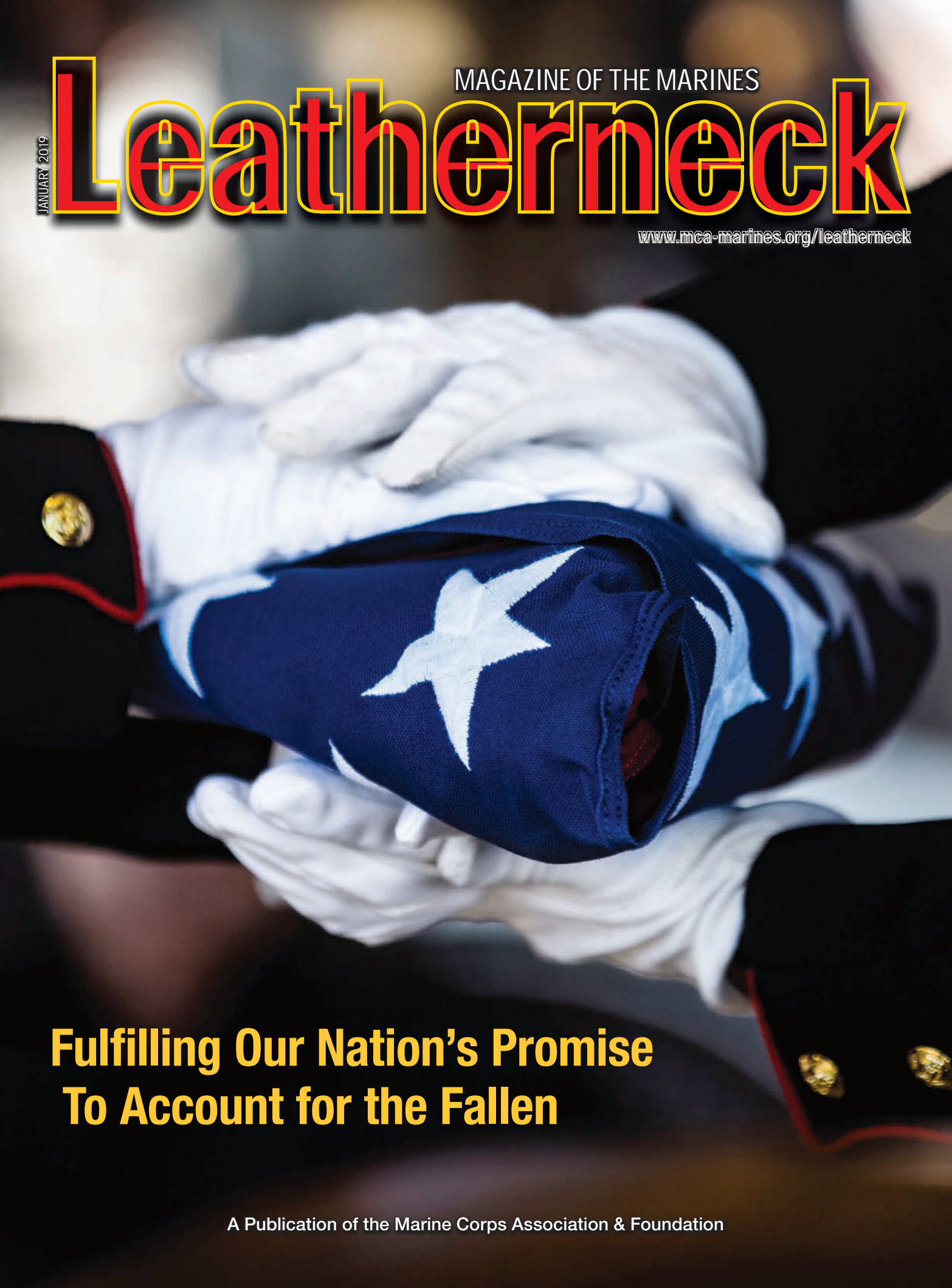


JANUARY 2019

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

# Leatherneck

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**Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise  
To Account for the Fallen**

A Publication of the Marine Corps Association & Foundation





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# From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

I always think about the mothers. Whenever I hear that a missing Marine's remains have been identified and are being sent home, I think about their moms and what happened so many years ago when the dreaded telegram arrived or the casualty assistance officer made the notification that their Marine was missing and presumed killed in action. Their lives changed in the blink of an eye as they endured the worst thing that could happen to any parent—the loss of a child.

But how much worse was their agony when their Marine was not returned home to be laid to rest? How long did they hold out hope? Even years later, did they secretly believe that their Marine might someday walk through the door? Or did they simply wish that their Marine would come home to be properly buried in his hometown?

No Marine wants to leave a fellow leatherneck behind on the battlefield, but the fog of war is real, and much to our sorrow, Marines have been unaccounted for in wars and battles throughout our history. Their families have been left wondering and hoping and praying that someday, they will be able to bring their Marine home. And now, thanks to technological advancements and the incredible work of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), more and more families have been able to lay their Marines to rest back home—in the country they gave their lives defending.

This month's article "Accounted For: DPAA Strives Never to Leave A Fallen American Behind" details the dedicated efforts of the staff of DPAA to locate, identify and return American servicemembers from the battlefields of the 20th century's wars throughout the world. Their painstaking work brings closure to families as the mystery of what happened to the sons, brothers, husbands, and fathers, whether on the beaches of Tarawa, in the frozen hills of Korea or in the jungles of Vietnam, is finally solved.

*Leatherneck* has published, and will continue to publish, notices in our "In Memoriam" section whenever a Marine is returned home thanks to the work of the DPAA as our way of honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice and the families who continue to mourn them.



ELIZABETH FRASER

**Rebecca Bailey, sister of LCpl John Killen, receives a folded flag during her brother's burial in Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, Sept. 27, 2018. Killen and four other servicemembers perished in June 1967 when their CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter was struck by enemy fire and crashed in Thua Thien-Hue Province, Vietnam. Their remains were recovered in 2012 and were identified by DPAA.**

We know that even when so much time has passed, and those who knew and loved the Marine may also be long gone, the children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews have continued to wait, carrying on the family's legacy of faithfulness and hope. The generations who never met the Marine but were regaled with countless tales and loving memories of their grandfather or father or great uncle have also lived the Corps' ethos of "Semper Fidelis" and continue to hope.

So as you read "Accounted For" or our special addition to "In Memoriam" or our "Saved Round" this month and see the names and ages of the Marines who are finally coming home, maybe you'll also think about the mothers who, in the words of President Abraham Lincoln, "laid so costly a price on the altar of freedom" and waited so patiently for their boys. And remember that thanks to the dedication of the DPAA, more and more of their missing Marines are coming home.

*Mary H. Reinwald*

Mary H. Reinwald  
Colonel, USMC (Ret)





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**COVER:** The American flag was folded during a burial service for Pvt John M. Tillman at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, on April 6, 2018. He was killed during the battle of Tarawa on Nov. 20, 1943, and his remains recently were accounted for by Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. See related story, "Accounted For": DPAA Strives Never to Leave a Fallen American Behind on page 36. Photo by Sgt Aaron S. Patterson, 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.



# Leatherneck

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

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**Leadership**- Describe an outstanding Marine Corps leader and what makes him or her so successful.

**Current Events**- Describe a recent event and the impact it had on the Marines involved.

**History**- Describe a little known aspect of a battle or an individual Marine that others may not know about i.e. "the rest of the story".

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## 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.)*

I was released from active duty on Jan. 14, 1970, after a two-year hitch in the Marine Corps. When it was my time to catch that freedom bird home, I said my goodbyes and headed out not getting information or addresses of my friends. Returning home, the reception I received was not what I expected. People acted as if what we went through was not honorable so I put away my uniform and carried on with my life getting married and raising a family.

As time went on, I would look back at my time in the Corps and think of all the men I shared my experiences with. The memories were never far away of my time in the Corps remembering the camaraderie and friendship of all with whom I served.

When computers came out, I started to search for the friends I served with, getting rosters of my battery from Headquarters

Marine Corps. Over time and with the help of my good friend, Elwood Anderson, we located more than 500 members of our battery including some who have since passed.

With the support of my wife I took a chance and organized a reunion. We had close to 100 in attendance. It's amazing how people you haven't seen in 50 years are so glad that they have been found. We just had our eighth reunion and as long as people show up, we will continue. This turned out to be good therapy for my PTSD.

I was recently going through my service pictures and came across a picture of one recruit in boot camp I remembered. His name was Kustaborder. Both our last names started with a "K" so our racks were side by side. He was different than the other recruits because he was old, 22 years old. They called him the "old man" since the average age was 19. His story was that he did four years in the Navy and then joined the Marines to get into the fight.

He also had a younger brother in the Marines who had just shipped to Vietnam. About our fourth week of training

Kustaborder left our platoon. Our senior drill instructor called a "school circle," where we gathered around him at the front of the squad bay and he would teach a class. This time he told us that Private Kustaborder's brother was KIA (killed in action) and they sent him home to attend the funeral. This really affected everyone in the platoon and I have always remembered him.

He never made it back to our platoon because he missed two weeks of training and was assigned to a newer platoon. The last time I saw him was on our graduation day and I saw him doing PT with his new platoon. He smiled and gave us a wave. Fifty years later I was thinking of him and decided to try to find him and see how he was doing. I didn't have his full name so I looked up his brother on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. Within five minutes I found Private First Class Ronald Kustaborder, born Aug. 16, 1948, died Feb. 25, 1968, from Pennsylvania. I then Googled his name and came up with his obituary on "Find a Grave." It also listed his parent's obituary. Under siblings they listed Thomas W. Kustaborder, 1946-1969. Could it be my friend was, like his younger brother, KIA in Vietnam? Two brothers, Marines, who gave their lives in the service of their country died less than one year apart. Both were awarded Silver Star medals.

A true Gold Star family. Semper Fi, my boot camp buddy. Rest in peace. You are not forgotten.

LCpl Ed Kirby, USMC  
Billerica, Mass.



**Thomas W. Kustaborder, facing camera, is shown with his platoon at Parris Island, March 1968. Cpl Kustaborder was KIA while serving with Co K, 3rd Bn, 9th Marines, 3rdMarDiv (Rein) in Vietnam on Feb. 14, 1969, and received the Silver Star, posthumously, for his actions.**

## A Corporal in Boot Camp

I am a new subscriber to *Leatherneck*. To say that it is a memory jogger for me is an understatement. I enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1952 at age 18. I served on active reserve duty until the summer of 1956 during which time I earned the rank of corporal. When my draft notice arrived, I opted for two years of full-time duty with the Marines. This, of course, meant Parris Island for 13 weeks.

Arriving in September with about 80 other recruits, I met our two drill instructors and yes, I still remember the names of the staff sergeants. They were scanning the list of recruits' names, stopped, looked at each other, surveyed the recruits and called out my name. It was pronounced correctly; Corporal Wayner, spelled Wahner. This just about never happens.



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#### POSTMASTER

Send address changes to: *Leatherneck Magazine*, Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.



*Leatherneck* (ISSN 0023-981X) is published monthly by the Marine Corps Association & Foundation, Bldg. #715, MCB, Quantico, VA 22134. Copyright 2019 by MCA&F.

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COURTESY OF MSGT MONTE L. RAILSBACK, USMC (RET)

### MajGen Weede cuts the Marine Corps Birthday cake during a celebration in Saigon, Vietnam in 1963.

This began my exposure to extra attention. Lots of it. This extra attention is still a benefit to me today.

A third DI was assigned to platoon 309, a corporal. Guess which corporal was senior to the third DI? To say that this was a point of contention would not be overstated. Apparently the corporal had an MOS of foot locker inspector specialist. Failing such inspection meant having your foot locker contents dumped onto the deck. I never did learn how to pass this type of inspection. Early on I had been appointed unit guide for the platoon. Every challenge was a test for me to perform or lose this coveted position. When rifle range training time came, it was well known that the better shooter between others and me would be "the man."

I out-shot them and maintained that responsibility until graduation day.

Sgt Norman E. Wahner  
USMCR, 1952-1960  
Norristown, Pa.

### Marine Corps Birthday, Saigon

In 1963, I was assigned to the Marine Advisory Division of the Navy Section, MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) in Saigon, Vietnam. President Diem was president at the time and his brother Nhu was vice president. Since President Diem was not married, Vice President Nhu's wife, Madame Nhu, acted as the first lady. She was very strict about conduct with no dancing and no holding hands in public with the opposite sex. The government was overthrown in early

November 1963 in a coup so we were able to observe the Marine Corps Birthday with a ball.

Marines from MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam), MAAG and the embassy all assembled at a hotel and Major General Richard G. Weede cut the cake. I was told that after he cut the cake, he put his sword down and a Vietnamese waiter stuck it back in the scabbard, frosting and all.

MSgt Monte L. Railsback, USMC (Ret)  
Shellsburg, Iowa

• *MajGen Weede would later retire as a lieutenant general. His son, Richard D. Weede, also served in the Marine Corps, retiring as a colonel. His grandson, Richard H. Weede, retired as a lieutenant colonel.—Editor*

### Weapons of WW II

In response to the question from James Rish in the October 2018 issue [Sound Off], regarding the issue of weapons in World War II's infantry platoon, the platoon was comprised of three squads consisting of a squad leader carrying a carbine rifle and three rifle teams of four men. The team leader carried an M1 Garand, the next man carried a BAR, the third man, the BAR man's assistant, carried an M1 and extra magazines for the BAR, and the fourth also carried the M1 with a grenade launcher attachment used as an antitank weapon.

I'm not positive as to exactly how the weapons and make-up of platoons were



organized but I'll tell you how I acquired mine. The platoon was not yet fully organized and we were on an overnight bivouac. I overheard the platoon leader and platoon sergeant discussing the make-up of the platoon and one said to the other, "We'll have O'Malley as a runner." No way did I want to be a runner. The next day I said to the platoon sergeant, "I heard they would be issuing the BARs this week. I would like to carry one." He couldn't refuse.

I had served with the Marine Raider replacement battalion in Camp Pendleton and was familiar with the runner's job. There weren't any phones between platoon companies and battalions.

Walter P. O'Malley  
Clinton, Mass.

### Marine Corps Bases Are Not Tourist Attractions

In response to Lance Corporal Howard G. Hudson's Sound Off letter, "Military ID Dilemma" in the November 2018 issue, I remind him that although he was formerly enlisted for a few years in the 1960s, the fact that he once served on active duty gives him no more right to enter a secure military installation or shop at a base commissary than a civilian.

We all served, but the fact remains that

unless one is an active-duty Marine, a drilling reservist or a DOD civilian, there is no valid reason for that person to enter a Marine Corps base except during special events open to the public. Certain individuals, such as retired Marines, have earned the privilege of continuing to enter base installations, but as noted, that is a privilege extended for having served a career in our Corps.

We all fondly recall our days in the Corps and love to revisit old haunts, but bases are working installations and are not tourist attractions.

You may not agree, but the same logic applies to the civilian world too. Just because someone worked at Google or Apple from 2005-2007 doesn't mean they can walk through the lobby to visit their old office. They'll quickly be shown the door. Former police officers and even FBI or NCIS agents have no more right to visit their old workplaces than you or me once they have turned in their shields. Perhaps you were formerly employed as an airline employee at your local airport. Try convincing security to let you through today simply because you previously worked there and see what happens.

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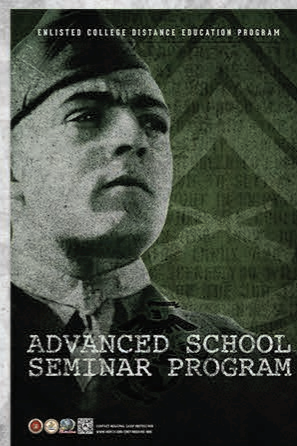
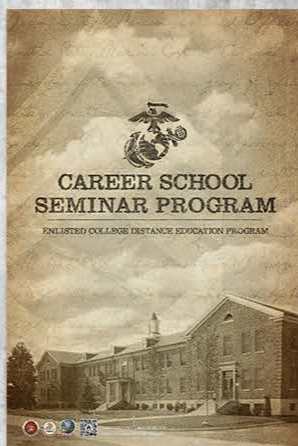
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COURTESY OF MIKE FALLON

**THEN AND NOW—Above, first lieutenants from 1st Recon after rappelling from a CH-46 aircraft. Left to Right: Casey “CCR” Roberts, Mike “Deli” Fallon, Chris “Horseman” L’Orange, Gump “Football” May and Jerry “Hostage 6” Spolter, the “Delta” Company commander. The photo was taken at Camp Reasoner, home of 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, on “Delta Company Street” in the spring of 1970. The sign to the right is the company sign in front of the Delta Co office. Below: Forty-eight years later, the same five lieutenants, in the same sequence, with Casey Roberts holding the Delta Company guidon. The photo was taken Aug. 10, 2018, in Colorado Springs, Colo., at the 1st Recon Association reunion.**



COURTESY OF MIKE FALLON

traffic, yet another unwieldy issue for the base to coordinate. Besides personnel and traffic, there are confidential materials, machinery and weaponry aboard bases that are not for public consumption.

While I applaud your former service and continued dedication to the Corps, the bases are indeed workplaces, not tourist sites, and as such simply cannot allow

every former Marine the privilege of entering the base to relive their glory days. And consider this—not every veteran is honest or full of good intentions, which is yet another reason we have limited base access.

While I sympathize with your desire to look around, perhaps places like the Vietnam Memorial or better yet, the Na-

tional Museum of the Marine Corps are more suitable locations to reminisce and remember.

LtCol Craig Covert, USMCR (Ret)  
Mobile, Ala.

### Once a Marine, Always a Marine

I recently met a young gentleman by the name of Jay whose occupation is a designer consultant from a window company. My wife and I had contacted the company requiring about new windows and Jay responded to our request.

Entering our driveway he observed a Marine logo magnet attached to the rear trunk of my vehicle. Ringing our door bell, he said, “Semper Fi,” and informed both my wife and me that in the 1980s he was a Marine recruit going through boot camp at Parris Island. In his sixth week of training he had a severe asthma attack and was given a medical release. His question to me was is he considered a veteran Marine and part of the Marine brotherhood. Knowing he has his DD-214 separation documents, this was proof enough. I decided to give him a Marine baseball cap and a Marine key chain and welcomed him into the brotherhood.

My wife and I decided to give Jay the contract for installing the new windows. We developed our new friendship with this nice gentleman who is proud to shout out our motto, “Semper Fi,” to another brother Marine.

LCpl John Messina Jr., USMC (Ret)  
1952 to 1954  
Brockton, Mass.

• While serving as the adjutant for the 6th District in Atlanta in the mid-1990s, I was tasked with assigning funeral details throughout the southeastern states. After receiving a request for funeral support for a Marine who was discharged during the first week of recruit training, I called Headquarters Marine Corps to ask for clarification on when someone can claim the title of Marine. I was told in no uncertain terms that as soon as a recruit steps on the yellow footprints, he or she is considered a Marine.—Editor

### Appropriate Dress

I thought Master Sergeant James W. Truman Jr.’s, letter, “Ethos or Apathy?” in the November 2018 issue was spot on.

I was an MP on the main gate at NOB Guam in 1952 where we stood two four-hour watches in 24 hours. We wore khakis in those days. One fresh set per watch plus polished brass and spit shined holsters and shoes. It probably took us two hours to prepare for our watches a day.

Was it worth it? Damn straight! NOB Guam had some 10,000 Naval personnel



and 315 Marines. No one wore civvies. When we stood watch at the main gate, we represented our Corps. We were proud and time spent getting ready for watch was worth every minute.

When I was stationed at MCRD San Diego sometimes I had to go ashore to pick up supplies. By 1961, we were required to change from utilities to “trops” before leaving the base. Point being, when a Marine was seen in public he was dressed appropriately, never in utilities. If preparing to attend a function or go out in public requires a Marine to use some spit and shine, so be it.

If it's too damn much work, then you should have been a doggie or a flyboy.

Sgt Charles Westlake  
Bozeman, Mont.

### Recognize the “Mud Marine”

Recently I noted that the latest badge issued by Headquarters Marine Corps is for drone operators. My concern is that the issue of badges is becoming quite similar to the U.S. Army. The Army seemingly has a badge of some type to cover virtually every MOS. The Marine Corps has had a tradition that the wearing of the uniform is sufficient and no division, unit, etc., badges are necessary to be worn on the uniform.

The various badges we have now from pilots' wings to crew chiefs to parachute qualification to divers is sufficient except for one, the “mud Marine.” Everyone else gets recognized but the force that bears the brunt of an assault is the infantry.

I have a couple of recommendations: C-rat can opener, sweat rag of Vietnam and combat boot. The latter being the prime mover of the infantry in combat. Recognition of the mud Marine is long overdue.

Capt George B. Meegan, USMC (Ret)  
1955 to 1978  
Tempe, Ariz.

### Memorable Bus Ride

I was sitting near the front of a bus on 23rd Street in Manhattan on the afternoon of Oct. 1, 2018, after leaving the Manhattan VA hospital. At one stop a man with limited vision got on and was standing a few feet from the front of the bus. I stood up, tapped him on his shoulder, and asked him if he wanted my seat. He said, “No, thank you, I'm fine.” A few minutes later I heard him talking to the bus driver and they were talking about the Marine Corps and their time in it. These guys were two complete strangers. Then the bus driver told him that he was a Marine Security Guard at a

U.S. embassy. I too was a Marine Security Guard at the embassy in Seoul, Korea, from 1962 to 1965.

At that point I stood up, introduced myself to them, and for the next 5 or 10 blocks the three of us, the bus driver, the older man, and I were completely engrossed in telling of our Marine Corps background and experiences. The old Marine was in the Corps from 1965 to 1969 and served in Vietnam. The bus driver was in the Corps for about 10 years in the mid-1980s to mid-1990s, and fought in many battles in the Middle East. I was in the Marine Corps from 1960 to 1966.

I was wearing a black golf shirt with the Marine Corps eagle, globe and anchor on it. The old timer was wearing a red hat with USMC on it. The bus driver had a small USMC EGA pin on the lapel of his shirt. The old timer pointed to his USMC ring to show it to us. I pointed to mine and the bus driver pointed to his. The bus driver was black, I was white, and the older man was Hispanic. Just like in the Marine Corps. It was amazing. I could see all of the other people who were sitting in the front of the bus just watching and listening to the three of us Marines chat like we were old time buddies—which Marines are. Once you get two or more

[continued on page 68]



# Hi, we're (not so) new here.



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Omar Yacoub  
Gen Anthony Zinni





# In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

## TINIAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

### In Aftermath of Typhoon, 31st MEU Provides Crisis Response

After Super Typhoon Yutu made a direct hit on Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Pacific Ocean, Oct. 25, 2018, Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit took the lead on relief efforts. The joint force—Task Group Tinian—led by 31st MEU Commanding Officer Colonel Robert “Bams” Brodie, USMC, executed crisis response in support of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) efforts to assist the U.S. citizens who reside there.

The super typhoon was the second strongest storm to ever hit U.S. soil and the strongest storm of 2018. With 170 mile-per-hour winds, businesses, government buildings, homes and schools sustained heavy damage.

Four days after the storm swept directly across the isolated islands, servicemembers from across the Indo-Pacific

region began arriving en masse to provide assistance. Led by FEMA officials and partnering with local government leaders and local law enforcement, the 31st MEU began categorizing urgent needs and establishing a base of support for partner and military units, including the U.S. Navy’s Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1 and the U.S. Air Force’s 36th Civil Engineer Squadron based at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

“We have effectively opened the door and laid the groundwork for long-term forces of military members and federal aid workers to continue helping the Americans here on Tinian,” said Col Brodie. “I am incredibly proud of the work these Marines, Sailors, airmen and soldiers have done in such a short time—it is incredible seeing the progress in only four days.”

Marines with the 31st MEU, U.S. Navy Seabees with NMCB-1 and 36th CES airmen completed several projects, including purifying and distributing more than 20,000 gallons of water; clearing two

public schools, government buildings and the municipal power facility of downed trees and debris and restoring emergency services’ capacity to respond to medical emergencies. All efforts laid the groundwork for the arrival of the dock landing ship USS *Ashland* (LSD-48), which arrived Nov. 3 with a well-equipped force of Marines belonging to CLB-31 and additional Seabees to augment existing capabilities already at work on the island.

“With the arrival of the *Ashland* and all its embarked Marines, Sailors, heavy equipment and supplies, we can continue building our support capacity for both FEMA and local leaders’ priorities, not the least of which is helping establish temporary shelters for displaced families who lost everything to Yutu,” said Brodie. “This storm is historic—it had devastating effects on this island—but the people of Tinian are resilient and we’re glad to lend a hand to help them get back on their feet.”

During Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations, the U.S. military



Marines with the 31st MEU remove debris from a baseball field on Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, during recovery operations after Super Typhoon Yutu, Nov. 2, 2018.





LCPL HANNAH HALL, USMC

**SSgt Joseph Colvin, an ammunition technician with CLB-31, greets a Tinian resident while participating in typhoon relief operations with the 31st MEU, Nov. 6, 2018.**

provides essential lifesaving support to American citizens affected by declared natural disasters.

The 31st MEU departed Tinian on Nov. 14, following a ceremony marking the end of their mission. As the Marine Corps' only continuously forward-deployed MEU, the 31st MEU provides a flexible force ready to perform a wide range of military operations across the Indo-Pacific region.

GySgt T.T. Parish, USMC

## SARDINIA

### Mare Aperto: U.S. Marines, Italian Forces Strengthen Combined Capabilities

A platoon-sized element of Marines from the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit trained alongside 1st Regiment, San Marco Brigade of the Italian Landing Force during Exercise Mare Aperto, Oct. 8-15, 2018.

During the integrated exercise, 13th MEU Marines participated in multiple ship-to-shore movements and live-fire events with the San Marco Brigade, strengthening their ability to work together in combat-related skills.

"We were able to sustain skills ranging from marksmanship to amphibious planning, while simultaneously developing new skills based on the San Marco Brigade's techniques," said Captain Michael Falvey, USMC, the executive officer of Weapons Company. "Each Marine gains something unique every time we work, live and communicate with partner militaries. This exercise also demonstrated

our support to partner countries, and that there is no place we cannot reach as the nation's forward-deployed crisis response force."

Mare Aperto provided training in anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, anti-air warfare as well as amphibious operations to enhance the tactical proficiency of participating units. This exercise allowed units to continue to build combined capability, quickly and ef-

fectively responding to a wide variety of maritime threats in a complicated maritime environment.

"Exercise Mare Aperto not only proved the strength between the U.S. and Italian navies, but also reaffirmed that our values and vision are so closely aligned," said Commander Ian Scaliatne, USN, the commanding officer of USS *Mitscher* (DDG-57). "This shared experience was so critical for keeping us focused on what it takes



GYSGT T.T. PARISH, USMC

**LCpl Matthew Mills, a landing support specialist with CLB-31, observes as Tinian locals unload a barge of supplies during relief efforts after Super Typhoon Yutu hit the Northern Mariana Islands, Nov. 3, 2018.**



CPL VICTORIA DECKER, USMC

**Capt Michael Falvey, right, the executive officer of Weapons Co, BLT 3/1, 13th MEU, observes as a platoon commander with 1st Regiment, San Marco Brigade of the Italian Landing Force operates an M4A2 service rifle during Exercise Mare Aperto on the Italian island of Sardinia, Oct. 10, 2018.**





**Above: Marines with VMFA-232 handle an Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared (ATFLIR) before installing it on an F/A-18C Hornet in support of Red Flag-Alaska at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, Oct. 17, 2018. ATFLIR can locate and designate targets day or night at ranges exceeding 40 nautical miles and altitudes surpassing 50,000 feet. (Photo by Sgt Maria Noyola, USMC)**

**Right: PFC William Hurley, a fixed-wing aircraft mechanic with VMFA-232, services an F/A-18C Hornet's airframe mounted accessory drive (AMAD) after a flight in support of Red-Flag Alaska, Oct. 17, 2018.**



SGT MARIA NOYOLA, USMC

to maintain security and stability and deter aggression. It was a privilege to operate with such professionals.”

The *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock USS *Anchorage* (LPD-23) and embarked 13th MEU are deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations as a crisis response force in support of regional partners as well as to promote U.S. national security interests.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

1stLt Mallory Martinez, USMC

### **EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, ALASKA During Red Flag, Marines “Fix, Fly and Fight”**

Operating in an area with more than 67,000 square miles with an average temperature of 22 degrees Fahrenheit, Marines with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing’s Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 232 and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALs) 11 joined together with U.S. and coalition forces to participate in Exer-



cise Red Flag-Alaska 19-1 at the largest instrumented air, ground and electronic combat training range in the world. During the two-week event, Marines worked alongside the Finnish Air Force and the Republic of Korea Air Force as well as the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy.

All engaging aircrews, maintainers, ordnance and logistics counterparts were exposed to fast-paced battle rhythms and low operating temperatures around the clock to support realistic combat missions in a simulated hostile, non-cooperative training environment.

“Our mission for the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing is to be able to bring the fight to the enemy and provide air support to those Marines on the ground,” said Sergeant Major Joseph Standifird, the VMFA-232 sergeant major. “This exercise allows us to conduct that air-to-air training with our allies in the case that we’re called upon to fight our nation’s battles.”

Red Flag-Alaska serves as an ideal platform for international engagement, enabling all involved to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures from across the globe in a vast airspace and varied terrain, with ranges containing 510 different types of targets and 45 threat simulators, both manned and unmanned.

Pilots sharpened their training while flying in the presence of real surface-to-air and air-to-air replications.

“This airspace is massive—we are able to simulate actual wartime scenarios and then tie it all into one package,” said Captain Samuel D. Burt, an F/A-18C pilot with VMFA-232. “It’s an opportunity for us to prove ourselves out here and work together as a coalition, learn what friction points we may have and find a solution to it.”

Climate challenges put the maintainers and the MALS-11 ordnance crew to the test as they worked to support the F/A-18C Hornets.

“It’s freezing, and it kind of changes how we do things, but that doesn’t stop us,” said Lance Corporal Katelyn Dunham, an aviation ordnance systems technician with VMFA-232. “We just push through it—this helps us learn how to be a better team, so it’s all around a learning experience.”

More than 200 Marines made up the VMFA-232 maintenance crews, and their hard work enabled the success of the exercise.

“We maintain the jets in a full mission-capable status so we can provide the pilots the assets they need so they can fly,” said Sergeant Tyler Hanson, the VMFA-232 corrosion control noncommissioned officer in charge. “The mission timelines up here are tight, but we only came here to do one thing: fix, fly and fight!”

Sgt Maria Noyola, USMC



LCPL TERRY WONG, USMC

**SSgt Ryan Betonie, right, orders LCpl Jonathan Zhinin, left, to engage the target during a fire and movement range at Camp Hansen, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Oct. 24, 2018. The Marines with 3rd MLG practiced marksmanship, improved communication and worked on weapons handling while engaging targets.**

### **OKINAWA, JAPAN On Fire and Movement Range, 3rd MLG Marines “Rush the Enemy”**

Marines with 3rd Marine Logistics Group traversed slippery mud and grass while heading toward wooden walls for cover during a fire and movement range at Camp Hansen, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Oct. 24, 2018. Dark green targets rose from the ground, prompting a marine to shout at the top of his lungs: “Contact front!”

During the range, the 3rd MLG Marines practiced their marksmanship skills, improved their communication and worked on their weapons handling while engaging targets.

Staff Sergeant Ryan Betonie, an infantry unit leader with Tactical Readiness and Training (TRT), G-3, 3rd MLG Headquarters, said the Marines applied different rifleman techniques such as quickly identifying the target, moving downrange with a fire team buddy and maintaining alignment with their squad.

The main technique the Marines executed was “buddy rushing,” where some

Marines fire at the targets while others rush forward. They repeated the process until they reached a specified location and “closed with” the enemy.

Another important skill the Marines practiced was communication. During buddy rushing, Marines must pass crucial information such as the status of their equipment and the amount of ammunition they have remaining.

“The [fire and movement drill] allows the Marines to gain mastery in moving and communicating as they assault the objective,” said Lance Corporal Markus Dodd, a machine gunner with TRT, G-3, 3rd MLG Headquarters.

Some Marines only fire a weapon once per year during their annual rifle qualification; however, during the fire and movement range, Marines with Headquarters Regiment were able to join the infantry Marines.

“We like to incorporate our training so that Marines that don’t often get this type of training can come out and experience it,” said Betonie. “We do like to come out here and sharpen our skills, tactically.”

PFC Terry Wong, USMC



**Right: A CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 465 takes off after inserting Marines with “Kilo” Co, 3/5 during a helicopter raid at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 4, 2018.**



LCPL DALTON S. SWANBECK, USMC

**Above: Sgt Dalyss Reed, a rifleman with Kilo Co, 3/5, briefs Marines prior to a helicopter raid at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 1, 2018.**



## **CAMP PENDLETON, CALIF.**

### **Into Hostile Territory: Raid Rehearsal Puts K/3/5 To the Test**

In preparation for an upcoming deployment with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, the Marines of “Kilo” Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment conducted a helicopter raid rehearsal at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., during the first week of October. Evaluated and advised by Expeditionary Operations Training Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, the training allowed the unit to practice inserting into hostile territory to secure information, capture the enemy or destroy enemy compounds before executing a planned withdrawal upon mission completion. 🦖



LCPL DALTON S. SWANBECK, USMC





LCPL DALTON S. SWANBECK, USMC

**Right:** Cpl Brandon Wilson, a scout sniper with Kilo Co, 3/5, searches for simulated “enemy” in the area during helicopter raid training, Oct. 4, 2018. With detailed intelligence on the objective, raid forces use surprise, speed and violence to ensure success.

**LEFT:** LCpl Kenneth Burns, a rifleman with Kilo Co, 3/5, directs his Marines as they assault an objective during helicopter raid training at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 2, 2018. The training allowed the participating Marines and Sailors to prepare for their upcoming deployment with the 11th MEU.



LCPL DALTON S. SWANBECK, USMC



# Operation Deep Freeze:

## Ice Pilot Assures Lasting USMC Presence In Antarctica

By Mike Hoeferlin

**H**istorically, Marines were documented to have been aboard two U.S. warships that visited Antarctica and nearby waters as part of a United States Navy “exploring expedition” from 1838 to 1842. The strength and makeup of the Marine contingent on the expedition, however, is unknown. From 1927 to 1928, after an approximate 75-year hiatus, Marines accompanied the famous explorer, Admiral Richard E. Byrd, USN, when he and his task force landed, reconnoitered and flew on the frozen and mostly barren continent. Since then, only a handful of Marines have served on the cold and desolate continent of Antarctica.

It was not until 1973, when the U.S. Board on Geographic Names officially named “Dobbratz Glacier” in honor of United States Marine Corps pilot, Colonel Joseph R. Dobbratz Jr., USMCR (Ret), that a permanent—albeit symbolic—Marine Corps presence in Antarctica was assured.

Dobbratz Glacier is the only Antarctic glacier to be named for a Marine, and it has immortalized the leadership, flying skills and professionalism exhibited by Col Dobbratz when as a major, he was flying often dangerous missions in Antarctica as an “ice pilot” from 1962 to 1964.

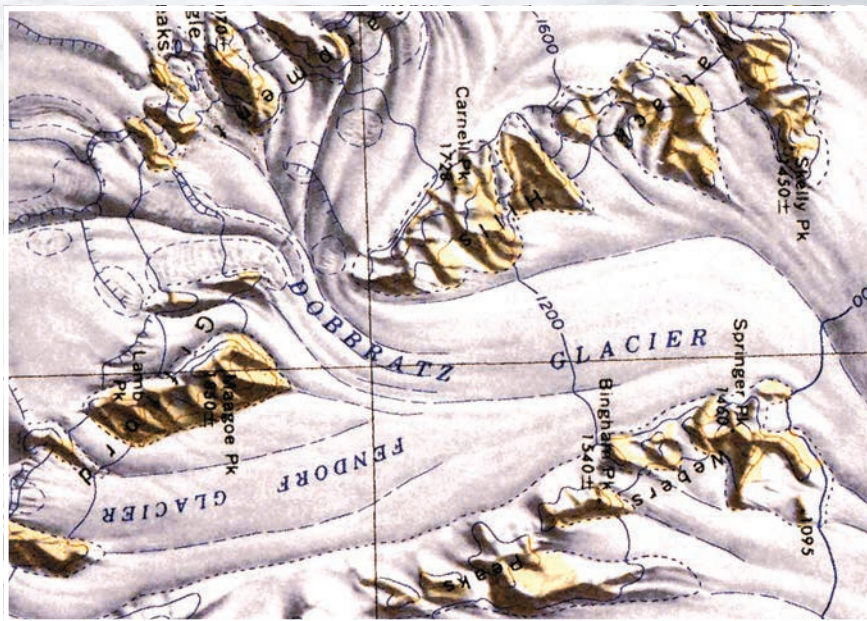
How did Maj Dobbratz, then primarily a Marine helicopter and jet fighter pilot, end up flying ski-equipped C-130 Hercules transports in the skies and on the snow and ice of Antarctica?

“I was flying the RQ4 ‘Flying Boxcar’ at Cherry Point when I was contacted by Headquarters Marine Corps wanting to know if I wanted to take one of the few Marine officer flying billets in VX-6,” Dobbratz said.

**The Dobbratz Glacier was named in honor of Col Joseph R. Dobbratz Jr., USMCR (Ret) in 1973 and is the only Antarctic glacier to be named after a Marine.**



COURTESY OF COL JOSEPH R. DOBBRATZ JR., USMCR (RET)



COURTESY OF MIKE HOEFERLIN



Maj Dobbratz takes off from an icy runway at Byrd Station, Antarctic in a Navy VX-6 LC-130 ski equipped Hercules. Note the eight jet assisted take-off bottles, four on each side of the aircraft, which were ignited to provide extra boost to get airborne. Inset: Maj Dobbratz is seen in the left seat of his LC-130 prior to taking off in Antarctica.



At that time, the Navy's Air Development Squadron Six (VX-6), based at Naval Air Station Quonset Point, R.I., was the principal support and logistics squadron for the U.S. Antarctic Programs. Knowing the VX-6 mission of providing logistical support in Antarctica and hoping that he would soon be flying C-130s on the ice, Dobbratz readily agreed to be transferred to the now legendary squadron, and his ice adventures began. "The first thing they did was to send me to an Air Force base in Tennessee to learn to fly the C-130," he said. "I really loved flying the C-130 as it was truly a gentleman's airplane."

### Operation Deep Freeze

It was during Operation Deep Freeze, the operational component of the United States Antarctic Programs (which was actually a series of military-supported U.S. scientific and/or exploratory missions to Antarctica lasting from 1955 to 1998) that Maj Dobbratz served two six-month tours on the ice. He flew Navy C-130s laden with supplies, equipment and sometimes personnel bound for remote outposts, including South Pole Station, and occasionally to almost inaccessible and small field parties scattered across the continent.

Flight operations at that time in that place could only be conducted during the Antarctic summer season—roughly from September through March of each calendar year. Flying during the Antarctic winter was prohibitively dangerous and not an option. When the flying season ended and the permanent personnel in Antarctica prepared to winter over without air resupply possibilities, the pilots and aircrews of VX-6 returned to Quonset Point and prepared for the next time they would be called upon to provide necessary logistical support during the next Antarctic summer season.





**RADM James R. Reedy assumed command of Operation Deep Freeze from RADM David M. Tyree during one of the coldest ceremonies in history—the temperature at the South Pole that day was 33 degrees below zero.**

Most experts agree that some of the most difficult flying conditions in the world can be found in Antarctica. At times, pilots must contend with extreme winds, deadly temperatures, treacherous and unforgiving landscapes and sometimes white-out atmospheric conditions during which there is zero visibility. “It was sometimes like flying in a milk carton,” Maj Dobbratz remembered. “Flying in Antarctica on skis was chal-

lenging but it was also very rewarding.” In addition to using hard-packed snow and slick ice runways, Dobbratz and fellow ice pilots regularly had to land and take off in the snow without runways. “Open snow landings were very [pause] ‘interesting,’ ” he modestly recalled. During his time as an ice pilot, despite the innate hazards associated with flying in that challenging environment, Dobbratz amassed an impressive and enviable safety record.

Unfortunately, a significant number of aircraft—both fixed-wing and helicopters—were “lost” during Operation Deep Freeze and more than a few individuals perished in aircraft-related accidents and mishaps.

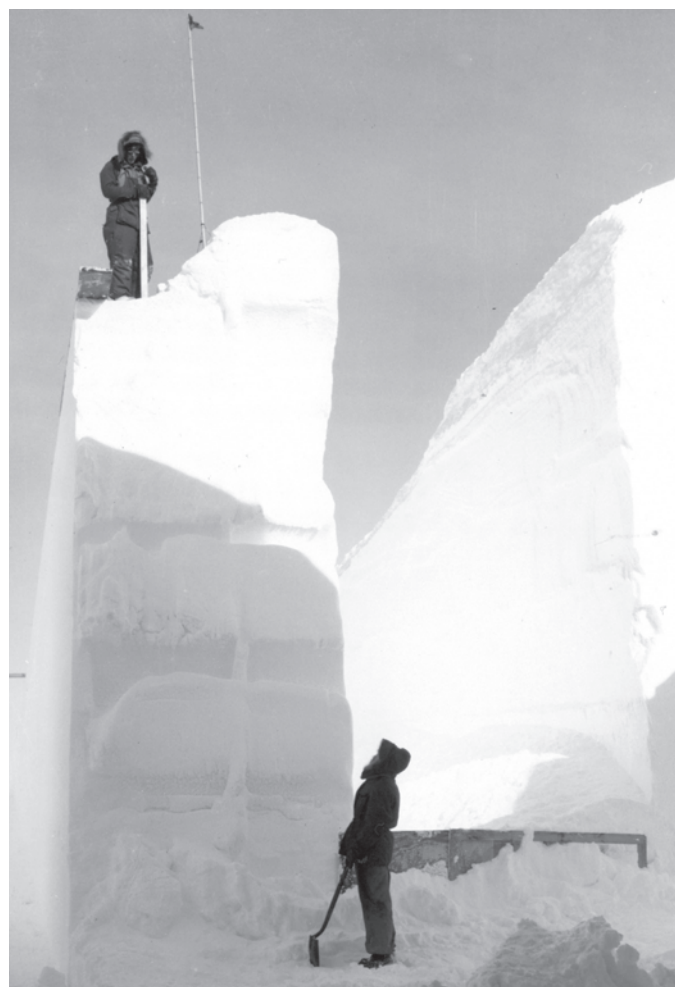
In addition to his flying duties, Maj Dobbratz was also assigned the critical job as a cargo officer, overseeing and supervising the loading and unloading of cargo at the various scientific stations and isolated outposts. If aircraft were overloaded or if the cargo shifted during flight, the results could be catastrophic. “We had to be very meticulous and extremely careful,” he said.

When his second tour as an ice pilot ended in 1964, Maj Dobbratz reported to the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., for the Command and Staff course. Drawing extensively upon his most recent experiences on the ice, his final research paper at the War College, which has since been declassified, was entitled “The Effective-





PHC FRANK KAZUKAITIS, USN



PH3 T.J. TAYLOR, USN

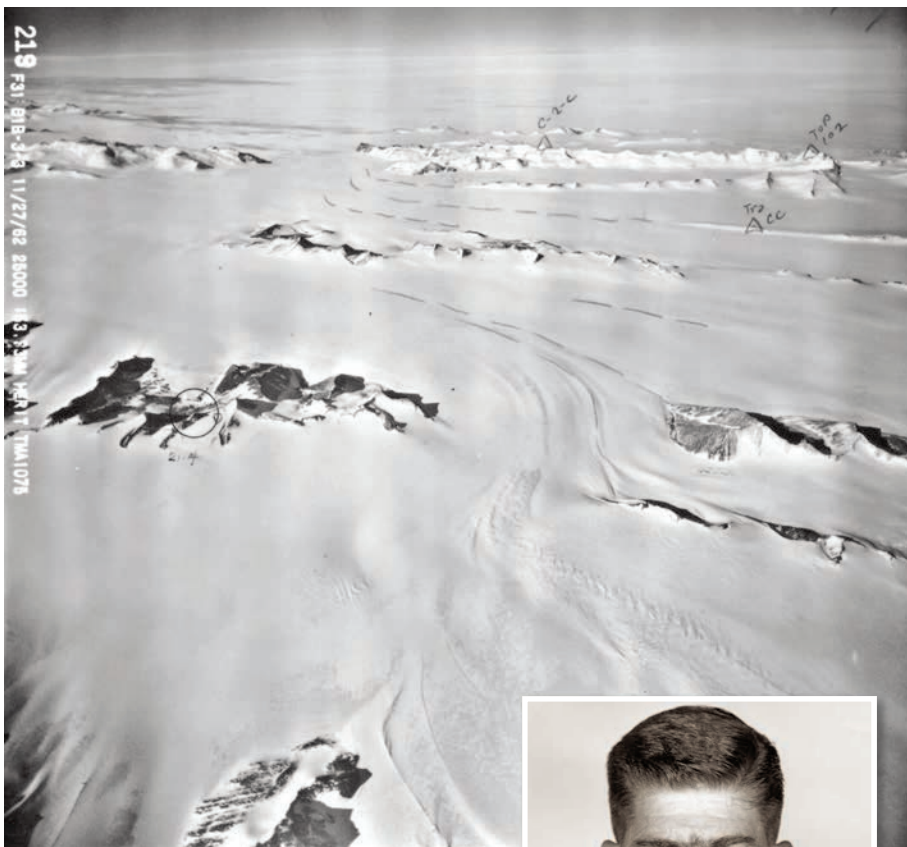
**Above:** LTJG David C. Devicq stands atop a sturdy ridge of snow temporarily created by the drifting pattern of tunnel construction at New Byrd Station, Antarctica on Dec. 7, 1961.

**Below:** U.S. Navy icebreaker *USS Edisto* (AG-89) escorting/towing the HMNZS *Endeavor* to McMurdo Station, the United States Antarctica Research Center in 1963. *Endeavor* was New Zealand's Antarctica support vessel that was leased from the United States.



PH2 R.H. LANES, USN





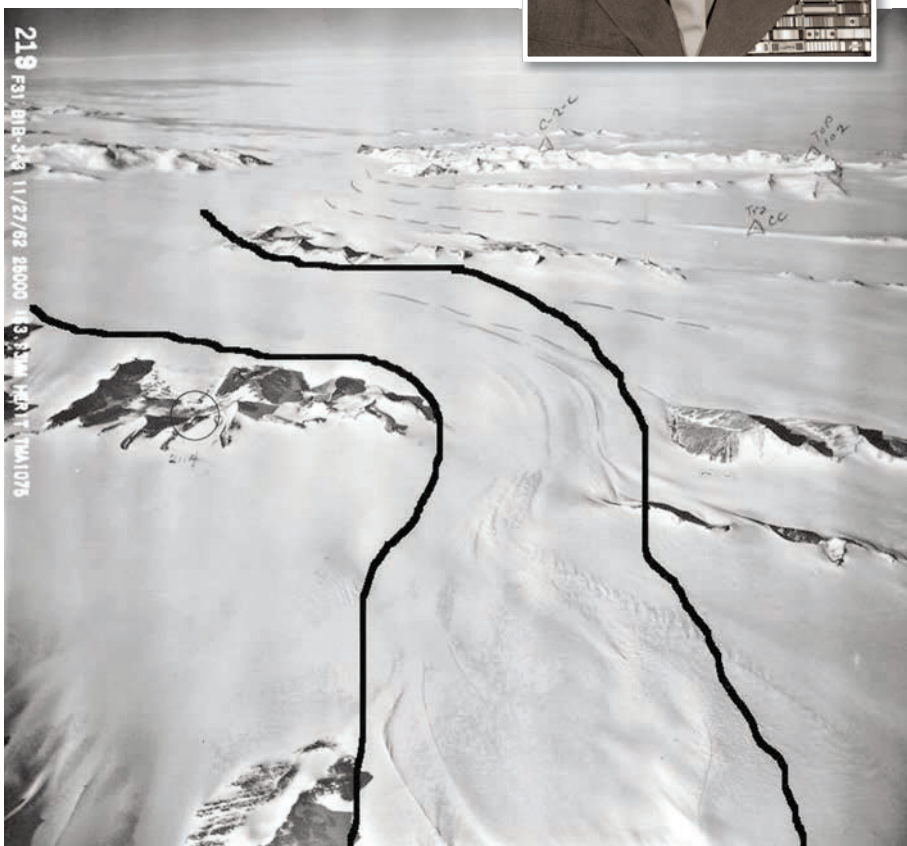
**Aerial shots of the Dobbratz Glacier show the harsh and unrelenting environment in which the military and scientific expeditions operated.**

**Inset: Col Joseph R. Dobbratz Jr., USMCR, as Chief of Staff at the Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Va., in 1981.**



COURTESY OF COL JOSEPH R. DOBBRATZ JR., USMCR (RET)

USMC



COURTESY OF COL JOSEPH R. DOBBRATZ JR., USMCR (RET)

ness of United States Aircraft in Antarctica.” As a seasoned expert in Antarctic aircraft operations under challenging weather and climatological conditions, it was a topic he knew quite well. Through his writings he was able to impart that knowledge to future generations of ice pilots and planners. That paper is still occasionally used as a resource by scholars and others seeking information about flying in Antarctica.

### Dobbratz Glacier

As the scientific and military expeditions expanded, the necessity of recurrent resupply by aircraft became increasingly critical and mandatory. In fact, the naming of Dobbratz Glacier came about because Maj Dobbratz so impressed members of a geological research team from the University of Minnesota who were exploring and conducting experiments in the Ellsworth Mountains and nearby glaciers in the Heritage Range, that they personally and persistently petitioned authorities to have a particular glacier that they had discovered and mapped named for him.

Eventually, they succeeded in their quest to honor their Marine resupply pilot and in December 1973, some nine years after departing Antarctica for the last time, while serving at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., then-Lieutenant Colonel Dobbratz received a personal and unexpected letter from the International Coordinator of the National Science Foundation’s Office of Polar Programs: “It gives me great deal of pleasure to inform you that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names has named in your honor the geographic feature Dobbratz Glacier located at 79 24’ S. latitude 85 05’ W. longitude in the Heritage Range of the Ellsworth Mountains, Antarctica.”

According to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Dobbratz Glacier is “A broad tributary glacier which drains the S part of the White Escarpment and flows NE between Watlack Hills and Weber Peaks into Spletstoesser Glacier, in the Heritage Range. Named by the University of Minnesota Geological Party, 1963-1964, for Major Joseph Dobbratz, U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) pilot who supported the party.”

### Other Achievements

Col Dobbratz’s storied and somewhat unconventional military career had other highlights. Before joining the Marine Corps, he was an enlisted U.S. Coast Guardsman. He served as a ground officer during the Korean War before going to flight school. He started his USMC aviation career as a helicopter pilot and subsequently transitioned to jet fighters





COURTESY OF COL JOSEPH R. DOBBRATZ JR., USMCR (RET)

**Above: Maj Dobbratz is seen with a waddle of emperor penguins.**



COURTESY OF LT COL JOSEPH R. DOBBRATZ JR.

**Left: As the CO of HMM-364, LtCol Dobbratz later served in Phu Bai, Vietnam in 1968.**

and later to transports. He was aircraft carrier-qualified in both helicopters and jets. He is also one of the few aviators who have commanded a Marine Recruit Training Battalion (1st RTB), MCRD Parris Island, S.C.

In 1968, LtCol Dobbratz received orders to Vietnam where he ended up commanding the fabled “Purple Foxes” of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 364, flying CH-46 Sea Knights. Leading by example and already familiar with

potentially perilous flying conditions as a result of his time on the ice, he always flew the same dangerous combat missions as his pilots and aircrews. “Interestingly enough,” he reflected, “the ‘46 was always my favorite aircraft and flying it was the highlight of my career.” In other words, he was a talented and well-rounded Marine Corps officer who was ideally suited and situated to be successful in a number of realms. His history-making and distinguished flying record in Antarctica was

just one of his many accomplishments; but, because of Dobbratz Glacier, it has become one of his most noteworthy achievements.

Today, when people look at maps and view images of Antarctica and see Dobbratz Glacier, near the Ellsworth Mountains in the Heritage Range, they might be surprised to learn that it was named in honor of a United States Marine pilot whose tested flying and leadership skills under sometimes unbelievably harsh and difficult Antarctic conditions were cherished by the scientists and military personnel who came to depend upon him and his aircrews for essential and crucial support from 1962 to 1964. Marines and the continent of Antarctica will forever be intertwined thanks, in part, to one of the few Antarctic Marine Corps “ice pilots,” Col Joseph R. Dobbratz, Jr.

*Author’s bio: Mike Hoeflerlin, a former helicopter pilot and public affairs officer, served under LtCol Dobbratz at MCAS Beaufort, S.C.*



# Leatherneck Laffs



"If I'm captured, I'll give my name, rank and email address."



"May old patrol mates ... reenlist ...  
For another ... hitch and a half ...  
May old patrol mates ... reenlist ..."



"I want to see you change from moderately active  
to a whole lot active."



The most dangerous thing in the world  
is a second lieutenant with a compass.





"The field is more than being without Wi-Fi."



"He has no concept of personal space."



"Hey, guys! Look what they gave me!"



Hand-held devices are filling more and more traditional roles in the USMC.



# Operation Iraqi Freedom II: The Deployment

By LtCol Kenneth W. Estes, USMC (Ret)

*Editor's note: The following article is from "U.S. Marines in Iraq, 2004-2005: Into the Fray," produced by the History Division of the U.S. Marine Corps.*

*The summer of 2003 saw a dramatic reduction in Marine Corps forces in Iraq as Major General James N. Mattis, Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, set the tone for stability and security operations by drastically cutting his Division's troop list from some 23,000 to 8,000. The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing under MajGen James F. Amos redeployed to the United States and the Marine Logistics Command under Brigadier General Richard S. Kramlich worked in Kuwait to reload materiel into ships and aircraft as a special purpose MAGTF under Brigadier General Ronald S. Coleman oversaw the withdrawal of Marine forces in theater. But the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Michael W. Hagee, had already asked Lieutenant General James Conway, Commanding General of I Marine Expeditionary Force, to prepare his forces for another deployment to support Operation Iraqi Freedom II.*

The planners of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and its subordinate units worked on the force deployment in November 2003 and in December began to develop the details of the strategic movement of all units identified for deployment. As in previous campaigns in the Persian Gulf, the Marine Corps forces shipped their equipment and a relatively small number of personnel by way of Navy and military sealift shipping while the bulk of personnel and some cargo traveled via

strategic airlift. Only two Navy ships took part in this phase, each a highly capable amphibious assault ship: the USS *Bataan* (LHD-5) from the Atlantic Fleet and the Pacific Fleet's USS *Boxer* (LHD-4). Fifty-five helicopters deemed immediately necessary for the relief of the aviation component of the Army's 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment were loaded onto these ships. The remaining 59 helicopters, in various states of disassembly, were shipped in the military sealift ships (24 helicopters)

and strategic airlift (35 helicopters). *Boxer* and *Bataan* sailed on Jan. 14-23, 2004, from their ports of embarkation. Between Jan. 18 and Feb. 28, 10 Military Sealift Command ships sailed from their ports, all taking approximately a month for the transit. Additional equipment for I MEF, principally vehicles drawn from maritime prepositioned ships—USNS *1stLt Baldomero Lopez* (T-AK 3010), MV *Pvt Franklin J. Phillips* (T-AK 3004), and MV *PFC William B. Baugh* (T-AK 3001)—awaited the arrival of the troops in Kuwait. These ships arrived Feb. 10-March 5, and comprised the lead elements and main body of the I MEF forces. Though small numbers of personnel continued to arrive in Kuwait through March 13, the main effort was preparing the relief in place of 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, planned for March 20, and the 82nd Airborne Division, planned for April 4.

Assembling the force in bases and camps in Kuwait proved as complex as the deployment of I MEF to the theater the previous year. The early 2004 relief in place for U.S. forces saw 12 Army brigades and two Marine Corps regiments replacing 17 Army brigades, most of which used the Kuwait expeditionary camps and training locales for three months as the sites for the relief in place. An early problem was the minimum requirement for 7,500 bed spaces at Camp Udari to support the 1st Marine Division through the standard joint processing known as Reception, Staging, Onward movement and Integration of forces (RSOI). Reduced to 3,500 beds at Camp Udari, I MEF staff found 1,000 additional beds each at camps Victory and New York. The remaining shortfall could only be filled by moving two regiments into camps, training areas, and on to the border assembly areas. In all, I MEF used six camps, three ports, and two air facilities during its RSOI phase.

## Training in Country

After all Marines assembled in their assigned units and were issued equipment, they went to the range area to test fire crew-served weapons and systems unloaded from shipping and storage, and conducted final battle training. The con-



LCPL JONATHAN T. SPENCER, USMC

**MajGen James F. Amos, right, commander of 3d MAF from 2003 to 2004, speaks with Capt Shawn Miller of MWSS-273 while deployed to Al Anbar province in April 2004.**



**In Iraq, 3rd MAW used CH-46 Sea Knight, right, and CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters. Both types received new armor and other upgrades upon returning there in 2004.**

voys were dispatched in sequence by the 1st Marine Division, which also performed security functions for most convoys of the I MEF headquarters group and the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing. A three-day training period provided detailed preparation for safe and secure convoys. The convoy commanders formed, loaded, armed, and rehearsed their convoys for the first day and a half under the coordination of the division's operations staff. On the afternoon of the second day, each commander received the latest route and intelligence briefings, conducted a certification briefing for the division's chief of logistics, and got the assigned departure and convoy clearance information. For the final 24 hours, the convoy remained under a safety stand-down calculated to ensure rested personnel and well-prepared equipment for the single-day movement into the area of operations destinations.

I MEF headquarters established a garrison at Camp Fallujah, outside the city of the same name. The 1st Marine Division set up headquarters in the Al Anbar capital Ramadi, at Forward Operating Base Champion, which would soon be renamed



LCPL WILLIAM L. DUBOSE III, USMC

Camp Blue Diamond. The aviation combat element was based at Al Asad Air Base, and the 1st Force Service Support Group was housed south of Fallujah at Camp Taqaddum airfield.

The initial ground deployment into Iraq saw Regimental Combat Team 7 occupy Al Asad Air Base and deploy its units in the western half of the I MEF area of

operations, while Regimental Combat Team 1 occupied Camp Fallujah, taking responsibility for the easternmost section of the area. The Army's 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, remained at Ramadi with additional responsibilities for the vast and less populated area stretching south to the Saudi Arabia frontier, later called Area of Operation Manassas.



**Marine F/A-18 Hornet fighter-bombers from VMFA-224 sit on the flight line of Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. (Photo by Cpl Alicia M. Garcia, USMC)**





LCPL KEVIN C. QUIHUIS JR., USMC

**Capt Tom Lacroix, commanding Co C, 1st Bn, 7th Marines, communicates on the radio while accompanied by radio operators Cpl Kenny Bergain, left, and LCpl Travis Ball during the clearing of Qadawi Baghdad in 2003. All are wearing the Interceptor Multi-Thread Body Armor System Outer Tactical Vests.**

The planning by I MEF before returning to Iraq essentially sought to build on what had been widely assumed was a successful period of stability and security operations by the 82nd Airborne and 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. In particular, the Marine plan hinged on a strong “first 60 days” as the best method to maintain and continue progress toward a secure and independent Iraq.

#### Relief in Place

To maintain continuity in security and stability operations between the 82nd Airborne and I MEF, the relief in place outlined in I MEF orders sought to replace Army units sequentially, from the smaller up to larger units. This process also took place geographically from west to east, as Regimental Combat Team 1 and 3d Marine Aircraft Wing first relieved the

Army’s 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment of the huge western section of Al Anbar Province as well as airspace management responsibilities handled by the regiment’s air cavalry squadron. Then 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, reported to the Army’s 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division followed by the relief of 3d Brigade, 82nd Airborne, by Regimental Combat Team 1.

The Marines of I MEF at all levels carried out essential operations with their counterparts in the 82nd Airborne. These operations consisted of the so-called “right seat, left seat” rides in which incoming I MEF leaders and Marines patrolled with the soldiers of the 82nd Airborne, then exchanged roles and took over the operations with 82nd Airborne personnel still in place to provide assistance and advice. Each unit then transferred the responsibility and authority for the district or sector. Before such transfer of authority occurred, the incoming Marine Corps units assumed security of all vital infrastructure and institutions in their assigned sectors. They introduced themselves to local, Coalition, and non-governmental organization leaders, supervised local infrastructure projects, assumed responsibilities for equipment, and continued the ongoing process of collecting and disposing of weapons and unexploded ordnance.



LCPLSAMATHA L. JONES, USMC

**BGen Richard Kramlich, CG of 1st FSSG, talks with Marines at Camp Fallujah in November 2004.**



**MajGen James N. Mattis, commander of 1stMarDiv from 2003 to 2004, was already a veteran of Marine Corps operations in Afghanistan and Iraq when I MEF returned to Iraq in the spring of 2004. (Photo by LCpl Christopher R. Rye, USMC)**





**At the relief in place ceremony at Camp Babylon, Iraq, on Sept. 3, 2003, Polish-led coalition forces relieved the Marines of I MEF. (Photo by LCpl Andrew Williams, USMC)**

In each case, the transfers of authority occurred well before the deadlines. LtGen Conway recognized the need for an accelerated relief of Army units deployed in Iraq and promised all due speed. The early dispatch of Regimental Combat Team 7 from Camp Udari paid off, as it completed its relief of 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment on March 15, five days ahead of schedule. As part of the transfer, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing assumed responsibility for airspace management and aviation support for the area of operations. On March 21, MajGen Mattis relieved the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, MajGen Charles H. Swannack Jr., and assumed responsibility for ground operations in the Marines' area of operations, named Atlanta in Marine Corps orders and plans. The 1st Force Service Support Group relieved the 82nd Airborne Division Support Command on March 22.

Though the Marines of I MEF met LtGen Conway's expectations, Al Anbar Province also lived up to its reputation as a tough area of operations, and as such, Marines conducted combat operations for several days before the transfers of authority took place. By March 14, insurgents inflicted 11 casualties upon the 1st Marine Division. On March 18, insurgents fired rockets at 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's Al Asad Air Base killing one Marine and wounding three. A bombing killed a second Marine on March 25, 2004.

### **Equipping I Marine Expeditionary Force**

Although the Marines newly arrived in Al Anbar considered themselves better prepared and organized for the stability and security operations missions than in the 2003 campaign, the Marine Corps equipment needs had increased. The brief period of occupation duty in mid-2003 allowed no time for incorporating new

technologies and engineering into the force. By 2004, however, the experiences of U.S. and Coalition forces had generated a comprehensive set of new equipment requirements. Thus, the second deployment presented a range of new equipment requirements. Stability and security operations demanded increased numbers of vehicles of all types, yet the force lacked funding for maintenance and facilities that more equipment would require.

The hope that I MEF could obtain special equipment needed for the 2004 deployment from units departing Iraq would fall far short of expectations despite a U.S. Central Command directive to leave all "uparmored" High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) humvee models M1114, M1116, and M1109—and all tactical vehicles fitted with bolt-on armor or ballistic doors. The 82nd Airborne Division turned over 83 uparmored humvees, but the Marine expeditionary force required 250. Of the highly desired Warlock radio frequency jammers used to counter improvised explosive devices, only 25 could be gained from Combined Joint Task Force 7 sources; the Marine Corps required 61.

As in the case of the 2003 campaign, the supporting establishment of the Marine Corps, chiefly Marine Corps Systems Command, employed rapid acquisition under the Urgent Universal Need Statement (UUNS) process. Commanders of



LCPL ANDREW WILLIAMS, USMC

**LtGen James T. Conway commanded I MEF through both the 2003 and 2004 campaigns in Iraq, and in 2006, succeeded Gen Michael W. Hagee as Commandant of the Marine Corps.**





**Fighting the insurgency required improvements to the armor on humvees. Adapted vehicles, like this M1114, were known as uparmored humvees.**

forces assigned for the 2004 campaign received instructions in November 2003 to request material required under UUNS to LtGen Conway for consolidation and forwarding. Ultimately, the Marine Requirements Oversight Council reviewed the requests and recommended actions to the Commandant. The initial requests before the 2004 deployment totaled approximately \$170 million, in comparison to approximately \$100 million provided for the entire 2003 campaign.

### **Uparmoring the Humvees**

The requirement for uparmored humvees took immediate priority. The Marine Corps Logistics Command produced steel doors for delivery to the deploying units until more permanent solutions could be approved and acquired through joint service and Marine Corps specific programs to produce armor kits and new production vehicles.

In addition to compiling the initial requirements, Systems Command deployed liaison teams to the I MEF staff to assess new requirements and accelerate the UUNS process. The tandem requirements of human body armor and armor kits for utility vehicles became more pressing in

both military and political arenas after combat continued in 2003 as the Iraqi insurgency gained momentum after the declared “end of major combat operations.” Armoring a fleet of utility vehicles never intended for use in close combat was a requirement new to the logistics system, and the system’s response proved predictably slow as casualties increased. Likewise, distribution of the new Interceptor body armor system to the troops was only partially complete at the time of the 2003 invasion, and priorities of issue left large numbers of combat units with older design armor vests. Moreover, defective quality control and the delays in providing upgrades to Interceptor components (heavier





SGT JEREMY M. GIACOMINO, USMC

insert plates and additional side and shoulder protection) exacerbated the political uproar. The American government and military underestimated the scope and ferocity of the insurgency and the personal protection that fighting insurgents would require. The military laboratories and systems commands responded with designs encompassing almost total protection for vehicles and persons alike.

The “hardness” or armor of humvees remained a critical problem for all U.S. troops, including Marines as three different levels of protection appeared in the uparmored humvees, but only one of which offered adequate protection

**Below: In 2003, Marines from the 24th MEU establish a perimeter in Qalat Sukkar, Iraq, as civilians gather to welcome them as they secured the town.**



SSGT BRYAN REED, USMC

against the improvised explosive devices employed by the enemy. As a result, some units procured locally fabricated steel plates to augment the minimal protection offered by the unarmored humvee. So scarce were the uparmored humvees, that Marines began to improvise simple, additional protection, such as hanging bags containing Kevlar plates salvaged from vests and vehicles on the exterior of the otherwise thinly constructed doors of their humvees, thus making their vehicles into “Hillbilly Hummers.”


### The Need for Better Body Armor

Personal body armor consisted of two types during the initial stages of the 2003-2004 campaign. The superior Interceptor System, used by front-line troops, gradually replaced the older vests worn by Marines during I MEF’s 2004 deployment. The older design was the Personnel Armor System Ground Troops (PASGT) vest that had replaced the obsolete vinyl and ballistic plate combination of the older M-1969 Fragmentation Protective Body Armor. The PASGT ballistic filler consists of 13 plies of treated (water repellent) aramid Kevlar 29 fabric and improved the M-1969’s protection against fragments.

The more effective Interceptor Multi-

Threat Body Armor System consists of two components: a Kevlarweave outer tactical vest, which can stop a 9 mm bullet, and ceramic small arms protective inserts (SAPI) or plates. The 16.4-pound system of vest with removable throat and groin protectors (8.4 pounds) and insertable front and rear plates (4 pounds each), can defeat the 7.62 mm round common to the insurgents’ primary AK weapon types. Straps and Velcro fasteners allow attachment of personal equipment. The 2003 Armor Protection Enhancement System added sections to protect the neck, arms, and groin. The later Deltoid Extension protected the sides of the rib cage and shoulders but added pounds, provided less ventilation, and limited body movement.

As the more than 20,000 Marines and sailors of I MEF filled their new positions for the 2004 campaign, they were equipped as well as the hurried measures and changing military environment permitted.

*Author’s bio: LtCol Kenneth W. Estes, USMC (Ret) is a 1969 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served in a variety of assignments throughout his Marine Corps career. LtCol Estes is the author of several books and has a Ph.D. in history.* 



# “THE JUNGLES WILL RUN RED WITH BLOOD”



USMC

## The Battle for Suicide Creek, Cape Gloucester December 1943

By Dick Camp

### Prologue

In late 1943, the 1st Marine Division, then recovering in Australia after the debilitating Guadalcanal operation, was placed under the command of Lieutenant General Walter Krueger's 6th Army in the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) for Operation Backhander, the seizure of Cape Gloucester on the western end of

New Britain in the Bismarck Islands group. Radio Tokyo got wind of the Division's movement: "This gang of degenerates, cutthroats and assorted jailbirds, it seemed, had been withdrawn from Melbourne because of their disgraceful conduct ... our soldiers are fully prepared to repulse this insolent attempt. The jungles will run red with the blood of the Guadalcanal butchers!"

The 6th Army devised an operational

plan that the Division considered unacceptable—finding it too complicated and a dangerous dispersal of forces—and voiced their concerns directly to General Douglas MacArthur, SWPA commander, during a visit in mid-December. According to "The Old Breed," "MacArthur asked, as if in politeness only, how the First liked the plan for the coming operation. 'Well, General,' spoke Lieutenant Colonel E.A. Pollock, Division D-3 [Operations Officer]

**Above: Marines guide a jeep through shallow water after unloading it from a landing craft. In the background is a utility land-and-water transport vehicle.**



...“We don’t like anything about it.” His comment earned him the enmity of Krueger’s staff. Subsequently, the Cape Gloucester landing plan was changed; the Division’s 1st and 7th Marine Regiments would land in assault with the 5th Marine Regiment in reserve.

### The Green Inferno

LtCol Frank O. Hough and Major John A. Crown described Cape Gloucester’s seasons in “The Campaign on New Britain” as “wet and less wet.” “The area’s hot, humid climate ‘rain forest,’ they noted, “produced giant trees towering up to 200 feet into the sky above dense undergrowth lashed together by savage vines as thick as a man’s arm and many times as tough, in the coastal area interspersed with occasional patches of kunai grass, sometimes higher than a man’s head, and hip-deep swamps.”

The Division’s report noted, “Water backed up in the swamps in rear of the shoreline, making them impassible for wheeled and tracked vehicles. The many streams which emptied into the sea in the beachhead area became raging torrents. Some even changed their course. Troops were soaked to the skin and their clothes never dried out during the entire operation.”

One Marine said, “I’d just wrap up in the poncho—which was good if it didn’t rain too hard, and if the foxhole didn’t fill with water ... we were always wet.” Private First Class Everett Marvel exclaimed, “When it rained it was like 5-gallon buckets of water being poured over your head ... our feet were always wet, rotten.” The rain-saturated ground caused trees to fall, which killed and injured at least 100 men during the campaign.

One platoon commander noted that half his men were ineffective because of the rainforest. He went on to say, “One of the really bad things about the fighting at Gloucester was that you couldn’t see the [Japanese]. It sounds funny, but I got so I almost liked to run into them and have a fight. Just to see ‘em helped, made you feel there really were some [Japanese] on the island, not ghosts.”

### Alamo Scouts

Under cover of a rainy night on Sept. 24, 1943, Marine First Lieutenant John D. Bradbeer, chief of the 1st Division scouts, Lieutenant Junior Grade Rudy Horak USN, Lieutenant Kirkwall Smith, Royal Australian Navy, a former coastwatcher, Lieutenant Daily Gambill, an Australian enlisted radio operator, and two natives landed near Grass Point on the first of four reconnaissance patrols. “We paddled our rubber boats shoreward after launching from a PT boat,” Horak recalled.

“Japanese armed barges were in the area and we finally got past them and landed.” For the next nine days, the patrol scouted Cape Gloucester’s interior gathering information from friendly natives. “Our scouting report showed that the southern coast was rocky, the immediate inland terrain densely vegetated, and that a large scale landing there was not feasible,” Horak said.

On the last day, the patrol received word that a large Japanese patrol was stalking them. “A native came running up to me [Horak] saying, ‘Japon he come,’ in Pidgin

to flow rather than leap from the ships’ sides, a solid mass of vivid orange-yellow, disappearing at leisure into its own smoke.”

The initial landing was carried out by Colonel Julian N. Frisbie’s 7th Marines across the eastern landing beaches, Yellow 1 (3rd Battalion) and Yellow 2 (1st Battalion), while 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment landed on the western side of the cape. The Marines charged down the lowered ramps of the landing craft only to be brought up short by a wall of thick jungle so dense as to be almost impenetrable. There were only 6



**Scouts from 3/7 and 3/5 reached a stream that ran between high banks 20 to 30 feet across with water from knee to waist-deep high. (USMC photo)**

English.” The patrol was supposed to leave but there was a problem. “The rescue PT boat’s radio wasn’t working and they couldn’t hear us, so it went back to its base. That night the [Japanese] started shelling where they thought we were and we played a deadly game of hide-and-seek. We won. The next night another PT came out, the radios worked, and we got off. I’ll never forget the joy of being back aboard a U.S. vessel after thinking that all was lost.”

### D-day

On Dec. 26 at precisely 6 a.m. and lasting for the next 90 minutes, two cruisers, eight destroyers, and two rocket-firing LCIs commenced a pre-assault bombardment of the landing beaches at Borgen Bay. A Marine observed, “Flame seems

feet of sand between the surf and edge of the jungle. In addition, the “damp flat,” noted on their maps was, according to one Marine, “damp up to your neck.” Another Marine noted, “Time and again members of our column would fall into waist-high sink holes and have to be pulled out. A slip meant a broken or wrenched leg.”

“First wave ashore without opposition,” was announced by the assault wave, except for a handful of Japanese rear echelon personnel too stunned and scared to offer resistance. The first fatality was a Marine killed by a falling tree. Despite the appalling terrain, the Division pushed eastward toward its objective: Target Hill. In the early morning hours of Dec. 27, “A terrific storm struck the Cape Gloucester area,” according to the Division report. “Rains continued for the next five days.”



## Suicide Creek

On Jan. 2, the scouts from 3/7 and 3/5 reached a broad, innocent looking stream that ran between high banks, 20 to 30 feet across and with water from knee to waist-deep. The scouts waded into the water and started across in the face of scattered sniper fire. Footing was difficult because the bottom of the creek was covered with slippery stones and, in addition, the scouts had to climb over trees that had fallen into the creek. After gaining the opposite bank,

with natural vegetation to ensure that they were almost impossible to spot. Bearss recalled, "Just below the point where the ground slopes upward and then levels off on the other side, the Japanese had dug in at least three 'pillboxes,' which we couldn't see." Foxholes and individual fighting positions were cunningly positioned between and under the arching roots of massive Banyan trees and within dense masses of bush to support the bunkers. Snipers were also positioned in



**Marines on Cape Gloucester used tank-infantry tactics to destroy the entrenched enemy defenses.**

they motioned for the rest of the platoon to cross. PFC Edwin Bearss recalled, "We could see men about 40 yards from us, and they ain't friends, their helmets are different. We didn't know whether they were decoys or what, but they seemed oblivious to our approach."

The scouts passed the sighting back and were told to open fire. Bearss recalled, "After we fired for two or three minutes, we started to move forward toward the stream when, all of a sudden, all hell broke loose." Combat correspondent Asa Bordages said, "The jungle exploded in their faces." The Japanese opened fire from several expertly camouflaged machine-gun positions dug in along the stream bank.

## Japanese Defenses

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 53rd Infantry defended Suicide Creek from mutually supporting machine gun earth-and-log bunkers cleverly camouflaged

the thick brush and even in the tangled limbs and vines of the trees. The few yards of open area in the stream bed was a killing ground without any concealment for the attackers.

Machine-gun fire swept the Marines from every direction. "A short 10 yards to my left," Bearss recalled, "they hit a scout from the 1st squad in the arm ... within seconds they hit the company gunnery sergeant ... and the next guy 3 yards to my left gets hit. The gun is traversing from left to my right." Bordages recounted, "Marines died there ... cursing because they couldn't see the men who were killing them." The platoon was pinned down with its back to the water. All they could do was hug the ground as bullets cut the brush above their heads, like a sweeping blade of fire. "The Japanese have us pinned down," Bearss explained.

"They instantly killed our two BARmen and stopped our attack with very heavy casualties."

Bearss was one of the casualties. "They hit me in the left arm through the elbow. It felt like a sledgehammer. The next slug hit me in the right shoulder and lodged above my pelvis. They were hitting men all over. In a matter of five minutes, our squad had five killed and six wounded." It was obvious the wounded had to evacuate. "You could hear the Japanese talking and I was worried they were going to attack [and then] we'd all die," Bearss said.

PFC Calvin B. King saw the Japanese approaching. "They had slipped around and were coming in from our flank to wipe us out ... they didn't make a sound, but they kept coming at us. We had to pull back a little way and stop and fire ... guys were getting hit. We had to pull them along with us. You can't leave a wounded guy for the [Japanese] to get. The things they do to 'em ... ." The survivors worked their way back across the stream under murderous enemy fire. Platoon Sergeant John M. White declared, "No matter how bad it got, I never saw one of the boys pass up a wounded man."

The Marines tried all day to get across the creek, but in the end, they had to withdraw to a ridge on the American side and dig in for the night. "Most of the men were stripped to the waist and they had laid aside their weapons as they dug," Bordages reported. A large force of Japanese chose this moment to launch a counterattack. They rushed in with bayonets and got within 10 feet of four unattended machine guns when they were spotted. "Japs!" someone shouted. "Everybody's running like hell, scrambling to get their rifles ... the captain's [Andrew A. Haldane] up there with his .45 blasting away," PFC Fred E. Miller recalled. One of the Japanese slid behind a gun, but before he could bring it into action, a Marine bayoneted him in the chest. Others rushed in during a frenzy of close quarters combat. The fight was on. Before it was finished, 20 of the enemy lay scattered in the underbrush.

At dawn the next morning, the Japanese launched a devastating mortar attack, but still small groups of Marines tried to cross the creek. Sgt White crawled along the ground checking on his men. "A kid sitting there in his foxhole. He didn't have any head. He just had a neck with dog tags on it."

One Marine lay behind a log, firing. "It don't do no good," he muttered, his face ashen. "I got three of 'em but it don't do no good."

All the next day small units tried to push across the creek at different points trying to find a soft spot in the Japanese defenses. Each time, they had to pull back—the Japanese positions were just too strong. "Some of our guys crossed



the stream as many as four times, but neither battalion was able to gain a solid foothold on the opposite bank,” PFC Jim McEnery recalled. Tanks were needed, but the coastal swamp and the steep banks of the stream were impossible for vehicles.

### Engineers Up

Engineers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 17th Marine Regiment were tasked with constructing a corduroy road log by log across the coastal swamp. LtCol Kerry Lane wrote in “Marine Pioneers: The Unsung Heroes of World War II,” “The men in my Pioneer Platoon ceased to look like men. They looked like slimy frogs working in some prehistoric ooze ... as we went about the difficult task of building a causeway through a stretch of jungle and mangrove swamp.”

Late in the afternoon on Jan. 3, an unarmored bulldozer and three Sherman tanks worked their way over the rough-hewn track to a position in the center of the Japanese defenses. The courageous

bulldozer driver, Corporal John Capito, riding high in the exposed cab, began cutting the 12-foot-high near bank. Suddenly Capito was shot. “Doc, I’m hit ... in the mouth,” Pharmacist Mate Second Class William Pace recalled Capito saying. “The bullet went right through his cheeks, cracked a tooth, and blistered both lips. I put some sulfadiazine ointment on his lips.” Capito was evacuated and another volunteer took over, but he too was shot.

Two more volunteers, Staff Sergeant Keary Lane and PFC Randall Johnson, crawled forward under heavy sniper fire and used a novel approach to complete the task. They stayed on the ground in the lee of the bulldozer and worked its levers with a shovel and an ax handle. At one point, Lane climbed into the seat of the machine to operate it better and suffered the consequences. He was shot in the shoulder, but gallantly stayed at his post until nightfall when the banks of the stream were lowered enough for the

Shermans to cross. Both Marines were awarded the Silver Star for their heroic actions.

The final assault began on the morning of Jan. 4 after a 15-minute artillery preparation. The three Shermans eased their way down the earthen ramp and through the shallow water, up the far bank and right into the heart of the enemy position. Using tank-infantry tactics, the dug-in Japanese defenses were expertly destroyed by point-blank cannon fire or crushed under the tank treads. The battle of Suicide Creek was over, but the cost had been heavy: 36 Marines had died, 218 were wounded, and five were missing in action.

*Author’s bio: Dick Camp, a retired Marine colonel, is the former director of operations for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, former deputy director and director (acting) of the Marine Corps History Division and a prolific author. He is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck.*



USMC

**Marines made multiple attempts to cross the creek while facing the ferocious Japanese defenses—some attempted the crossing four times.**





# “ACCOUNTED FOR”

By  
Sara W. Bock

## DPAA Strives Never to Leave A Fallen American Behind

**F**or as long as Robert Patterson can remember, his father, Willis, carried a tattered old photograph in his wallet. It was a portrait of a young Marine private first class, one who held a special place in his heart—his cousin, Herman W. “Dick” Mulligan Jr., who was killed during the Battle of Okinawa. PFC Mulligan’s name was listed among the approximately 79,000 Americans unaccounted for at the end of World War II.

As the decades went by, Willis Patterson held on to the photo—and to the hope

that he’d live to see the day his cousin’s remains were disinterred, identified and given a final resting place on American soil.

The two grew up together in West Greenville, S.C., and they were more like brothers than cousins, said Robert. Dick’s death at the age of 21 didn’t deter Willis from following in his older cousin’s footsteps several years later when he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served during the Korean War.

When Robert continued the family’s

tradition of service in the Corps and shipped off to Vietnam in 1967 with the 1st Marine Division, his unit stopped briefly on Okinawa where his father asked him to look for possible sites where Dick may have been buried. It wasn’t really a feasible request—Robert didn’t have the time, and in hindsight, he said, his efforts would have proven futile.

What Willis Patterson didn’t know at the time was that in 1948, a set of unidentified remains from Okinawa, classified as “X-35,” was disinterred by the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) from one of six cemeteries that had been set up on the island shortly after the battle began. But at the time, their ability to identify remains was rudimen-

**DPAA and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command conduct an honorable carry ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, Aug. 1, 2018. The transfer cases pictured above contain the remains of U.S. servicemembers killed during the Korean War. North Korea recently turned over the remains to the U.S.**





SSGT LEAH FERRANTE, USAF

**Above: Dr. Laurel Freas, a forensic anthropologist with DPAA, consoles Amy House, wife of the late Capt John A. House II, USMC, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, during House's visit to the facility to receive her husband's remains at a chain of custody ceremony, Sept. 13, 2018. Capt House went missing in action in Vietnam in 1967 when his helicopter went down on a reconnaissance mission; his remains were recently identified and buried at Arlington National Cemetery.**

SRA MIKALEY KLINE, USAF



CPL JOHN TRAN, USMC

tary at best—scientific breakthroughs like DNA analysis wouldn't be made for decades—so the remains were deemed un-identifiable and subsequently were buried in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines.

Mulligan, who was killed on May 30, 1945, while serving with Company L, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marine Regiment, 6th Marine Division, during a period of heavy fighting against the Japanese at Hill 27 on the northern bank of the Kokuba Estuary, was one of dozens of casualties resulting from the large explosion of a crypt loaded with ammunition.

Officials with AGRS had made an effort to bury the fallen in the cemetery assigned to their respective divisions, but the nearly three-month battle became one of the deadliest in American history, and therefore a number of the deceased, Mulligan included, were buried with other units without documentation or any indicators of their identity.

Mulligan's family members weren't the only ones holding out hope for resolution. Author and Columbia University journalism professor Dale Maharidge wrote the Department of Defense jointly

**A Marine sergeant carefully handles the remains of a servicemember from the Vietnam War during a repatriation ceremony in Laos in June 2016. These remains and others were returned to the U.S. and examined by DPAA for possible identification.**



**Local villagers assist DPAA staff during excavation operations in Khammouane Province, Laos, in January 2017. Working at as many as 80 sites worldwide each year, DPAA often hires local villagers to assist at recovery sites.**



SSGT LEAH FERRANTE, USAF



CPL JOHN TRAN, USMC

**Army SGT Travis Walker removes loose dirt from an excavated area in August 2016 while searching for the remains of tank crewmen who were killed in action in LeMesnil-Tove, France, during WW II.**

a book, “Bringing Mulligan Home: The Other Side of the Good War,” published in 2013. His father, Marine Sergeant Steve Maharidge, served in Mulligan’s unit and seemed plagued by his death, keeping a photo of the two of them on his wall for years. After his father’s death, Maharidge tracked down other members of the unit to hear their stories, which he compiled in the book, and even traveled to Okinawa to see the site where Mulligan died.

Willis Patterson passed away in 1994, the photo of Dick still in his wallet, a

tangible reminder of the answers he longed for and never received.

But this year, on Feb. 20, closure finally came.

Robert Patterson, now Mulligan’s closest living relative, received the news his father had hoped to one day hear: “Accounted For.” After 73 years, Mulligan’s remains finally would be returned to his family for burial.

A positive identification had been made by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), an organization within

manned by soldiers, airmen, Marines, Sailors and DOD civilians who are responsible for providing the fullest possible accounting for missing DOD personnel from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Gulf War and other recent conflicts.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., with major laboratory facilities in Hawaii and Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, DPAA employs more than 100 service-members and civilians in its laboratories alone, who work to identify the remains of those unaccounted-for Americans whose families wait patiently, often for decades, with the hope that their loved ones will be returned for proper burial.

By the time Mulligan was accounted for, there were no longer any living relatives who personally knew him. Willis Patterson’s brother (Robert’s uncle and a first cousin of Dick’s) passed away in 2017 just months after he provided a DNA sample that would be a key contributor to the identification.

This type of situation is common, according to Sergeant First Class Kristen Duus, USA, DPAA Chief of External Communications.

“We often have families that are second and third generation carrying on the search that their loved ones were never able to complete in their lifetime,” Duus said. “Identifying these remains provides such a sense of closure to the families that many of them are desperately searching for—if not for themselves, then for their grandmother, mother, father, cousin, who never saw closure themselves.”

In May 2017, after extensive research of historical accounts and unit documentation, “X-35” was disinterred from the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines. Lab personnel used mitochondrial DNA and anthropological analysis to identify the remains as Mulligan’s, as well as circumstantial evidence which, according to Patterson, included evidence of a leg injury in the exhumed skeletal remains that correlated with documentation that he had been shot in the leg a month before his death. After that injury, he elected to stay with his unit.

To the outward observer, the process of deciding which remains buried as “unknown” are to be disinterred, and when, may seem unsystematic, but it assuredly is not. The process of recovering and identifying the missing begins with a significant step: research.

Experts at DPAA study all known information for each unaccounted-for American and develop a case file that is kept open until a positive identification is made. They conduct interviews, review





SSGT MICHAEL O'NEAL, USA

**Robert Marzo of DPAA secures the remains of the late PFC Joe S. Elmore, USA, during a chain of custody event at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, Aug. 14, 2018. The remains were received by Elmore's great-nephew, Marine Cpl Nathaniel Walters, who escorted the remains of his great uncle, killed during the Korean War, to his final resting place in a cemetery near the family's home in Kentucky.**

records and analyze all available information before the decision is made to disinter servicemembers buried as "unknown." Often, site investigations are conducted as part of the research process in an attempt to correlate a specific site with missing Americans prior to making a decision to excavate.

Recovery sites can be small, in the case of known burial areas, or large, in cases of aircraft crashes. Anthropologists take the lead on the recovery site, similar to the way in which a detective operates in a crime scene. Local workers are frequently hired by DPAA to assist with the excavation, providing manpower as well as inside knowledge specific to the area of the recovery sites—up to 80 each year—which often are situated in extremely remote locations.

Sometimes, remains are inadvertently uncovered by local residents or by individuals working for non-governmental organizations such as History Flight, a nonprofit organization whose mission aligns closely with that of DPAA. Those remains are then transferred to DPAA for testing and identification.

Recently, the remains of numerous U.S. Marines were identified after being



TSgt KATHRINE DODD, USAF

**Taro Kono, Foreign Minister of Japan, right, views a demonstration of the identification process by a forensic anthropologist with DPAA during a tour at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, Aug. 22, 2018. The agency relies on agreements with more than 50 foreign nations in order to conduct excavation operations abroad.**

either recovered from Betio Island in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, or disinterred from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, often referred to as the "Punchbowl," in Honolulu, Hawaii, based on newly discovered evidence.

In order to conduct its work on foreign soil, DPAA has agreements with nearly 50 nations that assist in its missions.

According to Duus, the agency routinely carries out technical negotiations and talks with representatives of foreign governments in order to ensure positive and safe in-country conditions for its staff.

From underwater sites to mountaintops and remote locations in the jungle, DPAA recovery teams work tirelessly across the globe to bring fallen Americans home.

"As you can imagine, these efforts do not happen overnight," said Duus. "The agency makes every effort to reach sites in jeopardy as soon as possible ... some sites are in danger of being lost due to urbanization and/or environmental, regulatory or political issues beyond the control of the agency."

In recent years, due to new DNA testing methods developed by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System DNA Lab, identifications can be made from very



degraded samples that previously were unidentifiable, said Dr. John E. Byrd, the DPAA Lab Director at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. In addition, DPAA has developed radiographic matching methods that use chest radiographs—or X-rays—once required of Americans who served in early conflicts as part of a tuberculosis screening. The records were stored by the DOD and now can be used by DPAA to compare the X-ray in an individual's medical record to an X-ray they take of found remains. Other newer developments also include stable isotope testing to understand the geographic histories of the deceased and new computer applications for analyzing large quantities of data, particularly from commingled remains, Byrd added.

"Everything is always changing in science," said Byrd. "We make a concerted effort to be innovative, with an eye towards developing new methods to solve specific problems we encounter in our work."

Byrd also pointed out that DPAA's laboratory staff is responsible for introducing many methods that are broadly used in forensic science today—a tradition

that dates back to World War II, when the U.S. military began hiring scientists who virtually created the science of identification.

"Our work follows that legacy today," Byrd added.

Dental records have long been a mainstay in making identifications, and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis, used today in the majority of cases, is a vital piece of the puzzle. Samples from bones and teeth are taken from disinterred remains and sent to the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, where they are analyzed and compared with sequences from family reference samples provided by living individuals who are maternally related to the deceased.

Forensic anthropologists and other laboratory personnel at DPAA not only analyze the remains of each individual, but also examine personal effects that may have belonged to the fallen as an additional means of gathering evidence.

No individual line of evidence is used to identify remains; rather, each line of evidence—chest radiographs, DNA analysis, dental records and so forth—is

correlated with all known historical evidence. DPAA then makes the identification when all evidence points to the same individual.

A relatively new agency within the Defense Department, DPAA became fully operational in January 2016 following a merger of the former Defense POW Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), located in Washington, D.C.; the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) in Honolulu; and the applicable personnel from the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory in Dayton, Ohio.

According to Duus, a 2013 comprehensive review of the Personnel Accounting Command led to the decision to reorganize personnel accounting efforts into a single, accountable, responsive and transparent organization with comprehensive oversight of personnel accounting resources, research and operations.

"This new organization increased training, cutting-edge research and awareness to help execute our missing more effectively and efficiently, improved personnel accounting efforts means, establishing long-term efficiencies across the department for future generations," said Duus.



MC2 CLAIRE FARIN, USN

**Servicemembers with DPAA conduct a disinterment ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii, Aug. 20, 2018. The ceremony was part of the agency's efforts to disinter the remains of unknown servicemembers lost during the Korean War in order to possibly identify them as new evidence is discovered.**





SEAN KIMMONS



SEAN KIMMONS

**At the DPAA laboratory at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, March 12, 2018, Army SFC Jennifer Owen, a morgue noncommissioned officer for DPAA, examines personal effects that may have belonged to a fallen servicemember. During the identification process, DPAA personnel examine all available evidence and compare it to what is known or recorded about the unidentified servicemember in question.**

The agency's role in identifying missing and unaccounted-for servicemembers was recently brought to national attention in August when 55 boxes of servicemembers' remains from the Korean War were returned to the U.S. by North Korea, where they had been held since 1950. The repatriation of the remains made headlines worldwide, given the historically volatile relationship between the two nations.

Further, DPAA announced Sept. 21 that with the permission of the State Department, the agency had begun negotiations with North Korean officials to restart joint excavations in the near future.

The DOD previously had been allowed to conduct recovery missions in North Korea between 1996 and 2005, but a decline in diplomatic relations in the region necessitated the suspension of those operations.

By September, two American soldiers had been identified from the returned remains, and DPAA officials believe the boxes contain the commingled remains of far more than 55 servicemembers. They expect to identify others over the next several months; although, Byrd added, some could take years.

"The process is generally to curate the remains into the lab, inventory and measure them, take DNA samples and send to the AFMES [Armed Forces Medical Examiner System] Lab, get DNA results back, re-assess and identify remains," said Byrd, who added that the size of DPAA's Korean War Project team has been increased due to the workload brought on by the returned remains, and will not impact the agency's ability to continue work on other cases from other wars and conflicts.

In an effort to provide transparency and keep waiting family members informed, DPAA conducts routine "family member updates," a program the DOD began in 1995 that has since reached more than 26,000 family members face to face. Each update is tailored for the family members attending and includes overviews of all aspects of remains recovery operations taking place around the world as well

as the forensic identification work being conducted. Most importantly, family members have the opportunity for one-on-one discussions with casualty officers from the military services and specialists with DPAA. According to Duus, these discussions include receiving the latest information about the work being done on their individual case.

It's important that individuals who have

## For Family Members of the Missing, Services' Casualty Office is First Point of Contact

Is there a missing or unaccounted-for servicemember from a past conflict or war in your family tree? Do you want more information about their case or to find out if you qualify to provide a DNA sample that could help identify their remains? Your first point of contact is the service casualty office for the branch in which your family member served. They can provide information about the personnel accounting process, DNA and future family member updates and other events.

### U.S. Marine Corps

Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps  
Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
(MFPC)  
Personal and Family Readiness  
Division  
2008 Elliot Road  
Quantico, VA 22134  
(800) 847-1597

### U.S. Navy

Navy Personnel Command Casualty  
Assistance Division (PERS-13)  
5720 Integrity Dr.  
Millington, TN 38055  
(800) 443-9298

### U.S. Army

Department of the Army  
Attn: Past Conflicts AHRC-PDC-R  
1600 Spearhead Div. Ave., Dept. 450  
Fort Knox, KY 40122  
(800) 892-2490

### U.S. Air Force

HQ AFPC/DPFCM  
550 C Street West  
JBSA-Randolph, TX 78150  
(800) 531-5501

### State Department

U.S. Department of State CA/OCS/  
ACS/EAP  
SA-17, 10th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20522  
(202) 485-6106





**A Marine casket team transports PFC Mulligan's remains through heavy rain to his burial site in Section 12 of Arlington National Cemetery, Aug. 21, 2018.**

a missing or unaccounted for servicemember in their lineage provide a DNA reference sample that DPAA can keep on file in the event their family member's remains are uncovered. While DNA samples exist for 92 percent of U.S. servicemembers who served during the Korean War, only 6 percent of the families have DNA samples on record for those missing from World War II.

In total, more than 82,000 Americans from World War II to present remain unaccounted for, with 34,000 of those believed by DPAA to be recoverable.

"It is so important to be able to return these Americans to their families for proper burial," said Duus, who emphasized how rewarding DPAA's work is for those employed by the agency. "Our nation owes it to these heroes who gave their lives for our country."

It was pouring rain in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 21, when Robert Patterson, an amputee who was medically retired from the Marine Corps when he returned home

from Vietnam, put on his uniform for the first time in decades to honor his father's cousin as he was laid to rest in Section 12 of Arlington National Cemetery.

The interment was well-attended by family. Robert's adult children and grandchildren were present, including his granddaughter, Elizabeth Baumbarger, who recently left active-duty service in the Marine Corps as a corporal. And there were also a few who, while not family, made the day particularly meaningful. Dale Maharidge, the author who spent years searching for answers about Mulligan's death, and 94-year-old Joe





**Inset: PFC Herman W. "Dick" Mulligan Jr., USMC, was killed during the Battle of Okinawa at the age of 21. (USMC photo)**

**Below: Members of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band honor Mulligan as his remains are laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery, Aug. 21, 2018.**



SFC KRISTEN DUUS, USA



SFC KRISTEN DUUS, USA

Leonardi, who served alongside Mulligan at the Battle of Okinawa and was one of the Marines who carried him down the hill after he was killed. He traveled from New Jersey to pay his final respects to his brother in arms.

"If he had been around, my dad would have been ecstatic to know him," said Patterson of Leonardi.

With his mother and aunt at his side, Robert accepted the folded flag presented to him on behalf of a grateful nation, and believed that his father was looking down on them.

"I'm sure he was pleased," he said.



SFC KRISTEN DUUS, USA

**PFC Mulligan's cousin, Robert Patterson, accepts condolences from a Navy chaplain following the burial of Mulligan's remains at Arlington National Cemetery, Aug. 21, 2018. Patterson, Mulligan's closest living blood relative, said he is thankful to DPAA for providing his family the closure that his late father had always wished for.**

And in the middle of the deluge, the Marines fired three volleys and the band played on as they honored one of their own who finally had returned home.

"Watching his [Mulligan's] casket come out of that hearse and go onto that caisson was just—it was so emotional," said Patterson. "To think he's finally back

home on American soil, and the Marine Corps did such a good job honoring him."

To the individuals at DPAA who were involved in the recovery and identification of his second cousin's remains, Patterson struggled to find the words:

"Thanks just don't seem like enough."





## For 1950 Special Basic Class, An Emotional and Memorable Final Reunion

He found himself walking a ridgeline, moving through bitter cold air and shoveling through waist-deep snow in enemy territory. Deciding to stop for the night, he and his men patrolled the area by order of his commanding officer. The enemy was waiting in a nearby bunker and began showering grenades on the Marines.

“My platoon sergeant dug a foxhole near me,” said 91-year-old Louis “Lou” Buttell, a former captain and infantry officer. “A grenade hopped right into his foxhole.”

The platoon sergeant survived the blast as his gear took most of the impact, said Buttell. Air support was called in the next morning, but the pilot missed the bunker.

“He had to fly through again,” he added. “He flew so close to the ground, we could see the pilot’s goggles.”

The pilot hit the bunker and the patrol survived.

This was just one of the many stories recounted during the final reunion of the Marines of 1st Special Basic Class of 1950, held at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Oct. 17-19, 2018. The class, which consisted of 360 junior officers of the Marine Corps Reserve, graduated from what is known today as The Basic School (TBS) in October 1950. Buttell and 24 other members of the class were in attendance at the reunion, which the group tentatively decided would be their last gathering due to medical complications among numerous members.

The group has reunited each year since 1999 to spend time together and remember those from their class who made the ultimate sacrifice in Korea and Vietnam.

Jim Fitzgerald and Frank Bell organized the first reunion in 1999, and Buttell and his wife, Betty, took the reins going forward; he credits much of the success of the reunions to her. Their daughter, Amy, and son, John, also have assisted with the planning as the Buttells have grown older.

The strength of the bond among the classmates, said Amy, makes her feel as though she has known them her entire life. She wasn’t the only child of one of the classmates to attend. Carl Annas joined this year despite the fact that his father, former Captain Carl J. Annas, passed away three years ago.

“I felt compelled to come here and learn more about the Corps, what he



LCPL QUINN HURT, USMC

**Above: Korean War Marine veterans of the 1st Special Basic Class of 1950 gather at MCB Quantico, Va., for their final reunion, Oct. 18, 2018.**



LCPL QUINN HURT, USMC

**Louis Buttell, a Korean War Marine veteran and member of the 1st Special Basic Class of 1950, enjoys the company of active-duty Marines during his final class reunion, Oct. 18, 2018.**

went through, meet some of the men he fought with, and try to get some of that camaraderie and understanding from his past life,” Annas explained.

The group has without a doubt left its mark on the Quantico area.

They erected a memorial monument

at TBS for their fallen brothers during their October 2000 reunion. They also had their names etched in bricks that line the walkways outside the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. The Warner Center at Marine Corps University in Quantico is named after one



of the most notable members of the class: former U.S. Senator John Warner.

Rich in history and experience, these Marines shared their stories with one another during the reunion, joyously laughing and imitating their younger selves. They enjoyed one another's company, but the thought of their fallen comrades never seemed to leave them.

Jim Fitzgerald was the first Marine of the class to be wounded after arriving in Korea in January 1950. He led a 60-man patrol into enemy territory where they engaged in a firefight. A bullet ricocheted and blinded him in one eye and cut off part of his ear.

"I cite his ordeal as an illustration about how abruptly the members of 1st Special Basic Class were sent directly into combat soon after leaving Quantico," said Angus Deming, who received a Silver Star while serving as first lieutenant platoon commander in 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines in Korea in 1951. "Not only did they arrive soon after Quantico, they received casualties almost immediately."

Emotions ran high as Deming continued by naming members of the class who made the ultimate sacrifice. The first, Felix "Bill" Goudelock, was killed in 1951, and the last, Victor Ohanessian, was killed in action in Vietnam in 1967.

Three members of the class were awarded the Navy Cross, and numerous members received the Silver Star. Two classmates, Hugh Hardy and Jack Frisbie, reached the grade of major general while many were promoted to colonel. Three more became federal judges.

During the reunion, a special guest came to visit: Commandant of the Marine Corps General Robert B. Neller.

"I just wanted to stop by and pay my respects to you," said Gen Neller to the group. "Thank you for your service and getting together, staying in touch with one another like Marines are supposed to do."

The reunion concluded at the National Museum of the Marine Corps with a dinner.

In a tribute to the many members of the class who are no longer living, Deming had one message to share: "We remember you."

Sgt Shaehmus Sawyer, USMC

### **DCO-IDM Mission: Protect Corps from Cyber Attacks**

9th Communication Battalion, I Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group activated the first Defensive Cyberspace Operations-Internal Defensive Measures (DCO-IDM) Company during a ceremony at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 1, 2018.

The Marine Corps Enterprise Network,



CPL CUTLER BRICE, USMC

**LtCol Bryan Eovito, the commanding officer of 9th Comm Bn, I MEF Information Group, addresses leader and guests during the activation ceremony for the DCO-IDM Company at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 1, 2018. In accordance with Force Modernization 2025, the company will provide added security through defensive cyberspace operations.**

while protected against most cyber attacks, has advanced adversaries that are always seeking vulnerabilities in cyberspace.

To combat these attacks, 9th Communication Battalion activated one of the three DCO-IDM companies the Marine Corps will activate as part of the Marine Corps Force Modernization 2025.

"People look at DCO-IDM and the capability it brings; they innumerate the network, they hunt. What it's about is the battalion hunts," said Lieutenant Colonel Bryan Eovito, the commanding officer of 9th Comm Bn. "This battalion has operated and defended the networks for a long time, but there was a gap. There was a chink in our armor, and with the addition of DCO-IDM [Company], we now have all the tools to execute that 'operate and defend' mission."

The DCO-IDM Company has additional capability to execute defensive cyberspace operations defending the Marine Air-Ground Task Force information network across all domains.

"The added security provides the ability to command and control through lines of communication in cyberspace, giving the commanding general flexibility to employ Marines without concern of being compromised," said Captain Benjamin Opel, the DCO-IDM company commander, 9th Comm Bn.

The battalion has always protected the network and lines of communication in any battlespace to maintain communication. The DCO-IDM Company has increased

the security posture and protects against adversaries most Marines never see.

"We are the behind-the-scenes force much like the rest of the battalion," said Opel. "When we do our job properly, no one knows it is being done."

Cpl Cutler Brice, USMC

### **Mobile Recruiting Takes Marines "On the Move"**

There are many aspects of Marine Corps recruiting duty that hold true regardless of location: long drives, late nights and early mornings. Every recruiter, however, faces a unique set of challenges and opportunities driven by their immediate environment—namely demographics, geography and market.

For the Marine recruiters assigned to the 8th Marine Corps District Mobile Marketing Team, the environment in which they operate is constantly changing. The dedicated team is designed to augment local recruiter efforts throughout the district's area of operations, headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, which covers more than a million square miles across 13 states.

Through the use of an Enhanced Marketing Vehicle, a branded semi-trailer that includes an indoor simulated marksmanship trainer and a custom, branded MMT H1 humvee, the team is able to scale and tailor the experience to a variety of situations and Enhanced Area Canvassing events.

Nicknamed "Marines on the Move," the



team brings the Marine Corps experience to various locations across the recruiting district.

Sergeant Travis Lindsay, a member of the 8th Recruiting District Mobile Marketing Team, has spent more than a year “on the move.”

“The assets available to the team create an experience that is unique in its ability to attract foot traffic,” said Lindsay.

It is not a secret that recruiting can be a demanding and sometimes arduous task. The Mobile Marketing Team is no stranger to these challenges.

“The biggest challenge we face on the MMT is the time spent on the road. A lot of things are missed being on the road: things like PT, loved ones and time off. After coming home, the biggest challenge is trying to catch up on life,” said Lindsay.

Lindsay and the rest of the team know that the reward is worth the sacrifice.

“The best part of being on the team is being able to help the local recruiters. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to serve local efforts and love being part of the capabilities that we are able to provide. Traveling to every corner of the district to witness the challenges and

demographics unique to each area and watch the recruiters overcome them makes this job worthwhile,” Lindsay said.

LCpl Desmond Andrews, USMC

### “Zulus” Arrive at 2nd MAW

Marines and spectators gathered along the flight line at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., Nov. 9, 2018. Overhead, the whirling sound of rotor blades grew louder as a formation of AH-1Z “Zulu” Vipers became visible, approaching at high speed.

Their arrival at Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 167, Marine Aircraft Group 29, marked the first of the newest model of the AH-1 helicopter to join 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. Replacing its predecessor of more than 30 years—the AH-1W Super Cobra—the Vipers are equipped with 21st-century technology and significant upgrades.

“The ordnance payload, carrying capability, digitized cockpit and system integration throughout the entirety of the aircraft are the biggest improvements over the AH-1W Super Cobras,” said Major Jeffrey P. Pullinger, one of the pilots with HMLA-167. “The ability for all of the

systems to talk together in order to assist the pilot and reduce workload is the main enhancement we’re excited about.”

The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing received the AH-1Z in late 2008 and 1st MAW in late 2017. By early 2019, HMLA-269 will acquire the aircraft, becoming the last unit within the Fleet Marine Corps to have them. By 2020, the Marine Corps is expecting them to be fully operational and employed across the fleet.

“Personally, I’ve had four years of experience with the Zulus, coming from 3rd MAW,” said Sergeant Garrett W. Syfert, an airframes mechanic with the unit. “Now that I’m here, my job is to teach the Marines the knowledge I’ve gained while working on the aircraft and catch them up to where they need to be.”

Both pilots and maintainers are required to return to Marine Light Attack Helicopter Training Squadron (HMHT) 303 to complete a syllabus specifically for the Vipers. Experienced Cobra pilots have to essentially start from scratch and learn about the new Viper before following up with more advanced qualifications, according to Maj Pullinger. For two months, maintainers undergo their basic training



From the left, Sgt Travis Lindsay, SSgt John Liddell and Sgt Quemaine Tolar, assigned to the 8th Marine Corps District Mobile Marketing Team (MTT), stand in front of the Enhanced Marketing Vehicle in Fort Worth, Texas, Oct. 17, 2018. The MMT is responsible for augmenting local recruiter efforts throughout the district’s area of operations, which spans 13 states.





CPL JERED STONE, USMC

An AH-1Z “Zulu” Viper with HMLA-167 prepares to land at MCAS New River, N.C., for the first time, Nov. 9, 2018. The 2nd MAW is the last in the Corps to receive the newest model of the AH-1 helicopter, which replaces the AH-1W Super Cobra.

for the aircraft before returning to the squadron for hands-on training to complete their official qualifications.

“It’s a complete different beast,” said Sgt Carl E. Veigle, an avionics technician with HMLA-167. “Not only do they fly faster, they’re able to hold more fuel allowing for a longer time on station to support the Marines on the ground.”

Since the release of the Commandant of the Marine Corps 2016 Planning Guidance “Advance to Contact,” the Marine Corps has seen continuous upgrades both to technology and to aviation assets with the employment of the F-35B Lightning II, unmanned aerial systems and the integration of the AH-1Z Viper across the fleet, providing both tactical and operational

advantage above emerging threats.

“I think in the future battle space, stand-off is going to be key over the next five to 10 years,” Pullinger said. “The Zulu’s sensor ability and capability to carry laser-guided weapons and the advancements of those weapons is going to be absolutely crucial to provide us the standoff in order to still prosecute those targets without exposing ourselves to undue risk.”

With the Viper’s arrival, HMLA-167 will effectively and more proficiently continue its mission of providing offensive air support, utility support, armed escort and airborne supporting arms coordination, day or night, under all weather conditions during expeditionary, joint or combined operations.

Cpl Jered Stone, USMC



## Crazy Caption Contest

### Winner



CPL JOSEPH ABREGO, USMC

“Life is uncertain. Eat dessert first.”

Submitted by:  
Andrew S. Rostolder  
Boynton Beach, Fla.

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](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org). The winning entry will be published in two months.

### This Month’s Photo



LCPL AUDRY RAMPTON, USMC

(Caption) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



Marine Barracks, League Island Navy Yard, Philadelphia, Pa., where the “Fighting Five” initially underwent training prior to leaving for France.



# THE FIGHTING FIVE

By James Carl Nelson



Sydney Thayer Jr.

COURTESY OF SYDNEY THAYER IV

**B**elleau Wood was still crawling with Germans and the three-week battle still raging when 21-year-old Sergeant Sydney Thayer Jr. of the 43rd Company, 5th Marine Regiment put pen to paper and dropped a line to his parents in Riverton, N.J.

“I am writing at my first opportunity to let you know that I am alive and well and trying to enjoy a period of rest behind the lines,” Thayer wrote on June 18, 1918. “I say ‘trying to enjoy’ because of the loss of a real friend and comrade.

“Poor Bob is gone. I was not with him when it happened but was notified of it later and was able to get his fraternity pin and his sergeant’s warrant which I will send to Mr. Reath at the first opportunity.”

“Poor Bob” was Thomas Roberts “Bobby” Reath who was just three weeks shy of his 21st birthday when he

died in action at Belleau Wood. He was part of, along with Thayer and three others, a famed group of men known as “The Fighting Five,” boyhood chums, best friends, and fraternity brothers in Phi Kappa Sigma at the University of Pennsylvania.

They were well-heeled sons from prominent families who dwelled on Philadelphia’s tony Main Line or in leafy, suburban New Jersey, just across the Delaware River. For each, there were high hopes and the higher expectations that came with their stations in life.

In late April 1917 the five swapped their fraternity pins for the eagle, globe and anchor, enlisting almost *en masse* and becoming local heroes and legends in the columns of the Philly newspapers, which dubbed them “The Fighting Five.” The same papers would follow them through their wartime adventures in France.

Besides Reath, whose father was the





COURTESY OF LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

counsel for the Norfolk & Western Railroad, and Thayer, son of the secretary of the Henry Bower Chemical Manufacturing Co., there was Henry Percival Glendinning, 20, son of Robert Glendinning, a banker and aviator; Sydney Grier Gest, 20, the son of Orphans' Court Judge John Marshall Gest; and Henry 'Henny' Lassault Geyelin, 20, whose father was president of the University of Pennsylvania Athletic Association.

All were accepted first for officer training, splendid candidates for leadership for a Corps that at the beginning of World War I took only volunteers and was seeking the best and the brightest on college campuses throughout the nation. Sent to nearby League Island in the Delaware River for their training, they soon "began to feel the strong pull of the esprit de corps for which the United States Marine Corps is famous," one Philadelphia paper would report.



**Thomas Roberts  
"Bobby" Reath, left,  
and Henry Percival  
Glendinning in 1917.**

COURTESY OF SANDY GLENDINNING





**Marines training to fight in France gather in front of the Marine Barracks at the Philadelphia Navy Yard during the war years. (Photo courtesy of Library of Congress)**

Soon enough, that esprit turned into an intense ardor for action. With their examinations for commissions scheduled for July 10, the Five began casting about for a way “over there.”

“Somehow the idea of calmly staying back and studying for a commission did not appeal to them as it had,” the paper wrote. “They saw men who had gained their commissions under fire, they saw the pride with which the enlisted Marines served under these men, and their spirit of emulation was aroused.”

Learning that the Marines’ 5th Regiment would soon be leaving for France, the Five sought permission to volunteer for duty with the regiment, but were turned down. They returned to their studies, but when new word came down that the regiment was short of men and looking for volunteers, they put their names down—and were accepted.

On May 7, 1917, the Five transferred into the 5th Regiment’s Supply Company. By June 12, they were leaving New York Harbor aboard troop transport ship *USS Hancock*, bound for France, and whatever adventures a world war might bring.

Landing at Saint-Nazaire on July 2, it wasn’t long before the Five found themselves again being transferred—this time

with the aid of Frederic “Fritz” Wise, commander of 2nd Battalion, 5th Regiment, who had become acquainted with the boys and their families at The Racquet Club of Philadelphia.

“They were loose in the regiment and I had to look them up,” Wise wrote in his book “A Marine Tells It to You.” Wise assigned them to the 43rd Co, telling its



**Henry Percival Glendinning**

veteran first sergeant, James Gallivan: “Put them through the mill. If there’s anything in them, I intend to make officers out of them.”

Gallivan would jokingly rechristen the Five as “The Racquet Clubbers.”

On July 15, the battalion left Saint-Nazaire for the area around Menaucourt, north of Verdun, where its training was to commence. Under the tutelage of the famed “Blue Devils”—French veterans—they learned to dig trenches, install wire, throw hand grenades, and handle a bayonet.

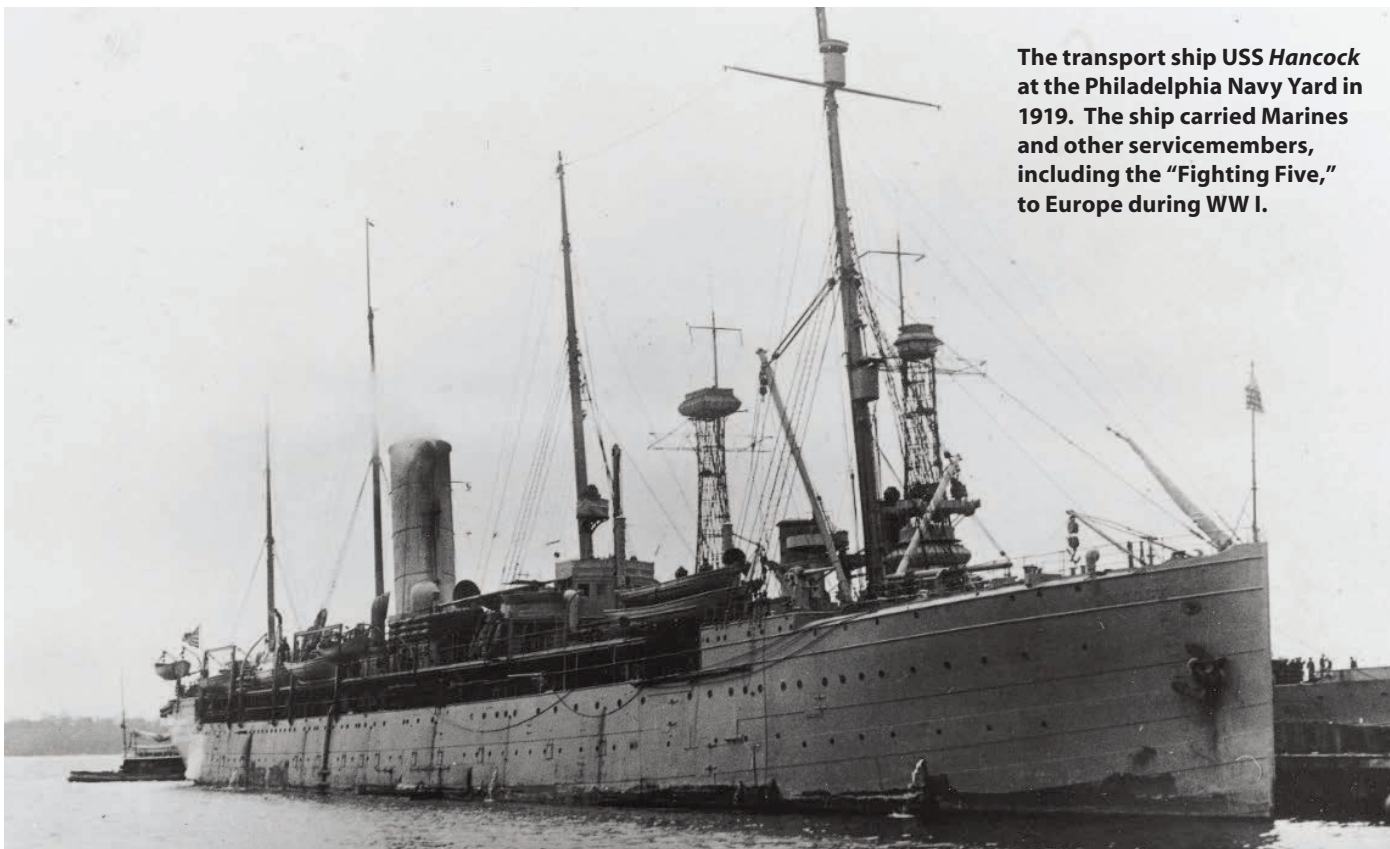
And there were idle moments. “We are very comfortably living in a hayloft in a little village,” Sydney Gest wrote home. “Mrs. Reath sent Bob a box of chocolate, which filled a long-felt want.”

Thayer wrote home that by Aug. 16, three of the Fighting Five had been promoted to corporal with a fourth being assigned the job of messenger. “Bob, Percy and I were made Corporals,” Thayer wrote. Henry Geyelin had “an important position as liaison, or messenger,” Thayer added.

In mid-September 1917 a friend of the Five, James Crosby Brown, wrote to Thayer’s parents that he had spent “parts of two evenings with your son Sydney and

COURTESY OF SANDY GLENDINNING





**The transport ship USS Hancock at the Philadelphia Navy Yard in 1919. The ship carried Marines and other servicemembers, including the "Fighting Five," to Europe during WW I.**

USN

his friends, Percy Glendinning, Reath, Geyelin, and Gest. They all seem to be in the pink of condition."

The Marines continued to train through the fall of 1917 and into the spring of 1918. By March, Sydney Gest had been promoted to corporal, while Thayer and Geyelin had attained the rank of sergeant. That same month, disaster threatened the Allies.

On March 21, the Germans launched the first of a series of offensives aimed at splitting the French and English forces. On the first day alone, the Germans virtually destroyed the British 5th Army while taking 21,000 prisoners and advancing more than 4 miles—an unheard-of success to that date in the war.

On May 27, the Germans launched another assault, this one spilling south from the Chemin des Dames and across the Aisne River with the aim of luring the French south. The drive pushed all opposition aside and by the end of May, the enemy was at the Marne River, just 35 miles (by air) from Paris. Held at Chateau-Thierry by elements of the U.S. 3rd Division, the German wave turned west and south along the Marne's north bank and steamrolled on.

The Marines, one-half of the U.S. 2nd Division, were then north of Paris, and preparing to relieve the 1st Division at Cantigny, 70 miles north of the French capital. With the crisis on the Marne, the men of the 2nd Division were instead

hustled into trucks and began racing east to meet the German onslaught.

In the early days of June at Belleau Wood, the Marines took up positions on the southern edge of the woods and allowed retreating French soldiers to slip through their lines for several days. They made their first attempt to take the woods on June 6, 1918.

A morning attack by 1st Battalion of the 5th Regiment on the southwestern woods failed, but in the afternoon the 1st and 3rd Battalions once again went into action, in conjunction with an attack by the 6th Regiment to the east.

The village of Bouresches was taken, as was a small foothold in the southern wood. But the German defense proved almost impregnable, and in the days to come, the Marines fought hand to hand with their stubborn counterparts. On June 6, the Marine casualties—31 officers and 1,056 men—were more than the Corps had suffered in its entire history to that point.

Fritz Wise's 2nd Battalion had been held in reserve and had suffered few casualties. But at 4 a.m. on June 11, his four companies—the 43rd, the 51st, and the 18th—were ordered to attack Belleau Wood. Wise intended to hit the western face of the wood at its narrow waist, then

continue east, while the 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment attacked north on its right.

Stepping off into a thick morning mist, the 43rd Co, commanded by Charley Dunbeck, advanced on the left, the 51st on the right, as the battalion crossed though an open field.

"The Germans couldn't have had better targets if they had ordered the attack themselves," Wise would later admit. "The battalion went on, men dropping."

The leading wave plunged into the wood, and smashed the line held by the German 40th Regiment. Held up by a

machine-gun nest at one point, now-Sergeant Bobby Reath coolly attacked the position while under intense machine-gun fire, killing three Germans and capturing the two remaining men and "enabling his company to continue the advance," his posthumous Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) citation says.

On June 12, the attack resumed, the 43rd Co now

pushing due north through the heavy, tangled wood and the fierce opposition of the Germans. Before long, Dunbeck was wounded in both legs; Reath picked him up and helped him get to the rear. "Had it not been for his heroic work, I could not have been living today," Dunbeck said.



**Col Frederic "Fritz" Wise**

USMC





COURTESY OF PAIGE CHURCHMAN

**A young Henry Percival Glendinning, left, and Henry Laussat Geyelin in the years before the war.**

Later that same day, Reath volunteered to carry a message to Wise across open ground where several previous messengers had already been killed. While trying to cross, he was killed by a blast of shrapnel.

Wise saw to it that Reath's body was recovered and interred in a backline cemetery.

The rest of the Five were left to mourn their good friend.

"The last weeks have been weeks of sorrow for me and I have not gotten over the loss of my staunch and devoted friend 'Bobby' Reath," Henry Geyelin, wrote later that summer.

"Col Wise was all broken up over Bob's death and told me about it with tears in his eyes," Thayer wrote. "All he could say was, 'Thayer, Reath was killed last night.' I said, 'Yes sir.' He started to say something else and then turned away. He knew how much it hurt me and hated to have to tell me."

"I know what a shock it will be to his family," Sydney Gest wrote in a letter home upon the 43rd Company's relief on June 17, "but they should try to remember only that he died for a noble cause and so their pride in him may in this way help to lessen their sorrow."

Gest would earn his own DSC for his actions on June 11. When a German machine gun held up the company's advance, Gest "crawled around the flank and, undaunted by grenade and rifle fire, rushed the gun crew's nest, killing the enemy gunner and four others as they attempted to escape," according to his DSC citation.

"I have been 'over the top' twice in three days," Gest wrote after being relieved. "The first 'Boche' I killed was operating a

Maxim machine gun and the bullets were thicker than a swarm of bees.

"One Boche had used up his machine-gun clips and was busy sniping at me from behind a rock. At the critical moment my magazine 'jammed' and for a minute my chances were not encouraging, but I dropped behind some brush and fixed my rifle, crawled around and potted the Boche from the flank."

Thayer, too, was busy. At one point, he spotted a dark form in the woods and, thinking it was a fellow Marine, called to him to keep his head down. "Was?" came the German's startled reply. Thayer



USMC

**Capt Charley Dunbeck**

rectified his mistake "by giving Mr. Fritz a 'lead cocktail.' "

Thayer's actions, in fact, led to his battlefield promotion to second lieutenant on June 28, just a few days after the battle for Belleau Wood was declared to be over. "It means a hell of a lot to me to feel that I

have made good," he wrote to his mother on July 7.

As per policy, Thayer was reassigned to the 17th Co of the 1/5. On July 18, he went over the top with the 5th Regiment at Soissons, kicking off the four-day battle that would mark the "turning of the tide" for the Allies.

"We attacked as 'shock troops' with the 1st Division U.S., 1st Division of Moroccans and the 29th Division French Infantry," Thayer wrote home on July 25. "Tanks, French cavalry and British armoured [sic] cars also took part, so it was a merry little party."

The drive sliced through a deep German pocket, forcing a withdrawal that would end in an Allied victory on Nov. 11. Thayer would note that Glendinning, by then promoted to second lieutenant as well, and Gest went in with the 43rd Company and "came out all right."

Fritz Wise, meanwhile, hoped to reunite the four remaining members of The Fighting Five, and managed to have Thayer transferred back into the 43rd Company. Wise, Thayer added, had also tried to have Henry Geyelin transferred back into the 43rd; but he remained on detached duty for the duration of the war.

By Aug. 4, Thayer was commanding a platoon of the 43rd Co, though he didn't necessarily agree with the move. "[I]t is hard to be an officer in an outfit you have soldiered in as a private, but [Wise] said he wanted me back so that's all there was to it," Thayer wrote.

By Oct. 3, Thayer was leading the 43rd Company up the heights of Blanc Mont about 15 miles northeast of Reims after Captain Charley Dunbeck—since recovered from his Belleau Wood wound—was again put out of action.

The 2nd Division delivered a stunning blow to the Germans manning the heavily fortified and supposedly impregnable position, before which thousands of French soldiers had died in vain attempts to carry it. "When the smoke cleared away, we had reached all objectives and caused the retreat of the Boche all along the Champagne front," Thayer wrote home.

"You know what it means to drive a salient both your flanks unprotected, machine guns popping at you from in front, both sides, rear and from below and artillery from every god damned angle ... Well, here I am but I'm damned if I can figure out why."

Thayer named Percy Glendinning as his "number two." According to Thayer, "we sure ran that company to the queen's taste ... Perce is in good shape and so is S.G. [Sydney Gest]."

Gest, in fact, would add a Silver Star to his medal collection for his actions





USMC

#### Marines in the Meuse-Argonne area of France during November 1918.

at Blanc Mont, where at one point he saved the life of a wounded Marine and carried him to safety. He would also make lieutenant before the war was over.

For the next several weeks, the Marines regrouped. Then, on Nov. 1, the last great drive began in the Meuse-Argonne. Slicing north from the Romagne Hills above Exermont, over the next nine days the Marines chased the retreating Germans all the way to the Meuse River near Mouzon.

On the night of Nov. 10, with strong rumors of peace in the air, engineers went to work stringing two bridges across the swift Meuse River above and below Mouzon. The northern bridge, intended for the 6th Regiment, was never completed.

To the south, elements of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 5th Marines, followed by a battalion of the 89th Division, pushed off in the early hours of Nov. 11 and made their way across the flimsy, swaying bridge under intense fire from the Germans.

More than 400 men were killed, wounded, or drowned. But Syd Thayer and Percy Glendinning, a portion of the 43rd Company, and other Marines and regulars made it across and into the German lines, where they were to capture a quarry and a farm, and “mop up” a small wood.

Early that morning, a bullet crashed

into Thayer’s upper right arm, breaking it into five pieces. It was while he was being tended to that he and his company mates learned that the Armistice had been signed at 11 a.m. that morning.

The war was over.

“The first we heard of it was from two German officers who came over to us with a white flag saying they had received orders to cease firing and wanting to know if we had the same,” Thayer wrote home. “I do not know how Percy came out that night but from all I can learn he is all right.”

Sydney Thayer Jr. had survived, as had Percy, and Sydney Gest, who, fortunately for him, had become sick with the flu and was in the hospital on the night of the crossing. Geyelin remained in Paris with the censor bureau.

Thayer would receive a DSC for remaining with his company after being wounded and “refusing evacuation until rendered unconscious by loss of blood,” according to his citation.

On the first day of 1919, while laid up in a base hospital, Thayer wrote home to say he had heard from Percy Glendinning, who was in Germany with the occupation.

“He tells me that Capt Dunbeck, who is now battalion commander, had recommended me for the rank of Captain, and

also a ... Medal of Honor.” But, he noted, “you know how often these things go wrong.”

Sydney Thayer, Percy Glendinning, and Henry Geyelin returned to the United States and went about their civilian lives. Sydney Gest stayed in Europe, studying law at Oxford.

Because of his schooling, it wasn’t until May 27, 1925, that Gest received his DSC in a ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. Lieutenant General John Lejeune, Commandant of the Corps, pinned the award on Gest, while his father, Thayer, Glendinning, Geyelin, and Bobby Reath’s parents looked on.

Geyelin would die from a heart attack the same year but Glendinning lived until 1960, Thayer until 1972, and Sydney Gest until 1973. Bobby Reath was buried not far from where he was killed at the Aisne-Marne Cemetery at Belleau, France.

*Author’s bio: James Carl Nelson is the author of “I Will Hold: The Story of USMC Legend Clifton B. Cates, from Belleau Wood to Victory in the Great War,” which won the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation’s Colonel Joseph Alexander Award for biography in 2017.*





## New Bern, N.C.

### Symposium Recognizes Contributions of Combat Correspondents Past and Present

During the most recent U.S. Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association Professional Development and Training Symposium, held in New Bern, N.C., Aug. 20-24, 2018, guest of honor Brigadier General William H. Seely, Director of Marine Corps Communication, pictured bottom right, tried his hand at taking a “selfie” with attendees. It was just one of the memorable moments of the event which brought together veteran combat correspondents and active-duty Marines serving in all phases of strategic communications and operations, including photojournalism, graphic design and multimedia production.

During the banquet, more than 75 awards were presented to Marines serving in 45XX military occupational specialties. Some of those recognized included recipients of *Leatherneck*'s annual combat correspondent awards, presented by editor Colonel Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret): the Master Sergeant Tom Bartlett Award for best *Leatherneck* cover photo was presented to Lance Corporal Zachery Laning; the Lou Lowery Award for best photo inside *Leatherneck* was presented to LCpl Cody Rowe; and the Ronald D. Lyons Award for best story in *Leatherneck* was presented to Corporal Shellie Hall.

Gunnery Sergeant Christine Whiting, USMC (Ret), received the association's most prestigious honor, the Donald L. Dickson Memorial Award, for her many years of service to the association as national secretary of the combat correspondents.

Of special significance was Sergeant Matthew Callahan's unprecedented receipt of overall Department of Defense honors as both the DOD photographer of the year and videographer of the year for his work in 2017—which included striking imagery captured in Syria.

The gathering featured a training-packed two days including



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presentations from famed combat journalist Joe Galloway and Hollywood's go-to military technical advisor, Dale Dye. Other presenters included J. Ford Huffman, one of the architects of *USA Today*; Dan Clare, Director of Communications for Disabled American Veterans; and Major Bob Jordan, USMC (Ret).

Submitted by Col Keith Oliver, USMC (Ret)



A. THOMAS

## Boston

### MCJROTC Cadets Take the Field at Fenway

Cadets from the Tolman High School Marine Corps Junior Officers' Training Corps (MCJROTC) in Pawtucket, R.I., participated in the pre-game ceremony at Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, Sept. 14, 2018. With nearly 40,000 fans in attendance to watch the Red Sox play the New York Mets, the color guard took the field to present the colors for the singing of the National Anthem. Pictured from the left, cadets Arlenne Almanzar, Zachary Williams, Mason Dineen and Erlenne Almanzar proudly represented the Marine Corps' JROTC program, which is designed to teach character and citizenship and prepare high school students for leadership roles.

Submitted by SgtMaj Scott Smith, USMC (Ret)



## San Diego

### MCEA Awards Acknowledge the Corps' Top Engineers

Each year, deserving Marine Corps engineers and units are nominated by their commanders to compete for the title of outstanding Marine within their MOS and grade. Headquarters Marine Corps makes the final selections and the Marine Corps Engineer Association recognizes the individuals and units at its annual awards banquet, which most recently was held Sept. 28, 2018, in San Diego, Calif.

The highlight of the evening was the recognition of 18 active-duty Marines selected as the Corps' outstanding engineers and EOD technicians. Additionally, the following were recognized as the outstanding engineer units of the year: 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 6th Engineer Support Battalion and Engineer Operations Company, Marine Wing Support Squadron 373.



COURTESY OF COL JOELL L. COOLEY, USMC (RET)

Retired Army Brigadier General Joe Schroedel, the executive director of the Society of American Military Engineers, was the guest of honor and plaques were presented to the individual award recipients and unit representatives. For the first time since the inception of the program in 1995, all recipients were in attendance to receive their well-deserved awards.

Submitted by Col Joel L. Cooley, USMC (Ret)

## Plymouth, Mass.

### In New England, Female Marines Honor Their Own

Marines from Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut gathered at the American Legion, Post 40 in Plymouth, Mass., Oct. 20, 2018, to honor one of their own with a long-overdue recognition. During a special presentation, Marine veteran Henriette Sununu Kramp received her World War II Victory Medal and American Campaign Medal for the first time.

Kramp enlisted in the Marine Corps on Nov. 8, 1943, and was an administrative clerk stationed at Henderson Hall in Arlington, Va. She remembers proudly marching in a Victory Parade in Washington, D.C., in October 1945 to welcome home Admiral Chester W. Nimitz of the Pacific Fleet.



COURTESY OF SGTMAJ JAMIE DEPAOLA, USMC (RET)


Active-duty recruiters from the local region, Captain Bridgett Soares, Staff Sergeant Justin Rheame and SSgt Darius Sterling, presented Kramp with her medals.

Also during the gathering, SgtMaj Jamie DePaola, USMC (Ret), Area Director for the Women Marines Association, announced that a new chapter will be established in Massachusetts and named in memory of Captain Jennifer Harris, who was killed in action in Iraq in 2007. DePaola and her "sister Marines" have pledged to keep their fallen sisters' spirits alive in their communities back home by helping female veterans in need, supporting Gold Star Families and honoring the valuable contributions of female Marines like Kramp.

Submitted by SgtMaj Jamie DePaola, USMC (Ret)



COURTESY OF SGTMAJ JAMIE DEPAOLA, 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.heck@mca-marines.org](mailto:s.heck@mca-marines.org). Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos.** 



# Hunt it Up: A Bond Welded by War

Story by SSgt Zakery D. Noland  
USMC

Photos courtesy of the author

*Editor's note: The following article received an honorable mention in the Leatherneck Magazine Writing Contest. Major Richard A. "Rick" Stewart, USMC (Ret) sponsored the contest, which is open to enlisted Marines, through the Marine Corps Association & Foundation.*

**T**he United States Marine Corps gave me the best friend I have ever had. His name was Clay and he had four legs instead of two.

You guessed it, Clay was a dog, a yellow Labrador retriever. He was not just any old yellow lab, however. Clay was an Improvised Explosive Device Detection Dog (IDD) and worked for the USMC. As an IDD, Clay located Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) through his sense of smell. Clay had a profound gift for using this sense of smell. As a result, he consistently outperformed his peers. Clay was destined to become an IDD, and since he was a puppy, he had been taught to locate the scent of homemade explosives (HME). Upon completion of scent location qualifications, he began deploying.

As fast as Clay was able, he began his path to supporting Marines. As a puppy, Clay looked remarkably similar to a baby polar bear. Although he was categorized as a yellow lab, his fur was snow white. He was as wide as he was tall and stood at about mid-calf height.

Most Military Working Dogs (MWD) begin obedience training before any other follow-on training. The obedience training for IDDs consists of teaching the dog to "sit," "cover," and "heel." "Sit" is just as you picture it, except instead of just saying the word "sit," the dogs are trained to sit when they hear one sustained whistle blast. When given the command "cover," the dog will lie on its belly, facing the handler, with all four paws maintaining contact to the surface of the ground. The command "heel" prepares the dog to learn to "lineup" to run a "point," "blind," or

"orbit." When given the command to "heel," the dog will align its front shoulders with the handler's left or right leg with both the handler and dog facing the same direction. Once aligned, the dog will scoot as closely as possible to the handler, then sit and look straight ahead, awaiting the next command. A "point" and a "blind" are very similar in nature. Both methods involve the handler setting up the dog to

given the command of "hunt it up," which is the most effective method while patrolling. This method is less stressful for the dog and allows him to work at his own pace. An "orbit" is simply a zigzag motion down a roadway or trail.

Once all skills are mastered by the dog, the dog moves along in training and learns to identify scents of military-grade explosives such as composition 4 (C4), trinitrotoluene (TNT), and dynamite. These dogs are also trained to find HME including ammonium nitrate and aluminum, and ammonium nitrate and fuel oil, the two most common HME during Clay's training. Once these newfound skills have been mastered, the dog pairs with a Marine and deploys to a combat zone.

By the time I met Clay, he was a bit older than a puppy. He was 8 in "human years" to be exact. When I was first introduced to Clay, I had no idea he had already been deployed five times. I thought he resembled more of a house pet than a bomb dog. He was still as tall as he was wide, only now he was just a bit over knee high.

Life with Clay while deployed reminded me of living with a child. I was responsible for him, so this meant I had to always pack enough water and chow for both of us. I had to ensure I woke up prior to the Marines with whom I was operating in order to ensure Clay was properly fed and watered before our daily patrols. While it was our first deployment together, it was Clay's sixth overall and my second. This was our first time in Afghanistan, as all of our previous deployments had been to Iraq.

Our first deployment to Afghanistan was during the summer of 2009 to a place called Gereshk, Nahri Saraj District, Helmand Province, on the Helmand River. Employing Clay in the summer months meant we had to operate during the cooler parts of the day or in short spurts during hotter times. This meant the majority of our patrols were conducted around 4 a.m., which meant I had to wake up at 2:30 a.m. to ensure that Clay was prepared for the mission.

During the first patrol Clay and I went on, I taught my squad of Marines how



**When I was first introduced to Clay, I had no idea he had already been deployed five times. I thought he resembled more of a house pet than a bomb dog.**

run a straight line to the target. The difference is a "point" has a target indicator that is known and a "blind" is an area of interest that is unknown with few to no indicators.

When running an "orbit," the dog is





**A local news station documents the reunion of SSgt Zakery Noland and his best friend Clay, an Improvised Explosive Device Detection Dog, at Palm Springs International Airport.**

to properly employ a bomb dog. This teaching on-the-go was due to an extreme operational tempo during which we simply did not have time to waste. As a dog handler, I positioned myself in the front of the patrol to allow Clay to easily locate me as I controlled his movements with my voice, hands and whistle. Within the first 1,000 meters from our patrol base, Clay found his first IED under my direction. I was elated that all of our training and time spent together was proving effective in combat. That was the first of 63 total IEDs found over our two deployments together which were all accomplished through Clay's unbelievable sense of smell for the explosive components of the devices.

Clay became a celebrity among the Marines and his talents made him legendary as well as a highly coveted asset. Upon the conclusion of our combat deployments, we flew back to America on the same type of plane we flew in on—a Boeing C-17—a large military jet built to transport military equipment, or in this case, a platoon of dog handlers and their dogs.

Upon arrival in America, the organizations employed by the Marine Corps to house and train the IDD's met us and took



**Clay, a yellow Labrador retriever, center, is seen with his handler, SSgt Zakery Noland, and 3rd Combat Engineer Bn's IDD Plt in Afghanistan in 2009.**



**We were able to enjoy seven absolutely wonderful years with this amazing dog, but father time eventually caught up to him. Clay's body had been damaged and was battle-worn from his deployments.**

the dogs back to their kennels. This process was heartbreaking as the dogs had been our "war buddies" for seven months. Together, we shared hardships and triumphs that many Americans will never know, only to be separated in an instant. I can remember the feeling so vividly as if a part of me had been removed. Tears rolled down my face. Luckily for me, fate was on my side. I was able to adopt Clay shortly after our arrival home from our second deployment together.

I will never forget the day I picked Clay up from Palm Springs International Airport. Somehow, the word had spread that two MWDs were arriving in Palm Springs and the local news was there to document the story. The second MWD arriving that day was my close friend's military dog that he was also able to adopt. We were both totally unaware of the local news presence, and I showed up to the airport wearing gym shorts, a T-shirt, and some old athletic shoes. There I was in front of a camera speaking to a reporter about how excited my family and I were to take Clay home.

Our first stop was to a pet store to allow Clay to pick his toy of choice. Of all the different types of dog toys, Clay had a genuine passion for tennis balls and that's all he wanted. Naturally, he chose the big one with a squeaker inside. During Clay's time with our family, we took him to the dog beaches around our home in San Diego, Calif. There, he played freely with other dogs, totally carefree and enjoying life as a pet and not a working dog. We took him on vacations and trips to see family. He was the first one to greet my wife and I when we arrived home with our firstborn child. Our second child was born three years later, and our family was picture perfect—a beautiful wife, two amazing children and my war buddy who was part of the family.



**SSgt Noland's family, including his son, Damon, welcomed Clay to their home after his service as an Improvised Explosive Device Detection dog ended.**

We were able to enjoy seven absolutely wonderful years with this amazing dog, but Father Time eventually caught up to him. Clay's body had been damaged and was battle-worn from his deployments. The time had come to make that heartbreaking choice to lay my best friend to rest. My heart hurt so much. My family and I had lost a dog who meant so much more to us than just a house pet. He was a decorated war hero, one who allowed Marines to survive in combat and to return home the same way they left.

I am extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to know, love and work with such an amazing animal. Who would have guessed that when Clay was chosen to train to become a MWD, I would be the lucky one. I was as committed to Clay as he was glued

to my side. Throughout our training and deployments, we were inseparable, and this created an indomitable bond between a man and a dog. Clay taught me to make the best out of any situation and showed me unconditional love. Most importantly, he kept my Marines and me alive in order to continue our lives with our amazing families back home. Clay's impact on my family will be everlasting and for as long as we exist, Clay will live through our memories.

*Author's bio: SSgt Noland is currently serving as the platoon sergeant for 7th ESB, Company B, 1st Plt. His awards include the Purple Heart, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with one gold star.* 🇺🇸



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## SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

### Never Trust a “Broken” Radio

In March 1951, I was serving with the Marine Security Guard detachment at the top secret Naval Air Missile Test Center at Point Mugu, Calif. My assignment was base patrol operator in a radio equipped jeep.

Late one afternoon I was instructed to take three Marine sentries to the chow hall but was informed by the patrol driver coming off duty that the jeep’s radio was out of order.

After we ate, the sentries and I set out to deliver food to the night patrol protecting the radar on top of Laguna Peak. As we crossed the coastal highway, one of the sentries, Private First Class Dudley, started playing with the radio receiver. Knowing it was out of order, Dudley pretended to transmit. He “told” our commanding officer, Captain Howard Pitman, what to do with himself. We all laughed. PFC Dudley then “told” the Navy captain on the base a few obscene things, all in fun, and we laughed even louder.

Driving the winding trail up Laguna Peak, I dropped the sentries off at their post. A message was waiting for me as I approached the main gate, “Sellards, you are to report to the guard shack on the double. And by the way, you were transmitting perfectly!”

I stood at attention in the guard shack while the sergeant major reamed me out. He ordered me to go to the barracks, dress in dungarees and boots and start swabbing all the Quonset huts.

As I was getting dressed, a messenger came to the

barracks and told me to get back into uniform and return to base patrol. There I learned my liberty was suspended for 30 days.

I later learned that while I was being disciplined, the Navy captain was laughing and telling people about the hilarious communications. He said that since no other transmissions were audible, I couldn’t have known the voice coil was open on my speaker. He called my CO and suggested that he go easy on me.

Two months later I was on the 9th replacement draft for Korea—the assignment I was looking forward to.

Jack B. Sellards  
Corbin, Ky.

### Army Salutes Marines

After I graduated from boot camp and administrative school I was assigned to Camp Lejeune. I received 20 days leave to go home to Whiting, Ind., en route to North Carolina.

I was wondering  
why the MPs had  
saluted me as I  
entered the building.  
I thought maybe  
it was a common  
courtesy.

As was the procedure at the time, I carried my SRB (service record book) and pay record with me. I was instructed to go to the nearest military facility if I needed money to receive any pay that was due me.

I did need additional funds and the nearest military facility to my

home was the 5th Army Headquarters in Chicago near the University of Chicago. I went in my summer uniform which at that time was all khaki. I was an E-1. The headquarters was in an old limestone Greek architecture building with lots of stairs. As I ascended the steps there were two Army MPs (military police) guarding the entrance. As I approached them, they both snapped to attention, and saluted me. I returned their salute. I entered the building and found the finance office and received my pay.

As I received my wages, I was wondering why the MPs had saluted me as I entered the building. I thought maybe it was a common courtesy rendered to everyone who entered or a tribute to other services. When I left the building they again stood at attention, saluted and I again returned their salute. This time I stopped and asked if this was something they did to render respect to all those entering the building or other branches of service. I said in the Marine Corps we only salute officers. They pointed out that there was no rank on my uniform and they thought I was an officer. I told them I just graduated from boot camp and was heading to my first duty station and was a slick-sleeved private. We all had a good laugh.

Cpl Bradley S. Barton  
USMC (Ret)  
1966 to 1968  
Tualatin, Ore.

### The Sergeant’s Orders

It was the winter of 1960 at MCRD San Diego. The night before we were to go to the rifle range, our drill instructors, Sergeants Hardy and Harr, had the platoon

assemble out behind our hut. We were told to sit in a circle. Our DIs then went to each of us and told us to take a big bite of chewing tobacco and chew it. To make sure we chewed it they took a flashlight and checked our open mouth. We were told that chewing tobacco would steady our nerves. To this day I’m not sure it worked but I know I shot expert that day.

Lucky J. Springer  
Valencia, Calif.

### Golf Anyone?

In 1956, as I waited for the sergeant at the New Haven recruiting station to finish talking to another recruit, I perused a brochure on the sergeant’s table. On the back of the brochure was a picture of two Marines playing golf. When it was my turn, the first question I asked the sergeant was, “Should I take my golf clubs with me to Parris Island?”

If that sergeant has already beaten me to the Pearly Gates, he is probably regaling other Marines with the dumbest question a recruit has ever asked him.

Jack “Ed” Edmondson  
Humboldt, Ariz.

### Memories of an Impromptu Concert

This morning while my wife was streaming a song from the early 1960s on her iPhone, a memory from 1961 came to me in a rush.

It was December 1961. I was 2,000 miles from home. I was assigned to ITR [Infantry Training Regiment] at Camp Pendleton learning to blow up bridges and forcefully evict unfriendlies.

After evening chow, three platoons were marched to an outdoor theater in a field to watch a film projected on a screen made from a white-



washed barn door. When we arrived, it was not quite dark enough to start the film.

Platoon 306 was sitting on wooden benches in the back of the primitive amphitheater. There was some commotion down toward the screen on the right. In place of a cartoon before the film, Plt 307 was trying to get some poor young Marine to stand up and sing. The kid was embarrassed, but when the light faded, he stood up and began to sing.

After a few bars, the rowdy troops became stone-still, hypnotized by the voice coming from the dark. The kid sang from his heart, a cappella, sounding like Johnny Mathis.

"I'll be home for Christmas.

You can count on me ... ."

When he finished, there were several seconds of silence, then a standing ovation with clapping and no rowdy cheers or yelling. One hundred fifty Marines stared down at their feet and applauded. Then the movie started.

It is 2018 now, and from time to time an unexpected spark of sound brings that voice back from the dark at Camp Pendleton in 1961.

Cpl William A. Bascom  
USMC (Ret)  
St. Louis, Mo.

## Yellow Footprints

Last year I flew for the first time in a few years and had my inaugural experience with the full-body scan at airport security. When I approached the machine, the security guard, a man who looked to be in his 30s, standing about 6 feet 3 inches tall, with the build of a linebacker and wearing a crisp, tailored uniform, said in his official command voice, "Step on the yellow footprints, please."

I'm usually in a jovial mood and have been known to be a bit of a smart aleck on occasion. For some

reason the urge overcame me. As I stepped on the footprints I said, "I've had a fear of yellow footprints since I was 18."

I was waiting for an indication of bewilderment such as "huh?" Instead, he glanced at me, a 71-year-old with a salt-and-pepper colored not quite high and tight haircut, and without cracking a smile, he quietly said, "Semper Fi."

Not another word was spoken. If there hadn't been a few hundred impatient people stacked up behind me I would have stopped to chat.

It just goes to show that Marines are everywhere.

J. Michael Green  
Tucson, Ariz.

## Impersonating an NCO for a Good Meal

I was the executive officer of "Fox" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines in the summer of 1978 when we deployed to Korea with the old 105 mm howitzers. On one occasion as we were moving between positions, one of our drivers hit a howitzer that was being towed by a truck, putting the tube through his radiator.

We didn't have the parts we needed to repair the howitzer, so Sergeant Gray, MT chief, and Corporal Chester, the tow truck driver, went with me to

Camp Casey Army base to get the truck repaired. We found the Army maintenance shop and traded three cases of C-rats for the parts we needed. The soldiers also agreed to do the labor.

Meanwhile, the three of us had a couple of hours to kill at Camp Casey. We had

**We found the  
noncommissioned  
officers (NCO) club.  
Sgt Gray had an  
extra set of chevrons  
so I took off my bars  
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all enjoyed a  
steak dinner.**

been in the field for weeks and needed a good meal.

I was a first lieutenant accompanied by a sergeant and a corporal. We found the noncommissioned officers (NCO) club. Sgt Gray had an extra set of chevrons so I took off my bars and impersonated an NCO while we all enjoyed a steak dinner. None of the Army

personnel questioned three Marines in utilities. All three of us "NCOs" enjoyed a nice meal but we did get some strange looks.

Capt Steve Schenk  
USMC, 1976-1985  
Dayton, Ohio

## Bounty on My Head

In 1970 while attending Drill Instructor School at Parris Island, two buddies and I drove into Beaufort for our Saturday night steak dinner. We all had high and tights, and as we approached the business district, my car was suddenly and without warning stopped by several police officers with guns drawn. After a short conversation and proving that we were all indeed sergeants, they explained that they thought we were three escaped recruits.

Twelve years later, after my discharge, I became a county police officer in Charleston, S.C., a military town 70 miles north of Beaufort. I found out that the government paid a \$50 bounty for any UA military personnel that they turned over to authorities. It was then that I knew the Beaufort police that evening were looking to split \$150 in county cash.

Ray Wright  
Charleston, 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](mailto: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! 🦖



**Then-2ndLt Steve Schenk, left and Sgt Gray are pictured together at the motor pool in Okinawa just prior to leaving for Korea.**

COURTESY OF CAPT STEVE SCHENK, USMC



# Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock



**Have plans to travel on commercial airlines this year? The Transportation Security Administration wants to ensure that servicemembers and DOD civilians are aware that they can save time by using the TSA Precheck line at the airport free of charge.**

## **Don't Stand in Line: TSA Precheck Open to Military, DOD**

Servicemembers are trusted to defend the nation—surely they can be trusted when boarding a plane.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agrees with this sentiment and is pushing to ensure that servicemembers and civilians employed by the Department of Defense know they can use the TSA Precheck program, which allows them to enjoy expedited security screening when traveling from participating airports.

“Servicemembers are already enrolled in TSA Precheck, but many do not know they are,” TSA Administrator David Pekoske said in a recent interview. Pekoske, a retired Coast Guard vice admiral, wants all those eligible to use this free program.

Servicemembers of all components of the U.S. Armed Forces and students at the Armed Forces’ service academies are automatically enrolled in TSA Precheck. Their DOD ID number—a 10-digit number on the back of their Common Access Card (CAC)—also serves as their “known traveler number” for TSA purposes.

Civilian DOD employees must opt into the program using the milConnect website at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>. Their DOD ID number is their known traveler number as well.

There is no cost for military members or DOD civilians. For the general public to enroll in the TSA Precheck, the cost is \$85.

“This is a real benefit for being a member of the Armed Forces, and it is good for us from a security perspective,” Pekoske said.

Servicemembers and DOD civilians have already undergone background checks as a requirement of their service and employment and most have security clearances. They are trusted to carry weapons in defense of the United States or to safeguard America’s secrets; therefore, the TSA decided that there was no need for them to take off their shoes and belts at a checkpoint before boarding an aircraft.

All travelers must add their DOD ID number to their Defense Travel System profiles to access TSA Precheck while on official travel, but eligible servicemembers and civilians can also use it on personal travel, Pekoske said.

“The effort makes sense from an agency perspective and it is also a way to say thanks to members of the military and the civilian members of DOD and the Department of Homeland Security who sacrifice so much,” added Pekoske. “It’s a really good program and it provides a direct benefit to those who keep us free.”

Jim Garamone, DOD News

## **New Guidelines Change Transfer Rules for Post-9/11 GI Bill**

With the release of Marine Administrative Message (MARADMIN) 642/18 on Nov. 8, 2018, the Marine Corps alerted Marines of coming changes to Department of Defense policy on the transfer by servicemembers in the Uniformed Services of “Post-9/11 GI Bill” education benefits to eligible family members.

Effective July 12 of this year, eligibility to transfer those benefits will be limited to servicemembers with less than 16 years of total service, active-duty service and/or selected Reserves as applicable.

Previously, there were no restrictions on when servicemembers could transfer education benefits to their family members. The provision for a Marine or other servicemember to have at least six years of service to apply to transfer benefits remains unchanged.

“After a thorough review of the policy, we saw a need to focus on retention in a time of increased growth of the Armed Forces,” said Stephanie Miller, Director of Accessions Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense. “This change continues to allow servicemembers that earned this benefit to share it with their family members while they continue to serve.”



**For Marines planning to transfer GI Bill benefits to college-bound family members, new guidelines take effect July 12 that limit transfer eligibility to those with less than 16 years of service.**





SGT JACK ADAMYK, USMC

**Sgt Benjamin Crouch runs with his wife, Blanca Crouch, during a modified CFT event during Jane Wayne Day at MCLB Barstow, Calif., Oct. 12, 2018.**

Miller added that the change is an important step to preserve the distinction of transferability as a retention incentive.

Chief of Naval Personnel  
Public Affairs and MARADMIN 642/18

### **Jane Wayne Day Offers “A Day in the Life” of a Marine**

Marine spouses and civilian Marines gathered at Sorenson Field, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., to take part in Jane Wayne Day, designed to give military dependents a taste of what daily life is like for servicemembers, Oct. 12, 2018.

The first event the attendees took part in was a modified Combat Fitness Test.

“The Combat Fitness Test was modified for the participants, but it was still a physical challenge that most people would have difficulty completing,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jose Maynes, Uniformed Readiness Coordinator, who organized the event.

The CFT required participants to lift

15-pound ammunition cans over their heads as many times as they could in a specified time period. That was followed by a quarter-mile “movement to contact” run around the track. Next, the “maneuver under fire” activities included a body drag, a fireman’s carry, a “grenade” toss and a sprint to the finish while carrying two ammo cans.

The group also had the opportunity to participate in live-fire activities at the base pistol range, firing a 9 mm semi-automatic handgun at a silhouette target. Each attendee had a Marine as a partner, in some cases their active-duty spouse, to teach them proper stance and firing position as well as range safety.

“I enjoy shooting. That’s one of the reasons I signed up for Jane Wayne Day,” said Stephanie Gray, a civilian analyst with Manpower Department at MCLB Barstow. “I knew the physical demands were going to be pretty intense for us, but I wanted to see what it’s like to be a Marine.”

Lunch was served at the range in the form of Meals Ready to Eat (MREs). After the range, the participants went to the Yermo Annex to tour the Lieutenant Colonel Robert Lindsley Stables, home to the last remaining mounted color guard in the Marine Corps.

They also enjoyed a tour of Production Plant Barstow and participated in a demonstration at the Vehicle Test Track area of the Marine Depot Maintenance Command facility. Each of the participants took a ride in a Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected vehicle.

“Jane Wayne Day helps build community among the personnel who live and work aboard MCLB Barstow,” said Maynes. “Families are of major importance to our morale and spirit, and Jane Wayne Day helps bridge the gap by providing the non-military member a better appreciation of our mission.”

Sgt Jack Adamyk, USMC,  
and Keith Hayes





# In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

**TSgt Dorothy L. Angil**, 96, of Twenty-nine Palms, Calif. She enlisted in the Marine Corps, along with her sister, during WW II. They were in the second graduating class of Women Marines at Hunter College, the Bronx, N.Y. She was discharged at the end of the war. She reenlisted during the Korean War and was assigned to recruiting duty.

**MGySgt Ira B. Baker III**, 61, of Fredericksburg, Va. During his 30 years in the Marine Corps he was an aircraft maintenance mechanic and a CH-46 crew chief. He was assigned to numerous squadrons including HMM-268 and HMX-1.

**Vernon T. Benning**, 80, of Pulaski, Wis. He served in the Marine Corps.

**Cpl Walter J. Brautigan**, 87, of Franklin Lakes, N.J. From 1952-1954 he was assigned to the 2nd Amphibian Truck Co at MCB Camp Lejeune.

**Cpl William F. "Bill" Brouillard**, 84, of Orlando, Fla. He was a member of the MarDet aboard USS *Roanoke* (CL-145). He later had a career in mechanical engineering.

**SSgt Dawson L. Brown**, 95, of Stuart, Fla. He served in the Pacific theater during WW II.

**Ensor Bush**, 86, of Clovis, Calif. He served in combat during the Korean War.

**Gary L. Byl**, 88, of Spring Lake, Mich. During the Korean War he served with 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv. He saw action at Inchon and the Chosin Reservoir. His awards include the Purple Heart.

**GySgt Ruben E. Cravens**, 82, of Washington, Ark. He enlisted at age 18 and served for 25 years.

**1stSgt William C. Denton**, 86, in Sun City, Ariz. He enlisted in 1949 and fought at the Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War. He later served in Vietnam and retired in 1969. He was a member of the MCA&F.

**MSgt Robert W. Deyerle**, 81, in Roanoke, Va. He served three tours in Vietnam before his 1974 retirement from the Marine Corps. He also had a 25-year career with the U.S. Postal Service.

**John L. Dorn**, 84, of De Pere, Wis. He was a tanker who served in the Korean War.

**LtCol Terry C. Drew**, 82, of Fredericksburg, Va. He had a 20-year career in the Marine Corps. His awards include the Bronze Star.

**SSgt Roy C. Dunmire**, 89, of Ottawa, Kan. He was an Eagle Scout who enlisted

after finishing high school. During the Korean War he was assigned to Co D, 2nd Bn, 5th Marines, 1stMarDiv. He saw action at Pusan and the Chosin Reservoir. His awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V."

After the war he attended college and earned his private pilot certification. He was an active volunteer with a local Boy Scout troop.

**John J. Foley**, 91, of Hudson, Fla. He was a Marine who served during WW II. His awards include two Purple Hearts.

**Maj Charles A. Folsom**, 90, of Fremont, Neb. He enlisted in 1945. After completing college in 1952, he returned to active duty as a second lieutenant. In 1954 and 1955 he won three national rifle championships. In 1956, he declined a slot on the Olympic team in order to return to his infantry unit. He served in Vietnam from 1966-1968. He retired in 1972.

**Calvin T. "Cal" Friesz**, 92, of Green Valley, Ariz. He was a corpsman who saw action during WW II and the Korean War.

**LTC George W. Gaspard Jr.**, 91, of St. Johns, Fla. He served in the Marine Corps from 1944-1946 and fought on Okinawa. He later served in the U.S. Army and had a distinguished career as a Green Beret.

**Maj James R. Glick**, 85, of Royal Oak, Mich. He was a Marine Corps aviator. He also had a career as an educator.

**Robert E. "Bob" Hall Jr.**, 87, of Scotia, N.Y. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1951 and saw action in the Korean War with "Fox" Co, 2nd Bn, 5th Marines. He later earned a degree in education and taught American history for nearly 40 years.

**Cpl Raymond B. Harton**, 70, of Carrollton, Ga. He was a machine gunner who served in the Vietnam War. His awards include the Purple Heart. He later had a career in law enforcement.

**CAPT Walter A. Hiskett**, 87, of Kearney, Neb. During his 30-year career in the U.S. Navy, he was a chaplain for Marines. His awards include the Purple Heart.

**BGen Fenwick W. Holmes**, 99, of San Jose, Calif. He began his 23-year Marine Corps career after his 1941 graduation from college. He served in the Pacific in WW II and was awarded the Silver Star for his actions on Vella LaVella on Oct. 1, 1943. According to his award citation, he led his men into the hold of a ship that was engulfed in flames to assist in salvage operations and evacuation of casualties.

He also "led a detail onto the upper deck and threw ammunition overboard to prevent the spread of further explosions."

**Capt Myles "Colin" Johnson**, 50, of Leesburg, Va. He served in the Marine Corps for eight years and saw action in Somalia. For 20 years he was a U.S. Secret Service agent and served on the presidential detail.

**William Karpowicz Sr.**, 94, of Grand Rapids, Mich. He served with 3rd Bn, 21st Marines, 3rdMarDiv in the Pacific during WW II. He was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded on Guam.

**SgtMaj Neal D. King**, 94, of Spotsylvania, Va. He joined the Marine Corps after Pearl Harbor and retired 30 years later. He saw combat in WW II, during the Korean War, and in Vietnam. His awards include the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. After retiring from the Marine Corps he served with the Capitol Police.

**SSgt Eva D. Kreisher**, 97, of Green Valley, Ariz. During WW II, she was a pararigger and repairman.

**Alexander L. Kurowski**, 68, of Suamico, Wis. He served in the Marine Corps from 1969-1971.

**Paul J. Martin**, 96, of Lafayette, La. He joined the Marine Corps in 1939 and fought in the Battle of Corregidor. He was wounded in action and then spent three years, seven months and 11 days as a POW. His awards include the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

**Sgt A.C. Masingill Jr.**, 81, of Natchitoches, La. He joined the Marine Corps following his 1954 graduation from high school. He served with 1st Bn, 12th Marines in Japan and Hawaii.

**Robert C. "Bob" Mathews Sr.**, 94, of Cheyenne, Wyo. He was a Marine Corps veteran of WW II.

**Sgt Gale McGuire**, 93, of Santa Cruz, Calif. During WW II he served with 1stMarDiv and saw action on Guam. He later used the GI bill and went to college, planning to become a teacher. On his first day as a teacher, he was called back to active duty and was assigned to Co B, 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv. He landed at Inchon in November and fought at the Chosin Reservoir where he was wounded.

He later returned to his teaching career. His awards include two Purple Hearts.

**Sgt William H. McMichen**, 88, of Cobb County, Ga. He served with 2ndMarDiv. He later had a 42-year career as a locomotive engineer with CSX railroad.



**Capt Peter L. Meade**, 76, of Irvine, Calif. He served in 1st Bn, 9th Marines, 3rdMarDiv from 1966-1967. He was awarded the Bronze Star with combat "V" for actions on March 5, 1967, in the Con Thien area of Vietnam. He was wounded a few months later near Dong Ha.

**GySgt Truman L. Miller**, 78, of Spotsylvania, Va. He served with the 3rdMarDiv.

**Gary D. Nejedlo**, 67, of De Pere, Wis. He was a Marine who served in the Vietnam War.

**Capt Carl E. Nida**, 83, of Huntsville, Ala. He served during the Korean War and completed two tours to Vietnam.

**Averal A. O'Dell**, 75, of Ripley, W.Va. He served in the Vietnam War with 3rd Bn, 4th Marines.

**MSgt Matthews V. Peplinski**, 100, of Eastpointe, Mich. He survived the Bataan Death March and was held as a POW by the Japanese during WW II.

During the Korean War he saw action at the Chosin Reservoir. The celebration of his 100th birthday was featured in Sound Off in the April 2018 issue of *Leatherneck*.

**GySgt Wayne Edward Powell Sr.**, 84, of Roanoke, Va. He served 23 years in the Marine Corps.

**Erling O. Ravn**, 91, of Merrill, Wis. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after his

1944 high school graduation and served in the Pacific until the end of WW II. He attended college and medical school after the war and had a long career as a physician.

**Capt Clarence A. Rice**, 96, of Detroit, Mich. He was a Marine Corps aviator who served in WW II flying PBJ bombers with VMB-423 in the South Pacific. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross and four Air Medals.

**William F.J. "Frank" Richmond**, 84, of Middletown, Ohio. He was a Marine who served during the Korean War.

**GySgt Michael A. Robinson**, 67, of Indianapolis, Ind. He had a 24-year career in the Marine Corps.

**Douglas Rosenberg**, 75, of Pulaski, Wis. In 1961, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He maintained the F-4B Phantom aircraft on board USS *Ranger* (CVA-61) and USS *Midway* (CVB-41).

**Joseph L. Scardena**, 85, of Livingston, N.J. He served in the Korean War, during the Chosin Reservoir campaign. He later had a career as a sheet metal mechanic.

**Herbert E. Schlender**, 94, in Meridian Conn. During WW II he served in Co B, 4th Engineer Bn, 4thMarDiv. He was wounded during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

**Cpl Frank J. Viggiano**, 78, of New City, N.Y. He served from 1959-1965 at

various bases, including Camp Pendleton, Camp Upshur and MCB Quantico.

**Sgt Michael C. Walsh**, 68, of Phoenix, Ariz. He was a Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War. He later retired from the U.S. Postal Service.

**Michael A. Wells**, 67, of Middleton, Ohio. He was a Marine who served in Vietnam.

**CWO-2 Eugene M. Wheeler**, 93, of Concord, N.C. He served with VMB-611 during WW II as a gunner on board PBJ bombers. His aircraft was shot down over the Philippines. He later served in the Korean War. He retired after 22 years in the Marine Corps. He was a licensed pilot and flight instructor.

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



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# DPAA Identifies Fallen Marines

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

*The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) is committed to providing the fullest possible accounting for missing personnel to their families and to the nation. Below is a list of the Marines from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War whose remains recently have been returned to their families for burial.*

## WORLD WAR II



### **Pearl Harbor**

**2ndLt Harry H. Gaver Jr.**, 24, of Annapolis, Md., was assigned to the battleship USS *Oklahoma* (BB-37), which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7,

1941, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft. Multiple torpedo hits caused the ship to capsize resulting in the deaths of 429 crewman, including 2ndLt Gaver. He was accounted for on Jan. 26, 2017.



### **Guadalcanal**

**2ndLt Elwood R. Bailey**, 22, of Parma, Mich. On Aug. 24, 1942, he was a member of Marine Fighting Squadron 223 when he was shot down while piloting an

F4F-4 Wildcat in aerial combat with the Japanese over Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. He was reported missing in action. He was accounted for on Sept. 5, 2017.



### **Saipan**

**SSgt Richard J. Murphy Jr.**, 26, of Chevy Chase, Md. On June 15, 1944, he was assigned to 6th Marines, 2ndMarDiv, during the Battle of Saipan when he was

declared missing in action. On May 22, 1945, his status was amended to killed in action. He was accounted for on June 25, 2018.

## Tarawa



**PFC Paul D. Gilman**, 19, of Belen, N.M., was assigned to Co M, 3rd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on May 17, 2018.



**PFC Merton R. Riser**, 19, of Sanborn, Iowa, was assigned to Co K, 3rd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on June 20, 2018.



**TSgt Harry A. Carlsen**, 31, of Brookfield, Ill., was assigned to Co A, 2nd Amphibian Tractor Bn, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on June 4, 2018.



**Sgt Millard M. Odom**, 26, of Batesville, Ark., was assigned to Co K, 3rd Bn, 2nd Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on Aug. 20, 2018.



**PFC William F. Cavin**, 19, Ewing, Va., was assigned to Co F, 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on April 23, 2018.



**PFC Leonard A. Tyma**, 21, of Dyer, Ind., was assigned to Co E, 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on Aug. 6, 2018.



**Sgt Dwight W. Randall**, 22, of Fresno, Calif., was assigned to Co C, 2nd Amphibian Tractor Bn, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on Sept. 13, 2018.



**PFC Robert L. Zehetner**, 19, of Brooksville, Fla., was assigned to Co F, 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv. He died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. He was accounted for on July 3, 2018.





SGT ROBERT KNAPP, USMC

**Marines with the “Bravo” Company firing party, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., prepare to render a three-volley salute during a full honors funeral at Arlington National Cemetery for Capt John A. House II, Cpl Glyn L. Runnels Jr., and LCpl John D. Killen III on Sept. 27, 2018.**

## KOREAN WAR



**PFC Roger Gonzales**, 20, of San Pedor, Calif., was assigned to Co F, 2nd Bn, 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv in late November 1950. He was reported to have been killed in action in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir on Nov. 29, 1950. He was accounted for on June 4, 2018.



**Sgt Johnson McAfee**, 27, of Laveen, Ariz., was assigned to Co F, 2nd Bn, 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv in late November 1950. He was reported to have been killed in action in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir on Nov. 28, 1950. He was accounted for on Sept. 25, 2017.

## VIETNAM WAR

**Capt John A. House II**, 28, of Pelham, N.Y.; **LCpl John D. Killen III**, 18 of Davenport, Iowa; and **Cpl Glyn L. Runnels Jr.**, 21, of Birmingham, Ala., were accounted for Dec. 22, 2015, and were buried as a group Sept. 27, 2018, at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va.

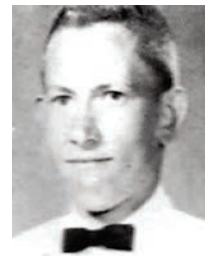
On June 30, 1967, Capt House was the pilot of a CH-46A Sea Knight, and along with three other crewmembers, was attempting to insert LCpl Killen, Cpl Runnels and six other members of Co A, 3rd Reconnaissance Bn, 3rdMarDiv into hostile territory in Thua Thien-Hue Province, Vietnam. As the helicopter approached the landing zone, it was struck by enemy fire, causing it to catch fire and crash. Three members of the helicopter’s crew and four members of the Recon team survived the crash and were rescued. 🇺🇸



**Capt John A.  
House II**



**LCpl John D.  
Killen III**



**Cpl Glyn L.  
Runnels Jr.**



## WAYS TO SOUND OFF



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**LETTERS** | Leatherneck, Box 1775,  
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### SOUND OFF [continued from page 9]

Marines together for even a few minutes, it is as if they have known each other all of their lives. I just had to share this little bit of Marine Corps history.

Sgt Jule Spohn  
USMC, 1960-1966  
Newark, N.J.

### Answer to Question About Chateau-Thierry Poster

Regarding Rich Basile's letter showing the World War I poster published in October 2018 [Sound Off], I believe that it says Chateau-Thierry because that was the recognized name of the larger operation that Belleau Wood was part of.

According to Martin Gilbert's, "The First World War: A Complete History," on June 3, 1918, German forces crossed the Marne River at Jaulgonne, 6 miles east of Chateau-Thierry putting Paris in grave jeopardy. Waiting for them were two U.S. divisions determined to stop the advance. The Marine Brigade was positioned in Belleau Wood as part of this defensive line.

The Marines played a significant role in not only stopping the offensive but pushing the Germans back. As described in J. Robert Moskin's history, the publicity received by the Marines after this battle initiated resentment from the Army that lasted through World War II.

John Simonitsch  
USMC, 1965-1969  
New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

### Camp Fuji, Japan

In regards to Corporal D.P. Van Blaricom's Sound Off letter [October 2018

issue] I too spent some time at Camp Fuji in May 1971. At the time I was assigned to BLT 2/4. We went on float from Camp Hanson to Camp Fuji for training and live firing of tanks. We were also quartered in tents. Mine had only one stove which we kept stoked for warmth. It was May, but it was still cold and very windy.

Cpl Bruce Holzgrafe  
USMC, 1969-1972  
Paulden, Ariz.

### Salty Sailor Enjoys *Leatherneck*

Thank you for publishing a letter [September 2018 issue] that questioned the content of our magazine.

I joined the Navy in September 1961, and imagine my surprise when my "A" school orders were to Hospital Corps School at U.S. Naval Hospital Balboa, San Diego. Imagine another surprise when I graduated from Corps School and received orders to U.S. Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton.

The best thing that happened in my life was being around Marines who were dedicated to their branch of service and were squared away in "gung ho" attitude and physical fitness. I weigh today the same as in 1962.

I subscribe to *Leatherneck* to read about new stories in our Corps, old stories,

# THANK YOU

The Marine Corps Association & Foundation would like to extend our sincere appreciation to these companies for sponsoring awards presented at Marine Corps Recruit Depots Parris Island and San Diego throughout the year.

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battles fought and the ability to try to connect with groups and reunions among warriors from yesteryear.

"The Marines' Hymn" goes back to Montezuma and Tripoli—many moons ago. The thing to remember about history in a person's life is never forget the past and remember it's the politicians who run a war and our military executes their orders. Good or bad.

I like new and old stories. From an old salty Sailor, keep up the good work.

John Sanchez  
USN, 1961-1966  
Hanford, Calif.

## Reader Remembers The Bamboo Mess Club

To say that I was surprised to see a picture of the bamboo mess club of "Golf" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines on page 31 [Sea Stories] of the October 2018 *Leatherneck*, would be an understatement. I was stationed at Chu Lai in Vietnam between 1966 and 1967.


I remember that club well. When I was stationed there, it was the enlisted club and the local "watering hole" for off-duty Marines and corpsmen. It was very popular in the evening hours.

One evening, a couple of Marines, who probably had a little too much to drink,

raised a toast to the Corps. During all the hoopla, including a few "oorahs," they shot a pop-up flair right through the roof of that club. Needless to say the roof quickly caught fire, and within minutes, the club was a raging inferno. The whole club burned to the ground. No one was hurt. We all got out and watched the place burn down. It didn't take too long since it was made out of bamboo. We sure hated to see our club burn down, but it wasn't long until someone hired the Vietnamese to build us a new one.

You can imagine my surprise when I saw its picture in *Leatherneck*. It sure brought back some memories.

Tom Lawton  
Green Bay, Wis.

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](mailto: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

• **Montford Point Marine Association, Inc.** (open to all veterans and supporters from all branches of the Armed Forces), Aug. 28-31, Charlotte, N.C. Contact MGySgt Ron Johnson, USMC (Ret), (504) 202-8552.

• **East Coast Drill Instructors Assn.**, April 11-14, Parris Island, S.C. Contact SgtMaj Kenneth D. Miller, USMC (Ret), (828) 757-0968, usmcpidi@charter.net, www.parrislanddi.org.

• **Marine Corps Aviation Assn. Donald E. Davis Squadron**, March 21-24, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Wayne Miller, (973) 441-3636, millerwayne559@gmail.com.

• **Iwo Jima Survivors (Marines, Navy and all other WW II veterans)**, March 20-24, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Dan Zepeda, (951) 201-6251, zepeda012@msn.com.

• **Black Marines Heritage Group**, June 20-23, Alexandria, Va. Contact Bernard Colebrook, (540) 720-2633, Bobby Wallace, (352) 259-2435, or Patricia Mims, (760) 717-2949, www.blackmarinereunion.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.

• **H/2/7 (RVN, 1965-1970)**, June 20-24, San Diego, Calif. Contact Dan Steiner, (618) 567-4077, dsteiner49@yahoo.com.

• **Mortar Btry, W/2/12**, Jan. 28-Feb. 1, N. Clearwater/Dunedin, Fla. Contact Mike "Doc" Mallach, 16 Torie Jordan Ct., Ocean View, DE 19970, (302) 339-7479, mallachmj@yahoo.com.

• **38th/39th OCC, TBS 3-66/4-66**, Oct. 7-11, Newport, R.I. Contact Jack Sheehan, (401) 255-0387, jacksheehanjtow@me.com, www.usmc-thebasicschool-1966.com.

• **TBS, Co C, 2-67**, May 12-15, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact Bill McBride, (210) 656-6035, bill.mcbride@gmail.com, or Ed Walsh, (610) 459-1879, eireish1@aol.com.

• **TBS, Co E, 5-69**, May 7-11, Quantico, Va. Contact Joe Howard, 21 Snow Meadow Ln., Stafford, VA 22554, (540) 720-0259, jlheach1@cs.com.

• **TBS, Co H, 8-69 (50th Anniversary)**,

June 6-9, Arlington, Va. Contact Dennis Mroczkowski, m4ski@comcast.net, or Thomas Molon, ncmolons@suddenlink.net, www.facebook.com/basicsschoolhotelcompany69.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.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 329, Parris Island, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact Thomas Payne, 2220 Flat Branch Rd., Ellijay, GA, 30540,



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

• **Plt 1098, Parris Island, 1970**, is planning a reunion. Contact Michael Shea, (786) 280-8202, mikek2709@comcast.net.

• **Plt 2023, San Diego, 1983**, May 6, Ontario, Calif. Contact Jeffrey R. Johnson, 3751 Merced Dr., Unit 4D, Riverside, CA 92503, jrj430@yahoo.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 3028, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact MSgt Bob Rees, USMC (Ret), (619) 940-9218, bobrees86@gmail.com.

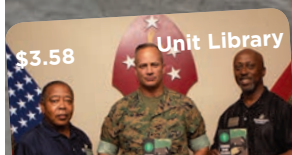
• **Plt 3042, San Diego, 1968**, is planning a reunion. Contact Gary Berry, (614) 679-1499, gnberry21@gmail.com.

• **Distinguished Flying Cross Society**, Sept. 15-19, Dayton, Ohio. Contact Warren Eastman, (760) 985-2810, weastman@dfcsociety.org.

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### Ships and Others

• **USS Inchon (LPH/MCS-12)**, May 4-9, Nashville, Tenn. Contact David Fix, ussinchon@gmail.com.

### Mail Call

• Dale Wittler, (804) 580-0237, dwittler@gmail.com, to hear from **Sgt Delbert STINET**, who served in **Vietnam** with **Co E, 2/26 in 1968**.

### Wanted

*Readers should be cautious about sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered:*

• Terry Summers, sumrs@hotmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book** for **Plt 1012, San Diego, 1967**.

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. 🦖



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NANCY S. LICHTMAN

**RETURN WITH HONOR**—This flag was used to cover a transfer case that contained a set of remains recovered from Koh Tang Island, Cambodia in 2000. According to Marine veteran John Minger, who was on the repatriation team from Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), the flag had gotten damp during the journey from Hanoi to Hawaii when condensation from inside of the transporting aircraft dripped on the flag. Minger said the team wasn't comfortable using a flag that wasn't in pristine condition so they covered the case with a new flag. The unit's first sergeant later gave the other flag to Minger, rather than retire it.

Minger, an intel analyst, was a staff sergeant when he was assigned to JTF-FA in the late 1990s. As an archival research specialist for the joint agency, the predecessor to today's Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), he reviewed wartime records and correlated them with investigations in order to recommend sites for excavation.

Minger said the first time one of the sites he

recommended resulted in a successful excavation of remains of a U.S. servicemember, "it gave me goosebumps, it gave me chills."

Always on his mind, he said, was the thought of bringing closure to the family members whose loved ones' remains he was assisting in locating and returning to the United States for proper burial.

"The assignment is one of the most honorable things I've ever done as a Marine," said Minger. "It's the best job I had in the Marine Corps."

Minger noted the impact the command's mission had on him. "... the understanding of the extent to which those men and women were going to [in order] to recover remains ... I had such a level of comfort to know that my government would go to those lengths to bring my remains home."

Locating and identifying remains of U.S. servicemembers is now the mission of DPAA. To read more about their dedication to leave no one behind, see pages 36-43 and 66-67. 🇺🇸



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In July 2018 the Marine Corps Association Foundation supported 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines with a PME trip to Tarawa, the site of an iconic WWII Marine Corps battle. 21 Marines—NCOs, SNCOs, and officer leaders—meritoriously selected from among their peers to accompany the battalion CO and sergeant major, were provided lodging, a tour bus, and a tour guide by MCAF. The Marines of 2/8 got to stand on the beach in the same spot where their battalion landed against fierce Japanese defenses 75 years ago. As the battalion commander said, “This was an experience those Marines will remember the rest of their lives, as they were allowed to ‘walk in the same surf and sand of those who forged our legacy.’ ”





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