

DECEMBER 2020

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

# Leatherneck

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## Clear Communications

A Historical Look at the  
Phonetic Alphabet  
From “Alfa” to “Zulu”

WW II Foundation:  
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**COVER:** LCpl Zachary Fuit, a communication technician with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, programs an RT-1796 radio on Aug. 11. Marines with Marine Air Control Squadron 1, Marine Air Control Group 38, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, worked with Marines from H&HS to set up an air traffic navigation, integration and coordination system in the middle of the MCAS Camp Pendleton flight line. Photo by LCpl Andrew Cortez, 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.

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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 am writing because I read the Sound Off Letter of the Month in the September issue by William M. Paparian about our fellow African-American Marine, Bryant, from Georgia. I wanted to express how angry I became after reading about a Marine like myself being treated in such a horrific manner. I was very angry because three generations of my family have served in the U.S. military; Bryant could have been one of us and I thank God that incident didn't happen to any of us. I am also thankful that Mr. Paparian helped Bryant.

I joined the Marine Corps in 1988 after graduating from Parris Island in Platoon 2061. I was sent to "Kilo" Battery, 4th Battalion, 14th Marines of Marine Forces Reserve under Major Gilbert, our battery commander, and Gunnery Sergeant Duckett. The officers and noncommissioned officers treated all Marines as if we were their biological sons—regardless of race. They worked the hell out of us even when we were deployed overseas to fight the first Persian Gulf War. No Marine was mistreated, and my experience in the Reserves was great.

LCpl Gregory Eddins  
Hamilton, Ala.

## Salute to Marine Tankers

I have fond memories of serving with 2nd Tanks and I know there are no finer Marines on the planet. It is hard to imagine our Corps of Marines without tanks as stated in, "Marines Bid Farewell to Tanks Under New Force Design," October issue [We—the Marines].

For me, when tanks showed up on the battlefield in Vietnam and later in Kuwait, it made all the difference. It was always great to see the tanks, but it was the Marine tankers who stood in the gap and cleared the way for the friendlies. You gotta love those Marine tankers!

In Desert Storm I was serving with Major Gary Wines (RIP) as the sergeant major for Task Force (Breach) Alpha (TFA) attached to the 6th Marines. We were 500 Marines of tankers and combat engineers tasked to clear six lanes through the Iraqi mine fields for following forces.

TFA used M60 tanks and we were always awed when 2nd Tanks were in our area of operation. I remember our task force M60 tanks were lumbering up Pipeline Road in Saudi Arabia near the Kuwait border when a column from 2nd Tanks whistled past us in their Abrams M1 tanks. It reminded me at the time of being on the New Jersey Turnpike and seeing a state trooper go flying past.

One night we pulled our M60s into a defensive 360 for the evening. When I got up the next morning, I saw that overnight 2nd Tanks had set up their own 360 perimeter around us. It was an impressive thing to see. The Marines of 2nd Tanks were on the job and we all stood a little taller that morning.

I write to salute 2nd Tanks and to say thank you for your service to country and Corps. You are remarkable Marines who served with honor and distinction and I was blessed to be on the battlefield with you because 2nd Tanks is second to none. God bless you all. Semper Fidelis Marines!

SgtMaj John Harlow, USMC (Ret)  
Dillon, S.C.

With all due respect to my brothers in the past who fought and served inside those hot or cold Marine tanks, we send our thanks for the job that they performed in keeping our lines straight and secure in past wars. Yet today we read where a command decision has been made to stockpile these government-paid U.S. Marine M1A1 Abrams tanks for good. Nothing can be farther from the truth when the attempt to defend this move was made in your article.

The key questions are: do you believe that the Russians and/or Chinese Marines will follow suit? I don't believe so.

Next, those of us that were working and fighting along the DMZ in 1968 heard those Russian donated tanks to the NVA coming across the DMZ—we too would have been up shit creek if we did not have heavy armor posted at the corners.

Then history tells us just how hard and tough it got when Marine officer John Ripley decided to follow his verbal order while serving as an advisor with the Vietnamese Marines that day and stopped the column of NVA tanks that side of the Dong Ha Bridge.

One cannot express a truer feeling to those Marines of today who never had to experience what the many Vietnam

Marines went through when crap hit the fan on the ground and you had tanks in the area to help defend and keep your lines straight.

I must respectfully submit that whoever thought to cut away future heavy armor support when you are taking a beachhead, village or in the final push to achieve your objective, does not have the combat life experience as we have endured. We can't all travel light like what our current Commandant of the Marine Corps (force recon) has decided to follow.

In summation, why not reverse and give these decisions more thought should an enemy come through the wire tonight?

Sgt Gene T. Spanos  
USMC, 1966-1971  
Park Ridge, Ill.

• *While the Commandant does have dual cool insignia, he only served one tour in the Recon community when he commanded a company in 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion during Operation Desert Storm. He served in traditional infantry billets as a platoon commander and later commanded 3/8 and Regimental Combat Team 8 in Fallujah, Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom.—Editor*

## One Sailor, Seven Marines

As I read about the training accident off the coast of California and the loss of life, I would like to pay my respects to our servicemen and women who serve in uniform and their families.

Having served from 1961 to 1966, I am sure the Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) used by the Marines today is of a more modern design and faster. I am wondering how a hatch or watertight compartment failed. I am suggesting that a plan be developed to build AAVs with flotation material between the outer and inner bulkheads to a degree that will slow down the sinking of the watercraft so troops can exit in a timely manner.

The AAV should also have, around the exterior sides of the perimeter, instant high-pressure air inflators as used to recover sunken watercraft. The inflatable air bags can be concealed in lockers around the perimeter above the waterline in bullet proof containers.

Large air bags have been used to recover submarines in deep water and aircraft. In the AAV design it would serve to keep the craft afloat and allow the crew to abandon ship orders. We would not only serve our



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troops but recover an AAV to serve again. An investigation into any design flaws is warranted or abandon ship procedures by the coxswain or craft captain. God bless our Marines, Sailors and families.

HN John Sanchez  
USN, 1961-1966  
Hanford, Calif.

## The Call to Volunteer

I've been a subscriber and an MCA member since boot camp in 1967 and look forward to receiving *Leatherneck* every month. When this month's magazine arrived containing the article, "The Call to Volunteer: Veterans Donate Their Time, Talents; Uplifting and Uniting Communities," it immediately was the first one read. Charles "Nate" Swope did an excellent job with one small oversight. He neglected to mention probably the most effective volunteer organization founded by a few Marines 11 years ago.

Team Rubicon was founded by veteran Marine Scout Sniper Jake Wood, along with several other Marines and veterans. It began simply as a group of strangers meeting in Haiti after the earthquake. They didn't know each other and came from diverse backgrounds. For the first two weeks following the disaster, it was Jake Wood and these volunteers, one of whom was a surgeon, who were the only nongovernmental organizations there. It took two weeks for the Red Cross and the better known relief organizations to get there, and by that time Jake and the other volunteers had set up a surgery and organized groups of local citizens to help rescue survivors some of whom were buried in the rubble. They also helped organize and distribute food and water to the survivors. After doing as much as they could, Jake and the others made a decision to continue trying to help people in time of disaster.

Team Rubicon was born in Haiti and since that time it has grown to more than 1,000 volunteers, many of whom are veterans. Team Rubicon has deployed all over the United States to underserved areas to clear roadways, fight forest fires, and clear rubble from uninhabitable homes. Team Rubicon is made up of nurses and doctors, qualified lawyers, water treatment specialists and just about any type of skilled worker imaginable. If you are willing to be trained, they will train you in rescue skills, first aid, debris removal, heavy equipment operating and more.

It is now a FEMA recognized disaster response group and is ranked as the 6th most productive in the United States according to FEMA. All volunteers are required to pass a background check and

must have their own insurance in order to be deployed to a disaster scene. For every hour worked by Team Rubicon volunteers, FEMA pays a generous hourly rate to the governing body of the city, county or state involved. There are also Team Rubicon chapters in Canada and Australia.

As a Team Rubicon volunteer, I've deployed to Panama City and Mexico Beach, Fla., to assist with recovery from Hurricane Michael and to Abaco Island, Bahamas, after Hurricane Dorian. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, my age prevents me from deploying now, but Team Rubicon is all over the south and western United States helping with forest fire and flood damage. I know there are plenty of Marine vets who would love to volunteer with Team Rubicon and a mention in *Leatherneck* would certainly make them aware of the need.

Thank you for a great magazine and keep up the good work!

Cpl Larry Mullane  
USMC, 1967-1969  
South Amboy, N.J.

• *Here's your mention in Leatherneck, and if your outstanding description of Team Rubicon and its wonderful works doesn't pull in more volunteers, I don't know what will!*—Editor

## The Marine Corps Has Meant A Lot to Me

After enlisting in the Marines, I was in boot camp in San Diego from February to April 1943. That April I started having the *Leatherneck* sent to my parents back home in Indiana. Mother saved them for me, and I still have them dating from April 1943 to December 1947. *Leatherneck* is my favorite magazine.

After boot camp I was sent to Camp Elliott in San Diego for eight weeks of infantry training. Next, I was placed in the 20th Replacement Battalion and sent to Melbourne, Australia. There, I was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines.

Upon completing infantry training, I was sent to New Guinea aboard an old coal-burning ship. While on watch someone in my company was smoking when the smoking lamp was out. Since I didn't catch them, I was sentenced to five days of bread and water, but when the guards changed every four hours, they brought me food, so I was eating more than anyone on the ship.

I arrived in New Guinea in September 1943 and trained there for four months and made my first landing at Cape Gloucester, New Britain. It was Dec. 26—Christmas Day back home. On the third evening at Cape Gloucester, "Chesty" Puller came



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by my foxhole and said, “How you doing, old man?” I was 19 years old. There were only eight of us left out of 40 Marines in my platoon at Cape Gloucester. The rest were either killed or wounded. In April we were relieved by the Army.

Next, we boarded a ship to the Russell Islands. I went below deck and found an ice cream store. The Sailor working there asked if I would like a job serving ice cream and cleaning the equipment and floors. I couldn’t refuse and became the most popular Marine in my company. It was a big treat because we hadn’t had ice cream in several months.

We arrived in the Russell Islands and were stationed on Pavuvu Island. While there, we were entertained by Bob Hope, Patti Page, Frances Langford and Jerry Colonna. After training for several months, we made the landing on Peleliu. After one month, only 13 out of the 200 Marines in our company were left who hadn’t been killed or wounded. We returned to Pavuvu and continued training until we made landing on Okinawa on April 1, 1945. On May 7th, we moved south and relieved the Army’s 27th Division. On June 6th, I received a gunshot wound to my right shoulder and was sent to Guam to Fleet Hospital number 111.

One day while waiting on a ship to go



**Cpl Carl F. Scott, left, and Mitch Paige, Medal of Honor recipient from WW II.**

COURTESY OF CPL CARL F. SCOTT, USMC

back to Okinawa, some of us were playing basketball. Two young lieutenants came along and asked if they could join us. While talking to one of the lieutenants, he asked if I had ever met Lieutenant Johnson. I said, “Yes. He was the worst lieutenant I ever served with!” He said, “That’s my brother.” That was the most embarrassing moment during my career as a Marine.

I returned to the States in October 1945 and was honorably discharged on Nov. 6. After the war, I became active in the

1st Marine Division Association where I met Mitch Paige, Medal of Honor recipient from World War II. The first time I met him was at a reunion in Washington, D.C., in 1965.

I have located Marines from B/1/7 and with the help of others, I have 100 names.

I’ve attended 48 national conventions for the 1st Marine Division Association where “Chesty” Puller was in attendance and at another reunion in Pittsburgh where I sat at the same table with him.

Although I served only 33 months in the Marines, I had some pretty interesting experiences. Those months have meant a lot to me all my life and I am 96 years old.

Cpl Carl F. Scott  
Elwood, Ind.

### Reminiscing on Personal History

Interestingly this year’s issues of *Leatherneck* have had both Sound Off letters and specific articles that have prompted me to communicate with you.

First, the letter, “Operation Utah,” sent by Jerry R. Wininger of Joplin, Mo., in the May issue regarding the RVN during March of 1966 and a response, “Vietnam War was Worth it,” by “Name Withheld” published in the July issue have personal meaning to me.

I participated in Operation Utah as



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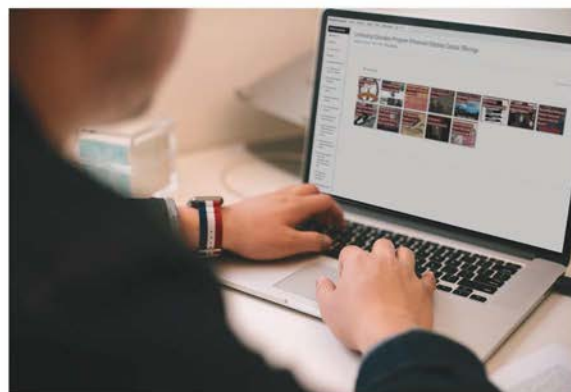
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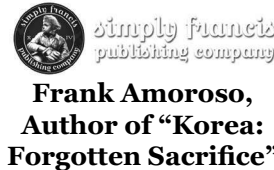
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well as several other operations during my 1965-1966 tour of duty in Vietnam including Operation Starlite under Colonel Oscar Peatross, who we reverently and affectionately referred to as "Colonel Pete." Col Pete was one of the main brain trusts behind Operation Starlite and was also the Chief of Staff during Operation Utah. While I understand the sensitivities of Mr. Wininger, I must state that I totally concur with the response as written from "Name Withheld." Yes, it was worth it, and yes, I'd do it again. We were there for the right reasons and doing the right thing.

Second, a Sound Off letter in the July issue entitled, "The Marine Corps Never Let Go of Him," touched me in a special way as well. It is difficult to express the amount of pride, sense of accomplishment and special camaraderie there is in being a part of something so special as the United States Marine Corps. If you haven't been there and experienced it, then you cannot possibly grasp the real understanding of what it means to earn and wear the title of United States Marine.

My brother, Ron, also a Marine, and I traveled to Quantico for a fundraising dinner prior to a shovel going into the ground to support the proposed National Museum of the Marine Corps. Guest speakers at that dinner were Wilford

Brimley (an actor and Korean War veteran) and General Peter Pace who was the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We had lunch at the Globe & Laurel restaurant on the day of the dinner, and much to our surprise, Mr. Brimley and a large contingent were also dining there. We did not interrupt them, however, it was a nice experience.

We also returned for an action-packed weekend during the grand opening of the National Museum of the Marine Corps during November 2006. On Nov. 10, we first attended the opening ceremonies featuring President George W. Bush as the guest speaker and later we attended the 231st Marine Corps Birthday Ball at the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel in Falls Church, Va., with Gen Alfred Gray as the guest speaker. We also had the great pleasure to meet several of the Navajo Code Talkers who attended the birthday ball.

On Nov. 11, Veterans Day, we went to Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., for the laying of the wreath ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the ceremonies in the amphitheater with President Bush as the guest speaker.

In 2007, we returned to visit the National Museum in a more relaxed atmosphere.

**[continued on page 68]**

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# In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

## SOUTH CHINA SEA

### Prepare to be Boarded: 31st MEU Conducts VBSS Rehearsal

The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and *America* Amphibious Ready Group executed a simulated visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) mission in the South China Sea, Sept. 6.

The exercise began with detailed planning across all three ships assigned to the *America* ARG. During the execution, dock landing ship USS *Germantown* (LSD-42) posed as a foreign ship that had been identified as a non-compliant vessel transporting illicit cargo while amphibious transport dock ship USS *New Orleans* (LPD-18) and amphibious assault ship USS *America* (LHA-6) carried out the simulated mission.

Marines with the Maritime Raid Force (MRF), 31st MEU, assaulted *Germantown* from the air, fast roping to the deck from Navy MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopters assigned to the Navy's Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 Detachment 6 and a CH-53E Super Stallion assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced).

MRF Marines cut through simulated barriers and entered the ship, clearing

through the ship's narrow passageways to detain hostile forces and locate the notional "cache" of illegal weapons.

The 31st MEU's MRF is made up of the Force Reconnaissance Platoon, Amphibious Reconnaissance Platoon (ARP), and a security element.

"The Force Reconnaissance Platoon is trained and certified through multiple courses and many hours of instruction, ensuring they are tactically and technically proficient at maritime interdiction operations," said the platoon's commander, Captain Alexander Lizotte. "I have full confidence in the ability of each member of my platoon to successfully plan and execute VBSS."

Every MEU trains to this mission; however, as the only continuously forward-deployed MEU, the 31st MEU must be prepared to execute VBSS in the Indo-Pacific region at any time, including in contested waters in the South China Sea. The ability to execute VBSS is a key part of the 31st MEU's role in ensuring security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

"As a forward-deployed MEU, we provide the most flexible and responsive capability in the world to interdict international threats at sea," said Captain

Steven Anderson, ARP commander for the 31st MEU. "Executing VBSS is an example of the effectiveness and lethality of the Navy-Marine Corps team."

The United States remains committed to supporting freedom of navigation and international law of the sea, and the 31st MEU's ability to execute VBSS missions contributes to these broader objectives.

"The Commandant of the Marine Corps gave specific instruction in his planning guidance to be first on the scene, first to help, first to contain a brewing crisis, and if required to do so, first to fight. The tactical discipline and aggressive action displayed this weekend by the Sailors and Marines of Amphibious Squadron 11 and the 31st MEU demonstrates to our Commandant, our allies and partners and our adversaries that we are prepared to do just that," said Colonel Michael Nakonieczny, the commanding officer of the 31st MEU.

The 31st MEU and *America* ARG operated in the South China Sea for a short time before moving on to continue planned exercises elsewhere in the region.

The *America* ARG-31st MEU team is operating in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations to enhance interoperability with allies and partners and serves as a ready response force to defend peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It remains the premier crisis response force in the region despite the unique challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1stLt Stephanie Murphy, USMC

## FORT BRAGG, N.C.

### Large-Scale Artillery Exercise Tests Regiment's Maneuver, Operational Skills

Marines and Sailors with the 10th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division kept the citizens of Fort Bragg, N.C., awake at night while they flexed their capabilities through the use of artillery.

The regiment executed Exercise Rolling Thunder 21-1 on the Army installation during October. Rolling Thunder is a large-scale exercise that integrates all battalions within the regiment to showcase their ability to maneuver and operate to further enhance their combat effectiveness.

The exercise is conducted twice a year with artillery and supporting assets such as Communication Battalion, Transportation Support Battalion and Training Support Center. The regiment successfully transported 22 M777-towed 155 mm



LCPL KOLBY LEGER, USMC

**Force Recon Marines with 31st MEU cut through metal during simulated VBSS mission drills aboard USS *Germantown* (LSD-42), Sept. 5. VBSS is part of maritime interception operations that aim to delay, disrupt or destroy enemy forces or supplies in the maritime domain.**





**LCpl Alexander Hilton, a field artillery cannoneer with 2/10, 2ndMarDiv, observes the blast of a M777-towed 155 mm howitzer during Exercise Rolling Thunder at Fort Bragg, N.C., Oct. 8. Rolling Thunder was a large-scale exercise that integrated all battalions within 10th Marines to showcase their ability to maneuver and carry out missions to further enhance their combat effectiveness. (Photo by LCpl Jennifer Reyes, USMC)**



LCPL JENNIFER REYES, USMC

**Marines with 2/10 are supplied with ammunition while preparing for Exercise Rolling Thunder at Fort Bragg, N.C., Oct. 7.**



**PFC Jahymes Williams, a field artillery cannoneer with 2/10, looks through an M17A1 fire control quadrant during an emplacing drill in preparation for Exercise Rolling Thunder at Fort Bragg, Oct. 6. (Photo by LCpl Jennifer Reyes, USMC)**

howitzers and more than 1,000 troops from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to the fields of Fort Bragg.

All battalions in the regiment were able to maneuver amongst each other and operate together during fire missions. Throughout the duration of the five-day exercise, the regiment fired more than 5,000 rounds and executed multiple move-

ments, both at night and during the day.

In recent years, artillery has been used in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. As warfare continues to change, it is vital for Marines to conduct exercises of the magnitude of Rolling Thunder to adapt and stay ready for generations to follow. As the Marine Corps evolves, so too does training. Exercises conducted at the regimental

level are becoming second nature and multiple battalions are expanding their lethality while operating together.

Mission success is the end goal of all operations, and Rolling Thunder is just another example of how the Marine Corps is continually preparing for the next conflict.

Cpl Aaron Douds, USMC





**A Marine with 3rd Recon Bn, 3rdMarDiv conducts a high altitude-low opening jump to secure an airfield facilitating a HIMARS rapid infiltration and simulated firing mission at Ie Shima Airfield, Okinawa, Japan, Sept. 24.**

CPL DONOVAN MASSIEPEREZ, USMC



**A HIMARS system is unloaded from a C-130 during a HIMARS rapid infiltration exercise at Ie Shima Airfield, Okinawa, Japan, Sept. 24. The exercise demonstrated how III MEF units leverage the unique capabilities of joint partners.**

CPL DONOVAN MASSIEPEREZ, USMC

## OKINAWA, JAPAN

### Extending the Range: Marines Secure Maritime Terrain, Deploy Rocket System With USAF Support

U.S. Marines refined their ability to rapidly deploy to remote regional islands in order to control key maritime terrain as 3rd Marine Division and 3rd Marine Logistics Group conducted operations

centered on the Okinawan island of Ie Shima, Japan, Sept. 23-25.

During this operation, elements of 12th Marine Artillery Regiment partnered with Marines from 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion and the U.S. Air Force's 1st Special Operations Squadron to develop the unit's ability to rapidly insert and employ a range of military capabilities

from remote islands within littoral areas of the region. Jumping from Air Force C-130s, Marines and Sailors with 3rd Recon Bn conducted a high altitude-low opening jump to secure an airfield on Ie Shima. Once secured, an Air Force C-130 loaded with a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launcher landed and conducted a simulated precision-guided firing mission. Shortly after finding and destroying the simulated target, the HIMARS launcher reloaded and departed the island.

Simultaneously, Marines from Combat Logistics Regiment 3 and 9th Engineer Support Battalion, at nearby locations in Okinawa, established an expeditionary advanced logistics base and practiced the ability to resupply the forward-positioned element on Ie Shima. Their efforts included surface reinforcement and resupply of Ie Shima and tested their ability to move fuel ashore under expeditionary conditions. The exercise represented a step forward in demonstrating how III Marine Expeditionary Force units can leverage the unique capabilities of joint partners in rapidly dispersing to and operating from key maritime terrain; sustain these distributed positions; and quickly replace or withdraw as necessitated by the tactical situation.

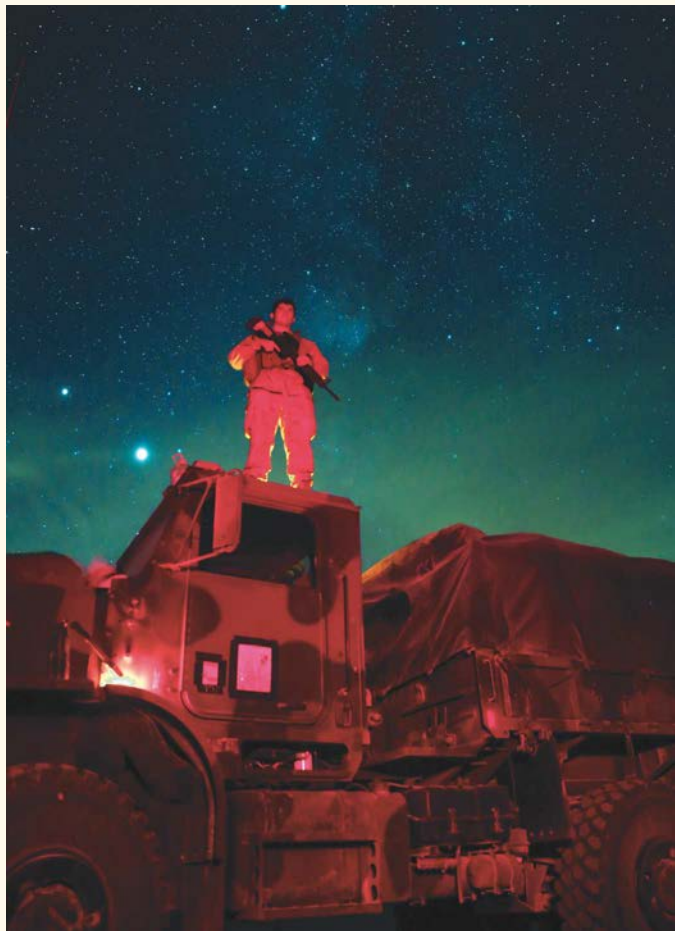
"Today's mission provided us an opportunity to work with the Air Force, and it's also an opportunity for reconnaissance elements to integrate with the HIMARS launcher and its crew," said Captain Robert O'Neill, a platoon commander with 3rd Recon Bn. "The training we're conducting is helping us enhance and expand our concepts of employment and increase our ability to conduct distributed maritime operations."

The reconnaissance platoon, which boasts more than 700 jumps in a tactical environment among its current members, served as a key enabler for the operation by conducting a low-signature insertion and ensuring the security of the airfield. The employment of C-130s to quickly transport the HIMARS extends the range and efficiency with which the Marine Corps can employ missiles and rockets, increasing the lethality of the force.

"During HIMARS rapid infiltration missions, we routinely practice sending and receiving targeting data over a variety of over-the-horizon communication methods," said Major John Huenefeld, the operations officer for 12th Marine Regiment. "By tapping into the network of sensors, we ensure the ability of 3rd Marine Division to fight now with long-range precision fires."

U.S. Air Force C-130s from 1st Special Operations Squadron delivered Marines





LCPL ZACHARY ZEPHIR, USMC

**Above: Cpl Justin Seigel participates in the Motorized Fire Movement Exercise Course during ITX 1-21, Oct. 8.**

**Below: Marines practice casualty response drills while participating in the Motorized Fire Movement Exercise Course as part of ITX 1-21 at MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., Oct. 9.**



LCPL ZACHARY ZEPHIR, USMC

### **Motorized Fire Movement: CLB-8 Provides Tactical Logistics During ITX**

Motor vehicle operators with Combat Logistics Battalion 8, Combat Logistics Regiment 2, participated in the Motorized Fire Movement Exercise Course during Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) 1-21 at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Oct. 8-9. The unit traveled from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to act as the logistics combat element during ITX, providing tactical logistics in the areas of medium and heavy-lift motor transportation beyond 4th Marine Regiment's organic capabilities.



LCPL ZACHARY ZEPHIR, USMC

**Motor vehicle operators with CLB-8, the logistics combat element, supported 4th Marine Regiment during ITX, serving as the logistics combat element, Oct. 8.**





CPL DONOVAN MASSIEPEREZ, USMC

**A Marine with 12th Marines, 3rdMarDiv participates in a fire mission during a HIMARS rapid infiltration exercise at Ie Shima Airfield, Okinawa, Japan, Sept. 24.**

from 3rd Recon Bn and a HIMARS launcher from 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines. “This opportunity is important because, if a real fight happens, we are going to use every available asset. The Air Force will work alongside the Marine Corps,” said Major Sean A. Sizemore, USAF, an air mobility liaison officer with Air Mobility

Command. “The Air Force integrating with the Marine Corps ensures we remain highly interoperable. When a fight comes, we can get the Marines behind enemy lines or to where the fight is.” Following this rapid seizure of maritime terrain, Marines with CLR-3 and 9th ESB sustained forward-positioned forces from

expeditionary advanced logistics bases and established a Forward Arming and Refueling Point on Ie Shima to support follow-on air operations. “We demonstrated the ability to conduct aviation refueling while operating within the construct of expeditionary advanced base operations,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jake Alamguer, a bulk fuel officer with 9th ESB, 3rd MLG. Practicing distributed operations integrated with joint partners and across the Marine Air-Ground Task Force ensures that III MEF remains postured to deter aggression and defeat any adversary. “It’s very important, if we want to succeed in a naval contested environment, that we maintain a force that is highly lethal, resilient, redundant and responsive,” said Colonel Michael Roach, the commanding officer of 12th Marine Regiment. GySgt Steve Cushman, USMC



## BRIDGEPORT, CALIF.



LCPL COLTON BROWNLEE, USMC

**ANIMAL PACKING**—Cpl Paul D. Mooney IV, an infantry assault Marine with 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, guides a mule during Animal Packing Course 4-20 at Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., Oct. 9. The course teaches students to use mules to travel through difficult terrain with mission-essential gear.



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# Assignment of Choice



KYLE DUNBABIN

**One of the most beautiful Buddhist Temples in the country, Haedong Yonggung Temple, is located in Busan.**

By Sgt Parker R. Golz, USMC

*Editor's note: The following article received an honorable mention in the 2020 Leatherneck Writing Contest. Major Richard A. "Rick" Stewart, USMC (Ret) sponsored the contest, which is open to enlisted Marines, through the Marine Corps Association & Foundation. The 2021 contest is open to enlisted Marines until March 31.*

**T**he Marine Corps is an elite military organization, and Marines are known for overcoming insurmountable odds with tenacity, fighting spirit, and battle-hardened skill. Throughout our illustrious history, we have earned our stripes in every corner of the globe. "Every clime and place" is a phrase used in "The Marines' Hymn," and the institution puts meaning to it in its practice of deploying all over the world.

We are truly a force that operates across the globe, from the hottest deserts to the coldest mountains, and from the densest jungles to the most far off islands.

Today, Marines have numerous duty stations from which we can pick and choose. Our Corps makes it possible to travel to six of the seven continents in the world. With so many opportunities, it's easy to overlook some of the most rewarding duty stations. One such station is U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Korea. The Republic of Korea (ROK), which is nestled on the southern end of a peninsula rich with culture and full of opportunity, is a post that Marines should consider.

The U.S. Marines have supported and defended the ROK since we fought against the aggression of the North Korean invasion in the early 1950s. North Korea crossed the 38th parallel on June 25, 1950, and threatened South Korea's way of life and its existence as an autonomous state. Ultimately, ROK and U.S. forces would be pressed into an area 140 miles long known as the Pusan Perimeter. With most of the peninsula under enemy control, on July 7, 1950, U.S. Marines answered the call to support and defend South Korea from that threat of tyranny. This was the first step in a long march toward liberating South Korea.

Two months later, a daring and surprise amphibious landing was carried out on Sept. 15, by 1st Marine Division, which landed at Inchon (*Editor's note: As of 2000, Inchon is now officially Incheon*) and took control of the city in five days. Today, this historical site is the first ground upon which most servicemembers step when entering South Korea. Located on the northwest coast, Incheon is one of the largest cities in South Korea with almost 3 million residents. It is the country's fourth-largest metropolitan area by population. Designated as Korea's first economic free zone, its financial success welcomes an abundance of activities.

Incheon is a premier location from which to learn what the country has to offer. You can spend an afternoon in Incheon Grand Park, a 727-acre park located between two large mountains, experience Sinpo International Market in the evening and take in some South Korean street food, or head to the Jeondeungsang



**U.S. Marines hike along the edge of a mountain cliff at Bukhansan National Park, Republic of Korea.**

Temple, a 1,000-year-old sanctuary with grand buildings and ancient relics. To Marines new to their assignments in South Korea, Incheon is an easily accessible city and a great first stop to begin enjoying their new homes. Incheon is an example of how the sacrifice and commitment made seven decades ago by ROK and U.S. forces served as a critical step toward South Korea becoming what it is today—a thriving economic powerhouse and a bastion for democracy in Asia.

Before the Marines made their spectacular landing at Incheon, we were engaged in an epic struggle for survival on the opposite end of the country at a place called Busan (*Editor's note: The same 2000 edict renamed Pusan Busan*). Today, Busan is a vibrant city, surrounded by mountains with rivers flowing through it; however, in June 1950, Busan was on the brink of a communist takeover. The North Korean People's Army (NKPA) pushed the ROK Army and U.S. forces inside an area south of the Naktong River. This zone is famously called the Pusan Perimeter. Marines helped reinforce the perimeter and eventually aided in breaking out of the vice grip the North Koreans held around

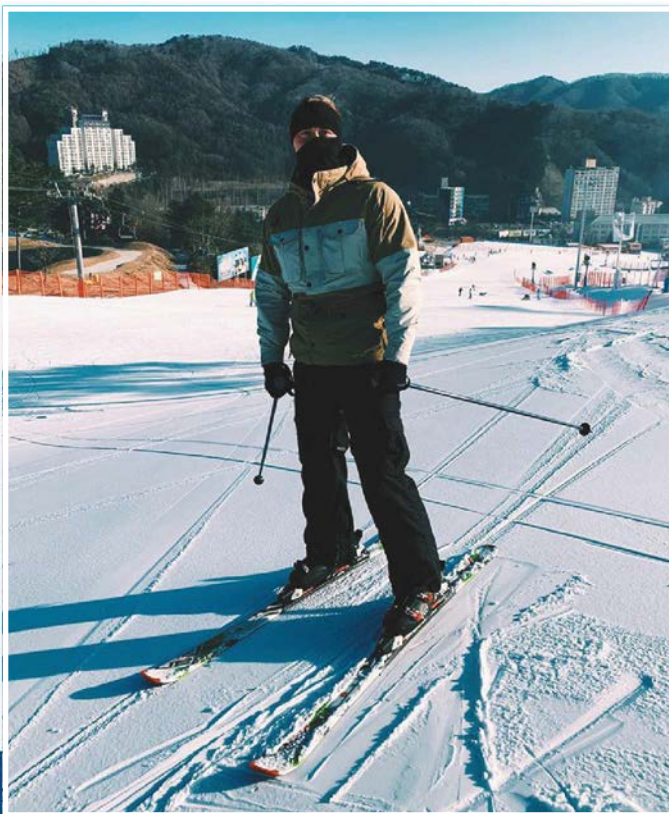
the allied forces. It was during this fight that the forces of the 5th Marine Regiment earned the moniker "Fire Brigade."

As of 2019, Busan has more than 3.5 million citizens and is home to the fifth-busiest port in the world. The city is also South Korea's largest industrial area and a prime tourist destination. There are several beaches where you can enjoy a leisurely stroll, catch some sun or dive in with a surfboard and hit the waves. The

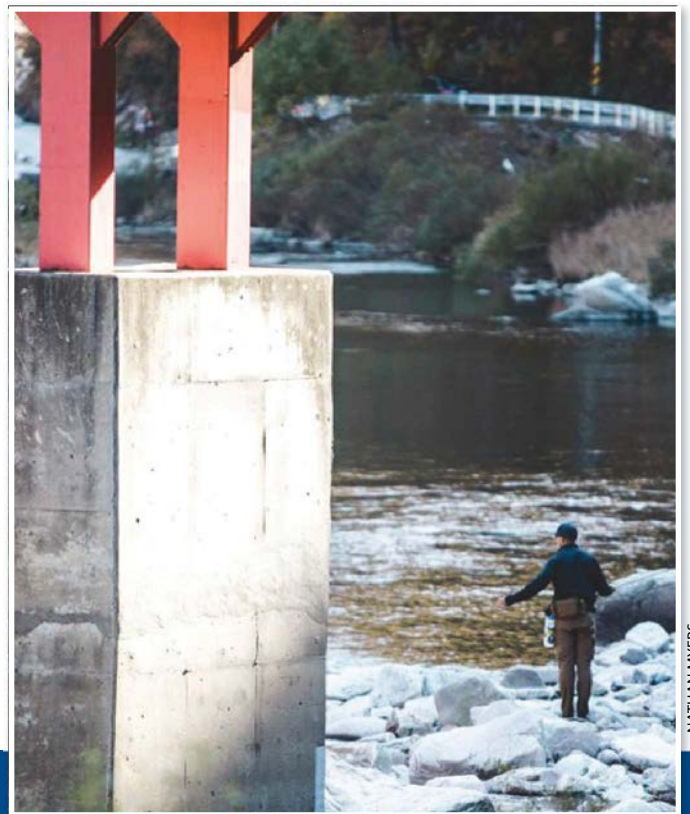
view from Songdo Beach is second to none, and you can take surfing lessons at Songjeong Beach if you are feeling more adventurous. The coastal entertainment provided by the many beautiful locations is enough to make anyone want to stay in South Korea indefinitely. If the beach is not your scene, there are plenty of other sights to see. You can enjoy the Gamcheon Culture Village, marvel at the Haedong Yonggung Temple's tranquility, or enjoy



NATHAN MYERS



ANDREW MAJOR



NATHAN MYERS

**Above left: U.S. Marine Sgt Kyle Dunbabin enjoys a ski trip at Phoenix Park Ski Resort near Pyeongchang, in South Korea.**

**Above right: A U.S. Marine takes liberty in Taebaek-Si, Republic of Korea, for a weekend of fishing and outdoor activity.**



the nightlife at the many nightclubs in the city. Busan is yet another growing South Korean city with near-limitless attractions. It is a marvel to consider the transition of a city from the brink of collapse 70 years ago to a growing and exuberant community today. All of this is the result of the tremendous contribution made by ROK and U.S. forces during the darkest moments of the Korean War.

South Korea is a culturally rich country full of welcoming citizens and a growing economy that breathes life into cities across the peninsula. With a state of the art railway system that runs coast to coast, and a taxi available at nearly every street corner, one can easily afford a trip to enjoy the cultural sites and take in the beauty of the sprawling mountains and countryside. The nation's capital, Seoul, is a great example of the opportunities available to visitors for leisure and entertainment.

It is also a city on which U.S. Marines have had an unquestionable impact. After landing at Incheon and pushing inland, the Marines arrived at the NKPA controlled capital on Sept. 25, 1950. With a fighting spirit, perseverance, and sheer will, they drove out the NKPA and liberated South Korea's capital. The ruin and devastation

of a city that saw intense street fighting is hardly evidenced today as Seoul has been rebuilt into one of the largest and most modern cities in the world. With the fourth-largest metropolitan economy in the world and stunning modern architecture, the contrast between the various temples and city skyline is breathtaking. Seoul is a city with unique nightlife for those who seek the city lights and hosts countless museums for the academics among us.

Though being stationed overseas often means being away from family during the holidays, South Koreans celebrate American holidays along with the most patriotic American. Their celebration of Thanksgiving, the spectacular display of fireworks on the 4th of July, and the warm spirit accompanied by a cool winter breeze of Christmas are reminiscent of life in the States and can help any Marine enjoy the holidays away from home. With such a welcoming tone, it is no wonder that service members across the joint force love calling South Korea their temporary home. Many of us overlook this country as a duty station simply because we are not aware of what it has to offer. Though it is not discussed enough, South Korea presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

to live abroad and take a deep-dive into another culture and way of life.

To be stationed in a country with such a distinguished history is a great honor. South Korean history is Marine Corps history, and any U.S. Marine who sets foot in South Korea becomes a part of that story. The citizens on the peninsula take great pride in hosting servicemembers from all branches. It is hard to believe that more Marines are not choosing Korea as their next post. Standing a one- to two-year duty, receiving extra pay and experiencing what this amazing country has to offer make it an opportunity worth taking. South Korea is arguably the Marine Corps' best-kept secret for overseas duty stations. With the recent encouragement of our Commandant that we need the "highest quality NCOs, SNCOs, and officers for duty in the Pacific," now is a perfect time to serve in the Far East, come experience the adventure of a lifetime and become a "Korea" Marine.

*Author's bio: Sgt Parker R. Golz is currently serving in South Korea. He is a videographer and photographer with a communication strategy and operations MOS.*



**The Jagalchi Market, South Korea's largest seafood market, is located in the coastal city of Busan.**



# Fleet Landing Exercises, 1934-1942

By Capt Michael Hanson, USMC

**I**f the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eaton, the Japanese bases in the Pacific were captured on the beaches of the Caribbean,” said General Holland M. Smith, commander of V Amphibious Corps and one of the architects of the American victory in the island-hopping campaign of World War II. However remarkable it was, the victory was not a quick one. Though the campaign itself lasted nearly four years, the seeds of victory were planted decades before and cultivated by countless Marines and Sailors. They struggled with writing doctrine, testing equipment, developing and refining tactics, techniques and procedures, and executing meaningful training under difficult conditions. In addition to those who bled in three years of intense combat, victory also belongs to those who shivered and sweated through 20 years of shaky development of a new type of warfare—amphibious operations.

Amphibious assault is one of the most difficult and costly methods of warfare, and one that takes years to perfect. In

1922, the Marines began the work of learning how to conduct modern amphibious operations. In that year, the 5th Marine Regiment (reinforced) joined Atlantic fleet maneuvers and explored offensive and defensive operations off Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and Culebra Island, Puerto Rico.

The following year, Marines made landings in exercises in Panama and Cape Cod, Mass. In 1924, the 5th Marines (reinforced) again conducted landings and subsequent attacks in Panama and Culebra. In 1925, 1,500 Marines representing a force of 42,000 conducted amphibious exercises in Hawaii. The common conclusion of each exercise was that more work was needed. Of the many problems experienced in each of the exercises, notable trends stood out: landing forces were insufficient once ashore; landing craft were inadequate in both quantity and quality to land troops effectively; landings made at the wrong places and at the wrong times; naval gunfire and close air support were also inadequate in quantity and quality in both sequencing and targeting to cover the landing force’s approach; and cargo was embarked inefficiently with

supplies needed ashore loaded haphazardly among non-essential gear. Other than a small test with two landing craft in 1926, however, the Marines were finished with amphibious experimentation for the remainder of the 1920s. The Corps was too involved with the Banana Wars to provide troops for landing exercises.

Though the Marines could not field the forces to practice amphibious operations, development did not end with the exercises. In his report to the Commandant, one of the exercise commanders stated the need for better equipment and official doctrine on amphibious operations to guide planning and execution. In 1933, bold action was finally taken on this recommendation. All classes at the Marine Corps Schools system were put on hold, and all personnel—both instructors and students—were tasked to write the official doctrinal publication on Marine Corps amphibious landing operations. They began by studying the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign of 1915 when British and French expeditionary forces attempted an amphibious assault against Turkish forces during World War I. Using this



Marines storm ashore across Guadalcanal’s beaches on D-day, Aug. 7, 1942, from attack transport USS *Barnett* (AP-11) and attack cargo ship USS *Fomalhaut* (AK-22). Fleet landing exercises conducted by the Marines in the 15 years prior to WW II played a significant role in the success of amphibious landings throughout the war.



USMC

**Above: MajGen Holland M. Smith, CG, Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet, observes landing operation exercises with his aide, Capt Victor H. Krulak, at Fort Story, Va., in the winter of 1941.**

**Below: Col Hayne Boyden, the first Marine officer to attend the Army School of Aerial Photography in 1923, filmed landing force exercises on the beaches of Culebra Island from 1924 to 1927 with Cpl Hubert Dogan as his cameraman.**

example as a problem framing guide, the officers individually outlined the order and detail of actions that must take place from preparation to execution of a forced landing.

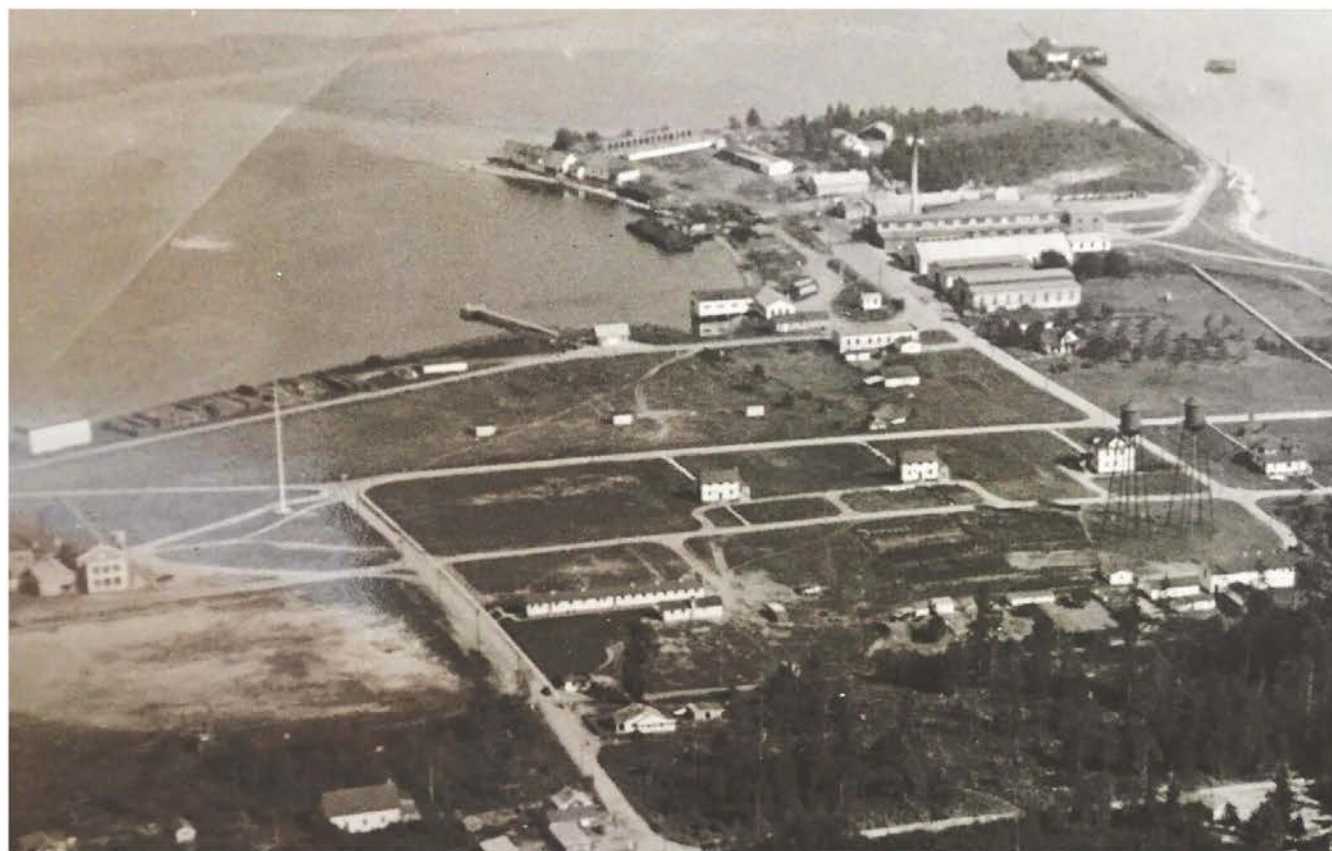
After a series of committees examined the papers and produced a table of contents, topics were assigned to working groups to develop the chapters for the upcoming manual. After seven months of focused study, the 127,000-word-long “Tentative Manual for Landing Operations, 1934,” was completed, and the Marine Corps had its own official doctrine on amphibious operations. The Navy accepted it as the “Manual for Naval Overseas Operations,” before the Marine Corps had finished refining it. Another two years of working groups and committees in Quantico honed the manual even further, and in 1938 the Navy adopted it as “Fleet Training Publication Number 167, Landing Operations Doctrine, U.S. Navy.”

“Tentative Manual for Landing Operations” went further than any preceding volume on the subject. Nowhere else in the world existed such a detailed set of directions on how to plan and conduct amphibious operations. Lieutenant General Victor “Brute” Krulak would later say that the manual represented, “more hard, doctrinal pronouncement

on the seizure of an objective by amphibious assault than had ever been assembled in one place in all of history.” It was a remarkable achievement in the development of warfare, and one effected entirely through academic study.

According to J. Robert Moskin’s “The U.S. Marine Corps Story,” “The manual dealt with all the basic elements of amphibious operations: the nature of the landing force, the allocation of command responsibilities, ship-to-shore movements, survival on the beachhead, fitting naval gunfire support to the need of the landing force, the coordination of close air support, logistics, the combat-loading of transports, the use of landing craft.” The Marine Corps and Navy now had the book of instructions that was so desperately needed to loosen the Gordian knot of assault from the sea. Next would come the work of testing this doctrine and validating or rejecting its precepts through practical application.

After an eight-year hiatus, the Marine Corps resumed amphibious landing exercises in 1934. In 1935, the Marine Corps and Navy initiated the first of seven annual amphibious maneuvers designed to test the “Tentative Manual.” Fleet Landing Exercise (FLEX) 1 embarked a landing force of more than 1,500 Marines organized around the 5th Marine Regiment. The task force



USMC

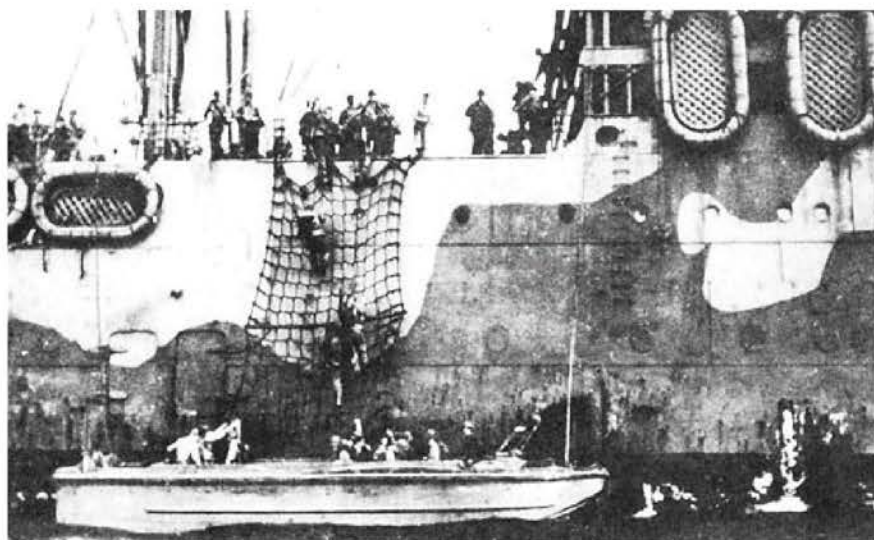


included light and heavy artillery, anti-aircraft defenses and a squadron of airplanes. The amphibious force operated on and around Culebra Island, Puerto Rico, for about a month. Notable themes of the exercise included aircraft attacks focused on strafing and bombing, naval gunfire experiments of various types of ammunition and fuses, and transportation of Marines ashore in ship's boats and towed lighters. Most of these drills were conducted separately from each other, so experimentation was not integrated, and training ashore was given priority over the difficulties of getting ashore.

The main conclusions from FLEX 1 indicated that the landing boats used were inadequate and that insufficient communication led to ineffective direction of naval gunfire and control of landing waves. Over the years to come, these after-action points would become common.

A year later, FLEX 2 was conducted at Culebra with a slightly larger landing force totaling nearly 1,800 Marines. Once again, the Navy conducted separate gunnery tests, while the Marines conducted training on land. FLEX 2 applied a stronger focus on moving the landing force ashore and even featured "an umpired one-sided maneuver involving an assault landing and evacuation of casualties." During the exercise, the landing force sailed aboard battleships and transferred onto destroyers before preparing to go ashore. At this point, the Marines loaded into ship's boats to go ashore. As in FLEX 1 the year before, the ship's boats were found to be a poor means of transporting Marines to the beach. Both the Navy and Marines recognized that dedicated transport ships were necessary for amphibious operations due to the limited space aboard the destroyers to carry personnel and equipment of the landing force the restrictive effects this placed on naval gunfire support to the landing force and the Navy's desire to use the battleships in other places.

FLEX 3 was conducted on San Clemente Island off the coast of California in 1937. The landing force consisted of 2,700 Marines of the 1st Marine Brigade and nearly 800 soldiers of the U.S. Army's 40th Infantry Regiment. FLEX 3 featured the first bombardment of targets ashore in support of an assault landing. Additionally, many different types of landing boats were tested, and troops boarded their



**Above:** During rehearsals for upcoming operations on Guadalcanal, U.S. Marines enter a landing boat on July 26, 1942, in the Fiji Islands.

**Below:** Members of the 4th Marines in full battle dress load into an LCVP and prepare to head for Red Beach 1 during the amphibious landing exercise presented for the National Editorial Association at Onslow Beach, Camp Lejeune.



landing boats from the destroyers via cargo nets for the first time. However, foul weather and harsh seas compromised the utility of the ships' boats and lighters [ramped cargo landing craft]. Struggling against the violent tide, troops landed late, dispersed, or in the wrong place altogether. Once again, the exercise demonstrated the need for better landing craft. Despite the harsh conditions, significant progress was made during FLEX 3. Marine light artillery demonstrated its ability to deliver effective fires shortly after landing on the beach, which represented a bright spot.

In 1938, the Navy and Marine Corps

went back to Culebra for FLEX 4. The exercise force consisted of about 1,300 Marines of the 1st Marine Brigade and nearly 600 soldiers of the 2nd Provisional Brigade. Marines and Sailors continued to test new landing craft and even experimented bringing tanks ashore on specially designed lighters. FLEX 4 featured a series of force-on-force landings during both day and night. These landings utilized reconnaissance, both as part of the landing force and from the air, as well as tanks, which went into action at the landing site. Additionally, aircraft carrier support to landing operations was recognized as essential for future evolutions.



USMC

**Eight- and 10-man rubber rafts were used to create surprise diverting attacks, nicknamed “end runs,” outside the main assault landing to help keep the enemy off balance.**

FLEX 5 was conducted at Culebra and Vieques in 1939 with 2,100 Marines. In addition to continuing with experimentation of landing craft, the exercise also tested tanks and 81 other vehicles on land. Over the course of three landings, significant attention was given to logistics in an amphibious assault, specifically sustaining the expenditures of ammunition and provisions.

According to Holland M. Smith's and Edwin Simmons' "The Development of Amphibious Tactics in the U.S. Navy," during the first landing, "a battalion of infantry reinforced with a mortar platoon carrying one unit of fire and 24 hours' rations," went ashore in a night landing of four waves supported by surface warships and aircraft. The second landing exercise featured a two-day assault on Culebra in which initial "landings were made on outlying islands and artillery landed with which to support the main attack. On the second day, the entire landing force was put ashore with the coordinated support of artillery, naval gunfire, and air." Unlike the second exercise, the third was a two-sided, umpired, force-on-force event where "small task groups conducted landings against Vieques, which was defended by a reinforced battalion. This operation was preceded by preliminary reconnaissance and a demonstration."

In 1940, FLEX 6 was held in Vieques and Culebra with 2,200 men of the 1st Marine Brigade under Brigadier General

Holland M. Smith. In addition to more testing of landing craft, including rubber boats and a prototype of the famous Higgins Boat, the exercise continued to refine the employment of naval gunfire. Like FLEX 5, FLEX 6 featured three landing exercises focusing on offensive and defensive operations during both day and night in a force-on-force training venue. Further emphasis was also given to reconnaissance operations with submarines used for scouting and insertion of recon elements. However, as in previous fleet landing exercises, FLEX 6 was hampered by the deficiency of transport ships and an undersized exercise force.

**I**n February of 1941, the fleet returned to Culebra and Vieques for the final time in FLEX 7. Parts of the Army's 1st Infantry Division and the 1st Marine Division, activated only four days prior, made up the landing force under Smith once again. As in every previous FLEX, the landing force was a skeleton crew of the force desired. In reality, the size of a FLEX 7 landing force was that of a brigade while the training was more appropriate for a battalion. Despite these limitations, FLEX 7 introduced new capabilities not previously seen in a Fleet Landing Exercise as it was the first one to utilize aircraft carriers and transport ships.

The completion of the seven Fleet Landing Exercises highlighted a period of reawakening and innovation for the

Navy and Marine Corps. Throughout the 1930s, a new method of warfare was developed and refined from scratch. It was an era of fiscal austerity in the face of the Great Depression and isolation from rising militarism across both seas. Progress was slow and often frustrating as Marines and Sailors cobbled together working solutions to pressing problems with limited personnel, equipment and funds. Advancement seemed dubious at times; however, events overseas would finally increase the attention and resources given for amphibious development.

A week after Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a limited national emergency. After the fall of France in the summer of 1940, Congress approved the Two-Ocean Navy Act, the greatest upsurge of naval strength to that point in American history, which "meant a 70 percent increase in naval strength, or 1,325,000 tons of new shipping and a commensurate increase in Navy and Marine Corps personnel" as noted in "The Development of Amphibious Tactics." Finally, in May of 1941, just a month before Germany launched the invasion of the Soviet Union, President Roosevelt announced that the country faced an unlimited national emergency. When Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan barely six months later, the United States military had already taken key steps to prepare for



war and had given significant priority to obtaining landing craft, transport vessels and other equipment needed to conduct amphibious landings and assaults in the near future.

Part of these preparations for the looming conflict was the establishment of the 1st Joint Training Force (JTF). Under the command of now-Major General Holland Smith, the subordinate units included the 1stMarDiv, 1st Infantry Division, and enablers. Smith's task was to train this expeditionary corps for potential amphibious missions in the Atlantic. In the summer of 1941, 1st JTF conducted its maneuvers at New River, N.C. After initial landing exercises for battalion and regimental formations, the entire corps prepared for a landing.

This one-sided exercise was, according to Gen Smith, "the largest of its type ever held in the United States. Over 16,500 officers and men, 300 vehicles and 2,200 tons of supplies were put ashore through the surf. Forty-two naval vessels participated in the operation together with four aircraft squadrons of the 1st Marine Air Wing ... The exercise included assault landing, the seizure of a force beachhead line, and an advance inland of about nine miles ... The withdrawal was executed tactically over a period of three nights, and all troops re-embarked under the cover of darkness."

Like the FLEX's before it, the JTF Exercise was not without deficiencies. Personnel shortfalls across the force, such as the absence of an entire infantry regiment from 1stMarDiv, left impacts

across the exercise. Specifically, the number of vehicles brought ashore was insufficient to the task of moving gear inland. Heavy equipment, especially tanks, experienced difficulty getting ashore and did not come in with the early waves. "Service troops also suffered shortages; there were not enough shore party and beach party personnel



**LtGen Holland M. Smith, USMC**

to unload the ships and supply the troops ashore." Additionally, all naval gunfire was simulated as the Navy had to provide ships for Atlantic patrols. Despite the frictions experienced, the exercise was still highly successful.

A two-sided, force-on-force exercise was conducted by the JTF in January 1942, though disagreeable weather challenged the operation. In addition

to an amphibious landing and seizure of a beachhead, the exercise also included a withdrawal and return to the ships from which participants were launched. Due to wartime security requirements, this exercise was also hampered, "by a lack of air and naval gunfire support groups so that it was more in the nature of a ship-to-shore practice than a full scale coordinated amphibious assault," though the JTF demonstrated steady improvement Gen Smith noted later in his book.

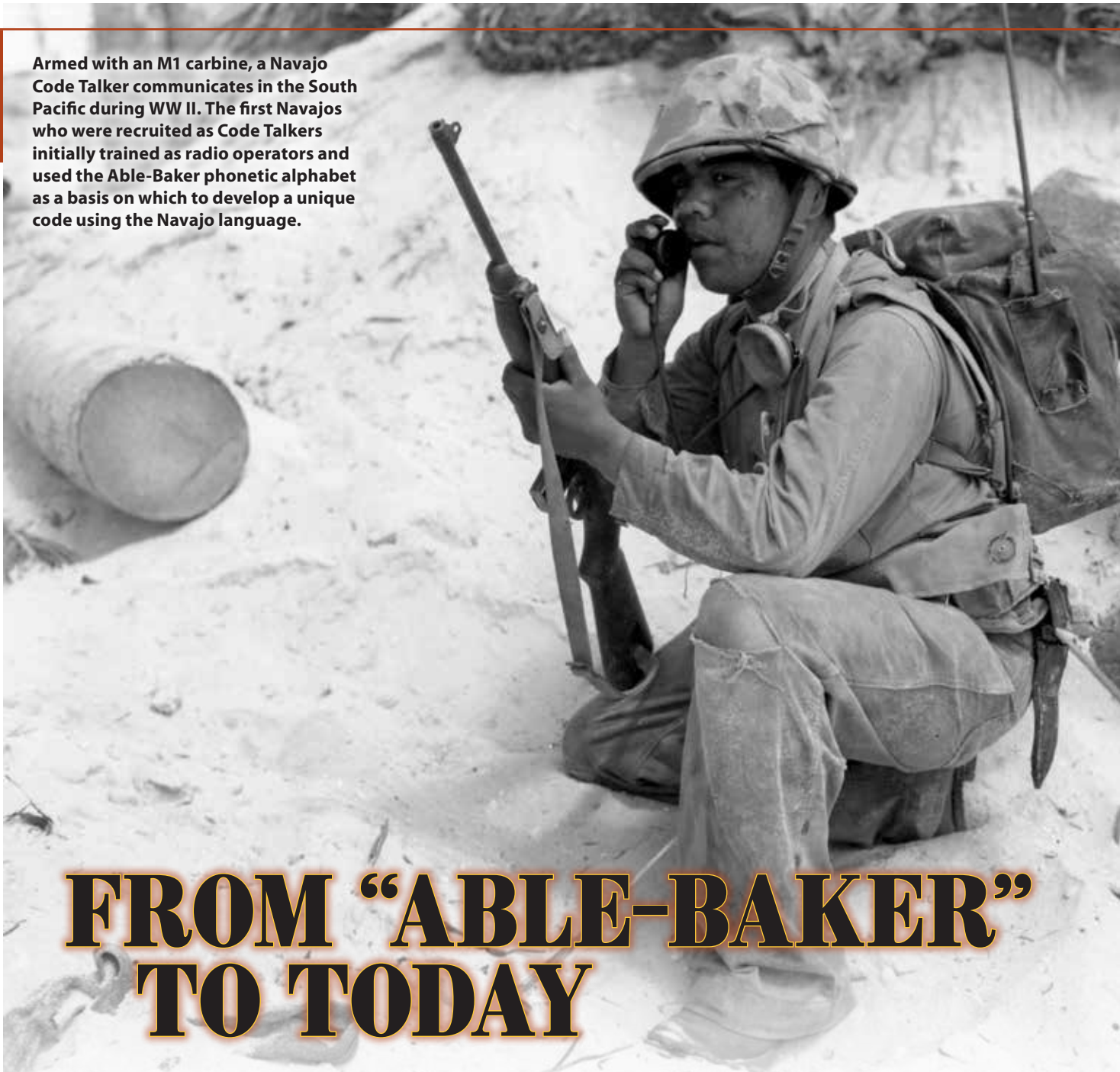
Over the next few months, smaller exercises occurred on Solomons Island in the Chesapeake Bay, but active operations drew away the units of the JTF. Within months, the formation was disbanded as the 1st Infantry Division prepared to invade North Africa and the 1stMarDiv shipped off to begin America's first offensive in the Pacific. When this campaign began with an amphibious assault on the island of Guadalcanal, the amphibious warfare doctrine was proven "sound."

The 1934-1942 large-scale amphibious exercises validated the amphibious warfare doctrine developed in the "Tentative Manual." With each successive exercise, doctrine was updated and refined. By the time of the Guadalcanal landing in August 1942, the Navy and Marine Corps had a workable template for amphibious operations. The Guadalcanal Campaign didn't validate everything as doctrine was continually updated and refined after every successive landing in the war. Many hard lessons remained to be learned, specifically at Tarawa in November 1943. Yet, the fact that the initial landings on Guadalcanal, despite the friction that they encountered, were as successful as they were, is largely because of the training achieved in the landing exercises from 1934-1942. Had the United States attempted its first offensive amphibious campaign with no practice, it could have been an unmitigated disaster. The investments made in peacetime reaped enormous benefits in war and ensured that the landings on Guadalcanal were not a repeat of those at Gallipoli.

*Author's bio: An infantry officer by trade, Capt Hanson has served with 3rd Bn, 1st Marines; 1st Bn, 2nd Marines; and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, Calif., with the Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group. He is currently a student at Expeditionary Warfare School at MCB Quantico, Va.*



**Despite enemy fire, Marines waded through the surf off Tarawa in November 1943. Landing boats and barges brought them to within 500 yards of the beach but the coral bottom prevented the boats from coming any closer to shore.**



Armed with an M1 carbine, a Navajo Code Talker communicates in the South Pacific during WW II. The first Navajos who were recruited as Code Talkers initially trained as radio operators and used the Able-Baker phonetic alphabet as a basis on which to develop a unique code using the Navajo language.

# FROM “ABLE-BAKER” TO TODAY

## The History of the Phonetic Alphabet

By Sam Lichtman

**C**lear and concise communication in the chaotic battlefield environment has always been of paramount importance. Radio was a revolutionary technology, but its invention in the early 1900s didn’t instantly result in rapid and clear communications between Marines. Military strategists and civilian officials spent decades developing methods to ensure that messages were received and understood with no ambiguity in the heat

of combat or with communications between air crews and Marines on the ground. After two world wars and a great deal of effort, the answer was found when an international team developed the standard phonetic alphabet we use today.

Any Marine, and indeed anyone involved with worldwide military and civil transportation authorities, has used the phonetic alphabet in one form or another. This system for clearly spelling words has become practically ubiquitous with even the uninitiated aware of the code words

for at least a few letters. Relatively few, however, know how the phonetic alphabet was actually created.

The phonetic alphabet is used today to ensure the message is received accurately despite interference; its earliest known predecessors were created for the very same purpose. Although the modern system was designed primarily for civil aviation, it, like the earliest radio spelling alphabets, is used routinely on the battlefield.

“It’s for the middle of the night, when





LCPL GADIEL ZARAGOZA, USMC

**During a February 2020 exercise at Camp Pendleton, 1stLt Daniel Lyrila, a tank officer assigned to I Marine Information Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, relays information to higher headquarters.**

there's no light and you're being shot at," said Major Joe Featherston, who served as both an enlisted Marine and an officer throughout his 22 years on active duty. Featherston worked as a voice radio operator and served in a number of communications-related billets.

According to Jayke Craig, a former communications officer and platoon commander, "When data capability fails, tactical radios are the backup ... [the] phonetic alphabet becomes much more important." Craig would know—during his recent service with 9th Communi-

cation Battalion, he and the radiomen under his command used the phonetic alphabet routinely during numerous large-scale training exercises.

With the technological boom experienced after the First World War, several new technologies combined to create a problem for sailors and aviators. Radio technology had improved enough that new, lightweight radio transceivers became practical for use aboard aircraft and ships, and aircraft became reliable enough to travel long distances with cargo and passengers. Aviation and maritime radios were powerful enough to transmit voice messages rather than the simple pulses of Morse code, but just barely. In the early days of this new technology, "voice communications were always fragile," said Featherston. Lightning noise, inclement weather, ground obstacles, and sheer distance constantly conspired against radio operators to render messages unreadable.

This problem was compounded by the fact that there existed no internationally standardized method of spelling words. Different militaries had independently developed their own spelling systems, ranging from the British Army's ever-evolving method of replacing just a few easily-confused letters with sounds or words (e.g. "Ack" for "A" and "Emma" for "M") to the U.S. Navy's elaborate system of two parallel phonetic alphabets. A British soldier, for example, might have difficulty understanding a U.S. Navy Sailor's "Actor, Baker, Canteen" and "Ash, Back, Chain," despite the two militaries working together during the war.

Even within a single military, several



CPL CUTLER BRICE, USMC

**A Marine air traffic controller with Marine Wing Support Detachment 371, assigned to Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response–Central Command 20.2, talks with an Air Force air traffic controller with the 407th Expeditionary Support Squadron in Kuwait on July 30. A standardized phonetic alphabet ensures there is no ambiguity when pilots and air traffic controllers, regardless of service, are communicating with each other.**

different “standard” phonetic alphabets might be in use at the same time—a British soldier, perhaps thinking in terms of “Ack, Beer, Cork” might also fail to properly receive a fellow British soldier’s message transmitted using “Apples, Butter, Charlie” or misread “Freddy” (“F” in his own phonetic alphabet) as “Eddy” (“E in the same system). The Royal Air Force used their own separate phonetic alphabet, so a member of the U.S. military might have to learn three or more different sets of code words just to communicate properly with his Commonwealth allies in the heat of battle. Clearly, a solution was needed by all.

Recognizing these problems, the Universal Electrical Communications Union (a body commissioned by the Allied powers at the end of World War I) convened in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 8, 1920, to issue the world’s first set of official radio communication rules. Their “Draft of Convention and Regulations” included standards for everything from maritime signal flags to the permitted uses of specific long-wave frequency bands. Tucked away in Appendix 14, “International Radiotelephone Procedure,” lies the brief passage: “3. Spelling out of Distinguishing Signals and Words. Words will be spelled out using names of well-

known places. The following names are to be used,” followed by a chart showing the first known example of an internationally standardized phonetic alphabet in both English and French. This alphabet used a mix of country and city names for its letters, such as “Canada” for “C” and “Jerusalem” for “J.”

Another conference, the International Radiotelegraph Convention of Washington, was held in 1927 with delegates from almost every country in the world. This conference aimed to create a better set of international rules specifically for radio communication. A phonetic alphabet was defined, this time almost exclusively using city names. This alphabet was largely the same as the one set forth seven years prior with only a few exceptions (i.e. “Amsterdam” instead of “Argentina” for “A”). Despite the efforts of the Convention, many militaries and even civil organizations and private corporations continued to develop and use their own systems, perhaps most notably the Joint Army/Navy Phonetic Alphabet, more commonly known as “Able-Baker” after its first two code words.

Just as the First World War had shown the need for a truly universal phonetic alphabet, so did the second. The formation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on April 4, 1949, made this need even more clear as it required the member states’ militaries to function together in the event of a seemingly imminent all-out war against the Warsaw Pact. The problem was soon solved by another group working in parallel. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a body created by the United Nations, commissioned a team of linguists to develop an “optimized” phonetic alphabet to replace the previous ones ICAO had adopted but deemed flawed. This new system was to be designed very carefully using more scientific means than had ever before been employed for this purpose; the goal was to create a spelling alphabet for the entire world to use.

When selecting a code word, every factor was considered, ranging from the obvious (such as ease of pronunciation and lack of ambiguity) to the seemingly pedantic. Because native speakers of different languages have different accents, the new system could only use sounds that anyone could pronounce and understand equally well despite language barriers.

In the interest of eliminating any possible cultural connotation attached to the code words, trademarked words and names of companies were generally rejected. “Whiskey” was almost thrown out with “Vodka” and “Cognac” due to its per-



SGT DAVE BUTLER, USMC

**A Marine aviator must be able to communicate with Marines on the ground. In this 1968 photo, LCpl John Daly tests helicopter radio equipment in the avionics facility’s communication and navigation section.**



ceived “negative moral value” as the name of an alcoholic beverage. “Quebec” was very nearly rejected, too, because it was thought that place-names might become politically sensitive in the event of a future armed conflict. The designers of what would eventually become the modern phonetic alphabet were so insistent that the code words be free from connotation that “Kodak,” despite its general suitability, was ultimately discarded in favor of “Kilo” due to the latter’s lack of connection to commerce.

The first draft of ICAO’s “Radio-telephony Spelling Alphabet” was unveiled to the world in 1951, but lingering problems with the words for C, M, N, U and X caused most people to reject it outright in favor of the already familiar “Able-Baker.” It wasn’t until 1955 that the alphabet was perfected, using statistical analysis to determine which code words were still ambiguous. The last code word to be selected was “November,” competing with “Nectar” for its place in the new phonetic alphabet. The deliberations took so long that NATO seriously considered unilaterally adopting the alphabet as it stood, with “November” as “N,” without waiting for ICAO to make a decision.



MSGT FRED BRAIT SCH, USMC

Working in contact with observers in spotter aircraft, a tactical air control party calls in air strikes on the Korean front in 1953.

**NATO**  
phonetic alphabet,  
codes & signals

The ability to communicate and make yourself understood can make a difference in life-threatening situations – imagine for example that you are trying to alert a search and rescue helicopter of the position of a downed pilot. To ensure clear communication, NATO uses a number of well-known formats which are in general use. NATO standardization agreements enable forces from many nations to communicate in a way that is understood by all.

Some standards can be found in everyday civilian and military life. “Bravo Zulu,” typically signified with naval flags on ships at sea and meaning “well done,” is also commonly used in written communication by the military, for example by replying “92” to an email.

**Phonetic alphabet**  
The NATO alphabet became effective in 1956 and, a few years later, formed into the established universal phonetic alphabet for all military, civilian and amateur radio communications.

**International Morse Code**  
Morse code broadcasts sent through on-off tones, light flashes or clicks. It was widely used in the 1900s for early radio communication, before it was possible to transmit voice.

**Flaghoist communication**  
Ships use flags to signal to send out messages to each other. The use of flags, known as flaghoist communication, is a fast and accurate way to send information in daylight.

**A Alfa**  
(al-fah)

**K Kilo**  
(key-lee)

**Semaphore**  
Semaphore is a system in which a person sends information at a distance using hand-held flags – depending on the position of the flags, the message will vary. The signaller holds the flag in different positions that represent letters or numbers.

**Panel signalling**  
Panels are visual signals for sending simple messages to an aircraft. Using a limited code, ground forces can send messages to pilots, for example to request medical supplies.

Numbers		Phonetic Alphabet	
1 One (oaner)		B Bravo (brav-oh)	
2 Two (too)		C Charlie (char-lee)	
3 Three (three)		D Delta (del-tah)	
4 Four (four-er)		E Echo (eck-oh)	
5 Five (five)		F Foxtrot (foks-rot)	
6 Six (six)		G Golf (golf)	
7 Seven (seven)		H Hotel (hot-el)	
8 Eight (ait)		I India (in-dee-ah)	
9 Nine (nine)		J Juliett (jyul-et)	
0 Zero (zero)		K Kilo (key-lee)	
L Lima (lee-mah)		M Mike (mike)	
N November (no-vem-ber)		O Oscar (os-car)	
P Papa (pah-pah)		Q Quebec (keh-beck)	
R Romeo (rom-ee-oh)		S Sierra (see-er-ee-ah)	
T Tango (tang-go)		U Uniform (yoo-ni-form)	
V Victor (vik-tah)		W Whiskey (wiz-ky)	
X Xray (ex-ray)		Y Yankee (yang-ky)	
Z Zulu (zoo-loo)			



**PFC John N. Bryant, a radio operator with 1st Bn, 2nd Marines establishes radio contact with the company command post during a search and clear operation south of the Demilitarized Zone, in Vietnam, 1969.**

The final product was simultaneously made official by ICAO, NATO, the International Maritime Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, and a host of other regulatory bodies the world over on March 1, 1956. Despite the miserable failure of every previous attempt to create a universal phonetic alphabet, the ICAO system immediately caught on. Its scientific design proved extremely effective in both speeding up messaging and eliminating ambiguity, and the popular “Able-Baker” fell out of favor within just a few years. After decades of voice radio communication, the entire world had finally standardized on a universal auxiliary “language” for

spelling words. Because the Marine Corps’ voice radio operators were mostly young enlisted personnel who usually only served for a few years, the transition was nearly seamless.

As Featherston remembers, some older Marines didn’t learn the NATO phonetic alphabet because they were not directly involved in radio communications and did not have a need to use it. Even some infantrymen weren’t fully acquainted with the system initially—“if you didn’t have a radio operator, it was an infantry guy carrying the radio and he may not have known [the phonetic alphabet].” For Featherston and other Marines working in the communications specialties, however,

“the phonetic alphabet was our bread and butter.” After working on the signal bridge of the attack cargo ship USS *Thuban* (AKA-19) during a Mediterranean cruise the early 1960s, Featherston was sent to Vietnam to coordinate naval and land-based artillery as a voice radio operator and later communications chief. At his post in front of a field radio and RC-292 portable antenna, he and other operators used the phonetic alphabet “all the time ... under duress, in calling situation reports, artillery fire, et cetera.” Skilled operators could communicate messages more quickly using the NATO phonetic alphabet and code phrases derived from it than a layperson could in plain English.





CPL G.N. ZIMMERMAN, USMC

With sufficient experience, they could instantly recognize which operator was which and what kind of stress they were under just by voice.

The near-simultaneous adoption of the new system worldwide by both civil and military authorities ensured that it would be used and understood by hundreds of millions of people on every corner of the globe; allowing, for example, an Alaskan bush pilot to immediately understand a message spelled by a French naval captain.

The modern phonetic alphabet has even given rise to some common expressions among Marines. During the war in Vietnam, Viet Cong insurgents were referred to by American personnel as “VC,” which



MAJ PAUL GREENBERG, USMC

**Above: Since the invention of radio communications, the radio operator has been a crucial part of Marine Corps operations. Before a patrol in Rutbah, Iraq, in 2008, Sgt Daniel Giere, left, a squad leader with “Echo” Co, 2nd Bn, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, calls his command operations center to relay a situation report with assistance from Cpl Talmadge Flowers, a radioman with 2nd Bn, 10th Marine Regiment.**

became “Victor Charlie” over the radio, eventually shortened to “Charlie.” Featherston said that Marines used a handful of other similarly derived colloquialisms that are rather less appropriate for publication in *Leatherneck*.

Although the use of modern computer systems has made conventional voice radio less common, use of the phonetic alphabet persists. As a recently separated communications officer, Jayke Craig explained that the phonetic alphabet is still alive and well in an age of satellites and encrypted telecommunications. During various field exercises, sometimes involving more than 10,000 Marines, he helped to coordinate ship-to-shore amphibious operations. Often, they were forced to conduct radio traffic the “old-fashioned way,” without the use of the more sophisticated datalink systems typically available now.

Even when using computers to transmit voice messages, Marine Corps communications personnel use call signs and identifiers based on the phonetic alphabet to obfuscate communications. This makes important messages easy for friendly forces to understand but impossible for enemy intelligence to decode in time.

The joint international standardization of the ICAO phonetic alphabet has ushered in a new era of interoperability in both civil and military communications. From Marines in the most remote areas on Earth to airline pilots ferrying travelers across the world at 35,000 feet, nearly everyone who uses voice radio for important communication can understand each other using the phonetic alphabet. It took a herculean effort over half a century for the world to settle on a universal “language” for voice radio. From the jungles of Vietnam to the arid highlands of northern Iraq, that same system has proven itself for more than half a century in all conditions. The story of the creation of the phonetic alphabet may not be widely known, but its end product has been an integral part of voice radio communication in every clime and place.

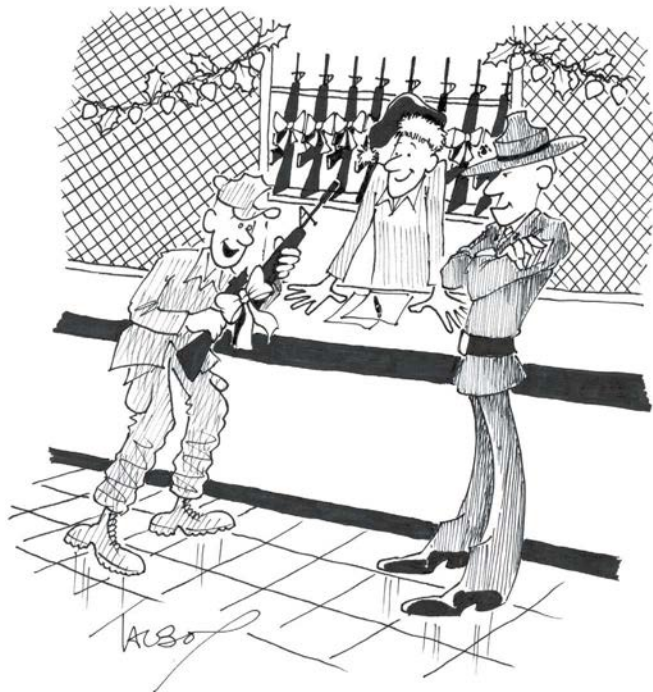
*Author’s bio: Sam Lichtman is a college student and licensed pilot who lives in Stafford, Va. He works in the firearms industry and occasionally contributes content to Leatherneck. This is his first feature-length article for the publication.*



# Leatherneck Laffs



"Sir, could you open your bag so I can search it, please?"



"Wow! Just what I always wanted!"



"OK, but they come down right after the holidays."



"The elves were put in quarantine, so the Marines volunteered."

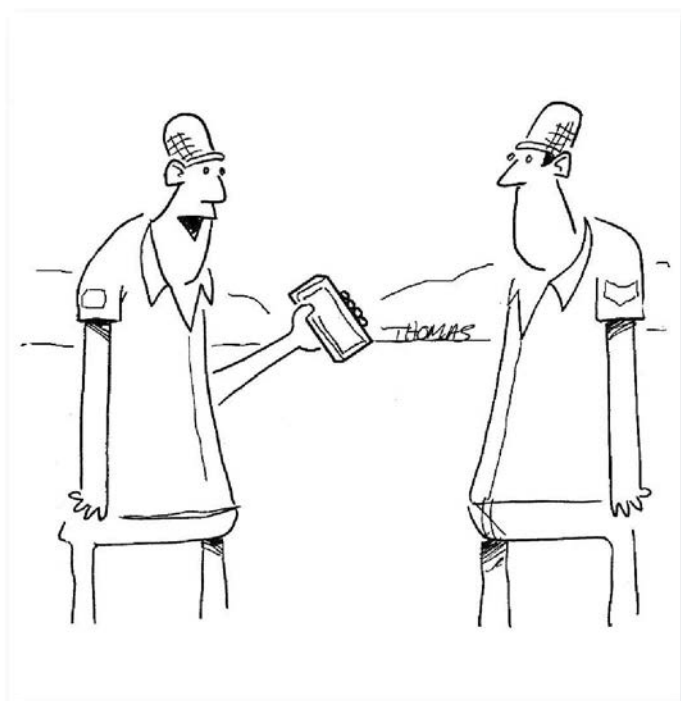




"Sir, I'm going to have to charge you for the second bag."



"Well, there's no chance of heatstroke."



"Sir, the mess hall's orders for processed meat keep going into our spam folders."



"This is classified information, so make sure you use Snapchat."

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**Left: From the left, historian Andy Giles; WW II Foundation CEO MajGen Andrew B. Davis, USMC (Ret); Marine veteran and Chicago restaurateur Dick Portillo; and WW II Foundation founder, president and filmmaker Tim Gray, visit Japan in February 2019 during the making of “The Portillo Expedition: Mystery on Bougainville Island.”**

# “Lessons of World War II Were a Blueprint”

## Documentary Filmmaker Strives to Educate and Inspire Future Generations

By Sara W. Bock

**T**im Gray never served in the military, but he’s walked the beaches of Normandy, passed through the foreboding gates of Auschwitz and trekked through lush vegetation on the remote Pacific islands of Peleliu and Guadalcanal. His mission? To use the visual medium of film to bring younger generations of Americans with him as he explores personal stories of those who

served and whose lives were imperiled during World War II on these and other now hallowed grounds.

For Gray, an award-winning, prolific documentary filmmaker and founder of the Rhode Island-based World War II Foundation, his lifelong fascination with WW II history led to the production of a 2006 film chronicling the return of five D-Day veterans to Normandy, France, where they retraced their steps of June 6, 1944. Fourteen years and 27 films later—

all of which have aired on hundreds of PBS affiliates nationwide—Gray plans to wrap up production on “Return to Iwo Jima,” featuring one of the Marine Corps’ most iconic battles and narrated by actor Gary Sinise, early next year.

It’s Gray’s guiding belief that “the lessons of WW II were a blueprint” for future generations to emulate, he says, adding that these lessons are best displayed in the individual accounts of those whose sense of duty and selfless service helped prevent America and its allies from being overtaken by fascist regimes. Rather than employing the sweeping, exhaustive approach to the history and military strategy of the war made popular by Ken Burns and other documentarians who occupy the same genre, Gray and his team center each film on firsthand interviews with a small number of veterans to tell one specific story.

Each of these stories are what retired Marine Corps Major General Andrew B. Davis, who joined the WW II Foundation in 2017 as Chief Executive Officer, refers to as “mosaic chips” of the war.

“When you put all those mosaic chips together, you get a sense of the big picture,” said MajGen Davis, who retired in 2008 and previously served as the director of





A cameraman collects footage on the island of Peleliu in September 2019 for the WW II Foundation film “1st to Fight: Pacific War Marines,” the first of the organization’s documentaries to focus exclusively on Marines in the Pacific theater during WWII.

**While the WW II Foundation’s extensive cache of films appeals to audiences of all ages and backgrounds, Gray attempts to cater specifically to today’s students, now largely made up of members of “Gen Z.”**

cache of films appeals to audiences of all ages and backgrounds, Gray attempts to cater specifically to today’s students, now largely made up of members of “Gen Z” who are digital natives and have grown up in a world inundated by social media, reality television and a vast array of attention-grabbing content at their fingertips.

Gray’s approach to getting the younger generation interested in WW II history is simple yet effective. By leveraging the broad appeal of actors like Sinise; Jon Seda, who portrayed Marine Gunnery Sergeant and Medal of Honor recipient John Basilone on HBO’s “The Pacific”; Dan Aykroyd; Matthew Broderick, and Liev Schreiber to narrate the films, Gray lends himself instant credibility. But what’s most striking about each film is not the celebrity voiceover; rather, it’s the interviews with veterans, historians and other key players, and the juxtaposition of black-and-white archival film alongside vivid, colorful present-day footage of the same locations.

In recent years, Gray’s team, which always films on location, has utilized high-resolution drone imagery that gives their audience a bird’s-eye view of places that most have only ever read about in a history book and brings the stories to life in a way that archival black and white footage cannot. But spectacular cinematography aside, the stories themselves take center stage.

“The films are really ‘micro views’ of World War II. It’s the stories, it’s the

Marine Corps Public Affairs. He now lends his experience both as a Marine and in the nonprofit sector to help further the foundation’s mission of educating and inspiring future generations through the stories of WW II.

The “blueprints” found within these individual stories, said Gray, provide a model that Americans desperately need to follow today.

“You don’t get things accomplished when you’re divided. You get them accomplished when you’re part of a team, and we’ve lost that in this country. That doesn’t exist anymore,” said Gray. “It’s how we responded as a nation that is the biggest lesson that I feel that time period and that generation has left for us—and also to be humble. [...] They came through the Great Depression, and then they fought a world war where 70 million people died, and they came home and they rebuilt America. And they did it without boasting, and they did it without the fanfare that people generally want to seek today.”

While the WW II Foundation’s extensive

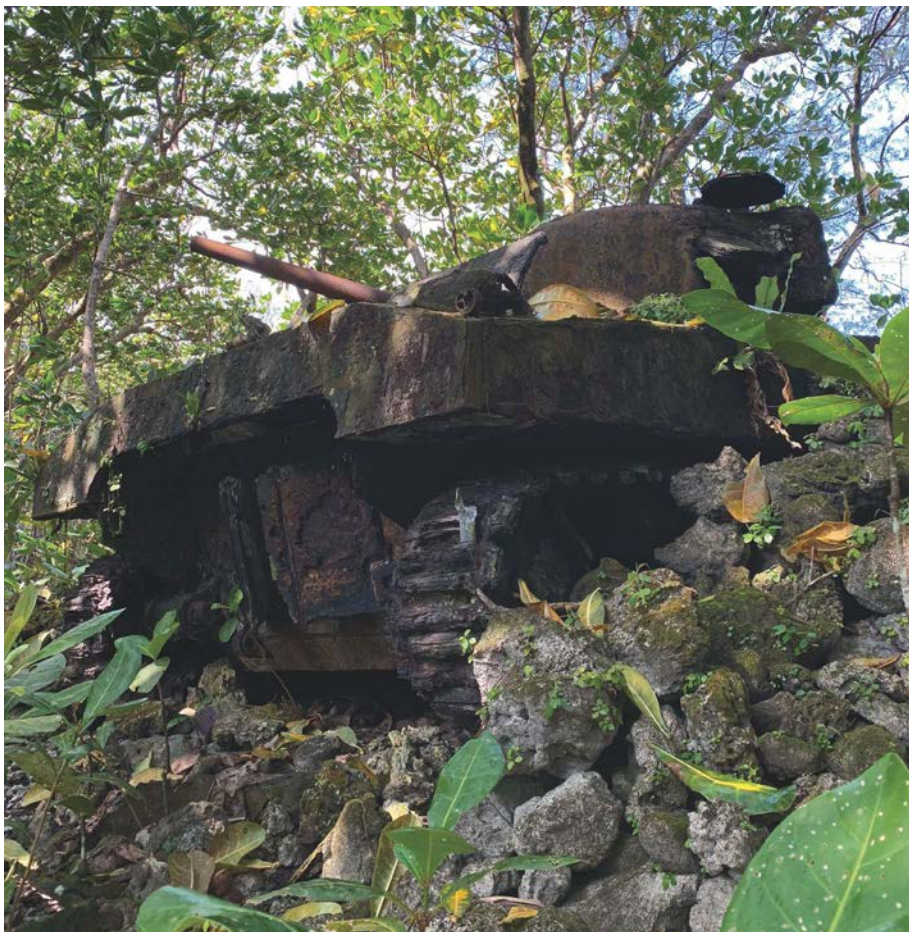


**Young students show off their copies of WW II Foundation documentary films given to them during a field trip to the foundation’s Global Education Center in Kingstown, R.I., in June 2019. For founder and filmmaker Tim Gray, passing the stories of WW II to younger generations is what drives him to produce numerous films each year.**





**Above: Marine veteran Oliver Marcelli, who served with Headquarters Co, 1st Bn, 1st Marines, 1stMarDiv, shares his story of landing at Guadalcanal on Nov. 25, 1942, with a WW II Foundation film crew during the filming of “1st to Fight: Pacific War Marines,” which first aired in May.**



**This image of the wreckage of an M4 Sherman tank from the Battle of Peleliu was captured by the WW II Foundation crew while making the film “1st to Fight: Pacific War Marines.” When the crew visited the island, they found that many relics from the war remain untouched 75 years after the Marines engaged in fierce fighting there.**

personal stories of the individuals rather than the ‘macro view’ of the strategy of the war,” said Gray. “We find that for the younger generation, it resonates with them because they love stories and they can relate a lot of these stories to things that happen in their own daily lives.”

Gray’s hope is that his films will pique the interest of young students, who will then utilize the technology available to them to learn more.

“We want them to go to Google and search ‘Pearl Harbor’ or ‘Auschwitz’ or ‘1st Marine Division,’ ” said Gray. “We look at ourselves as a conduit, kind of the opening of the door for this younger generation, and so that’s why we make everything available for free.”

From the first film to the most recent—“Grandpa’s War Story Goes #Viral”—which first aired in November of this year, the WW II Foundation has donated its productions to American public television, and the films regularly rank among the top five most requested programs nationally by PBS affiliates. Gray and his team are so dedicated to eliminating any roadblocks to accessing the films that they’ve also made them all available for free on the foundation’s website with the hope that students and educators can utilize them in the classroom.

As a nonprofit, the foundation relies on the support of a long list of corporate donors to fund its films and other educational initiatives, as well as a number of individual donors and grants. And while Gray’s organization is best known for his films, it also operates the WW II Foundation Global Education Center in South Kingstown, R.I., where school groups can learn about the history of the war through a hands-on experience. The foundation also offers a number of free online educational resources like quizzes and essay questions, and produces a weekly podcast featuring actors and authors, “From the Front to the Films,” which also is available on its website.

In the WW II Foundation, Gray created a niche where his passions for filmmaking, history and education intersect. And the rate at which he produces content—on average, three films each year—while acting as the sole writer, producer and director is both remarkable and reflective of his sense of purpose. He laughs as he talks about the 50 or more names that generally flash across the screen during the end credits of a documentary on The History Channel. Gray’s team generally consists of himself, a videographer, and a few sound technicians.

“We travel light, and we work lean and mean,” said Gray. “My joy is to be able



to tell these stories, my job is to be able to write these stories, so that's where I find the most satisfaction, in sharing an incredible story from the Pacific or Europe or the Holocaust. That's where my love of that time period and that generation is on its greatest display."

Gray believes that people have an innate desire to hear stories of others overcoming adversity because everyone faces some form of adversity in their own lives. When he speaks with students, particularly those who are high school age, he talks about what their age group would have been doing during the war. "You have to relate everything back to them and then they become interested," he emphasized. "I say, 'Look at that generation. How did they face adversity?'"

"There's a phrase I like to use [...] 'get off the beach,'" said Gray of his talks with students. "When you land on the beach, and people are shooting at you, there's only one way to go and that's forward. If you want to live, you have to keep moving forward, no matter what's going on in your life."

Considering the fact that more than 16 million Americans served during the Second World War, there are myriad stories to tell. So much so, it wasn't until May 2020 that the foundation released

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**—Tim Gray, Founder  
WW II Foundation**

its first film based on stories of Marines in the Pacific theater. Narrated by "The Pacific" star Jon Seda, who serves as the foundation's global spokesperson, "1st to Fight: Marines in the Pacific" follows the journey of four young Marines with the 1st Marine Division: Bill Finnegan, Lou Imfeld, Frank Pomroy and Oliver Marcelli, from Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester to Peleliu.

In spite of the decades that have passed since they participated in the first U.S. ground offensive of WW II at Guadalcanal in 1942, the firsthand accounts of the four Marines are marked by the exceptional

clarity with which they remember feeling left to fend for themselves on the mountainous, jungle-covered island. Drone footage captures the rich green vegetation of Guadalcanal and the vivid turquoise waters that surround it: today, it's still and quiet, a stark contrast from the chaos that once engulfed it.

One of the most captivating portions of the film covers the four Marines' accounts of the bitter fighting against the Japanese on the small coral island of Peleliu in 1944, where they faced a lack of fresh water, temperatures nearing 115 degrees and heavy casualties among their ranks. Gray and a crew, which included Pacific War historian Andy Giles, explored the island while making the film, walking among M4 Sherman tanks and other war relics that haven't been moved or touched since 1944 by order of the island nation of Palau. High-resolution video of the caves and pillboxes where the Japanese hid from sight give viewers a clear understanding of what the Marines of the 1stMarDiv were up against.

From his Marine perspective, WW II Foundation CEO MajGen Davis views "1st to Fight" as an example of the contemporary lessons of history and points out that today's active-duty Marines can learn from watching the film.

**Using high-resolution cameras and drones, Gray and his small team have captured vivid and colorful imagery of places like Peleliu, pictured here, which helps bring the stories and black and white photographs of WW II to life.**





**Marine veteran Dick Portillo is filmed on location in Japan in February 2019, during the making of “The Portillo Expedition: Mystery on Bougainville Island,” which chronicles his travels to Bougainville to locate the crash site of Japanese Admiral Yamamoto’s bomber and the discovery of a gold tooth that may have belonged to the admiral.**

“If you look at ‘1st to Fight’ and listen to the four Marines that were interviewed, and their experiences—particularly on Peleliu—their TTPs [tactics, techniques and procedures] for clearing a Japanese bunker [...] is not too different from a fire team going into a house in Marjah or Fallujah,” said MajGen Davis, who added that while each individual’s view of a situation is different, “their personal stories of courage and endurance and interdependence—dependence on the Marine or soldier to their left or right—are constant.”

For actor Jon Seda, narrating the film was an honor. His interest in the personal stories of WW II began when he portrayed John Basilone on “The Pacific” and had the opportunity to speak with and listen to many Marine veterans as he prepared to get in character, hoping to do Basilone’s story justice. While working with the foundation on “1st to Fight,” his interest and appreciation for members of the “greatest generation” grew.

“I’m really thankful for people like Tim Gray who continue to keep their stories alive, keep their legacy alive,” said Seda. “It’s really important to have that—that we stay connected to the men and women

**“If you look at ‘1st to Fight’ and listen to the four Marines that were interviewed, and their experiences for clearing a Japanese bunker [...] is not too different from a fire team going into a house in Marjah or Fallujah.”**

**—MajGen Andrew B. Davis  
CEO, WW II Foundation**

of the military who wholeheartedly give of themselves so that we can enjoy the freedoms we have today.”

And while “1st to Fight” was the first WW II Foundation film featuring Marines in the Pacific theater, another featuring a Marine veteran, “The Portillo Expedition: Mystery on Bougainville Island,” was released in November 2019. The film follows well-known Chicago restaurateur Dick Portillo, who served in the Marine Corps from 1958 to 1961, during his search on the Papua New Guinea island

of Bougainville for the crash site of Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto’s bomber after a U.S. Army Air Corps P-38 Lightning shot him down and killed him. Yamamoto was the architect of the attacks at Pearl Harbor and Midway, and at the time of his death in April 1943 was considered the United States’ most wanted individual in the Pacific theater.

Portillo, a self-proclaimed history buff, had befriended a WW II Marine veteran, Bill Faulkner, who saw action at Iwo Jima and Bougainville, and the two made several journeys to the Solomon Islands together. They were planning a trip to Bougainville to track down the Yamamoto wreckage, but Faulkner died before they were able to get there. In 2015, Portillo, along with historian and tour guide Andy Giles, two former Navy SEALs and Faulkner’s son and his family, landed on the island and hiked to the crash site, filming their adventure with the hope of making their own documentary.

What Portillo and his group couldn’t have predicted was that Giles would discover a gold tooth near the crash site, which experts believe may have belonged to Yamamoto. After Portillo returned to Chicago and the story of the discovery began making local headlines, he was contacted by Gray and MajGen Davis, who expressed their interest in being involved in the development of the documentary. Portillo agreed to let the WW II Foundation lead the way, and their quest for answers about the tooth took them to Japan and back, all of which is chronicled in the film.

Portillo, who credits his success in the restaurant business to the lessons he learned in the Corps, believes wholeheartedly in the mission of the WW II Foundation and in the benefits of military service for young people.

“They taught me the value of organization, they taught me the value of teamwork and the value of training,” said Portillo of the Marine Corps. While he didn’t become a career Marine, he carried those lessons with him in his own career and has remained a lifelong student of Marine Corps history.

The next WW II Foundation film featuring Marines in the Pacific, “Return to Iwo Jima” was initially slated for release in November of 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of the 75th anniversary commemoration on Iwo Jima, originally scheduled for March of this year.

“The film is about the return of two sons of Marine veterans of Iwo Jima to the battlefields where their fathers may have actually fought and walked,” said

**Ready to Watch?** Check your local PBS listings, or visit <https://wwiifoundation.org> and click “Podcasts and Stories” to view “1st to Fight: Pacific War” and “The Portillo Expedition: Mystery on Bougainville Island,” as well as other films like “A Promise to My Father,” the story of Holocaust survivor Israel Arbeiter; “Journey Home to the USS *Arizona*”; and “D-Day at Pointe-du Hoc.”





**Andy Giles and Dick Portillo are interviewed by members of the Japanese media at the Yamamoto Museum in Nagaoka, Japan, in February 2019. The two were part of the WW II Foundation team that traveled there in hopes of positively identifying the gold tooth they uncovered on Bougainville as belonging to Yamamoto.**

MajGen Davis, who worked extensively with the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to get Japanese approval that would allow them to take their film crew and the sons of Marines to areas of the island typically off limits to visitors, where their fathers may have been.

According to Gray, the archival footage and interviews for “Return to Iwo Jima” are complete, and he’s hopeful that the commemoration, which has been rescheduled for March 2021, will go on as planned and that they’ll be able to complete production of the film.

Another film in the works will detail the Japanese surrender aboard USS *Missouri* (BB-63) that brought the war in the Pacific to an end. Gray and his team—including Seda—were scheduled to visit Pearl Harbor for the 75th anniversary of V-J Day in August to film, but that trip was postponed due to pandemic-related restrictions.

Even before “stay at home” became a mantra of 2020, the foundation was thinking of ways to utilize cutting-edge technology to broaden its reach beyond documentary films and is in the process of developing an exciting new, first-of-its-kind project: virtual reality tours of the major battlefields of WW II from the



**Filmmaker Tim Gray answers questions about the WW II Foundation film “The Portillo Expedition: Mystery on Bougainville Island,” while visiting the Yamamoto Museum in Nagaoka, Japan, in February 2019.**

comfort of one’s own living room.

“In addition to documentary filming, we’re going to do 360-degree virtual reality filming,” said MajGen Davis. “And then we’ll edit this into an experience where the viewer puts on a headset and can go on a tour by looking and moving around and toggling—see the contemporary battlefield and then toggle a switch, it’ll cut to archival footage of what that looked like, for example, in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, or on June 6 in Normandy.”

But for now, gathering interviews and making films based on firsthand accounts remains the foundation’s top priority. As the number of living veterans of WW II becomes smaller by the day, it is with an even greater sense of urgency that Gray and the foundation collects and preserves the stories of the greatest generation.

“We want to get their stories out there while people still have the opportunity to go speak with them, and that won’t be the case much longer,” said Gray. “It’s important that these stories are preserved and that they’re told in the right way that engages a younger audience.”

*Editor’s note: All photos Courtesy of WW II Foundation.*



CPL ANDREW KING, USMC

**Marines assigned to Camp Blaz, the Corps' newest base in Dededo, Guam, observe the first flag raising of the new command, which marked the installation's initial operating capability, Oct. 1. Over the next several years, 5,000 Marines with III MEF will relocate to Guam from Okinawa.**

## **Marine Corps Activates First New Base in Nearly 70 Years**

On Oct. 1, Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz in Dededo, Guam, was activated, officially marking the initial operational capability of the first new Marine Corps base since Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., was commissioned in 1952. The Marine Corps plans to hold an activation ceremony for the new base in the spring of 2021.

MCB Camp Blaz will be home to approximately 5,000 Marines from III Marine Expeditionary Force who will relocate from Okinawa, Japan, over the next several years.

MCB Camp Blaz is named in honor of the late Brigadier General Vincente "Ben" Tomas Garrido Blaz, the first Chamorro—a member of the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands—to attain the rank of general officer in the Marine

Corps. Following his 29-year Marine Corps career, BGen Blaz went on to serve as Guam's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives for four consecutive terms. His legacy reflects the strong relationship that the Marine Corps and the people of Guam have shared since the establishment of the Marine Barracks there in 1899.

Born on Guam in 1928, Blaz was 13 years old when the island was attacked by Japanese forces on Dec. 8, 1941. He remained on Guam throughout the Japanese occupation until the island was liberated in July 1944. In 1947, he was awarded a scholarship to the University of Notre Dame and was subsequently commissioned in the Marine Corps in 1951. During his honorable and faithful service, including a combat tour in Vietnam, he was awarded the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with combat "V," the Navy

and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

While representing Guam in Congress from 1984 to 1992, retired BGen Blaz was instrumental in reorganizing Guam's judicial system and advocated for improved educational benefits for veterans. He was an accomplished author, whose notable memoir "Let Us Remember" captured the hardships and determination of the Chamorro people during the Japanese occupation in World War II. BGen Blaz passed away Jan. 8, 2014, after a life of selfless public service to his nation and to the island of Guam.

"As the Marine Corps presence on Guam grows, I am confident that we will live up to our motto of honor, courage and commitment. We will honor the history of the island of Guam, we will have the courage to defend it, and we will remain committed to preserving its





CPL ANDREW KING, USMC

**Col Bradley Magrath, right, CO MCB Camp Blaz, gives a speech following the first flag raising at the new installation in Guam, Oct. 1.**

cultural and environmental resources,” said Colonel Bradley M. Magrath, the first commanding officer of MCB Blaz.

The formal establishment of MCB Camp Blaz is a significant milestone in the Marine Corps’ realignment of forces and honors an international agreement with the Government of Japan while securing a Marine Corps posture in the Indo-Pacific region that is geographically distributed and operationally resilient. MCB Camp Blaz will play an essential role in strengthening the Department of Defense’s ability to deter and defend, and is also a testament to the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance, which is a cornerstone of peace, security and prosperity in the region.

On Oct. 7, the *Marine Corps Times* reported that four burial sites uncovered during construction on Camp Blaz were determined to be 1,000 years old, and the remains belong to members of the Chamorro people. A forthcoming archaeology report was expected to offer additional details, and the remains were reburied with the intention of adding a monument to them on the base.

USMC

### **Marine Corps Fields First New Service Pistol in 35 Years**

For the first time in 35 years, the Marine Corps is fielding a new service-wide pistol replacement.

Marine Corps Systems Command began fielding the M18 Modular Handgun System in September. This striker-fired, semi-automatic 9 mm pistol is based on the Sig Sauer Model P320. The M18 will replace all other pistols in the Marine Corps inventory, including the M9, M9A1, M45A1 and M007.

“All Marine Corps units with a pistol

will receive an M18,” said Brian Nelson, M18 project officer at MCSC.

Formal marksmanship training centers, reconnaissance battalions, provost marshal offices and Marine Corps security forces will be the first to receive the M18, and MCSC projects that the fielding of the new pistol will be complete by fiscal year 2022.

The M18 comprises capabilities previous pistols lacked. For example, the M9—the most widely issued pistol among Marines—is a steel-framed, single action/double-action hammer-fired pistol. This

means it is a heavier, metal gun with two different trigger pulls for single- and double-action. Conversely, the M18 is lighter and does not include two different trigger pulls.

“For some Marines, having two trigger pulls, like with the M9, is difficult to get used to because different forces are acting upon the gun,” said Sergeant Randall McClellan, pistol program manager with Weapons Training Battalion, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. “With the M18, the trigger is going to be the same weight every time.”



**SgtMaj Troy E. Black, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, fires an M18 Modular Handgun System at Weapons Training Bn during a tour of its facilities at MCB Quantico, Va., Oct. 29, 2019. The Marine Corps is now fielding the pistol across the service as a replacement for all other pistols in the Marine Corps inventory. (Photo by Sgt Kelly Timney, USMC)**

The M18 has increased modularity when compared with previous pistols. The gun includes interchangeable components to fit small, medium or large hands. A receiver module inside the pistol grip enables Marines to remove the trigger mechanism and insert it into a new grip size, said Nelson.

The weapon also includes an accessory rail that enables Marines to attach lights or lasers underneath.

“Marines can attach more things to the M18, such as a red-dot sight, once approved for use,” said McClellan. “The modularity and ergonomics of the gun benefits the warfighter as they can change parts out more easily.”

The Corps’ acquisition of the handgun is part of an Army-led program, which fielded M18s to Army units in 2017. The program includes the M17—the full-size pistol—as well as the M18. MCSC is only purchasing the M18, the compact variant, as well as holsters through the Army contract.

The Marine Corps collaborated with the Army on the development of the M18 requirement. Requirements managers from the office of the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration and other Marines actively participated in the assessment and selection of the MHS.

“The M18 is unique in that it is a utility player capable of supporting a broad range of missions in which a handgun is required,” said Billy Epperson, the Infantry Weapon Capabilities Integration officer at CD&I. “Because of this versatility, the M18 will replace the four pistols in the Marine Corps inventory.”

Tom Vass, the Army’s project officer for the M18, believes the weapon will greatly benefit Marines, noting how it is a more reliable, accurate and effective pistol than its predecessors.

“Overall, the adoption of the M18 by the Marine Corps is an extremely positive decision that will benefit the Corps and enhance Marines’ safety and effectiveness when conducting missions,” said Vass,

In June, a group of Marines and civilians from MCB Quantico, including PMO and Marine Helicopter Squadron One, converged on a firing range aboard the base to learn and qualify with the M18 during instructor and key personnel training.

After the two-hour event, Marines and subject matter experts spoke about the benefits of the system. Sgt Journey Granados, a weapons trainer with PMO, MCB Quantico, said the M18 is much easier to grip and shoot than other Marine Corps pistols.

“I feel more comfortable holding the M18 than I do holding the M9, largely because of the interchangeable grip,” said Granados. “This pistol is definitely easier to shoot, is a lot more accurate and could improve Marines’ qualification score.”

The requirement for Marines to qualify with a pistol will not change. Those required to qualify annually will still do so, said Nelson. Combat Marksmanship Trainers will qualify with the M18 during new equipment training, and they will be responsible for qualifying other Marines.

“The only thing changing in the qualification course now is the verbiage in regard to single action/double action and

the de-cocking,” said Nelson, who added that Weapons and Training Bn will hold its marksmanship symposium toward the end of 2020, in which they planned to review data and decide if the course as a whole would need to be changed.

Major Mike Brisker, weapons product manager in MCSC’s program manager for infantry weapons, expressed excitement for the M18 because of its capabilities and its potential in helping Marines carry out their missions.

“This is the first service-wide replacement of the pistol since the M9 in the 1980s,” said Brisker. “The M18 is important in terms of modernization and lethality.”

Fielding the M18 is part of a larger effort to modernize and increase the lethality of Marines. The addition of the M18 to the Marine Corps inventory will be an exciting experience for many Marines, according to Nelson.

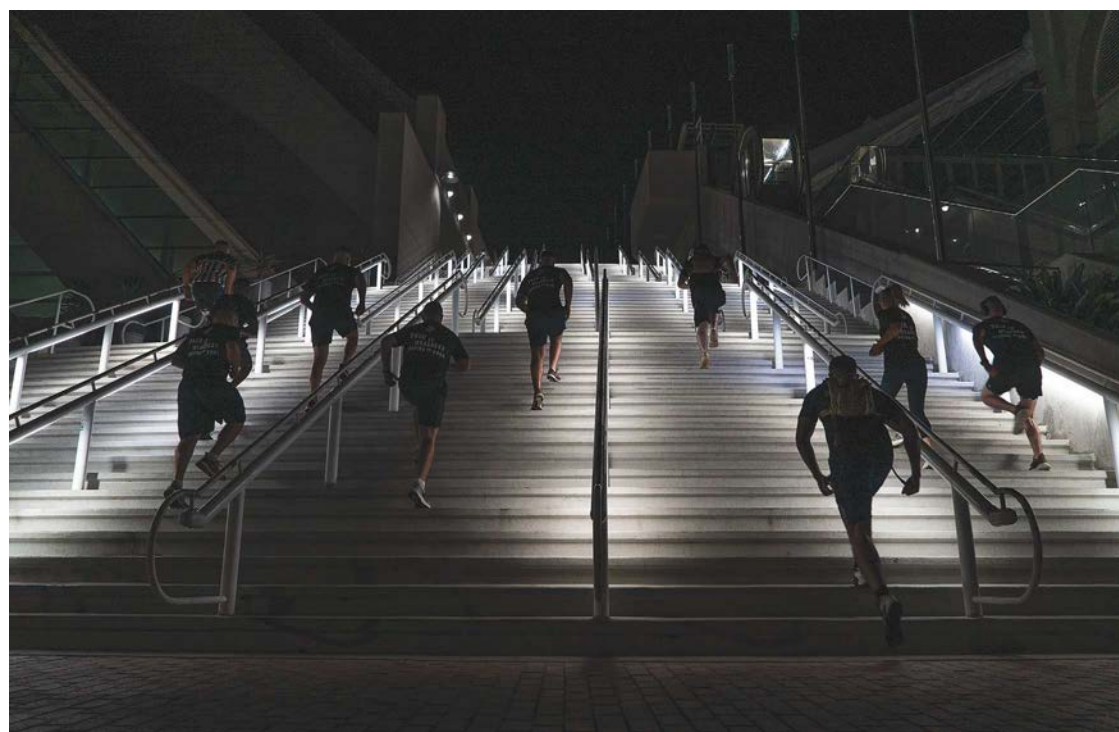
“This is the first new service pistol in more than 30 years, so it’s going to be a very emotional transition for Marines,” said Nelson. “Fielding the M18 is a big step for the Marine Corps.”

Matt Gonzales

### **In Stair Climb Event, Marines Pay Tribute to 9/11 Fallen**

On Sept. 11, the 19th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Marines from the 12th Marine Corps District gathered at the San Diego Convention Center to pay homage to those lost on that tragic day.

Corporals Quentin K. Hadan and Jackson K. Golz, both administrative clerks assigned to the 12th Marine Corps



SGT CHRISTIAN OLIVER CACHOLA, USMC

**In honor of the first responders who climbed 110 flights of stairs in the World Trade Center on 9/11, Marines assigned to the 12th Marine Corps District run the equivalent number of steps of the San Diego Convention Center, Sept. 11.**





SGT CHRISTIAN OLIVER CACHOLA, USMC

**Cpl Madisyn Sternotti, a supply clerk assigned to the 12th Marine Corps District, runs up a flight of stairs during a 9/11 tribute PT event at the San Diego Convention Center, Sept. 11.**

District, planned the 9/11 tribute physical training event.

“Originally, we were just going to do a hike over by the ocean, but we asked ourselves, ‘Why are we going on a hike? Let’s just find some stairs,’ said Hadan.

First responders climbed 110 flights of stairs up one tower of the World Trade Center in New York City, which was approximately 2,226 steps. The corporals located a 300-step stairwell at the convention center and decided they would go up and down those stairs 23 times to simulate the feat of those first responders, who also were wearing an additional 60 to 90 pounds in emergency and protective equipment.

As the Marines began preparing themselves for the training event, Cpl Joneydy Jaime, an administrative clerk with the 12th Marine Corps District, shared his experience of that day when he was just 25 miles from the towers.

But not all of the Marines present had a strong recollection of what occurred on 9/11. Private First Class Daniel Martinez Jr. was only a few months old in 2001.

“My history teachers would tell us stories, play videos and the phone calls

that people made to their wives or their husbands,” said Martinez. “This was something that resonated with them when they were growing up; I didn’t have that.”

But regardless, the 19-year-old San Antonio native gave everything he could during the tribute stair climb.

“I think what they did brought a lot of value, unit cohesion and unity and it made us remember what this day is about,” said Keith. “Now that we’re adults and we see the gravity of it all, that adds a lot of emotion to it and what the Marines did was put that emotion into a physical sense so we feel it, so we can remember that we have first responders who did an amazing thing—a generation with very few heroes became a generation that would step up and become heroes.”

Keith expressed that there are many other ways of remembrance. It can be a stair climb, as the Marines and thousands of other individuals all over the nation completed, or it can be simply taking a moment of reflection for those who gave everything on that day and during the conflicts that followed it.

Sgt Christian Oliver Cachola, USMC



## Crazy Caption Contest

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# Chosin Reservoir Campaign

## Battle Perspectives from Marines Who Were There



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**Infantry Marines move along the flank of the column between Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri.**

By Irv Sternberg

**O**n a bitterly cold afternoon on Dec. 23, 1950, about 8,000 men of the 1st Marine Division were strung out along a narrow, twisting road that ran near the west side of a man-made lake in North Korea called the Chosin Reservoir. Despite being halfway around the world from home, they enjoyed a traditional Thanksgiving Day meal, eating quickly before their food turned cold in the freezing temperature. Under the command of Army General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander of the United Nations forces, the Marines had fought their way almost to the Manchurian border. MacArthur had assured them they would be home by Christmas.

Four nights later, companies of the 1st, 5th and 7th Marine Regiments fixed bayonets and engaged in hand-to-hand combat with hordes of Chinese soldiers near remote villages with names like Koto-ri,

Hagaru-ri and Yudam-ni. It was the beginning of the 17-day battle and fighting withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir that defined the Korean War.

Called “The Forgotten War” by many, the Marines of 1stMarDiv, some of whom arrived there as boys as young as 17 and left as battle-hardened men, vividly remember their time in Korea. Among the survivors were Martin Letellier, Don Johnson and Manert Kennedy. Letellier and Johnson were teenagers when they arrived in Korea, Kennedy a 20-year-old. Now in their nineties, they recalled those fateful days 70 years ago with remarkable clarity.

### **Kennedy**

Manert Kennedy grew up in Wyandot, Wis., the son of a self-educated engineer. Bored with school, he quit and said he “bummed around Detroit where the truant officers knew me by my first name.” Actually, he spent most of his time in

Detroit’s libraries, where he read lots of books and followed the war in Europe and the Pacific. Returning home, he told his parents he wanted to enlist in the Marines. “I needed a sense of direction,” he said. He had followed the Marines’ exploits during World War II at Guadalcanal, Okinawa and Iwo Jima. “They were my heroes.” With his parents’ permission, he enlisted at the age of 17.

Little more than three years later, as a 20-year-old sergeant in 1stMarDiv, he found himself leading a patrol that was searching for North Korean soldiers west of Wonsan, North Korea. His patrol found a North Korean hiding under a house. When the soldier reached for Manert’s .45-caliber sidearm, Manert shot him. He killed more Chinese in many firefights that followed.

### **Letellier**

Martin “Marty” Letellier grew up in Sioux City, Iowa, and was the son of a



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**—Manert Kennedy**

livestock inspector. He recalled a happy childhood, spending long hours swimming in a neighborhood pool and lifting weights from the time he was 7 with the encouragement and supervision of his father.

His grandfather had been a trapper and fur trader in Canada in the late 1800s, and Marty always felt he, too, would someday be an adventurer. He played football in high school where, at 5’10” and 180 pounds, he was a punishing fullback who dreamed about playing for Notre Dame, his favorite college team. He got his chance to be an adventurer when he left high school to enlist in the Marines at his dad’s suggestion.

“They’re the best,” his father had said.

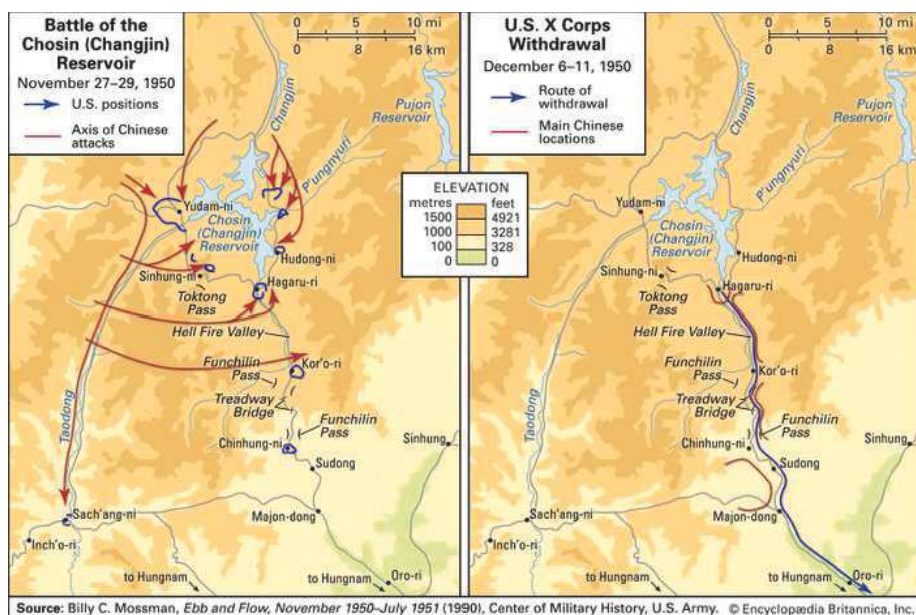
So Letellier quit school in his senior year and enlisted in 1948. He completed boot camp at San Diego Recruit Depot in November and was assigned to a 60 mm mortar unit at Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he trained before sailing to Pusan, Korea, on Aug. 2, 1950. He was 19 years old and excited to fulfill his destiny as an adventurer.

## Johnson

Don Johnson and his siblings assumed responsibilities beyond their years when their father left the family during the Great Depression. To assist their mother, the boys all became newspaper carriers and delivered papers “all over south Denver” to earn money for their needy family. “We had no time to play. We did what we had to do.” At South High School, he finally found time to enjoy himself by joining the wrestling team, a sport he took with him when he joined the Marines.

About two months after graduation in 1946, he enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 18 because “they were a great outfit, the best.” One of his brothers was in the Navy and encouraged him to also join the Navy. “I couldn’t swim,” Don recalled, “so why join the Navy?” Then, at boot camp in San Diego, he found

**The men of the 5th and 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv receiving an order to withdraw from their positions near the Chosin Reservoir, Nov. 29, 1950.**



himself flailing in a pool and being eyed by an unsympathetic drill instructor. Don started to leave the pool. “Get back in there!” the drill instructor barked. “He’s trying to drown me!” Don thought. But his DI conducted late-night sessions in the pool and helped him learn how to swim. Later, Don joined the Marines’ wrestling team and earned a spot on the All-Navy wrestling team.

Discharged in 1948, he chose to remain in the Marine Reserve to earn extra money to help support his mother. During that time, he met his future wife, Joan. When the U.S. entered the Korean War in September 1950, he was recalled to active duty which was not in his plans. He wanted to get married and settle down.

“I’m not a fighter,” he protested. “I’m a lover.”

The Marine Corps, with its numbers greatly diminished after World War II, was rebuilding to fight a new war in Korea. Johnson was ordered to report to San Diego and soon boarded a troop transport headed for Inchon, Korea.

## Kennedy

By October 1950, Kennedy’s company was ordered to march west to Funchilin Pass in North Korea where the altitude was about 3,500 feet, the snow deep, and the night temperatures below zero. Their C-rations were frozen, and their hands and feet colder than they had ever been before. Shortly after they arrived, they



SGT FRANK C. KERR, USMC

confronted untold numbers of Chinese.

"The enemy attack started with a flare that lit up the whole area," Kennedy recalled. "They started sounding horns and clashing cymbals. It was eerie, like a New Year's Eve celebration. Then the enemy soldiers came, waves of them. When one fell, it seemed like two more took his place. They broke through the perimeter and soon we were fixing bayonets, fighting hand-to-hand before they finally withdrew. It was nasty. Nobody slept that night. We wondered if we would survive." He paused in his thoughts. "One of the hardest things we had to do was picking up dead Marines in the morning. Their bodies were frozen, their limbs twisted and faces contorted. We were freezing, too. Not only physically, but also emotionally."

He got orders to fall back to Koto-ri, a base established by their Division commander, Major General Oliver P. Smith. There, Kennedy and his men finally found some rest inside a secure perimeter set up by their regimental commander, Colonel Lewis "Chesty" Puller of the 1st Marines, the most decorated Marine in the history of the Corps. Kennedy and his men were glad to be serving under him.

#### Letellier

To the northwest, Marty Letellier and his mortar outfit had marched or were trucked about 20 miles from Hagaru-ri to join Baker Company, 1st Provisional Marine Brigade.

Letellier and his buddies in "King" Battery had set up a position northwest of Yudam-ni near the Yalu River, the border between North Korea and China. MacArthur wanted to push the enemy all the way up to the border, but he didn't expect huge numbers of Chinese to pour across the border and confront his



**MajGen Oliver P. Smith, CG of 1stMarDiv, attends memorial services for his fallen men at the Division's cemetery at Hungnam, Korea, following the break-out from the Chosin Reservoir in December 1950.**

**"As they got close, they  
screamed curses at us in  
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them down with machine-gun  
and rifle fire, but it seemed  
they just kept coming."  
—Marty Letellier**

troops—1stMarDiv, the Eighth Army and various United Nations forces. Soon they would be in serious trouble.

On Nov. 27, Letellier recalled, "the night we arrived, Chinese troops wearing white, padded coats attacked with burp guns, machine guns and grenades. They filled the sky with green tracers—every fifth round—and sounded bugles and other horns and slammed cymbals. As they got close, they screamed curses at us in English. 'Sonofabitch! You die, Marines!' We were mowing them down with machine-gun and rifle fire, but it seemed they just kept coming—shooting and screaming. I thought it was over. I thought I'm 19 and I'm going to croak in this damn place!"

By morning he was astonished to see how many dead Chinese were on the hillside. The white snow was red with blood. Hundreds of bodies were strewn over the ground, frozen into bizarre positions. Short of sandbags, he and his buddies stacked the bodies of dead Chinese around them to provide protection against the next attack because the ground was too frozen to dig foxholes.

#### Johnson

Don Johnson sailed to Wonsan in November 1950. He and his artillery outfit moved a 150 mm howitzer up a narrow, winding road for 78 miles, followed by a truck carrying howitzer shells. The farther north they went, the colder it got, falling to 35 degrees below zero at night. "We'd never been that cold. Finally, we got some parkas to replace our field jackets. That



**A Direct Air Control Center in Hagaru-ri, North Korea, during the battle for the Chosin Reservoir in December 1950.**



made a big difference.” But the M1s were freezing up. “You could hear a constant clicking noise all day long. The guys were moving the operating rod handles to keep the mechanism from freezing.”

The howitzer was aimed toward the Yalu River. “But we were told not to fire any shells across the river. That was China. We followed orders, but thousands of Chinese were attacking us anyway.” Johnson was given a jeep and ordered to pick up new maps from wherever the headquarters was located.

“Our greatest fear was running out of ammunition, but “Flying Boxcars” [C-119s] would come in the nick of time, flying low and dropping ammo and supplies.” Meanwhile, gull-winged Corsairs flew just above the treetops, strafed the Chinese soldiers and dropped canisters of napalm. The Chinese soldiers would run screaming, their bodies aflame. “When we found them later, they were cooked like hot dogs, their arms and legs split like franks on a grill,” Johnson said.

Under Gen Smith, 1stMarDiv captured Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, and pushed the Chinese almost to the China border. There, the drive halted when it became apparent that the Marines and Eighth Army troops were outnumbered by more than seven to one. MacArthur,

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**—Don Johnson**

who had ignored or dismissed intelligence reports of Chinese intervention, finally called for a withdrawal. While the Chinese had targeted the 1stMarDiv for elimination, it was the Chinese heralded Ninth Army Group that was decimated, never to fight again in Korea.

What followed next has been called one of the most outstanding fighting withdrawals in military history. Asked if he was retreating, Smith reportedly said, “Retreat, hell! We’re just attacking in another direction.” Columns of exhausted and chilled Marines in tattered clothing stained with blood, mucus, urine and feces, marched and fought for 78 miles to the port city of Hungnam. The arrivals



**Col Lewis B. Puller, CO, 1st Marines, and BGen Edward A. Craig, Assistant Division Commander, 1stMarDiv, September 25, 1950. (Photo courtesy of Oliver P. Smith Collection, Marine Corps Archives & Special Collections)**



SGT FRANK C. KERR, USMC

**Riflemen and machine gunners engage the enemy during the Korean War.**



**Marines move forward after effective close air support flushes out the enemy from their hillside entrenchments near Hagaru-ri in December 1950.**

included walking wounded, hard-eyed infantrymen, and tons of artillery, vehicles and supplies.

After hot showers, hot meals and long sleep, they boarded troop transports. First to board were Smith's 22,215 Marines, including the 8,000 "Chosin Few" as they later called themselves. "They earned it," said Army Major General Edward Almond, second in command to MacArthur. Added Army General Frank Lowe, President Harry Truman's liaison in Korea, "They are the most efficient and courageous combat unit I have ever seen or heard of."

Numerous historians have called the fighting withdrawal from the Chosin one of the most astonishing maneuvers in American military history, often compared to Dunkirk or to General George Washington's stealthy night departure from Long Island in the Revolutionary War of Independence. The Chosin battle and withdrawal have joined Montezuma, Tripoli and Iwo Jima in Marine Corps lore. For his leadership, Smith was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star. Forty-two Marines were awarded

the Medal of Honor, 27 posthumously.

President Truman relieved and replaced MacArthur with Army General Matt Ridgway. Under his command, United Nations forces reorganized and launched a counter-attack, recapturing Seoul. But, fighting for position, the Chinese continued to attack at places like Heartbreak Ridge and The Punchbowl. The war dragged on to a stalemate, an exchange of prisoners, and an armistice on July 27, 1953. An area around the 38th Parallel was reestablished as a demilitarized zone (DMZ). Thus, the war ended where it began.

The Marine Corps lost 4,200 men in combat and suffered a total of 28,000 casualties, including 7,331 due to frostbite at the Chosin Reservoir and 193 missing in action.

Like the wars that followed, the Korean War (often called a "conflict" or "police action" because no declaration of war had ever been declared) was not popular with the American public. It was only five years after the end of World War II, and Americans had had enough of war. Nevertheless, American intervention saved South Korea

from being wiped out. Today, it is a thriving democracy technically still at war with North Korea, but a contributing nation to the world's economy. North Korea remains an isolated nation with a struggling economy and a severely oppressed population.

Kennedy, Letellier and Johnson returned home to continue their education. All became teachers; Kennedy taught at college and became an authority on genetics.

During the war, the Marine Corps had begun to rebuild its strength. Today, it can claim that 182,000 now on active duty are the few, the proud, and the ready to fight the nation's battles on the land or sea.

*Author's bio: Irv Sternberg is a former journalist, public relations practitioner and the award-winning author of 10 novels. His most recent book, "In the Land of the Morning Calm, When Boys Became Men at Chosin Reservoir—the Epic Battle of the Korean War," was published in September. He served in the 1stMarDiv at Camp Pendleton in 1951 and 1952 and lives in Denver, Colo.*





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## SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

### Marines Can't Be Trusted in the Galley

I once caught two weeks of mess duty at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I was assigned to the scullery, which had a monstrous garbage disposal that we called the "red goat." We got bored one afternoon so we decided to see if the red goat would eat a coffee cup. Yup! The next thing we knew, the drain on the scullery floor backed up, flooding the room. Plumbers were called and they brought in this big air-powered unit to blow out the drain. What the plumbers didn't know was that the drain in the middle of the chow hall's main dining area was also part of the scullery drain system.

It was during lunch, and there were probably 100 Marines eating when the plumbers fired off the air-powered drain machine. A huge geyser covered the chow hall and most of the Marines in it with vile, scummy food bits and water. The incident was concrete proof that while 18-year-old Marines can be trusted with M60 machine guns and loaded .45-caliber 1911s on armory watch unsupervised, they can't be trusted with a red goat garbage disposal.

Shawn Skinner  
Franklinville, N.Y.

### Snapping In

It was a typical hot and humid day in August 1967. The sand fleas would not let up during Platoon 391's time on the rifle range. We were in week one learning all the shooting positions by "snapping in." This particular day seemed like it would never end as we sat, knelt, stood and lay in the prone position taking aim at 55-gallon drums.

Afterward we knelt around in a big circle and our senior drill instructor decided to have some fun with us. He slowly made his way around the circle handing out a pinch of chewing tobacco to everyone. Watching the reactions of others as they turned different shades of green and blue with some literally spilling their guts, I dreaded my turn.

As luck would have it, when the DI reached me, he must have forgotten where he had started. He said, "Did you get yours, maggot?" Even to this day I have never thought so quickly. I responded with tongue firmly in cheek, "Yesh, Shir." I can only imagine how many bends and thrusts I would have had to do if he knew I was faking it.

Sgt Art D'Uva  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

### From Ship to Taxi

In the summer of 1959, I was aboard USS *Bremerton* (CA-130) with the Marine detachment and had just left Long Beach, Calif., on a "shakedown" cruise.

One evening I became sick with severe stomach cramps and spent most of the night in the head bent over. The following morning, I went to sick bay and was examined. Next thing I knew, the ship's captain announced over the PA system that the ship was turning around and going back to the states.

A helicopter flew in and I was airlifted off the fantail and taken to Balboa Naval Hospital where I went right into surgery. My appendix had burst!

When I was getting discharged from the hospital, I asked the Navy personnel at the desk, "How do I get out of here?" He said, "Just how you came

in." I replied, "I came in on a helicopter."

He called me a cab.

Steve Grady  
USMC, 1958-1961  
Stoughton, Wis.

### Seabees "Can-Do" For Marines in Vietnam

The Marines and Seabees have always had a close relationship. In late 1966 and early 1967, I was a member of 4th Platoon, Company A, 1st Amtrac Battalion in Vietnam. We were assigned to support 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. The battalion was located at the west end of a hardtop road that was referred to as the main supply route (MSR). On the east end of the MSR was Marble Mountain. The Seabees were tasked with constructing hardback hootches for the 3/1 area and did a great job making the area livable.

While the Seabees were constructing the hootches, they had occasion to join our platoon for a cold beverage at the end of their workday. We had an old portable cooler that we kept stocked with assorted libations. They were very appreciative of our hospitality. The Seabees set up generators and furnished electricity throughout the 3/1 area—a very modern convenience we were unaccustomed to.

After the Seabees completed their work, they left with a promise to stay in touch. One afternoon a few weeks later we had just returned from a sweep with a platoon from 3/1 when we saw a large truck backed up to our hootch. Four Seabees were unloading a 60-case refrigerated beer cooler from the truck. They plugged it in, and low and behold we had a way to keep our drinks and food cold. They related as how they came across some

paperwork "requisitioning" two of these coolers from the Navy Supply Base at Camp Tien Sha, the supply center on the coast of Da Nang Harbor. They thanked us for our hospitality and for sharing our beer with them. With handshakes all around, they were gone in a cloud of dust. We paid several visits to them over the next few months at their Marble Mountain base and were always welcomed.

I have another story about the Seabee and Marine Corps relationship. On most Sundays, the Seabees would drive up and down the MSR in a refrigerated truck with "The Phantom Reefer" painted on the sides. When they would encounter Marines patrolling along the road, they would stop and give them cases of cold sodas that they had purchased out of their own pockets. Love those Seabees.

Sgt Mike Adair  
USMC, 1965-1969  
Weatherford, Texas

### Snakes Creep Me Out

My greatest fear in Vietnam, especially on my tour in the field, was snakes. The fact that Vietnam had more than 30 species of venomous snakes did not help. In fact, three instances verified my fear.

We were on an operation to establish a firebase on a hill just below the DMZ. We landed and almost immediately, a Marine in the perimeter was bitten by a python. It started raining just after we landed so I spent more than six hours trying to talk a chopper to get under the overcast so we could medevac our guy out.

Another incident was while driving with the commanding officer in his jeep in the rear area at Vandegrift Combat Base.



We came across a black krait, one of the deadliest venomous snakes in the world. He took out his pistol but thought better of discharging it inside the base. The krait went on to do whatever kraits do.

Again, on Vandegrift Combat Base, I went down the path to the heads. On the way back, I saw a group of guys huddled around something in the center of the path. I worked my way into the group and there on the ground was a green bamboo pit viper with its head cut off. As we looked down, a guy with a knife poked the severed head and it bit at the knife. That was one of those heart-stopping sights that still is fixed in my memory.

To this day, snakes creep me out.

Capt R.D. Ramsay, USMC  
Steger, Ill.

### My Love of Airplanes

Every enlisted man has memories of boot camp. They could be funny, good or bad. Mine was bad, due to close order drill.

In the summer of 1958 Parris Island was like an oven. The heat and humidity were brutal which made marching that much worse, but I thought I had found a way to block it all out.

Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort was nearby and their aircraft flew most days. I loved airplanes and had signed up for aviation schooling.

One day I became so absorbed in watching a string of airplanes in their landing pattern that I suddenly found myself marching alone. Somehow, I had managed to block out my drill instructor's cadence yet obey his command calls. I did an about face looking for my platoon and there was my drill instructor, hands on hips, watching me. He looked none too happy but in a very calm voice said, "Go back to the barracks. Put your rifle in

the rack and wait for me."

He returned and invited me to the shower area where he commenced to give me a lesson on close order drill.

After graduation and two weeks of leave, I returned to Parris Island to wait for a troop movement. One night in the "E" Club I ran into my DI and he offered to buy me a beer which I refused. I was young and dumb. To this day I regret that incident. If I could meet him today, I would buy *him* a beer.

I spent two and a half years flying as a crew member in a search-and-rescue unit.

Gerald Rubin  
Calabash, N.C.

### Pilot Lands "Cold" After Air Accident

Travel folders describe Hawaii's climate as sunny, warm and balmy, but there's a Marine pilot in VMA-212 who disagreed. As a matter of fact, he was once examined at the station dispensary for frostbite.

Captain Donald W. Smith was willing to testify that the "weather in Hawaii gets cold."

He discovered this fact while flying his Fury jet at an altitude of 30,000 feet. He and Capt Samuel E. D'Angelo, also of VMA-212, had just completed refueling along with two other Fury jets that were en route to the Naval Air Station, Alameda, Calif., on a trans-Pacific flight.

With the refueling complete, Capt D'Angelo's refueling hose failed to rewind and was trailing. Smith attempted to help release the rewinding mechanism by plugging in his probe thereby providing slack. Capt Smith overshot the refueling hose which looped his wing and smashed his cockpit canopy.

Capt Smith immediately dove to 20,000 feet for oxygen and maintained this altitude for fuel economy, a necessity to reach



COURTESY OF DR. DAVID O. WHITTEN

**This newly purchased 1957 Chevrolet station wagon was the pride of Sgt Madson at MCRD, Parris Island, in June 1957.**

Oahu, despite freezing temperatures.

After 15 minutes at the 20,000-foot mark, Smith could no longer stand the cold and went down to 9,000 feet. He said Capt D'Angelo maintained this altitude until reaching MCAS Kaneohe Bay where they landed safely.

Capt Smith was checked for frostbite and was taken to the station dispensary for a complete physical.

Submitted by  
William Helvey  
Los Altos Hills, Calif.

### Sergeant's Pride and Joy

I was posted outside the Co C, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion office, MCRD Parris Island in June 1957 as a runner while Platoon 126 polished shoes and brass and studied their Guidebooks. The drill instructors responsible for the office were outside examining a new automobile, recently purchased by one of the junior DIs of my platoon. The automobile was the pride of Sergeant Madson.

Weeks later, I was a passenger in that 1957 Chevrolet station wagon along with three others from our platoon. I was in the passenger seat, the others were behind me. One of my colleagues was not content to just enjoy the privilege of riding in his DI's new automobile in silence. He said, "You got a nice car, Sergeant Madson!" Madson nodded and replied, "You

like the color?" "Yes, Sir, pretty."

Madson nodded again. "And what is the color?" My colleague wiggled about in his seat and responded, "Pink, Sir?" I thought Madson would go through the windscreen. "PINK! PINK! You think I'd have a (expletive) pink car!" The recruit struggled, "Uhhh, no, Sir!" Madson yelled, "So what is the color?" "I don't know, Sir."

Madson looked over at me and said what I knew he was going to say. "Private Whitten, what is the color of my car?" The words came out of my mouth, but I swear to this day 63 years later, I don't know where they came from.

"Coral, Sir!"

Madson smiled and relaxed, "Right!"

My promotion was warranted.

Dr. David O. Whitten  
USMCR, 1957-1963  
Sullivan's Island, S.C.

Do you have an interesting story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? We would love to hear them. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Patricia Everett, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to p.everett@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or a one-year MCA&F membership for the "Sea Story of the Month." 🐻

**A shore party consisting of the first wave of 8th Marines to make a landing secures the beach at Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, during maneuvers held there in 1943 in preparation for upcoming battles.**



USMC

# The Marines of Solway

By Mark Pacey

**T**he showgrounds in the New Zealand town of Masterton have been the home of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association's annual shows since 1911. Located on the western side of the town, it was originally made up of two fields separated by a small section of forest. The larger southern one is the site of the main show buildings and where the main show activities are held. The northern field has a railway line running alongside and had been used as holding pens for animals during the agricultural shows. It was later converted into a golf course that was sold for housing after falling out of use. It was during work on roads and the digging of foundations for the new houses that the site's military history came to light.

By the end of 2019, the golf greens had gone, the new roads had been laid and

plots had been surveyed for more than 50 new homes. It was common knowledge that during World War II the grounds were used as a camp for both New Zealand and American servicemembers, but so many decades later, this had begun to fade from memory. In honor of the site's military past, the developers, Westwood Property Group named the new housing site "The Barracks." As progress continued, relics of those who had lived there before started to turn up. Buttons featuring stars and eagles, bullet casings and American coins began to tell the tale of a thousand men who came to this quiet New Zealand town in the middle of a ferocious Pacific war for some much-needed rest and retraining.

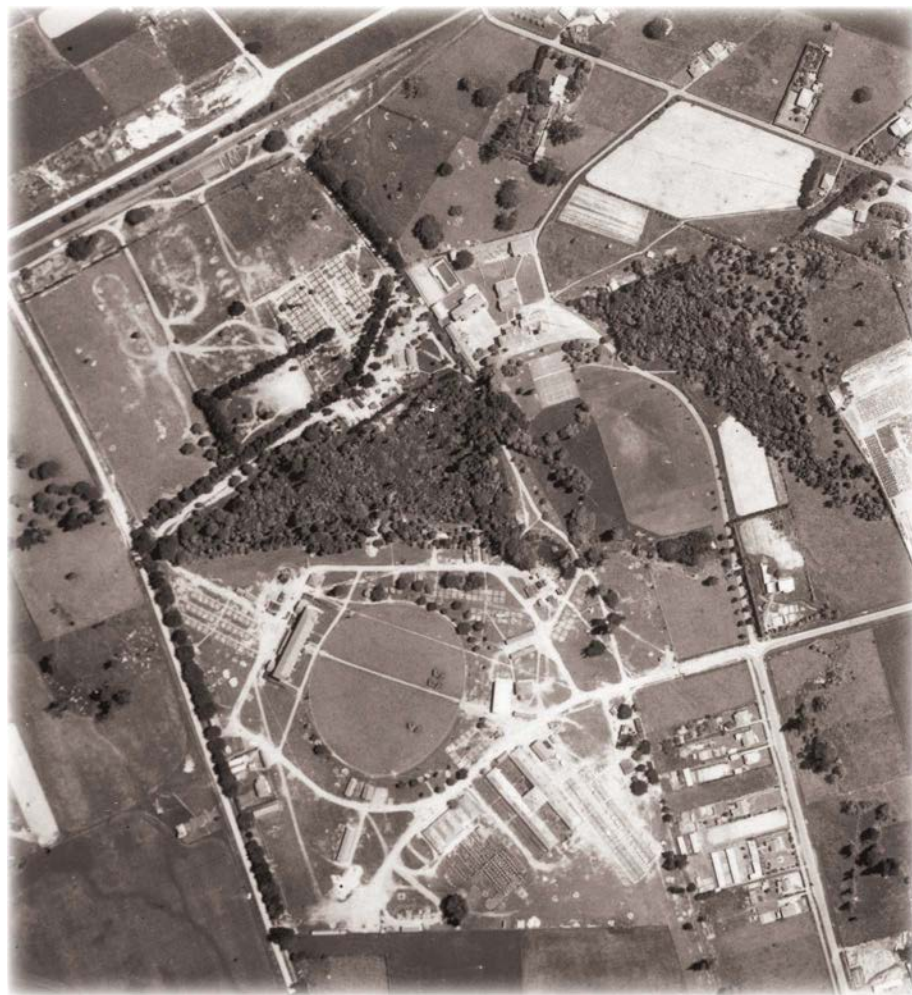
In September 1939, the United Kingdom declared war on Germany. Being part of the British Commonwealth, New Zealand followed suit and began to recruit men to help Britain in her war against Nazi Germany. For two years, young New

Zealander men trained and sailed for the European war. Meanwhile, life continued back home. Masterton still held its annual Agricultural and Pastoral shows at the Solway Showgrounds. It wasn't until Japan's entry into the war in December 1941 that this began to change. With the war much closer to home, more troops were needed for the Pacific to help defend against the coming threat. New training camps were set up across New Zealand to meet the demand, and the showgrounds at Solway were seen as an ideal site. The 1942 show was cancelled, and the Ruahine Infantry Regiment of the New Zealand army moved into the grounds for training and deployment to the Pacific.

Half a world away, another group of young men was involved in the same conflict. A month after New Zealand declared war on Germany, the 3rd Defense Battalion of the United States Marine Corps was formed. This was in response



The site where U.S. Marines were lodged in the Solway Showgrounds in Masterton, New Zealand just after the Marines departed in November 1943.



WAIRARAPA ARCHIVES

to the actions of Germany, but also of Japan, whose expansion into the Pacific was causing alarm.

In April 1940, the battalion boarded ships and sailed for Pearl Harbor. They remained there for 10 months and then sailed for Midway Island, where they helped build up the atoll's defenses. By September 1941, they were back at Pearl Harbor. They were there on Dec. 7, when the Japanese attacked and were quick to join in the base's defense. By the end of the raid, they had shot down three of the attacking planes.

In May 1942, half the battalion was sent back to Midway, where they helped defend the atoll against the Japanese attack on June 4. From there, it was back to Pearl Harbor to resupply before they were sent to their next battleground, the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. The Japanese had been building an airstrip on the island, which would be a threat to Australia when completed. For six months, the 3rd Defense Bn was stationed in the Solomons, defending against air and sea attacks by the Japanese, who were determined to recapture the airfield. By Feb-

ruary 1943, the troops were exhausted and sick with malaria. They were told they would be taking some time off for rest and retraining, and they would be doing this in New Zealand. On Feb. 9, the battalion boarded USS *George Clymer* (APA-27) and sailed for a safer world.

On Feb. 16, the battalion arrived in Wellington, New Zealand's capital city. From here, an advance party went by train to the Solway Showgrounds in Masterton. Masterton is the most populous town in the Wairarapa region. It is 51 miles to the north of Wellington and had a population in 1943 of about 9,500.

The advance group was tasked with making preparations ahead of the arrival of the rest of the battalion. The New Zealand Ruahine Regiment had left a few months before, and tents and facilities had to be put in order in the now vacant camp. In March, the remainder of the battalion arrived at the showgrounds. Dressed as they were for Guadalcanal, their summer uniform was inadequate for the much colder New Zealand climate. One Marine recalled, "the first chance I had, I went over the top and shot into Masterton and



MARK PACEY

**USMC Uniform Button**



MARK PACEY

**.50-Caliber M2 Bullet Projectile**



MARK PACEY

**U.S. Penny**



MARK PACEY

**Beer Bottle Fragments**



WAIRARAPA ARCHIVES

**Queen Street, the main thoroughfare of Masterton, shown here in the 1940s. Marines spent time and money here during their respite from the war in the Pacific.**

picked myself up a nice double eiderdown. I didn't get cold from then on."

For the first two weeks in Masterton, the Marines settled into their new home. Most stayed in tents with six to each, which were warmed by stoves supplied by the locals. Others used the showgrounds' existing buildings. The majority camped in the main showgrounds area, but there were several tents pitched on the northern field. This showed on a wartime plan and was proven when several brass tent strainers were dug up on site.

Cookhouses, shower blocks and latrines had all been installed prior to the Americans arrival at camp, although there were

complaints that the hot water in the shower blocks was lukewarm at best.

After two weeks, the troops were still without proper supplies and began to grow restless. They had brought some gear with them, including a souvenir Japanese bullet casing from Guadalcanal, which was recently rediscovered during excavations, but they were still short of warm clothes and luxury items. To appease the men, a supply of 700 bottles of American beer and a large amount of ice cream was sent up by train.

The main food supplies were provided locally and included meat, vegetables, fruit and tinned goods which had been brought in from overseas.

The Marines had been given their backdated pay from their time in the Solomons. With Masterton just a short distance away, the Marines took their pay to the local shops, and it became a common sight to see these men "dishing out dollar notes" at the town's stores and milk bars. Shopkeepers had been notified that they had to accept American money as payment for goods. New Zealand's currency was the same as the British Imperial system and quite different from the American dollars and cents. Newspaper notices gave the exchange rates for U.S. currency and names of banks able to exchange it. One New Zealand pound was worth just over \$4. Baked goods and ketchup were highest



MARK PACEY

**U.S. Rifle Casings**



MARK PACEY

**Proficiency Badge**





**Hospitable New Zealanders made a habit of inviting Marines to their homes for week-end visits and were listed on the rolls of the American Red Cross Cecil Club. Here, Mrs. M. Williams and Mrs. E. Luhks assist PFC E. Rutherford in finding a place to stay.**

on the list of items the men were wanted to buy.

One thing that the troops could not legally buy in Masterton was alcohol. Masterton had elected to become a dry area in 1909. It was legal to purchase beer in neighbouring Carterton and bring it back to the town to drink, which many of the inhabitants did. Despite this, there was an illegal trade in alcohol. After the war, some Marines did admit there were sly groggers who sold bottles of spirits to the troops at designated places near the camp.

For leisure activities outside of camp, the Red Cross set up a Services Club for the Marines which was located on Masterton's main thoroughfare, Queen Street. It was an open hall with tables for playing cards, ping pong and dominoes. These could be moved to the sides and dances held with local bands providing the music. The menu at the club also catered towards the Americans. Grilled cheese sandwiches, hamburgers and doughnuts were some of the items on the menu. These were not dishes with which many New Zealanders were familiar. It was an example of the effort made to welcome the Marines to New Zealand.

The dances held at the hall were popular, and the Marines had no trouble finding dates. With many of the local men already overseas, the arrival of these young men in their elaborate uniforms, accents and ample supplies of candy, cigarettes and money was welcomed by the town's inhabitants. One Masterton woman described them as being "great boys, they were only young ... most of them were only in their 20s. They were lovely young boys and we used to do our best for them."

After a period of settling in, the Marines were given some time off for leave. They were able to travel around New Zealand, with many choosing Rotorua for its



**New Zealand Forces Button**



**Japanese Arisaka Casing**



**Drum Bung**



**Tarpaulin Eyelet**

MARK PACEY



**Tent Strainer**

MARK PACEY



**U.S. Padlock**

MARK PACEY



**U.S. Padlock**

MARK PACEY

thermal attractions and Maori culture.

Not all of the Marines had to stay in the showgrounds. Some were able to find billets in the homes of locals. Many had sons serving overseas and welcomed the Americans into their home, thankful for their efforts to keep the Japanese at bay.

Many of the Marines had New Zealand girlfriends with whom they would keep in contact by letter after they returned to the war. Other local girls were more serious and became engaged to their American boyfriends. Several of the brides sailed back to the United States to wait with the Marines' families for their return at the war's end to start a new life together. Some girls were not allowed by their families to marry so soon. Should the Marine return after the war, they would be welcomed into the family, but until that happened, there would be no wedding.

It was not all rest and recreation for the Marines at Solway. After a few weeks of rest and settling in, the task of retraining began. Each morning, the men had to leave their warm tents to go for a run around the camp. By this stage, it was getting colder, and the stove-warmed tents were a welcome sight after their jog.

For jungle training, the troops were taken by local guides into the Tararua Ranges, the forest-covered mountains to the west of Masterton. Here they were also able to go hunting, with pigs and other game available. This was a very popular pastime for the Americans, who were also able to fish for trout in the local rivers.

For firing exercises, the battalion took over Riversdale Beach, 30 miles to the east. Newspaper notices told locals to avoid this beach during the exercises, as the Marines were using live ammunition, which they had brought with them in large numbers. A number of these casings were found during work on The Barracks site, which included the projectile from the defense battalion's heavy machine gun, the M2, one of the weapons being used at the beach.

For transport, the Americans had brought with them their jeeps and trucks. New Zealand was under quite stringent petrol rationing in 1943, but this did not apply to the Marines, who were able to access fuel that the New Zealanders could not. They could fill their vehicles and barrels with petrol from the depot in Masterton. This depot had been very quiet before the arrival of the Americans, attended by just one man and receiving little in the way of traffic. He was shocked one morning to arrive at work and see a line of U.S. trucks waiting to fill up and was forced to ask for extra help to cope with the increased demand. A resident remembers the increase in traffic at the time with "jeeps running around all over the place."

The site of The Barracks was remembered by some locals as where the Marines had their vehicle depot. Green painted padlocks with "US" stamped on them and a brass eyelet from a tarpaulin turned up during digging helped confirm this story. A bung [stopper] from a drum proved that



USMC

**Marine Corps dance bands would play popular swing tunes of the day at dances, which were popular among the locals and the visiting Marines and Sailors.**



**At the Cecil Club in Wellington, sodas and sundaes made the American way were a real treat to Marines and other U.S. military personnel who were away from home in 1943.**

this was where they stored their petrol as well.

After seven months in Masterton, the 3rd Defense Bn left by train for Wellington, where they embarked for Guadalcanal. During their time in Masterton, they had amassed a large amount of supplies. Unable to take much of this back with them, men gave away furniture, motorbikes and even a horse. Other supplies were disposed of at the local garbage dump.

The Marines left quickly with some Masterton residents saying they were there during the day and gone by the next morning. Some supplies were saved from the garbage dump and from what was left behind at the showgrounds. The last of the Americans at Solway were ordered to go over the site, making sure it was left tidy and free of rubbish. By October 1943, the Marines had left Solway and had returned to the Solomons, where they remained until they disbanded at the end of 1944.

With the war now in the Allies' favour, the Solway Showgrounds were no longer needed as a military camp and the Agricultural and Pastoral Association began the process of dismantling it and turning it back into a showground. One remnant which was kept was a large hall built by



USMC

the Marines. It is still in use to this day and functions as the site's trade hall.

The Barracks housing site is still progressing, with the show home now finished and other homes under construction. The new roads have been completed and are named Barracks Avenue and Marine Corps Drive. In a town located more than 6,000 miles from the United States, this small section of land will forever be a reminder of the brave men who fought

in a dreadful war and helped keep New Zealand safe.

*Author's bio: Mark Pacey is a military historian who works at the Wairarapa Archive in Masterton, New Zealand. He has a degree in defense studies and history and is the author of several books and newspaper articles on New Zealand history.* 🇳🇿



USMC

**The enlisted men's quarters in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1943. Marines were welcomed by the locals and were billeted not just in Masterton, but throughout the country in a variety of places including here, on the inside of a racetrack used by Wellington New Zealand Horse Trotters.**

# Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

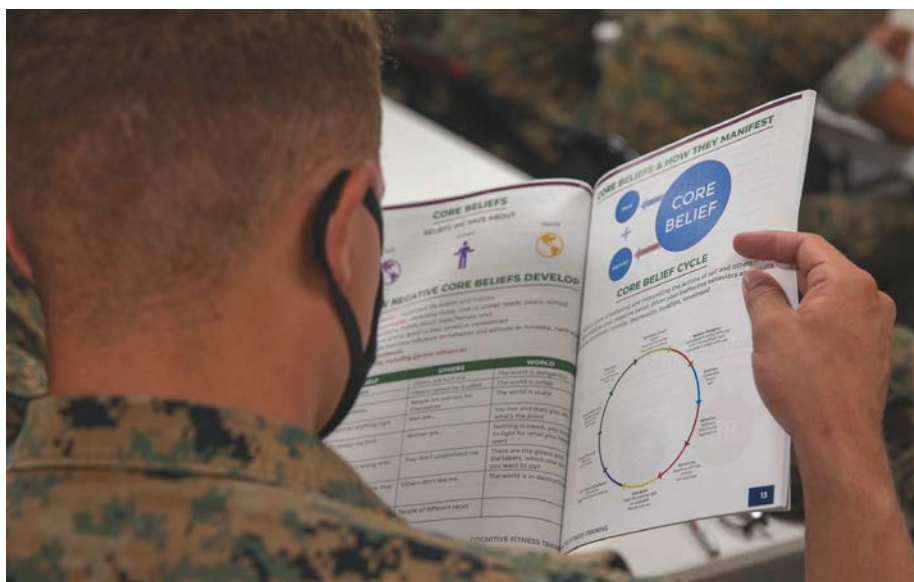
## Cognitive Fitness: New Course Teaches Marines Mental Resilience

Resilience—It's been defined by the Department of Defense as the ability to withstand, recover and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands. Over the last few years, the military has focused on building the physical, mental and emotional resilience of servicemembers as they face deployments and operations abroad.

In the Corps, Marines are required to attend annual suicide awareness training, and leaders have gone to great lengths to eliminate the stigma around reaching out for help. More and more resources have been made available to Marines as they work to overcome adversity, trauma, tragedy and stress.

As an additional tool to help address the challenge of building mental resilience, the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program (SARP), part of the Treatment Programs Department at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, Calif., is working to develop a Cognitive Fitness Program that uses a collection of prevention-based workshops that utilize the basics of cognitive behavioral therapy to enhance resilience, readiness and leadership for servicemembers.

"Cognitive Fitness really provides servicemembers with a foundation of therapeutic modalities within mental health," said Commander Michael Kim, USN, the SARP department head. "So,



LCPL KERSTIN ROBERTS, USMC

**A Marine with MASS-3, MWCS-38, 3rd MAW reviews a handout during a Cognitive Fitness class at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Sept. 25. The course is a pilot program developed by SARP counselors and is designed to teach Marines how thoughts, feelings and actions are connected.**

it really helps them understand their thought processes more effectively, how different stresses cause them to react and gives them a more positive way of dealing with the stress."

The program's goal is to develop flexibility and emotional intelligence in both Marines and their leaders along with giving them the tools to recognize and understand the actions and emotions of the servicemembers around them.

"I think it's important to be able to identify your feelings and understand how it affects your thoughts and behaviors in order to interact with your Marines appropriately and understand how it affects the junior Marines as well," said Captain Lauren Jarreau, an air support control officer with Marine Air Support Squadron 3, Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.



LCPL KERSTIN ROBERTS, USMC

**Shea Robinson, a substance abuse counselor with Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, gives a Cognitive Fitness class, developed by SARP counselors, to Marines with MASS-3, Sept. 25. The SARP's eventual goal is to develop a program that can be instituted Corps-wide.**



Cognitive Fitness is currently a pilot program, and MASS-3 and School of Infantry-West are being used as “test bed” units, said Kim. Taking the feedback from these units, SARP will eventually open the course to other commands aboard Camp Pendleton.

“My hope is that the Marine Corps will see the positive benefits of Cognitive Fitness and implement it Marine Corps-wide,” said Kim.

MCB Camp Pendleton

## VA Caregiver Benefits Expanded To Include Vietnam Vets, Older Generations

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced Oct. 1 the first phase of expansion of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC), which offers support benefits, education, health care coverage, certain beneficiary travel and monthly stipends to qualifying family caregivers of eligible veterans of the Vietnam War as well as older generations.

Previously, these benefits were only available to eligible veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or after 9/11.

The expected change was made official through the implementation of a new system, the Caregiver Records Management Application (CARMA), which automates manual processes and integrates with other VA systems, resulting in increased efficiencies and effectiveness for VA staff.

The expansion rolls out in two phases. Effective Oct. 1, the first phase includes eligible veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975. Effective Oct. 1, 2022, the second phase will include eligible veterans whose injuries occurred between May 7, 1975, and Sept. 11, 2001.

Through CARMA, an electronic health record will be created for a family caregiver and Caregiver Support Coordinators will document their clinical interactions. CARMA will also help guide consistency by systematically adjusting VA’s stipend payment calculations, as appropriate, and alerting VA users when annual reassessments of PCAFC participants are due, among other key functionalities. In addition, this program expansion also includes a new digital version of the application, which allows individuals to apply for the PCAFC online.

“Caregivers provide stability and security to our most vulnerable veterans, allowing them to stay in their homes with their loved ones for as long as possible,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie in a statement on Oct. 1. “Today begins the

first phase of expansion of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Through this expansion, VA is able to give more family caregivers access to essential resources so we can support them as they care for veterans of earlier eras.”

Since publishing the final regulation to improve and expand PCAFC July 31, VA also expedited hiring key staff who bring the clinical qualifications and organizational skill sets to ensure consistent eligibility decision making across the



CPL JULIEN RODARTE, USMC

**As of Oct. 1, qualifying family caregivers of eligible veterans of the Vietnam War and older generations are now eligible for support benefits, monthly stipends and other forms of support through the VA that previously were only available for caregivers of post-9/11 wounded veterans.**

enterprise, support program needs and provide strong infrastructure for consistent and standardized application processing and adjudication.

Over the past year, the Caregiver Support Program expanded to approximately 1,100 staff and will grow to approximately 1,800 over a six-month period. These changes ensure veterans and caregivers receive timely, accurate assessments and eligibility determinations as well as an improved customer experience.

VA’s Caregiver Support Program offers a wide variety of support services for caregivers of veterans. Learn more by visiting [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov), or call the Caregiver Support Line at (855) 260-3274.

VA

## DOD Diversity, Inclusion Board To Consider Input from Personnel

The Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion will report to the Secretary of Defense by Dec. 15 on ways to improve diversity and inclusion leading to broader opportunities for all department personnel.

The board will focus on actions to enhance diversity and inclusion and drive a cultural shift to create lasting change in the DOD, from recruiting, career track selection and retention; to accessions, assignments, schools and promotions; to military justice and everything in between and beyond.

Through October, all Defense Depart-

ment personnel were encouraged to “crowd source” feedback on ideas for improving diversity and inclusion.

“Hearing from our servicemembers is critical in helping the Department of Defense make lasting changes to our military culture,” said Brigadier General Troy E. Dunn, USAF, the board’s senior military member.

There are four focal points of action the board is taking: evaluating all military policies, programs and processes; surveying best practices of industry,

academic and other non-DOD organizations; reviewing the scientific literature, past studies and reports, including recommendations on actions the department can take to improve diversity and inclusion; and generating actionable items and policies to improve diversity and inclusion.

The board will provide six recommendations to the Secretary of Defense:

- Strengthening both community engagement and the narrative about military service opportunities during recruiting to attract more diverse candidates

- Retaining minorities beyond initial service commitment and into leadership ranks

- Addressing barriers confronted by minorities in the workplace

- Improving advancement opportunities, promotion boards, command selection, professional military education and assignments

- Addressing command and organizational climate issues that may negatively impact the retention of minorities

- Promoting inclusion of minorities in military culture and strengthening aspects of individual and cultural identities such as hair and shaving standards and dress

The success of the board will be determined by improvements to policies, programs and processes that achieve broader diversity and inclusion.

David Vergun



# BUCKETS, NAILS AND TNT

By Joseph Tachovsky  
and Cynthia Kraack

*Editor's note: This is an excerpt from the recently published book "40 Thieves on Saipan," by Joseph Tachovsky. The "40 Thieves"—or as the December 1944 issue of Leatherneck called them, "Tachovsky's Terrors"—were a scout-sniper platoon who were handpicked to fight in the Battle of Saipan.*

**T**he line of defense the Japanese had established between Lake Susupe and Afetna Point lay dead ahead. The men observed a well-fortified position on a dominant ridge. From several plateaus, mortars and heavy machine guns peppered Red Beach 3, keeping the Marines positioned there pinned down. There was no way they would survive a frontal assault on the Japanese position.

Corporal Martin R. Dyer and his men worked their way toward the left side of the ridge until they found a spot where they could climb up. Using a human pyramid, the Thieves scaled the jagged coral one by one to reach the top of the ridge and discovered enemy fortifications below, facing both to the north and south.



**PFC Alfred Yunker**

Moving along the apex Private First Class Bobbie Smotts led the way, pointing out and marking the Japanese positions below, four to five on each side.

There were too many pockets for the Marines to jump down and take them out man-to-man, so Dyer asked for options.

PFC Alfred Yunker offered, "Back at that [Japanese] camp, there's pails of rusty nails and scrap metal. We could put blocks of TNT in the pails and adjust the fuse to go off just before it hits the ground." No other opinions were needed. Dyer sent Yunker and five others back to the camp to salvage up to 10 buckets of rusty shrapnel. When they returned within an hour with



**Cpl Martin R. Dyer**



**PFC Walter Borawski**

COURTESY OF JOSEPH TACHOVSKY

the goods and a coil of rope, the Thieves went to work.

Estimating the distance from their location on top of the ridge to the base of the plateau, the Marines cut sections of rope and tied them off on trees or rocks above each of the enemy positions. On the other end was the pail of rusted metal and TNT, timed for 15 seconds.

When everything was ready, Dyer gave the signal. The fuses were lit and the pails thrown over. With staggered and resounding booms, the ridge rolled and rocked beneath their feet.

Half the squad scaled the ropes down to the plateau on one side; the other half, on the opposite.

Yunker's ploy worked. The few Japa-



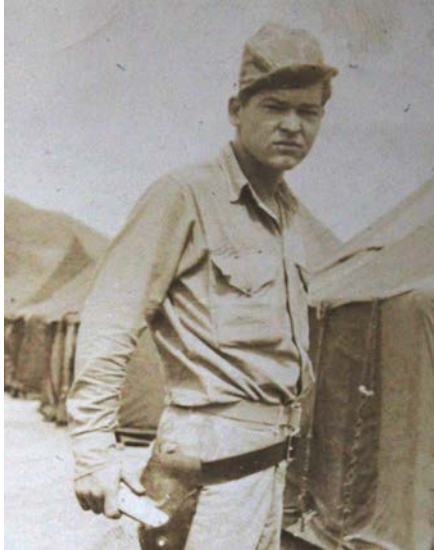
COURTESY OF RICHARD ZUZIAK

Members of the Scout-Sniper Platoon, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines, landing on Saipan. Lt Frank J. Tachovsky is pictured on the far left; the platoon took their nickname of "Tachovsky's Terrors" from their leader.



## Tachovsky's Terrors

By Sgt Vic Kalman, USMC



COURTESY OF JOSEPH TACHOVSKY

**PFC Bobbie Smotts**

nese left alive writhed in pain, bodies torn apart by the rusted shrapnel. They did not suffer long. After machine guns and mortars were destroyed, a search of the interconnected caverns uncovered cases of Hokkan sake, crabmeat, tangerines, and other canned provisions.

PFC Walter Borawski opened a tin with his Ka-Bar and tossed one to Yunker.

"We're issued Red Heart," Yunker marveled, "and the [Japanese are] eatin' this."

Using their ropes, they hoisted case after case to the ridge above, climbed up themselves, and took all they could carry with them back to their camp.

Bypassing the abandoned Japanese site, Dyer's squad walked through a lush area more fertile than the surrounding ground cover. As they passed a row of shattered small buildings, bullets suddenly pinged off debris and made plopping sounds as the slugs burrowed into the soft earth. The Thieves dropped their plunder and themselves to the ground. Borawski was the first to spy a lone tree, unscathed in the devastation. It had to house the sniper. He unloaded his machine gun into the foliage, ending the threat. The squad brushed themselves off, gathered their loot, and waited for their corporal to give directions.

None came.

"Dyer!" PFC Warren Tipton called out. Retracing their steps, the Thieves fanned out and searched. Their squad leader was nowhere to be found.

Soon, a faint cry of "Help!" led the men toward the demolished buildings, but by the time they got there the voice had stopped.

"Dyer?" Smotts spoke cautiously.

"Get me outta here!" The voice called out.

Some of the craziest, fiercest, most lovable Marines on the island are in the scout-sniper contingent under the command of First Lieutenant Frank J. Tachovsky, 29, of New Brighton, Pa.

"Tachovsky's Terrors" have wreaked havoc in, around, and mostly behind the enemy lines. They've killed numerous Japanese and blown up ammunition dumps.

But all of their exploits are not recorded in the annals of the high command. And it is their "unofficial" escapades which are becoming Marine Corps legends.

Take the "bike patrol," for instance.

One night, while Garapan was well behind the Japanese lines, Privates First Class William "Wild Bill" Emerick, 21, of Springfield, Ill., and Richard B. Knoll, 22, of St. Louis, Mo., crept into the city.

PFC Knoll spotted two Japanese guarding some bicycles. Unable to shoot for fear of rousing the garrison, the Marines knifed the sentries and calmly rode out of the city on their new vehicles.

"We decided to do it," said PFC Emerick, "after we thought of that long trek back to our outfit."

Youngest looking of the "Terrors" is diminutive PFC Hal L. Moore, 20, of Stillwater, Okla. He is proud of his month-old beard, yet hardly needs a shave. He is, however, what the Marines call "plenty salty."

One night, he almost got his patrol into trouble when his heavy field shoes clacked against a rock.

"You'd better get yourself some sneakers someplace," said his squad leader. Corporal Martin R. Dyer Jr., 20, of St. Louis, Mo.

Yes, sneakers. That had been PFC Moore's problem for days. The quartermaster didn't have any small enough.

The next night, the Oklahoma lad was missing from his foxhole for a few hours. He returned, noiselessly, in a pair of Japanese sneakers.

PFC Ira L. Causey, 19, of Baton Rouge, La., is called a "boot," because this is his first combat experience. The others were at Guadalcanal and Tarawa. But the boot saved some of their lives during an expedition the other day.

Several of the men peeped into a Japanese pillbox, saw a "dead" man, and walked over to a light machine gun, which they started to dismantle. As PFC Causey passed the pillbox, the Japanese was reaching for his rifle.

"I put a couple of bullets into him and walked on," Causey said. "Before I took two steps, I heard some noise and then three more Japanese came out armed with hand grenades."

The Baton Rouge Marine sent the Japanese trio to join their ancestors, while his mates continued to strip the machine gun.

K-Rations may be okay for the rest of the Marines, but "Tachovsky's Terrors" like fresh meat now and then. After a hard day's work, one may see them scouting around the hills. Rarely do they come back empty-handed. Soon afterward, the smell of barbecued pork or roast chicken drifts toward the nostrils of the other men.

The scout-sniper outfit has not been without casualties. Probably the most colorful of them all—Cpl Donald L. Evans, 21, Kansas University football and track star, of Kansas City, Mo.—was killed.

And taking chances with his men is Lieutenant Tachovsky "Ski," they call him—one of the best loved officers on Saipan. He fought on Guadalcanal and was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry on Tarawa. His wife, Mrs. Florence Tachovsky, lives in Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

## Decades-Old *Leatherneck* Article Spurs Author to Write about “40 Thieves”



COURTESY OF JOSEPH TACHOVSKY

**For his gallantry on Tarawa, Nov. 23, 1943, Lt Frank J. Tachovsky, Co L, 3rd Bn, 6th Marines, 2ndMarDiv, receives the Silver Star from ADM Chester W. Nimitz.**

Joseph Tachovsky always knew that his father Frank Tachovsky was a Marine who served in the Pacific during World War II and that he was the recipient of a Silver Star. Joe also knew who his father’s Marine Corps buddies were because they always referred to each other by last name only,

like they did during the war. It wasn’t until after the elder Tachovsky died, however, that Joe learned details about Frank Tachovsky’s wartime service.

One of Frank’s friends delivered a eulogy at the funeral that mentioned something Frank had done on Saipan that saved the life of every man in the platoon. That piece of information “was very eye-opening,” said Joe Tachovsky, “so I opened up his footlocker and discovered his platoon roster for Guadalcanal, Tarawa and Saipan.” That led him to search online where he found a forum that posted a December 1944 *Leatherneck* article entitled “Tachovsky’s Terrors.” A comment under the posting indicated that everything in the article was true with one exception: the scout-sniper platoon was known as the “40 Thieves.”

“I didn’t realize I had the title for the book ... before I even thought about there being a book,” Tachovsky said.

During his research, he developed a better understanding of things he had always found “curious” about his father. For example, Tachovsky said his father rarely slept at night, which his son would later learn was a result of his father’s experiences in the war; nighttime was when the enemy was most active. And the elder Tachovsky never took his son to see fireworks displays. “After hearing [about] bombardments that they would have to ferry through to get to beachheads, you can understand why fireworks aren’t as awe-inspiring to

Smotts followed the cries for help to an area of bright green fountain grass and a hole in the ground. Circling around it, the squad looked down. They had been walking through the latrines for the Japanese camp.

“Oh, Christ!” Tipton gagged, and turned away. The others suppressed their laughter.

The location of the outhouses was overgrown, and Dyer had fallen into one.

“Get me the hell out of here!” Fat flies swarmed around him. Yunker took a deep breath, reached down and pulled Dyer out. Now on solid ground, Dyer stood covered from head to toe in human waste and flies. The men all kept their distance, and no one dared to laugh or make a wisecrack.

“You’re ... ” was all Yunker could manage before being silenced by Dyer’s piercing glare. With all present and accounted for, the squad headed back to

the command post. Instead of leading his squad back, Dyer brought up the rear—a quite distant rear.

As they approached the coconut grove, Lieutenant Frank “Ski” Tachovsky observed nine men in the lead and one lagging far behind.

“What gives?” Ski asked Smotts as he entered camp.

As Smotts told the lieutenant about the shit storm Dyer had encountered, Ski called out to PFC Marvin Strombo to get a scrub brush and a bar of soap. The two met Dyer before he reached camp. Handing him the brush and soap, Ski ordered his corporal to the beach, “And don’t come back until you’re clean.”

“I’ll keep you company,” Strombo said, being careful to keep up-wind.

“A regular Roman holiday,” Dyer replied.

*Authors’ bios: Joseph Tachovsky is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and the son of Frank Tachovsky, commanding officer of the 40 Thieves.*

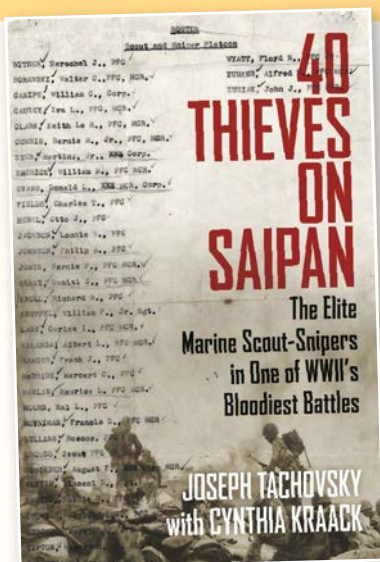
*Cynthia Kraack has a bachelor’s degree in journalism and history from Marquette University, a master’s degree from the University of Minnesota and an MFA from the University of Southern Maine. She is the author of five novels.*



COURTESY OF JOSEPH TACHOVSKY

**A portion of the Scout-Sniper Platoon on Hawaii. Standing, left to right, are Richard Knoll, Francis Moynihan, Barney Wheelless, Daniel Kenny, Ira Causey, Albert Malanga, Don Evans, Bill Emerick and Bernie Jones. Seated are Otto Hebel, Al Yunker, John Zuziak, Lonnie Jackson, Hal Moore, Wayland Stevens, Keith Clark and Bill Knuppel.**





Retired Col Frank Tachovsky, left, didn't talk about WW II with his family. His son Joseph learned the details of his father's wartime service after his father's death in 2011. His research led him to write the recently published book, "40 Thieves on Saipan: The Elite Marine Scout-Snipers in One of WWII's Bloodiest Battles."

COURTESY OF JOSEPH TACHOVSKY

veterans as they are to normal people," Joe said.

"Those two or three years of these young men's lives shaped them for the rest of their lives ... in those two years they lived a lifetime," he added.

After the war, Frank Tachovsky settled into quiet family life in Sturgeon Bay, Wis., where he eventually served as the town's mayor and later as the postmaster. He never talked about his WW II combat, but he remained close to the men he had led on the remote islands in the Pacific. Those were

the men Joe turned to when he began work on his book.

"The most wondrous part of the process was seeing these old leathernecks," said Tachovsky. He said they were willing to talk to him about things that had given them nightmares for 70 years. And now that they were older, they wanted to reminisce about what it was like to be a warrior in the Pacific going toe-to-toe with the enemy. "I was just fortunate enough to have them open up to me."

Nancy S. Lichtman



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## Warren G. LeGarie

Chief Hospital Corpsman Warren G. “Lou” LeGarie, a Navy corpsman who served 30 years and went into combat with Marines during three wars, died in September in Palo Alto, Calif. He was 95.

He was admired by those who knew him, and his fearlessness in combat was well-known. “He was most respected for his leadership and his expertise as a corpsman on the battlefield,” said Lieutenant General Michael A. Hough, USMC (Ret).

LeGarie enlisted in the Navy and served aboard USS *Nitro* (AE-2) before reporting to Field Medical Service School in 1943. He was assigned to 6thMarDiv and saw action in the battles of Guam and Okinawa.

In September 1950, he landed at Inchon and saw action in the bitter cold temperatures at the Chosin Reservoir while assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He was the recipient of the Silver Star for his actions on Dec. 7, 1950, when he repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire so that he could render first aid to wounded Marines. According to the award citation, “Although seriously wounded himself, he courageously refused medical aid and continued to treat and evacuate other casualties. His outstanding example of courage, professional skill and unselfish devotion to duty ... were an inspiration to all around him.”

LeGarie once again went into battle alongside his Marine Corps brothers during the Vietnam War. He was the 2nd Bn, 5th Marines chief corpsman at An Hoa, Phu Bai and during the urban fighting at Hue City in 1968.

LeGarie was so highly regarded in his battalion that instead of calling him “Doc,” the men called him Gunny. LtGen George R. Christmas, USMC (Ret), who commanded Company H, 2/5 during the urban fighting in Hue City said LeGarie played a key role during the battle. “He is something else. He’s a legend to all Marines,” he said during a 2005 oral history interview.

After LeGarie’s retirement from the Navy, he settled in Hawaii, working for 20 years with the Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe club systems where he received an award for outstanding club management.

“I first met Lou when I was the Group commander in Hawaii in 1991-92 ... and we became fast friends until the day he

died. He was one of a kind and in my 40+ years in the service, none that I knew came close to his whole being and character,” said LtGen Hough.

In 1994 HMC LeGarie was honored at an Evening Parade at Marine Corps Barracks Washington.

In addition to the Silver Star, his awards include the Bronze Star with combat “V,” the Navy Commendation with combat “V,” and the Purple Heart with star.

“My whole life has been dedicated to the United States Marine Corps,” said LeGarie in a 1990 interview for the *Hawaii Marine*. “When you love the Marine Corps and what it stands for, let me tell you, there’s nothing like it.”

Nancy S. Lichtman

## Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss, a World War II Marine and noted historian who was instrumental in the battlefield preservation movement in the United States, died in September in Richland, Miss. He was 97.

He was an expert battlefield tour guide, enthralling countless people as he helped them understand how the physical landscape of a site was a key component of the battle. He learned that firsthand during the Battle of Suicide Creek on New Britain in 1944 as a corporal assigned to Company L, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division where he was wounded during the fighting. “I lived rather than died because I used the configuration of the terrain to get out of there,” he later said during an oral history interview with the American Battlefield Trust.

The severity of his wounds, which limited his dexterity for the rest of his life, resulted in his return home and discharge from service. He went to college and then graduate school where he studied history. One of his areas of expertise was Civil War history.

He embarked on a career with the National Park Service as a historian, and his first posting was in Vicksburg, Miss., where he is credited with the discovery of USS *Cairo*, an ironclad ship which had been sunk during a skirmish in the Yazoo River in 1862.

In 1981, he was named the chief historian for the park service and became a key figure in the new movement to preserve battlefields. He was frequently called upon for his expertise and was interviewed for various documentaries including Ken Burns’ “Civil War.”

Throughout his life, he taught history in the most compelling classrooms available—the battlefields where men had fought and died. He made a lasting impression on his students as he showed them how battles unfolded.

“I have been on a lot of battlefields with Ed,” said Bill Vodra, a trustee with the American Battlefield Trust. “Ed educated me on life and war as viewed from a Marine private in World War II. Whether it was growing up in the West on a ranch in Montana, or his combat experience in WW II, he was always totally candid and blunt.”

He had an abundance of energy and conducted battlefield tours into his 90s. “While he never complained about his injuries, I do recall when he was unhappy that his busload of tourists could not keep up with him at age 75,” Vodra said.

The Marine Corps was a Bearss family tradition. In addition to his famous cousin, Medal of Honor Marine “Hiking Hiram” Bearss, Ed’s father was a Marine; his son and daughter are Marines; and one of his grandsons is a Marine.

Bearss’ daughter Jenny said she and her siblings grew up learning history from their dad as they toured battlefields. “He believed that you had to walk the battlefield so you could live it,” she said. Jenny, who served from 1986-1994, said her father remained devoted to the Marine Corps throughout his life.

The last two presentations her father gave were to Marines, she said. He spoke about the battles of WW II for the 6th Marine Regiment, where her son, Staff Sergeant Todd Olmsted, is currently assigned to Headquarters Company.

Nancy S. Lichtman

**LCpl Tim Conners**, 80, in Oakland, Calif. He served from 1959-1963. He was assigned to D/1/9 at Camp Hansen, Okinawa and was a member of the MCAS El Toro pistol team in 1963.

**LCpl Billy A. Dayers**, 69, in Riverside County, Calif. He and his best friend enlisted on the buddy plan and started boot camp at MCRD San Diego in January 1968. He served a one-year tour in Vietnam with Comm Co, Headquarters Battalion, 3rdMarDiv.

**Cpl Phillip A. Fazzini**, 86, of Millville, Ohio. After his graduation from boot camp at MCRD Parris Island, he was assigned to the MarDet aboard USS *Des Moines* (CA-134). He was a member of



the MCA&F. He also was a member of the Seagoing Marine Association and the MCL, serving as the commandant of the Lt Terrance C. Graves Det. #1330.

**Edward W. Hoth**, 89, of Hazlet, N.J. He was a Marine who served in the Korean War and was a veteran of the fighting at the Chosin Reservoir. After the war, he had a career with General Motors. He was a member of the VFW, American Legion and MCL.

**John P. Kenny**, 87, of Santa Fe, N.M. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after his high school graduation and then later attended college to earn a degree in forestry.

**Frederick W. Klein**, 104, of Tucson, Ariz. He was a pilot during WW II, flying PBJ bombers with VMB-433. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross. After the war, he returned to his career in the carpet manufacturing industry. He won several US Masters Swimming gold medals and set a record for the 50-yard backstroke in his age group the day after his 100th birthday.

**Sgt Patrick Q. McCaffrey**, 87, of Albuquerque, N.M. He enlisted in 1953 and served until 1956. His awards include the National Defense Service Medal.

**SgtMaj John C. Rood Jr.**, 86, of Wilmington, N.C. He had a 35-year career

in the Marine Corps, serving during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

**Col Bynon T. Schenn**, 93, of San Diego, Calif. He enlisted at the age of 17 and served four years. After his discharge, he went to college and upon graduation was commissioned a second lieutenant. He had a 32-year career during which he served in various command and staff assignments. His awards include the Legion of Merit with combat "V," the Meritorious Service Medal and the Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V".

**Joseph F. Schmatz**, 86, of Manitowoc, Wis. He was a Marine who served in the Korean War and then had a career as a long-haul trucker.

**Donald Tancredi**, 91, of Wilmington, N.C. He joined the Marine Corps in 1947 and served in Korea. He was the founder and former commandant of the MCL Cape Fear Det. #1070.

**LtCol James A. Wagner**, 101, of Richmond, Va. He was a veteran of WW II, who fought on Guadalcanal, New Britain, Pavuvu and Peleliu.

**John O. White**, 81, of Fullerton, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps Reserve.

**LtCol Thomas M. Yackley**, 66, of Eugene, Ore. He was commissioned a second lieutenant after his 1976 graduation from Oregon State University. His 20-

year career as an artillery officer included command of Recruiting Station Buffalo, N.Y., and Headquarters and Fox Batteries, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines. He was assigned to I MEF in Mogadishu, Somalia, during Operation Restore Hope. His awards include the Navy Commendation Medal.

**Capt Loreen R. Yager**, 73, of Eau Claire, Wis. She was commissioned in 1970 after graduating from college with a degree in elementary education. She served on active duty for six years. She later returned to her hometown where she had a career as a teacher.

**Cpl Bernard R. Zarasua**, 84, of Madera, Calif. He served from 1956-1959 as an aircraft engine mechanic at MCAS El Toro, Calif., and NAS Atsugi, Japan.

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



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### SOUND OFF

[continued from page 8]

On Nov. 10, we attended the wreath laying ceremony at the Marine Corps War Memorial, Arlington, Va., with guest of honor and Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen James Conway. Later that evening we attended the 232nd Marine Corps Birthday Ball held again at the same venue with Sergeant Major Gene Overstreet as the guest speaker. The next day, Veterans Day, we again attended the ceremonies

at Arlington National Cemetery with Vice President Dick Cheney as the guest speaker.

Third, when I sent you my email regarding Ernie Pyle, I was tempted to mention another "Ernie" that I had the honor of knowing for more than 35 years. He is a Marine and wrote articles for *Leatherneck*—Ernie Harwell. I didn't mention his name then as I didn't want any confusion. Much to my surprise and delight, I found Sergeant Ernie Harwell's article, "The Wake Story," reprinted in the August edition of *Leatherneck*. Ernie and I were together with the Detroit Tigers organization for many years. A fine gentleman with quite an accomplished career.

Thank you for indulging my reminiscing of some great personal history.

Sgt Bill Haase, USMC  
Shelby Twp., Mich.

### My Intention was to Enlist in the Navy

This letter is in reference to the Sound Off letter, "Luckily, the Air Force Recruiter was Out to Lunch." After graduating high school in June 1951, I went to the Navy and Marine Corps recruiting office in Pontiac, Mich., intending to enlist in the Navy. My uncle Jack was a corpsman

during World War II and survived two ship sinkings.

The Navy recruiter was out. However, the Marine gave me the Armed Forces Qualification test stating it was the same test for all services. I completed the form and returned it to him. He looked at it, commented, "That's pretty good," and tossed it on the adjacent Navy desk. A few minutes later he retrieved the form and repeated his previous comment adding, "You probably think you can't hack it in the Marine Corps." Being a rather impatient guy and faced with that challenge, by the end of the week, I was at MCRD Parris Island.

Joining the Corps was a great decision which set me on a successful life course. After interesting assignments, I was transferred to Chicago which I greatly disliked leading to my discharge after six years.

CMSgt John F. Forgette, USAF (Ret)  
USMC, 1951-1957  
Fairhaven Village, Wash.

### Garden of Stone

After my son, Staff Sergeant Alex A. Ramon III, passed away, I was visiting his gravesite at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, in San Antonio, Texas. It was an overcast day and I wrote a poem based

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on that moment. The poem gives him and all Marines that served tribute.

Here my Brothers lie, row upon row,  
In a garden of tombstones,  
amongst friends you may know.

With gleaming marble stone aglow,  
We gaze with sorrow  
for those we know.

We fought with pride,  
and all our might,  
Often seeing young lives,  
leave before our very eyes.

From the mountains of Afghanistan,  
and through Iraq,  
We had each other's back  
on every attack.

Our sweat and blood we left behind,  
On foreign streets,  
where we fought and died.

Carry on brothers,  
without a heavy heart,  
For we did, what no one else would do.

Only our Band of Brothers know,  
Marines fight, and die for each other,  
regardless of the politics of war.



Sadly, we come to say goodbye,  
But only until we too must die.

Semper Fi, my brothers,  
Laying row upon row.

Save me a place in the Garden of Stone,  
Where we'll be together, for evermore.

Meeting up in Heaven's pearly gates,  
And standing guard,  
as all Marines are told to do.

Capt Alex A. Ramon  
San Antonio, Texas

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 🇺🇸

## SERVING THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES SINCE 1867



Photo by Lance Cpl. James Bourgeois



Photo by Sgt. John Martinez



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## Reunions

*Editor's note: The following reunion information was current as of Nov. 1. Given that things are rapidly changing due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, please continue to check with the reunion points of contact for the most up-to-date information.*

- **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Sept. 23-25, 2021, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact Maj Charlie Dismore, USMC (Ret), (512) 394-9333, [www.marcorengasn.org](http://www.marcorengasn.org).

- **Marine Corps Cryptologic Assn.**, September 2021, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Edgar Kitt, 2250 Heavenly View Dr., Henderson, NV 89014, (702) 454-1646, [edgarkitt@earthlink.net](mailto:edgarkitt@earthlink.net).

- **Marine Corps Disbursing Assn.**, May 16-20, 2021, Reno, Nev. Contact MGySgt Kevin Gascon, USMC (Ret), (760) 458-2655, [mojorisin68@hotmail.com](mailto:mojorisin68@hotmail.com), [www.usmcdisbursers.com](http://www.usmcdisbursers.com).

- **Marine Air Traffic Control Assn.**, Sept. 19-26, 2021, San Antonio, Texas. Contact Steve Harris, (509) 499-8137, [sandkh2@gmail.com](mailto:sandkh2@gmail.com).

- **11th Marine Regiment, OIF (20th anniversary)**, March 31-April 1, 2023, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Casey Harsh, [casey.harsh@gmail.com](mailto:casey.harsh@gmail.com). Facebook group: The Cannon Cockers of OIF-1 (20-Year Reunion 2023 Group).

- **STA Plt, 2/8 (1989-1993)** is planning a reunion. Contact Mike Moriarty, [mmoriarty81@comcast.net](mailto:mmoriarty81@comcast.net).

- **1/27 (1968)**, July 2021, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Felix Salmeron, (469) 583-0191, [mar463@aol.com](mailto:mar463@aol.com).

- **"Stormy's" 3/3**, 2020 reunion postponed until 2021, date TBD, Branson, Mo. Contact Burrell Landes, (303) 734-1458, [bhanon@comcast.net](mailto:bhanon@comcast.net), [www.stormys33.com](http://www.stormys33.com).

- **H/2/7 (RVN, 1965-1970)**, June 24-27, 2021, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Steve Cone, (843) 424-8279, [scone1948@yahoo.com](mailto:scone1948@yahoo.com).

- **Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan, Task Force Leatherneck (2009-2010)**, May 7-9, 2021, Quantico, Va. Contact reunion committee, [taskforceleatherneck@gmail.com](mailto:taskforceleatherneck@gmail.com).

- **Philippine Embassy Marines (1976-1977)**, Nov. 10, 2021, North Carolina. Contact Tim Craig, [phildream2017@gmail.com](mailto:phildream2017@gmail.com).

- **TBS, Co F, 6-70**, June 10-13, 2021, Quantico, Va. Contact Tom Kanasky, (202) 366-3156, [tlkanasky@earthlink.net](mailto:tlkanasky@earthlink.net)

.net, or Mitch Youngs, (703) 493-9435, [mitchyoungs@verizon.net](mailto:mitchyoungs@verizon.net).

- **TBS, Co C, 3-72**, is planning a 50th-anniversary reunion. Contact Col Joe Mueller, USMCR (Ret), (818) 815-8331, [jnm21213@yahoo.com](mailto:jnm21213@yahoo.com).

- **TBS, Co D, 4-73**, is planning a 50th-anniversary reunion in 2023, Quantico, Va. Contact Col Bill Anderson, USMCR (Ret), (540) 850-4213, [binche57@yahoo.com](mailto:binche57@yahoo.com), or Col Bob Donaghue, USMCR (Ret), (614) 840-0267, [ip350haven@comcast.net](mailto:ip350haven@comcast.net).

- **Plt 1187, San Diego, 1969**, is planning a reunion. Contact T.E. Miller, (618) 520-9646, or Mark Elder, (314) 322-8516.

- **Plt 2057, San Diego, 1971**, is planning a reunion. Contact K.L. Christeson, (816) 830-1498.

- **Plt 3028, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact MSgt Bob Rees, USMC (Ret), (619) 940-9218, [bobrees86@gmail.com](mailto:bobrees86@gmail.com).

- **USMC A-4 Skyhawkers**, Oct. 21-24, 2021, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Mark Williams, 10432 Button Willow Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134, (425) 327-6050, [usmcskyhawker21@gmail.com](mailto:usmcskyhawker21@gmail.com).

## Mail Call

- Capt Dan Macsay, USMC (Ret), (252) 658-4014, [d.macsay@gmail.com](mailto:d.macsay@gmail.com), to hear from anyone who can identify the origins of a **Chelsea Maritime Clock**, pictured below, which has a faceplate that has "U.S. Marine Corps" stamped on it.

- Darnell Michel, [dmichel47@gmail.com](mailto:dmichel47@gmail.com), to hear from Marines who served with **HMM-161, MAG-39**, in **Quang Tri, Vietnam**.

- LtCol Edward E. Reynolds Jr., USAF (Ret), (818) 884-4013, [ed\\_reynoldsjr@msn.com](mailto:ed_reynoldsjr@msn.com), to hear from Marines assigned to **H&S Co, 3rd Marines, 3rdMarDiv, FMF**, in **June 1957** and/or **December 1957**; or Marines assigned to **Service Co, Hq Bn, 3rdMarDiv, FMF**, in **May 1958**. He would like to find out where those units were stationed during those months.

- CWO-4 Paul T. Kirsch, USMC (Ret), 1134 Hillview Terrace, Pittsburgh, PA 15220, (412) 343-5378, [ptkirsch@verizon.net](mailto:ptkirsch@verizon.net), to hear from **Capt William J. VIETS**, former OIC of **Marine Recruiting Service** in the **Cleveland, Ohio**, area, regarding a Plt 164 recruit graduation book loaned to his father. He also would like to hear from **D.P. BRENNAN**, a DI with **Co A, 1st Bn, Parris Island, 1954**.

- Jan Lentz, Volunteer Veterans Advocate, Office of Congressman Michael Conaway, 33 E Twohig, Suite 306, San Angelo, TX 76903, (325) 659-4010, [janlentz1@yahoo.com](mailto:janlentz1@yahoo.com), to hear from Marines who served with **H/2/4** at **Dong Ha and Dai Do, Vietnam** in **1968**, and remember **Samuel VASQUEZ** and the battles of **March 14, 1968**, or **May 2, 1968**, during which he was wounded.

- Former LCpl and retired Superior Court Judge David Long, [awlrize@gmail.com](mailto:awlrize@gmail.com), to hear from members of **Plt 288**,



Retired Capt Dan Macsay would like to hear from anyone who might have information about the origins or use of this Chelsea Maritime Clock.

COURTESY OF CAPT DAN MACSAY, USMC (RET)



**San Diego, 1959-1960**, particularly **Bill T. WYATT, Richard E. STOVER** and junior DI **Sgt D.L. JOHNSON**.

• Phil Williams, 6324 Falling Water Ln., Hoschton, GA 30438, pwilliams1946@icloud.com, to hear from **Sgt GOODNIGHT**, a junior DI with **Plt 183, Parris Island, 1965**.

• John Fuller, (613) 432-7982, blfuller1@hotmail.com, to hear from or about **Clifford Allan REID**, who was assigned to **H&HS Co, 1/7, MCB Camp Pendleton, 1971-1972**, moved to Nebraska in 1972 and then to San Jose, Calif. He also would like to hear from or about **John BEAL**, who was assigned to **B/1/7 in Vietnam, 1970**, was wounded May 30, 1970 and was sent to the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam.

• Capt Chas Henry, USMC (Ret), chas@chashenry.com, to hear from Marines and Sailors assigned to **2/4** during the **October 1979 fire at Camp Fuji, Japan**, particularly **Patrick T. SCHAEFER** and **Steven D. HAISHUK**, or any members of the permanent party at Camp Fuji. He also would like to hear from **anyone who was involved in caring for Marines injured in the fire**, and **4th Recon Bn/I&I San Antonio Marines** who looked after their needs when they were treated at Brooke Army Medical Center. He is producing a

radio documentary/podcast about the fire.

• SGM Gavin McIlvenna, USA (Ret), president@tombguard.org, to hear from **Marines assigned to the selection ceremonies for the WW II, Korean and Vietnam unknown soldiers**: any Marine attached to **USS Blandy (DD-943)**, **USS Boston (CAG-1)** or **USS Canberra (CAG-2)** in **May 1958**, and any Marine attached to **USS Brewton (FF-1086)** in **May 1984**.

• Jordan Kleinman, jordan.kleinman@foxroach.com, to hear from anyone who served with or has information about **2nd Force Recon, 1956-1959**.

### Wanted

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

• Gregory Davis, 735 Canterbury Dr., Ruther Glen, VA 22546, (804) 448-9741, wants a **platoon photo** and **recruit graduation book** for **Plt 81, Parris Island, 1956**.

• Steinar Andersen, steinarandersen@ntcusa.net, wants a **platoon photo** and **recruit graduation book** for **Plt 1080, San Diego, 1981**.

### Sales, Trades & Giveaways

• David Burke, d.mburke@hotmail.com, has the following **recruit graduation books** to give to any member of the platoon: **Plt 169, San Diego, 1962; Plt 317, San Diego, 1963; Plt 3005, San Diego, 1974; Plt 2082, San Diego, 1979; Plts 1093, 1094 and 1095, San Diego, 2004**.

• Robby J. Hookham, (618) 922-3703, sandhill19@yahoo.com, has more than **1,000 copies of Leatherneck** ranging from **1955 to 2010**, with 26 complete years and many months that have multiple copies, which he would like to give away for free, preferably all at once. He has a detailed inventory available, and any interested individual must arrange for delivery or pickup from Marion, Ill.

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](mailto:s.bock@mca-marines.org), or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. 🐻

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# Saved Round

By Owen Linlithgow Conner



COURTESY OF NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS

This rare Civil War-era dress cap was once owned by George M. Welles who was a member of the state militia in New York before leaving Brooklyn, where he was born July 19, 1837, to accept a commission in the U.S. Marine Corps in June 1861.

From April 27, 1864, until Feb. 1, 1865, Second Lieutenant Welles served with the Marine Guard on board USS *Minnesota*. This was a notable time as the ship and its Sailors and Marines took part in the two battles of Fort Fisher (Dec. 24-25, 1864, and Jan. 13-15, 1865). The second action was one of the few successes for the Marine Corps during the war, with nine Sailors and Marines from *Minnesota* receiving the Medal of Honor for their actions in capturing the allegedly “impregnable” Confederate fort.

Welles’ full dress officer cap is an extraordinary and seldom-seen piece of early Marine Corps uniform history given the size of the Corps at that time—there were approximately 87 Marine officers with fewer than 4,000 men in total serving in the Marine Corps of 1865. The interior underside of the cap is manufacturer marked to Baker & Kenney Military Goods, located at 141 Grand Street, New York, N.Y. Welles’ name and rank is still clearly handwritten inside.

*Author’s bio: Owen Linlithgow Conner is the uniforms and heraldry curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps.* 🇺🇸



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## MARINES





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1. Publication Title <b>Leatherneck Magazine</b>		2. Publication Number <table border="1"><tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>9</td><td>-</td><td>8</td><td>1</td></tr></table>		2	3	9	-	8	1	3. Filing Date <b>01 Sept 2020</b>	
2	3	9	-	8	1						
4. Issue Frequency <b>Monthly</b>		5. Number of Issues Published Annually <b>12</b>		6. Annual Subscription Price <b>\$42.00</b>							
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) <b>Marine Corps Association &amp; Foundation 715 Broadway St Quantico VA 22134</b>				Contact Person <b>Jaclyn Baird</b>							
				Telephone (Include area code) <b>703-640-0150</b>							
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) <b>Same as above</b>											

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)

Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)  
**Col Christopher Woodbridge USMC (Ret)  
715 Broadway St Quantico VA 22134**

Editor (Name and complete mailing address)  
**Col Mary Reinwald USMC (Ret)  
175 Broadway St Quantico VA 22134**

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Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
<b>Marine Corps Association &amp; Foundation</b>	<b>715 Broadway St Quantico VA 22134</b>

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☐ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months

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13. Publication Title		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
Leatherneck Magazine		September 2020	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		39,477	41,782
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	79	83
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	37,175	37,932
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	699	1,247
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	151	206
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		38,074	39,467
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	0	0
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	165	287
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	112	85
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	942	943
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		1,219	1,315
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		39,293	40,782
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		185	1,108
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		39,478	41,890
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		96.9%	96.7%

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a. Paid Electronic Copies ▶	20,797	20,189
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a) ▶	21,820	21,907
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a) ▶	23,039	23,222
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c × 100) ▶	94.7%	94.3%

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☒ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed  
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**18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner**

Date

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