 at Marine Corps Air Station, Futenma, Okinawa, Japan. He attended the MSG School and was assigned to the American Embassy in Tehran, Iran, on Aug. 6, 1979.

Hermening's mother, Barbara Jean Timm, traveled to Tehran to visit him during his captivity. Asked about his mother's visit, the Marine said:

"Well, of course, I was very glad to see her. And I must say that [her visit occurred] just at the time we moved out of the chancellery building and were dispersed around the country. And as far as my own experiences, my treatment had not changed at all" (as the result of his mother's visit).

Upon his return to the States, Hermening told his family that they could take down the Christmas tree they had kept decorated. He also told his mother that he could hardly wait to eat some of her barbecued pork chops.

The youngest of the Marine hostages, Hermening was surprised to find a Marine Honor Guard awaiting his arrival at the Milwaukee airport. Returning the salute of the senior Marine, Hermening, wearing dress blues, briskly inspected the formation.

Sgt Steven W. Kirtley was born on Oct. 19, 1958, in Little Rock, Ark. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on June 17, 1977, and went active on June 30. Graduating from recruit training at San Diego, he became an 0151 (admin clerk) and an 0121 (service record books clerk) with

Schools Battalion at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Headquarters Bn, Twentynine Palms, Calif., before applying for the MSG School. Following graduation, he was assigned to Tehran on Aug. 6, 1979.

Sgt Paul E. Lewis was born on July 12, 1957, in Danville, Ill. Enlisting in the Marine Corps on Feb. 14, 1976, he graduated from recruit training at San Diego and was assigned as an 0331 (machine gunner) with the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

He completed the Marine Security Guard School in October 1978 as the class honorman, and was assigned to the MSG Bn, American Embassy, Budapest, where he served until being assigned to Tehran on Nov. 3, 1979.

Although his enlistment expired in January, he was retained on active duty "at the convenience of the government."

Lewis was something of a celebrity before enlisting in the Marine Corps. A football star and "prom king" at Homer High School, he was taken hostage the day following his assignment to Tehran.

Upon his return to the United States, Lewis quietly moved through the streets of Danville to reach his home and spend time with his family. But the townspeople wanted to express their "welcome." More than 3,000, including Governor James

The ... former hostages became a symbol of the entire nation being held in bondage;

with their release came the venting of pent-up emotions and a spontaneous outpouring of patriotism.

Thompson, provided the Marine with a parade.

From the reviewing stand, Sgt Lewis could only say, "It's very good to be home."

Sgt Lopez was born on May 21, 1958, in Globe, Ariz. He enlisted in the Marine Corps and was called to active duty on April 29, 1977. Graduating from recruit training at San Diego, he was assigned to the U.S. Army Military Police School, Fort McClellan, Ala., for training as a 5831 corrections man (military police).

He was assigned to Headquarters Squadron at the Marine Corps Air Station,

persed around the country. And it was done in such a helter-skelter style that many of us were crammed into small cars, and the lodgings were last-minute affairs so that conditions we were living in were, even for the standards before ... well, they were below that."

Sgt John D. McKeel Jr., was born on June 26, 1953, in Dallas, Texas. He served two years with the Army, attaining the rank of sergeant. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on Feb. 18, 1977, and graduated from recruit training at San Diego, Calif. His assignment took him to Marine

upper left-hand corner of the envelope, as his return address, he wrote: "Hostage, Tehran, Iran."

During a press conference at the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., McKeel said: "I don't know how the rumors got out about some of us hostages supposed to be suffering from some mental condition, but I feel from the people I've been talking to since my stay here at West Point that we're all right. And as soon as they let us get home, especially the Marines, so we can get back to chasing women, everything will be perfect. We are all right, physically and mentally."

On the commercial airline flight from Washington, D.C., to Dallas, Texas, McKeel was preparing for a nap. Then the captain of the aircraft announced, "Ladies and gentlemen. We are honored to have with us ..."

Flight attendants served small chocolate cakes decorated with American flags. They broke out champagne. Passengers crowded around, toasting the Marine, who sipped beer.

Landing at Dallas, he kissed a pretty flight attendant and went quietly off to his parents' house.

Staff Sergeant Michael E. Moeller, the highest ranking of the former Marine hostages, was also the oldest. Born on Feb. 18, 1951, in Loup City, Neb., he enlisted in the Marine Corps in November 1970 and went on active duty in March 1971. Graduating from recruit training at San Diego, he was transferred to Vietnam to serve as a rifleman with the 3dMarDiv.

Participating in Operations Freedom Torch and Song Thang 6-72, he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal with star.

Returning stateside, Moeller joined the 1stMarDiv and was assigned as an instructor/troop leader with the Infantry Training Unit at Camp Pendleton. Re-assigned as a platoon sergeant, he joined the Communications Electronics School at Twentynine Palms, Calif., as a troop handler.

In early 1977, Moeller attended MSG School, and in July 1977, he was assigned to the American Embassy in Karachi, Pakistan, serving there until June 1979, when he was reassigned to Tehran.

His enlistment expired, and like Sgt Paul Lewis, Moeller was retained at the "convenience of the government."

Selected for promotion to gunnery sergeant while a captive, SSgt Moeller was described by the other former hostages as acting "cool as ice."

When he arrived at Wiesbaden, Moeller took advantage of a long bank of telephones and called his wife, Ann, in Virginia.



Former hostages Sgt Rodney V. Sickmann and Sgt Gregory A. Persinger talked with Sgt Vicki L. Gaglia during a reception for recent graduates of the MSG School.

El Toro, Calif., and then attended the MSG School, graduating in October 1979. His tour in Iran began on Oct. 6, 1979.

During his captivity, he was kept in solitary confinement. At night, he could feel centipedes crawling across his face. In the morning, "We would wake up and practically break the ice off the water so we could wash or drink."

Asked to describe his captivity, Lopez recalled what Mark Twain had written about being tarred and feathered. "If it wasn't for the honor, I'd rather do without!"

Following the return of the former hostages to the United States and their reunion with families and loved ones, Jesse Lopez, father of the Marine, confided that James was his old self, still cracking jokes.

What kind? "Unprintable!" his father grinned.

In reply to a reporter's question, the Marine replied, "Were we subjected to torture? No, Sir. I think what you're referring to is the fact that we were dis-

Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, McAlester, Okla., and later, Headquarters Battery, 11th Marines, at Camp Pendleton as an 0847 (artillery meteorological man).

McKeel attended the MSG School and graduated in October 1979. He was sent to Tehran on Oct. 12, 1979.

After being taken captive, he was told by the militants that his mother was dead, "and if you want to go to the funeral, tell us what you know," they said.

He gave his name, rank, social security number and date of birth. They kicked out his tooth.

When the former hostages arrived at Wiesbaden, Germany, Sgt McKeel called home to Balch Springs, Texas. His mother, Wynona, answered the phone.

"Hello," she said. And for a long moment, she heard only the crackle of the long distance line. "I thought you were dead," her son said. "They told me you were dead."

During his captivity, McKeel wrote: "I have been here so long I've gotten used to this and it doesn't bother me at all." On the

The telephone rang, and his 5-year-old daughter, Amy, answered.

"Hello. Is your mommy home?" the Marine asked.

"Yes," Amy replied, and gently hung up the phone ...

Sgt Gregory A. Persinger was born on Christmas Day, 1957, in Wilmington, Del. Enlisting in the Marine Corps in June 1976, he attended recruit training at San Diego, Calif.

Assigned duties as an 0341 (mortarman), he served with the 3dMarDiv on Okinawa, and with Force Troops at the Marine Corps Base, Twentynine Palms, Calif., before requesting assignment to MSG School.

Persinger reported to Tehran on Aug. 6, 1979, along with Gallegos, Hermening and Kirtley.

Sgt Rodney V. Sickmann was born on July 26, 1957, in St. Louis, Mo., and enlisted in the Marine Corps in May 1975. He began his active duty on Aug. 26, 1976, and attended recruit training at San Diego.

A rifleman, he served with the Third Marine Division on Okinawa, and with the Second Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, N.C., before applying for MSG School. Upon graduation, he was assigned to Tehran, reporting there on Oct. 6, 1979.

In one of his letters home, Sickmann wrote: "Hopefully, some way, we'll see through this mess. What an experience. Ha! Ha!"

Upon his return to the United States, he told his family that he "only went outside about 25 times in the past year," and that "mail and packages from home were received sporadically."

After the welcoming home ceremonies in Washington, D.C., Sickmann flew on to St. Louis where he was greeted by a group

**After being taken captive,
he was told by the militants
that his mother was dead,
"and if you want to go to
the funeral, tell us what you
know," they said.**

of screaming teenagers. "I love you," he shouted, shaking hands along the route. He was presented a replica of the St. Louis Gateway Arch.

Captives for 14 months, some of the Marines talked about an escape plan they had been working on. They had hidden razor blades and pins, and mixed a strong detergent with kerosene.

According to Sgt McKeel, six of the Marines planned to make their break on Feb. 12, if they hadn't been released by that time.

"When the Iranian guards weren't looking, we took whatever we could

[items which might be used as weapons] and hid them," McKeel said.

They had hopes of reaching the Turkish border.

Asked if the plan had a chance of succeeding, McKeel admitted that the chances were "slim" and "none."

"I think I could have gotten out of my area of confinement, but I don't think I could have gotten out of the country of Iran," he said. "I would have been shoeless, moneyless and unable to speak the local language."

Most of the Marines retained their military bearing, but, on occasion, they gave way to youthful exuberance. When the aircraft from Tehran landed at the Houari Boumedienne Airport in Algiers, the former hostages were divided into two groups aboard the C-9A Nightingale hospital planes. "A" to "K" were to board one aircraft; the remainder would fly in the other.

Some of the Marines sprinted for the waiting planes, with the winner raising his arms overhead, shouting "God bless America."

Colonel J.L. Cooper, commanding officer of the MSG Bn, met the Marines at Wiesbaden, Germany. "Our initial meeting was a very emotional time," the colonel said. "I don't recall all that was said, but I assure you, upon welcoming them, I did not instruct them to march right down to get haircuts and shaves!



BGen G.L. Bartlett, USMC (Ret), then-Executive Director of the MCA, presented bound volumes of *Leatherneck* and the *Marine Corps Gazette* to Sgt John D. McKeel and the rest of the Marine hostages as Col J.L. Cooper, MSG Battalion CO, looked on. The magazines covered Marine Corps events during the 14 months the MSG Marines were held in captivity.

Nancy Reagan, the first lady, entered. She shook a few hands, smiled and exclaimed, "I can't stand this!" She then hugged and kissed the former captives.

"I recall that Sgt Lopez apologized to me for his appearance. He said, 'If I had a chance, I'd have cleaned up.'

"And you know? Two hours after landing at Wiesbaden, the Marines were clean-shaven, they had haircuts, and they were all wearing Marine Security Guard T-shirts!

"I was told by more than one of the former hostages that our nine young men never ceased to be Marines. That's a fine compliment.

"In fact, I was told by one elderly gentleman that if it hadn't been for the Marine in his cell, who insisted that he eat and exercise during those 444 days and nights, that the man didn't think he would have survived the captivity."

During the White House reception, the hostages stood in the Blue Room as Nancy Reagan, the first lady, entered. She shook a few hands, smiled and exclaimed, "I can't stand this!" She then hugged and kissed the former captives.

Later, as a White House aide called their names, each of the former hostages stepped forward and received a rosewood box, engraved with the president's signature, and containing an American flag.

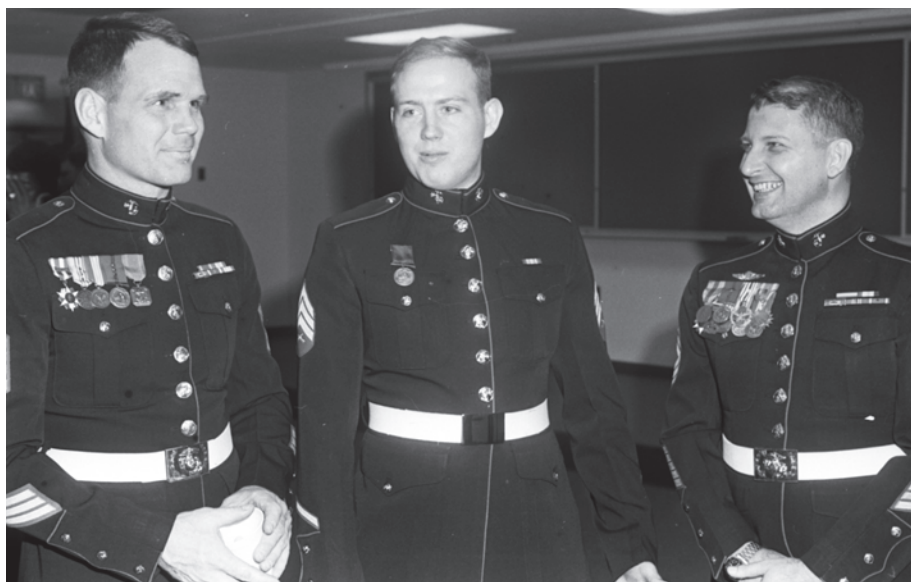
There were 52 former hostages returned to the States. Nine were active-duty Marines; but two more had ties to the Corps. One had split service and another was a Marine reservist.

William Earl Belk was serving at the embassy in Tehran as a communications specialist.

A 20-year veteran of the Air Force and Marine Corps, it was he who was blindfolded and photographed while being shoved and taunted by the Iranian militants following their takeover. The photograph was repeatedly published until it became the symbol of the crisis.

William J. Daugherty, a civilian embassy employee, was a Marine reservist who was selected for promotion to major during his captivity. "We aren't heroes," he said. "The real heroes have been our families ..."

"Some of the statements that I made to my family were misquoted," Sgt Lopez said. "Every little piece of information that came out [of Iran] was made to look like more than it was.



Sgt George A. Persinger, center, a former hostage, met with two of his MSG instructors, 1st Sgt Terry Taylor and GySgt Charles Constance.

"The statement I made that it was so cold that I had to break the ice to get a drink of water was a joke. It wasn't quite that cold. We were treated bad," he continued, "but I think our treatment is overblown and exaggerated. I think it's important that we maintain our integrity, otherwise, we're no better than Iran.

"The Iranians didn't know what they were doing," he said. "We were afraid they were going to come in and execute us and then find out they weren't supposed to do it."



He also referred to the proposed escape plan. "We were going to get it over, taking down as many as we could, making it expensive for them."

As for being a hero, he said, "It's embarrassing. We were doing our job."

During their stay in the Washington, D.C., area, the Marines met with General Robert H. Barrow, Commandant of the Marine Corps, who welcomed them and told them he was pleased with their conduct.

"Based on preliminary official reports, I can only conclude that the discipline, leadership and professionalism of you Marines can only be characterized as 'outstanding,' " the Commandant said.

"I have nothing but confidence that

each of you performed as we might expect Marines would perform. I have even heard reports of praise from fellow hostages that you assisted those who were in need and that you contributed to upholding their morale."

The former hostages were unaware of the attempted rescue plan that was aborted after three of the helicopters suffered mechanical failures in Iran. One of the helicopters collided with a transport loaded with fuel, resulting in the death of eight Americans, including three Marines.

For members of the Corps, the return of the nine former Marine hostages was cause for celebration. But it was also a time to remember those who sacrificed themselves on the all-volunteer rescue attempt in Iran.

The Air Force personnel were: Capt Richard L. Bakke, Capt Harold Lewis, Capt Lynn Davis McIntosh, Capt Charles McMillan and TSgt Joel Mayo. The Marines were: SSgt Dewey L. Johnson, Sgt John D. Harvey and Cpl George N. Holmes Jr.

Family members of all eight who perished in the rescue attempt attended the White House ceremonies and received the thanks of the returned hostages.

Diane Johnson, the widow of Marine SSgt Dewey Johnson, said during the ceremonies, "I don't know. I really thought I ought to be here."

Her husband, she continued, had carried out his duty, and she felt that she too "had a duty, to be present for the hostages' official welcome home. They all said they were very, very thankful," Mrs. Johnson remarked.

Yellow ribbons continued to flutter. There's a new-found pride in American communities. 🇺🇸



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS




TRY SOMETHING NEW



GET IN SHAPE



VOLUNTEER MORE



EAT HEALTHIER



QUIT SMOKING



MEET NEW PEOPLE



GET MORE SLEEP



DRINK MORE WATER



JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

Make a resolution to stay connected to the Corps by joining the professional association that fosters the spirit and preserves the rich traditions of the United States Marine Corps.
Join today at www.mca-marines.org

Books Reviewed

BRUTAL BATTLES OF VIETNAM: America's Deadliest Days 1965-1972. Published by Veterans of Foreign Wars. Edited by Richard K. Kolb. 480 pages.

Those of us who have watched the new Ken Burns PBS series, "The Vietnam War," also will be interested in the coffee table book, "Brutal Battles of Vietnam." Published by the VFW on the 50th anniversary of the conflict, the book graphically details the major battles fought by American forces between 1965 and 1972. Not to be confused with a comprehensive study of the Vietnam conflict, "Brutal Battles" is an unapologetic, straightforward view of the infantryman's war. Richard Kolb, the editor, states the book, "specifically targeted combat history unencumbered by politics, diplomacy, happenings on the home front, grand strategy, generalship or in-depth analysis of tactics."

Kolb also notes: "Perhaps 12 percent of those who served in Vietnam were infantrymen. Yet in the Army, 70 percent of the GIs killed by enemy action were 'beating the bush.'"

Ask a non-military friend to name any battle of this Far East war and you'll likely get a blank stare. This book isolates the major named battles of the war and puts you on the ground with more than 700 rarely seen photos and a host of personal battlefield accounts. Each battle covered in the book includes medals won and casualty reports. With the exception of incursions into Cambodia (1970) and Laos (1971), all the battles covered in the book took place in Vietnam. The editor's stated goal was to make sure every infantry division, independent brigade and separate regiment were represented, and in this regard, they did a splendid job. Both elite troops and regular units are fairly presented, and the book is laid out in easy to reference, date and time sequence. U.S. Army battles are well-covered. The ferocious battle for the Ia Drang Valley is featured. Additional major fights, like the fights for Hamburger Hill and Hill 996, are deservedly included. Lesser-known battles, such as Hoc Mon and other desperate fights along the Mekong Delta, also are incorporated. Additionally,

"Brutal Battles of Vietnam," takes care to include descriptions of deadly encounters fought by our Naval and Air Force personnel.

The Marine Corps is well-represented as major battles such as the siege at Khe Sanh are understandably included. The siege, lasting for 77 grueling days, resulted in 205 KIAs with an additional 1,600 wounded. Additional major engagements fought by Marines near the DMZ are recounted; importantly, some lesser-known, but equally hard-fought Marine brawls such as Chau Ngai, Binh Son, and Go Noi Island, are also adeptly depicted.

The final chapter provides a listing of the war's facts & figures. It is a comprehensive combat chronology from 1959 to the last officially recorded deaths on June 1973 that mark the end of the American's combat role in Vietnam. Additionally, other important American statistics and facts are included in this section of the book.

The book is a proud product of two gifted staff members of the VFW magazine, Richard K. Kolb and Robert Widener. Both men have worked for the VFW magazine for the past two decades. Together, they have created a well-balanced and artful representation of the war our country continues to misunderstand. The book successfully achieves their goal of representing the skill and fortitude of our men of arms. From the Mekong Delta to the northern battles fought along the DMZ, the war is presented with no holds barred. This first-rate volume, "Brutal Battles of Vietnam," presents the titanic struggles faced by our men at arms with boundless care and forceful empathy.

Joe Galloway, a Vietnam War correspondent, concludes: "They were noble, good people who stood up and served when their country called them. We are supposed to remember as long as any one of us is alive to remember. It's our job to remember."

"Brutal Battles of Vietnam," conveys the essence of our 50th Anniversary re-

membrance: God, country and honor. Exhaustively researched, this keepsake record of the Vietnam War will unquestionably claim its rightful place in the libraries of veterans, their families, and any resolute military historian.

Bob Loring

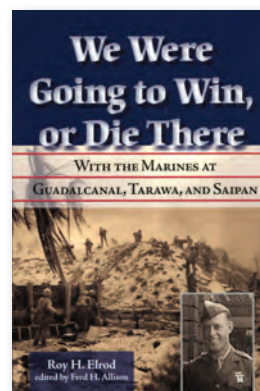
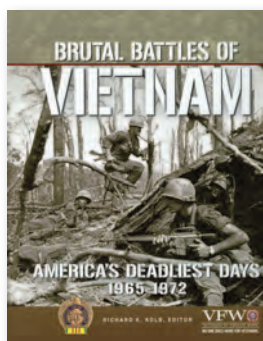
Author's bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran "Red Bob" Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine.

WE WERE GOING TO WIN, OR DIE THERE: With the Marines at Guadalcanal, Tarawa, and Saipan. By Roy H. Elrod and Edited By Fred Allison. Published by University of North Texas Press. 320 pages. \$26.96 MCA Members. \$29.95 Regular Price.

In the pantheon of Marine heroes, Dr. Fred Allison, retired Marine major and the Marine Corps' oral historian, has given us one more—Lieutenant Colonel Roy H. Elrod, a World War II Marine of America's "Greatest Generation." Allison's initiative in bringing Elrod's story to print in "We Were Going to Win, or Die There," demonstrates once again, the value of oral history in telling the Marine Corps story.

Allison's focus was spurred by family friends from Muleshoe, Texas, Allison's birthplace and coincidentally Elrod's, and his discovery that Elrod was living in Fredericksburg, Va., Allison's current hometown. Subsequent impressive meetings with Elrod, whose sharp recollections of people, events, dates and times as well as his file of personal records and letters home during the war, pulled together and edited by Allison, will give readers insight into the Marine Corps just prior to WW II and later during some of the island-hopping operations of the war.

Elrod's description of his life in the Depression era provides an informative look into life in America before the war with his depictions of working on a Texas ranch, studying at Texas A&M University, joining the Marines and his three-day train ride from Amarillo, Texas, to recruit training in San Diego. In addition, Elrod provides descriptions of enlisted promotion exami-



nations, pay scales, Marine Corps training (including a 180-mile hike), and the rapid wartime expansion of the Corps. He details his deployment to American Samoa as a 37 mm antitank gun section leader, and later platoon leader of a 37 mm antitank gun platoon in the 8th Marines, the ground combat element of 2d Marine Brigade, all of which preface his descriptions of fighting and surviving in the sanguinary battles of Guadalcanal, Tarawa and Saipan.

The purpose of oral history is to record an individual's relationship in certain historically significant actions. Incumbent on the historian's efforts is a responsibility to ensure, as much as possible, the accuracy of the subject's memories of the topic. Allison's attention to detail, background as a historian and access to official records supplies that assurance. He introduces each of Elrod's chapters with context-yielding historical insights into the subject Elrod addresses. Then at the end of each chapter, Allison furnishes in-depth endnotes rounding out various aspects of Elrod's text. Thus, Allison surrounds Elrod's recollections with the detailed history of the time, giving the reader an even greater appreciation for Elrod's deeds of valor.

When Elrod addresses the action at

Guadalcanal, he chronicles his regiment's arrival from Samoa joining the worn-out leathernecks of 1st Marine Division, the arrival of the 2dMarDiv, the starvation, jungle rot, malaria, dysentery and ragged uniforms and equipment and how pride and esprit drove the Marines forward. Although he commanded an antitank platoon, he and his Marines often fought as infantry, defending the frontlines against fanatical Japanese, patrolling and frequently attacking against the entrenched, well-trained enemy. In one January 1943 assault, he describes his men charging into fortified machine-gun positions driving the Japanese back. Elrod earned a Silver Star for that action.


The withdrawal from Guadalcanal, rest and refit in New Zealand, the bloody amphibious assault at Tarawa, recovery, rebuilding and training in Hawaii, and then the July 1944 attack against the Japanese on Saipan, where he commanded a halftrack platoon, round out Elrod's combat experience. His luck ran out on Saipan and his wounds near the end of that battle resulted in his medical evacuation to Hawaii and then San Diego. Allison places all the action in perspective with a fast-paced, concise and easily read history of those battles.

Saipan was Elrod's last combat action

during his career. The closing epilogue addresses his following tours, mostly in training assignments. Along his career path he served with and provides personal insights into such legendary Marines as Henry P. "Jim" Crowe, Alexander Bonnyman, Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, Julian C. Smith, David M. Shoup (who refused to let him retire when he first requested), and Bruno Hochmuth, who was killed in action in the Republic of Vietnam while commanding the 3dMarDiv. Elrod retired from active duty in 1961 and passed away in December 2016 before he could see his story in print.

This exceptional work by Dr. Fred Allison ensures Elrod's sacrifices and experiences as a United States Marine will be remembered.

Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret)

Author's bio: Col Walt Ford is a former editor of Leatherneck magazine and publisher for the Marine Corps Association. He is the author of Marine Corps History magazine articles on the Marine Corps Reserve in WW I and a pending pamphlet on the Marines in the September 1918 WW I Battle of St. Mihiel, one of the pamphlets in the forthcoming Marine Corps History Division's "Marines in WW I" centennial series. 

What Lessons Learned From the Battle of Belleau Wood Still Resonate With the Marine Corps Today?

Battle of Belleau Wood ESSAY CONTEST

Sponsored by the Marine Corps University and the
Marine Corps Association & Foundation.



Prizes

Winners will attend the centennial commemoration of the Battle of Belleau Wood in France in May 2018 and winning essays will be published in *Leatherneck*, *Marine Corps Gazette*, or the *Marine Corps University Journal*.

Honorable mentions in each category will receive a cash prize.

Submission deadline | 15 FEB 2018

Contest Details | https://www.mca-marines.org/belleau_MCUessay_contest2017

Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

ASYMCA, Health Net Partner For Teddy's Child Watch

The Armed Services YMCA is partnering with Health Net Federal Services (HNFS) to make healthcare more accessible by providing childcare services at military hospitals. The organizations will work together to support the military community by helping families overcome a hurdle they face when trying to receive medical care: an available and affordable child watch provider.

Military families frequently identify accessible and affordable childcare as a top need. HNFS is supporting ASYMCA's seven Teddy's Child Watch programs at military hospitals in Alaska, Hawaii and California. Military hospital child watch sites in those locations serve more than 10,000 military children each year while their parents and siblings receive medical care.

"This service ensures my husband maintains his focus at work, allows me to get the medical care I need, my daughter is well taken care of and we are able to save money," said a military spouse in Hawaii.

With support from HNFS, more parents will be able to focus on their own health and well-being, leading to more healthy and resilient military families.

To celebrate the new partnership the HNFS team met with the ASYMCA branch at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., home of the most frequented Teddy's Child Watch site. Following a tour of the childcare facility at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, John Butler, Senior Vice President of TRICARE Programs at HNFS, met with ASYMCA and command representatives to discuss further support for military families.

"Removing barriers to healthcare is an important step to ensuring a healthier

military community," said Butler, who recently joined the ASYMCA National Board. "We believe supporting Teddy's Child Watch at military hospitals through our partnership with ASYMCA will make healthcare more accessible to military families."

ASYMCA supports junior enlisted servicemembers and their families through childcare, travel assistance and other programs, all made possible by the support of individual and corporate donors. To learn more, visit asymca.org.

ASYMCA

DOD Offers Training for Blended Retirement Calculator

Servicemembers eligible to opt into the Blended Retirement System (BRS) this year can take a free course to learn to use the online comparison calculator to aid in determining whether the new BRS or



Representatives from HNFS present a check to ASYMCA employees at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, Calif., following a tour of ASYMCA's Teddy's Child Watch facility there, Nov. 8, 2017. The program provides childcare for military dependents while their parents and siblings receive medical care.

the legacy retirement system is a better choice for their circumstances.

The calculator provides individual retirement benefit estimates, allowing servicemembers to compare options under both systems. The Comparison Calculator Course can be found at <https://jkodirect.jten.mil> for Common Access Card (CAC) holders or, for those who do not have a CAC, at https://jko.jten.mil/courses/brs/brs_cal/launch.html.

Fred Drummond, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Education and Training, said the comparison calculator is a valuable resource for servicemembers and their families as they make decisions regarding their financial future. "Additionally, we strongly encourage servicemembers to seek out additional financial consultation with their own financial advisor, if they have one," Drummond said.

The Comparison Calculator Course is available in two versions—one for active-duty servicemembers and another for National Guard and reserve components. The official Department of Defense comparison calculators and the accompanying courses are the only calculator tools endorsed by DOD.

The DOD takes no position on which retirement system a servicemember should select, said officials. Everyone is encouraged to use all the resources available in the decision-making process, including the completion of the BRS Opt-In Course, using the BRS comparison calculator, accessing the online BRS resource materials and scheduling time with a personal financial manager or counselor, said Drummond.

Servicemembers can get free, personal support from an accredited financial manager or counselor through their installation's Military and Family Support Center at <http://militaryinstallations.dod.mil/> or <http://jointservicesupport.org/spn>.

Effective Jan. 1, the new military retirement system blends the traditional legacy retirement pension with a combined contribution to servicemembers' Thrift Savings Plan accounts. All members serving as of Dec. 31, 2017, are grandfathered into the legacy retirement system; however, active component servicemembers with fewer than 12 years of service are permitted to opt into the Blended Retirement System. The opt-in period ends Dec. 31.

Terri Moon Cronk, DOD

Mercedes-Benz DRIVE Program Encourages Veterans to Apply

In August 2017, Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA) received approval from the U.S. Department of Labor and Department



COURTESY OF MBUSA

Robert Tomlin, left, supervisor of technician recruitment, development and retention for the Mercedes-Benz DRIVE program, shakes hands with DRIVE student Seth Spradlin at the company's Grapevine, Texas, learning and performance center, in August 2017. Veterans are encouraged to apply for the program, which recently became certified as part of the National Apprenticeship System.

of Veterans Affairs to become the first luxury automotive manufacturer to offer a registered apprenticeship program in four U.S. states, certifying Mercedes-Benz DRIVE as part of the National Apprenticeship System.

Mercedes-Benz DRIVE is a 16-week technician training and development program that prepares participants for in-demand technician careers at authorized Mercedes-Benz dealerships. Specifically, candidates interested in becoming systems technicians receive training in core competencies such as brakes and traction, service and maintenance and telematics, in addition to E-Mobility, diagnostic strategy and electrical fundamentals. Students will also take a course in career development, helping them prepare for a successful transition into the automotive industry.

While participation in the apprenticeship is not exclusive to veterans, MBUSA believes that technician positions may be an especially good fit for military veterans, who have the motivation and discipline to succeed and often come from military occupational specialties that are technical in nature.

"The complexity of our current and

future luxury vehicles, along with significant sales growth, has created a strong and growing need for skilled professional technicians," said Christian Treiber, vice president of customer service at MBUSA. "Mechanics are now technologists with a high level of sophistication. With an eye toward the future, Mercedes-Benz has mapped out a new path that makes technician jobs attractive to veterans as well as providing much-needed assets for dealerships."

At the successful completion of the program's hands-on and instructional learning, apprentices receive a certificate from both MBUSA and the Department of Labor. These certifications will be recognized at all Mercedes-Benz dealerships throughout the U.S., honoring the significant achievement of completing more than 640 hours of specific manufacturer training.

Mercedes-Benz DRIVE is offered in four locations across the country: Long Beach, Calif.; Dallas, Texas; Jacksonville, Fla.; and Norwood, Mass. Interested applicants may obtain additional information by emailing mbdrive@mbusa.com.

Ben Rickles, MBUSA



DPAA Identifies Remains of WW II Marines

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) recently announced that the remains of several U.S. Marines, unaccounted for since World War II, have been identified.

U.S. servicemembers who died in the Battle of Tarawa were buried in a number of battlefield cemeteries on Tarawa. In 1946 and 1947, recovery operations were conducted and the remains that could not be identified were interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii. Recently DPAA began the process of disinterring those remains for identification.

The Marines whose remains were disinterred and identified are:

Cpl Henry Andregg Jr., 22, of Whitwell, Tenn. He was assigned to Company C, 2d Amphibious Tractor Battalion, 2d Marine Division.

Pvt Alberic M. Blanchette, 19, of Caribou, Maine. He was assigned to Co K, 3d Bn, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Cpl Anthony G. Guerriero, 22, of Boston. He was assigned to Co B, 1st Bn, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Frank L. Masoni, 21, of Gilroy, Calif. He was assigned to H&S Co, 2d Bn, 2dMarDiv.

PFC George B. Murray, 20, of Oceano, Calif. He was assigned to Co B, 1st Bn, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Cpl Raymond C. Snapp, 24, of Bonita Texas. He was assigned to Co F, 2dBn, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Pvt Joseph C. Carbone, 20, of Brooklyn, N.Y. He was assigned to Co K, 3d Bn, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv.

At the time of the post-war recovery operations, many of the remains on Tarawa were determined unrecoverable. In June 2015, History Flight, Inc., a nongovernmental organization, notified DPAA that they discovered a burial site in Betio Island. The remains were recovered and turned over to DPAA for identification.

The Marines whose remains recently were recovered and identified are:

2ndLt George S. Bussa, 29, of Chicago. He was assigned to Company F, 2d Battalion, 8th Marines, 2d Marine Division.

GySgt Sidney A. Cook, 32, of Ohio. He was assigned to Co E, 2d Bn, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Cpl Walter G. Critchley, 24, of Norwich, N.Y. He was assigned to Co F, 2d Bn, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv.

PFC Roland E. Schaede, 19, of Maywood, Ill. He was assigned to Co M, 3d Bn, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv.

Compiled from DPAA news releases

Col Wesley M. Fox

Colonel Wesley M. Fox, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courageousness and inspiring leadership in a fierce fight against a well-concealed enemy battalion during Operation Dewey Canyon in 1969, died Nov. 24, 2017, at the age of 86 in Blacksburg, Va.

"He was an authentic warrior, an infantry combat leader and old-school southern gentleman who lived by the highest standard of personal integrity and absolutely demanded the same standard of everyone around him," said *Marine Corps Gazette* editor, Col Christopher "Woody" Woodbridge, who was an instructor under Fox's command at Officer

Candidates School in the early 1990s.

Fox began his 43-year Marine Corps career as an enlisted Marine in 1950. He saw action during the Korean War and was wounded during the fighting. After the war, Fox was a drill instructor and served on recruiting duty before accepting a commission as a first lieutenant in 1966.

In 1967 Fox went to Vietnam where he was an advisor to the Vietnamese Marine Corps. In 1968 he was reassigned to another job in country—he was named as the company commander for A/1/9, 3dMarDiv. He received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions while leading his company in the A Shau Valley.

According to his citation, on Feb. 22,

1969, then-First Lieutenant Fox's company came under intense enemy fire. Fox and every other member of the command group, except the executive officer, was wounded. He continued, however, to lead his company.

"Advancing through heavy enemy fire, he personally neutralized one enemy position and calmly ordered an assault against the hostile emplacements. He then moved through the hazardous area coordinating aircraft support with the activities of his men. When his executive officer was mortally wounded ... he reorganized the company and directed the fire of his men as they hurled grenades against the enemy and drove the hostile forces into retreat. Wounded again in the final assault ... Fox supervised the preparation of casualties for medical evacuation."

In a 1986 *Leatherneck* article, Fox said of the engagement: "When the fight was over and my Marines started coming out of the jungle, I discovered I had only lost 10. But they were 10 great Marines. Even [losing] one is too many."

He attributed their success in battle to training, saying that whenever they were able, they would set up mock ambushes, and Fox would walk his Marines through various scenarios, developing their abilities to work as a team. "We had time to talk and those men knew what to expect. They were ready."

Training was a key tenet of Fox's approach to leadership. "He hammered into us the importance of physically demanding, realistic training ... for the officer candidates who were being screened and evaluated for potential commissioning in the Corps. Even when we were between classes of candidates, he personally led the entire staff of OCS in PT and grueling conditioning hikes on the Quantico hill trails. He could hike the legs off Marines young enough to be his grandchildren," said Woodbridge.

"Young guys, all you need to do is point them in the right direction," Fox told *Leatherneck* in 1986.

Following Fox's 1993 retirement from the Corps, he was the deputy commandant of cadets for Virginia Tech's Corps of Cadets. He also wrote several books including "Six Essential Elements of Leadership: Marine Corps Wisdom of a Medal of Honor Recipient."

His other awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V," Navy Commendation Medal with one Gold Star and the Purple Heart with three Gold Stars.

SgtMaj John “Jack” Abel, 87, of Temperance, Mich. After his 32-year Marine Corps career, he worked in the pharmaceutical sales business.

Harvey L. Benad, 96, of Taylor, Texas. During WW II he saw action on Guadalcanal, Guam, Tinian and Okinawa, where he was wounded. His awards include the Purple Heart. His son and grandson also were Marines.

Col Anthony Caputo, 98, in Burgaw, N.C. He was a Marine who served in WW II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Richard W. “Nick” Carter, 85, of Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine who served in the Korean War.

Richard “Drew” Dowling, 80, of Fairhope, Ala. He was a fighter pilot who served in the Vietnam War.

Claude T. “Tom” Green, 70, of Madisonville, Tenn. He served two tours in Vietnam and fought in the Battle of Khe Sanh. He was a member of the 3dMarDiv Association and the Khe Sanh Veterans.

Rodney E. Hatch, 95, in Albuquerque, N.M. He was a Marine who served during WW II. He served on Tarawa, Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa.

Theral Henry, 92, of Greenwood, Ark. He was a Marine Corps veteran of WW II, who fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Cpl Gary Janulewicz, 76, of Agawam,

Mass. He was a Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War. He later spent many years as a teacher. He was a member of the MCL, the VFW and the American Legion. His awards include the Bronze Star with combat “V.”

Cpl Harry E. Kirsch, 93, of Adams Township, Pa. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after his 1942 graduation from high school. During WW II he was an aviation armorer in the Pacific.

Capt Andrew B. “Mac” McFarlane, 87, of Saddle Brook, N.J. During his 22 years in the Marine Corps, he served with the 1stMarDiv during the Korean War. He also served two combat tours in Vietnam. His awards include three Bronze Stars with combat “V,” Navy Commendation Medal with combat “V” and the Combat Action Ribbon.

After his retirement from the Marine Corps, he began a second career as a law enforcement officer.

Sgt Morris C. Owens, 100, in Elkton, Ore. He joined the Marine Corps in 1941 and served in the Pacific. He saw combat at Guadalcanal, Saipan and Tinian.

He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during the Battle of Tarawa. According to the award citation, “he boldly proceeded to the gun port of a hostile strong point and, despite the

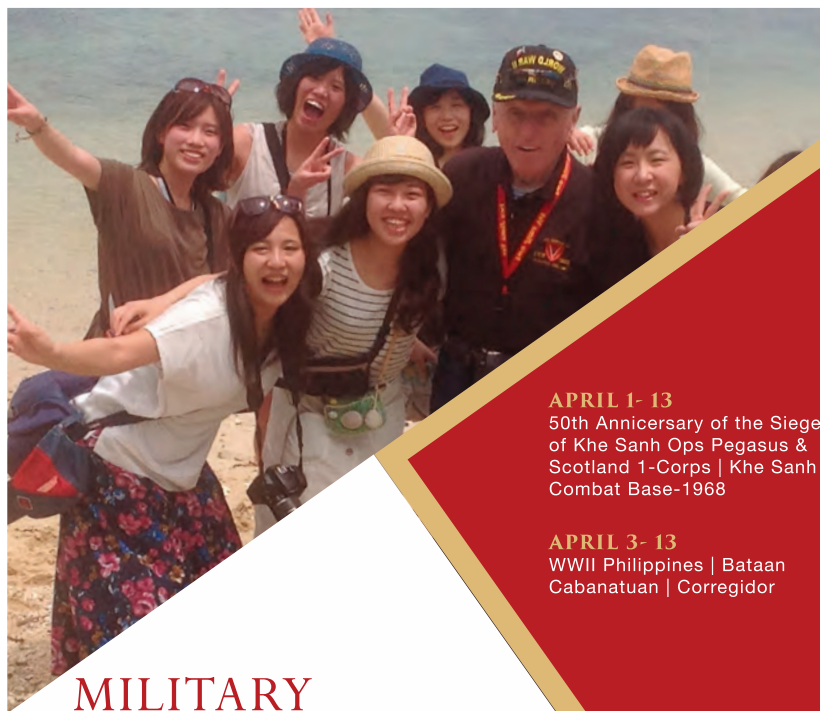
enemy’s incessant shellfire, destroyed the entrenchment with well-placed demolitions and grenade fire, then entered the area and killed the remaining personnel.”

SgtMaj Kiernan M. “K” Shannon, 89, in Gonzales, La. He served 23 years in the Marine Corps, including service during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

GySgt Milford T. Walker, 81, of Prince George, Va. After his 1952 high school graduation, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He served one combat tour in Vietnam. After his retirement, he completed college and had a career in civil service.

Cpl William T. “Bill” Wells, 90, of Farmington, N.M. he was a Marine who served during WW II. He was a member of the MCL.

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 or n.lichtman@mca-marines.org. 🦖



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MAY 19- 28

100th Anniversary of WWI –
1918 Yanks into the Fray!

MAY 25- JUN 3

100th Anniversary of WWI
1918 Devil Dogs & Dough
Boys!

MAY 27- JUN 9

74th Anniversary of D-Day
& Battle of the Bulge
Belleau Wood & Paris too!

JUN 1- 9

74th Anniversary of D-Day:
Normandy to Paris

JUN 26- JULY 6

Russia WWII Eastern Front
75th Anniversary of Kursk
Moscow & Stalingrad

JUN 30- JUL 12

50th Anniversary of
Operations Scotland II
& Robin - I-Corps

JUL 7- 16

Spain Military & Cultural
Exploration Madrid
Post Tour Barcelona

JUL 7- 16

WWII Italy - 75th Anniv
of Operation Husky
Invasion of Sicily

AUG 2- 11

Guadalcanal & Tarawa

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SOUND OFF [continued from page 7]

Marine Amphibious Assault. But a couple corrections concerning the 7th Fleet ships involved. *Princeton* is a LPH-5 not LHP-5. *Iwo Jima* is the original ship of that class, LPH-2, not the current LHD-7.

Thank you for providing your devoted readers with an exceptional monthly publication on past history and current events concerning our beloved Navy/Marine Corps Team.

Tim Halpin
USN, 1966-1970
Latham, N.Y.

Unidentified Barracks

I can't tell you much about the photo below of the barracks but I do know it was before World War II. My father served the Corps through the Banana Wars, Nicaragua, Cuba, Haiti, etc. He was a rifle range officer at Quantico, Va., where I was born prior to WW II. He served aboard USS *New York* (BB-34) as platoon sergeant during convoys to Iceland and England. After the war he was promoted

to warrant officer, serving with the 3d Marine Division until receiving wounds during combat. He died in 1985 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va.

He was very proud of his service as a career Marine.

Willard "Bill" Sheffield Jr.
Fort Thomas, Ky.

Col Mitch Paige Not a Forgotten Hero

I was amazed and shocked to read that Medal of Honor awardee Colonel Mitch Paige is considered a "forgotten hero." I enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1953. I first learned about Col Paige in boot camp at MCRD Parris Island, S.C.

Since then, from many sources, I have read many articles about him. For me, he has never been a forgotten hero.

Sgt Lloyd Stimson
USMC, 1953-1957
Fort Washington, Md.

Red's Tailor Shop

I was stationed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard Marine barracks in 1957-1958. I worked in the exchange slop chute and

operated the cleaners and tailor shop. In August 1958, the commanding officer summoned me and told me that they had no one to replace me with my tailoring experience. Since I had a pregnant wife and no permanent job, I requested to stay on and operate Red's Tailor Shop as a civilian contractor. He agreed and I stayed and operated the shop until July 1963. I wonder if anyone has any recollection of that time period?

Red Carnevale
New York, N.Y.

Uniform Code of Military Justice

The article, "Rocks and Shoals: Naval Discipline in the Old Corps," [September issue], starts by saying, "Before Congress established the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) in 1951," then goes on to explain Naval Discipline. However, it did not say who first made up and wrote the UCMJ.

I believe this was a disservice to one of *Leatherneck's* best contributors, Colonel F. Brooke Nihart, USMC (Ret), who was the originator of the UCMJ. I worked for Col Nihart for 20 years, and he never once mentioned his accomplishments, but I found out about it when I read his obituary the year he passed away.

MSgt Carl M. "Bud" DeVere Sr.
USMC (Ret)
Longmont, Colo.

Son's Interview with Grandpa

My Dad, David R. Murray, served in Vietnam from 1967-1969 with 1/9. He was wounded for the third time during Operation Dewey Canyon on Feb. 18, 1969, and was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during that battle. I do not know much about the Vietnam War because we rarely talked about it. It wasn't until a few years ago that I actually heard for the first time some of what my dad went through when one of my boys interviewed him for a school project on the Vietnam War.

I'm a big history nerd, but have stayed away from the Vietnam era until now. Dad is 70-years-old. My 14-year-old wants to follow in his shoes and join the Marine Corps. He is in 9th grade at the Marine Military Academy in Harlingen, Texas.

Tara Carroll
Eustis, Fla.

USMC Between 1973 and 1977

I've been receiving *Leatherneck* magazine for several years. It seems like I read very little about the Marine Corps during the period 1973 to 1977. During this period when I was in the Corps we witnessed some disturbing times and joyful celebration, which I feel affected



Unidentified barracks sometime before WW II.

our nation and the Marine Corps.

October 1973, Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned from office which affected the chain of command. Ten months later in August 1974, President Richard Nixon resigned from office, which once again affected our chain of command.

In April 1975, the fall of Saigon when we lost two Marines, Corporal Charles McMahon and Lance Corporal Darwin Judge at Tan Son Nhat Air Base. Two words explain the impact of the fall of Saigon—total chaos.

One month later at the Battle of Koh Tang, aka The Mayaguez Incident, we lost approximately 20 Marines, in this battle, and accidentally three Marines were left behind; LCpl Joe Hargrove from Mount Olive, N.C.; Private First Class Gary Hall from Covington, Ky.; and Private Danny Marshall from Waverly, W.Va. It's my opinion that this battle was a low point in our beloved Marine Corps and nation.

July 4, 1976, was a great time to be in the Marine Corps, the Bicentennial of America. This celebration seemed to heal our nation after the turmoil of 1973-1975.

Finally, in 1977, not much happened except for one of the biggest uniform changes in Marine Corps history; changing from the starched utilities to the camo utilities as we called them. Early on, we

wore camo utilities with the green utility cover, which looked awful. We also found out that starched camo utilities did not look very professional. The pockets were always wrinkled when using heavy starch. The biggest difference was going from the old green utility blouse, which was tucked into your utility trousers; the camo blouse was not tucked into the camo trousers. The new camo utilities were much cooler than the old starched green utilities.

In closing, the Marine Corps from 1973-1977 went from some tragic times to joyful celebration.

Sgt Chuck Baker
USMC, 1973-1977
South Charleston, W.Va.

Have a question or 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 🍷

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Reader Assistance

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Reunions

• **Iwo Jima Survivors (Marines, Navy, Coast Guard, Army Air Corps)**, Feb. 15-17, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Dan Zepeda, (951) 201-6251, zepeda012@msn.com.

• **Marine Corps Aviation Assn. Don E. Davis Squadron (Aviation Logistics)**, March 15-18, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Wayne Miller, (973) 441-3636, millerwayne559@gmail.com.

• **1/27 (1stMarDiv FMF, RVN, 50th Anniversary Reunion-all other 27th Marines battalions welcome)**, July 18-22, Alexandria, Va. Contact Felix Salmeron, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com.

• **2/4 (all eras, 50th Anniversary of victory at Dai Do-Gold Star family members welcome)**, April 30-May 3, Quantico, Va. Contact Becky or Frank Valdez, (714) 306-2329, fxala@hotmail.com.

• **B/1/5 and C/1/5 (RVN, 1966-1967)** are planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.com.

• **1st Provisional Marine Brigade ("The Fire Brigade," Korea, 1950)** is planning a 65th anniversary reunion.

Contact Col Warren Wiedhahn, USMC (Ret), Military Historical Tours, 13198 Centerpointe Way, #202, Woodbridge, VA 22193, (703) 590-1295, jwiedhahn@aol.com, www.miltours.com.

• **Battle of An-Nasiriyah (15th Anniversary)**, March 23-25, Fort Worth, Texas. Contact Dion Brugger, tftreunion@gmail.com, www.tftreunion.org.

• **TBS, Co K, 9-68**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jim Stiger, (206) 999-1029, jimstiger@earthlink.net.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Connors, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconnors3@yahoo.com.

• **Warrant Officer Screening Course, 1st Plt, Co D, January 1974**, is planning a reunion. Contact Capt Joseph C. Chiles, USMC (Ret), (619) 729-9562, joseph.chiles@gmail.com.

• **"Kilo" Co (Plts 277, 278, 279 and 280), Parris Island, 1961**, is planning a reunion. Contact MSgt Martin D. Smith, USMC (Ret), 10 Lee Ct., Stafford, VA 22554, (540) 720-3653, martann843@gmail.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is plan-

ning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.com.

• **Plt 171, Parris Island, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact J.P. Kuchar, 33 Sheridan Ave., Metuchen, NJ 08840, (732) 549-6468, jpkuchar@mac.com.

• **Plt 244, Parris Island, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact former Sgt J.D. Croom III, (704) 965-8521, jcroom47@aol.com.

• **Plt 245, San Diego, 1965**, is planning a reunion. Contact David S. Alvarez, (209) 735-2601, srt8o06@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 266, Parris Island, 1962**, is planning a reunion. Contact Donald A. Welch, 129 Hawthorne Pl., Ithaca, NY 14850, (607) 256-0554, don814u@hotmail.com.

• **Plt 340, Parris Island, 1963**, is planning a reunion. Contact Garrett W. Silvia, (508) 992-7392, gwsil@comcast.net.

• **Plt 431, Parris Island, 1945**, is planning a reunion. Contact 1stSgt George P. Cavros, USMC (Ret), (262) 782-7813, gcavros88@gmail.com.

• **Plt 1040, San Diego, 1968**, is planning a reunion. Contact Stephen Norpel, 206 N. 7th St., Bellevue, IA 52031, (563) 451-8417, snorpel@yahoo.com.



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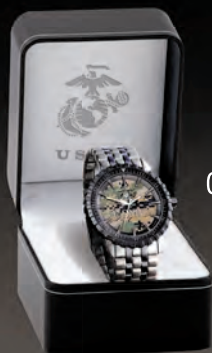
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• **Plt 1059, San Diego, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact Dave Jamieson, (805) 896-7404, daveyo_jamieson@msn.com.

• **Plt 2023, San Diego, 1983**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jeffrey R. Johnson, 3751 Merced Dr., Unit 4D, Riverside, CA 92503, jrj430@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 2030, Parris Island, 1965-66**, is planning a reunion. Contact John E. Lyford, (518) 654-6073, reniejohn@roadrunner.com.

• **Plt 2077, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact SgtMaj Raymond Edwards, USMC (Ret), 100 Stephens St., Boyce, LA 71409, sgtmajedretired@gmail.com.

• **Plt 2086, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact Bill Kennedy, (707) 527-8319, wm.kennedy98@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 3042, San Diego, 1968**, is planning a reunion. Contact Gary Berry, (614) 679-1499, tagpresident@verizon.net.

• **Plt 4035, "Papa" Co, Parris Island, 2000**, is planning a reunion. Contact Tammy (Manyik) Epperson, (571) 451-7263, tammy.epperson@gmail.com.

• **Marine A-4 Skyhawkers**, Nov. 1-4, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Mark Williams, 400 Howell Way #102, Edmonds, WA 98020, (425) 771-2030, rogerwilco14@gmail.com, <http://a4skyhawk.info/article/notices>.

Mail Call

• Eric Ethier, 55 May St., Attleboro, MA 02703, ericethier@msn.com, to hear from **3dMarDiv WW II veterans of Bougainville, Guam or Iwo Jima**, who are interested in sharing their experiences for a book he is preparing.

• Ronald Molton, 2770 Green Ash Loop #401, Woodbridge, VA 22192, (571) 317-5904, bear2lee@aol.com, to hear from **food service Marines (3300) GETTY/GEDDI and COWLEY**, who were stationed at **Montford Point, N.C.**, from **1972 to 1974**.

• William Landen, (386) 677-7277, landenmelandbill@aol.com, to hear from or about a Marine named **SCHULTZ** who served with **1/7 in Chu Lai, RVN, 1965-1966**.

Wanted

Readers should be cautious about sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered:

• GySgt Lew Souder, USMC (Ret), souder1@bellsouth.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 253, Parris Island, 1956** and a **cruise book for VMA(AW)-225, RVN, 1970**.

• Robert L. Atkins, 2424 Gristmill Rd., Little Rock, AR 72227, brm1937@gmail.com, wants a **1950 mesh kit spoon** with **U.S.M.C.** stamped on the handle.

• Ken Meyers, audrameyers205273@

gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2073, San Diego, 1984**.

• Phil Arneson, P.O. Box 1765, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270, phila47036@aol.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 417, San Diego, 1953-1954**.

• CMSgt Steve Broughton, USAF (Ret), (850) 603-7899, srb54@cox.net, wants **issues of Leatherneck** from **September 1966, May 1967 and August 1970**.

• Joe Joseph, bears_fan1951@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2040, San Diego, 1970-1971**.

• Jerry Jackson, 3921 Hardwood Ln., Portsmouth, VA 23703, jsj1008@aol.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1076, Parris Island, 1986**.

• Harold Strader, linksters2@comcast.net, wants **photos** from the **Marine Corps birthday cake cutting ceremony in Da Nang, RVN, November 1965**.

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 s.bock@mca-marines.org, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. 📧

Leatherneck 100th Anniversary Painting Auction

Congratulations

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Mr. Michael Martz on his winning bid for the 100th anniversary cover painting for *Leatherneck* — Magazine of the Marines.

Mr. Martz plans to donate the painting to MCA&F in recognition of his longtime friend and mentor, Sergeant David Lennox.

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COURTESY OF U.S. MARINE BAND

SURPRISE SERENADE—Major General Commandant John A. Lejeune is pictured with the United States Marine Band, under the direction of William H. Santelmann, on Jan. 1, 1927, outside of The Home of the Commandants in Washington, D.C. To kick off the new year, the “President’s Own” played a “surprise” serenade for the CMC. The concert for MajGen Lejeune was the first engagement in a busy day of performances, and according to the Marine Band Leader Log for the day, the CMC invited the band inside for breakfast after they had finished playing.

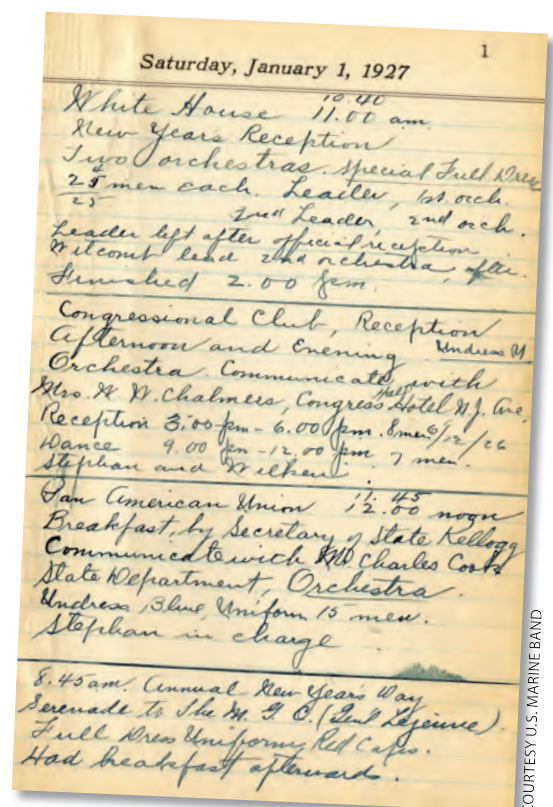
A heavy downpour on Jan. 1, 1932, prompted the 15th Commandant of the Marine Corps, MajGen Ben H. Fuller, and his wife to welcome the musicians inside the residence to play.

In 1940, temperatures were in the low 20s and the musicians had to blow continually into their instruments to prevent freezing while

serenading the 17th Commandant, MajGen Thomas Holcomb.

On New Year’s Day 1942, only a few weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, it is recorded in the log that “the Commandant [MajGen Holcomb] made a special trip back to his quarters from the Headquarters to be present, and after receiving the leaders and members of the band, returned immediately to his office at Headquarters.” There is a note at the bottom of the log entry that states “No holiday. Regular hours for entire Navy Department.”

Although it is not known exactly when the New Year’s Day serenade became an annual event, Marine Band historian Gunnery Sergeant Kira Wharton said the first official mention of it in the logbook was in 1917, but newspaper reports indicate that as far back as the 1860s, the Band serenaded the Commandant to ring in the New Year. 🦖



COURTESY U.S. MARINE BAND