

OCTOBER 2022

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MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

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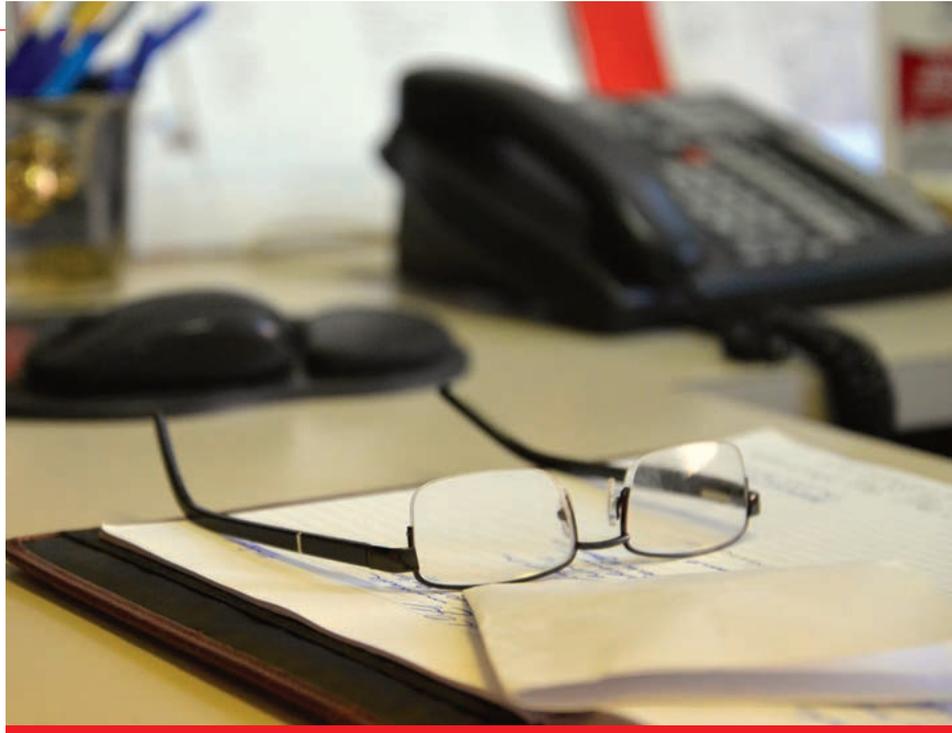
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From the Editor's Desk

Throughout *Leatherneck's* more than 100 years of existence, the look, size and feel of the magazine has changed often but the one constant has been our articles on the history and traditions of the Marine Corps and those who have served in its ranks. Whether a firsthand account of our iconic battles of World War II, a poignant account of the prisoners of war in Vietnam, or an update on the Corps' newest technologies and equipment, feature articles have formed the backbone of the magazine. And it is because of our exceptional roster of authors that we are able to create a publication worthy of the title, "Magazine of the Marines."

When *Leatherneck* was an official part of the Marine Corps, our readers would often see ranks in front of the writers' bylines. Master Sergeant Tom Bartlett was a regular in *Leatherneck*, and his legacy is carried on by the active-duty Marines who participate in our annual *Leatherneck* Writing Contest. Today the magazine uses many freelance authors whose stories cover a variety of topics and whose age and experience vary greatly; stories by young writers in their 20s and 30s are often side by side with the latest offerings by Marine writers who are spending their retired years researching and writing the untold stories of their brothers and sisters in arms. Retired Major Al Bevilacqua, who died earlier this year, was always one of my favorites from this group, and his ability to write well while also spinning a tale that would leave readers entranced is increasingly rare.

Our staff writer, Sara Bock, is an author of the caliber of Maj Bevilacqua. She has a clear writing style that is coupled with detailed research. Her passion for her subjects is evident in each feature article she's written for *Leatherneck* over the last decade. I've edited more than 600 articles in my time as *Leatherneck* editor, and Sara's article "Terrorism in Oklahoma City: 20 Years Later, Marine Survivor Shares His Story" from the April 2015 issue remains one of my very favorites. Sadly, this is the last issue featuring Sara's work as she is moving on to other opportunities. I know our readers will miss her and it seems especially fitting that her final *Leatherneck* article will once again focus on individual Marines and the difference they have made in the world. The *Leatherneck* staff is very much a family, and we will miss not only Sara, but also her husband, who is currently serving as a KC-130 pilot with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and her two wonderful children.



But in an amazing stroke of "*Leatherneck* luck," Sara's replacement is an author whose work is comparable to her own. Kyle Watts, a veteran Marine communications officer, has written for *Leatherneck* in the recent past and will be joining us with our November issue. Readers may recognize his name from his classic story, "The Flying Ladder" which appeared in the magazine's April 2018 issue and for which he received the 2019 Robert D. Heint Award from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. But as outstanding as "The Flying Ladder" is, his best work may be "LZ Margo," a detailed account of the reunion of Marines from 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines 50 years after their service in Vietnam which appeared in our July 2019 issue. "LZ Margo" combines Kyle's exceptional writing with his passion for telling the stories of the Marines who came before him. We are thrilled to welcome Kyle to the *Leatherneck* family and are eager to read more of his unique and fascinating stories.

Fair Winds and Following Seas, Sara and Welcome Aboard, Kyle!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary H. Reinwald".

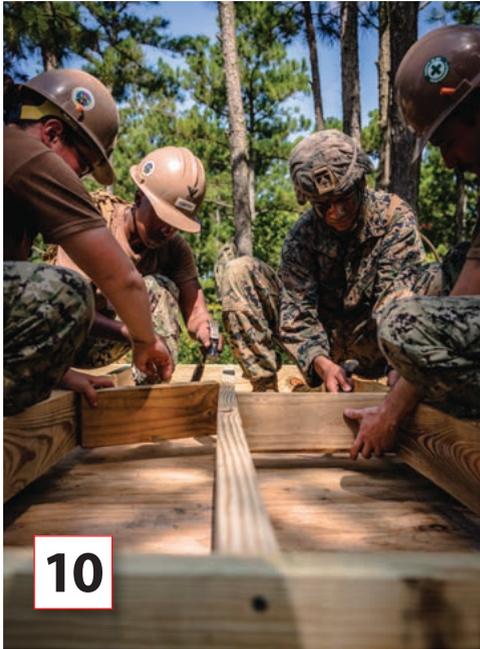
Mary H. Reinwald
Colonel, USMC (Ret)
Editor, *Leatherneck*



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COVER: An AV-8B Harrier with the 22nd MEU takes off from the *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship USS *Kearsarge* (LHD-3) in the Atlantic Ocean, June 27. The *Kearsarge* Amphibious Ready Group and embarked 22nd MEU, under the command of Task Force 61/2, recently returned from deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe area of operations. Photo by Sgt Armando Elizalde, 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 member or provide a one-year courtesy subscription to a non-member whose letter is selected.)

In the March issue there is a letter from Cpl Norm Spilleth of Minneapolis, Minn., titled "All Gave Some, Some Gave All" regarding a Marine killed in a bomb-loading accident in 1962. In his letter, Cpl Spilleth said the Marine was named Hooten and he was from down South.

I served with a buddy from Tampa, Fla., named Houghton (pronounced Howton), a radio man in an 81 mm mortar platoon from 1959 to 1961. Houghton and three of us in the platoon made a couple of car trips back and forth from Camp Pendleton to Alabama and Florida. We were all close at the time but were separated when we were assigned to other duty stations in 1961. The three of us were released from active duty in 1962 and are still in contact today, but Houghton reenlisted for aviation duty.

Many years ago, we heard that Houghton was killed in a bomb-loading accident in 1962 such as what was described in Cpl Spilleth's letter, but we were never able to learn the details.

We were wondering if Hooten and Houghton might be the same person. Is it possible that you could put us in contact with Cpl Spilleth so we could compare notes to see if he might be the same? Any assistance you can give us will be greatly appreciated.

Cpl James P. "Old Put" Putnam
USMC, 1958-1962
Madison, Ala.

• *Editor's note: Leatherneck was able to put Cpl Putnam in touch with Cpl Spilleth and the following transpired.*

Hi there. Got the message from *Leatherneck* that you wanted to ask about my story regarding "Hoot." Yes, his name was Houghton. I misspelled it on purpose in the story so as not to cause further pain to his family. It was a traumatic scene for all of us at the time. I remember Hoot

well. He was from Florida as I recall. He was an ordnance man in my squadron of A-4Ds, VMA-212, at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii from 1961 to 1962. Never forgot that day or Hoot. Good guy.

Cpl Norm Spilleth
USMC, 1960-1964
Minneapolis, Minn.

• *Editor's note: This next letter is from Cpl Robert Daniels, one of Houghton's platoon members.*

As Putnam has said, Houghton was with us in Okinawa and other places; Houghton and I were both from the South and attached to the 81s as communicators. He was called "Shouting Houghton" among us. He was a good guy, quarterback on the H&S flag football team in Okinawa and a starter on the H&S basketball team. We had lots of fun over the two years I knew him. He, Ron Peacock and I drove from Alabama to Camp Pendleton, Calif., in Peacock's white Ford.

As a forward observer for 81s, we were in communication with a captain who was

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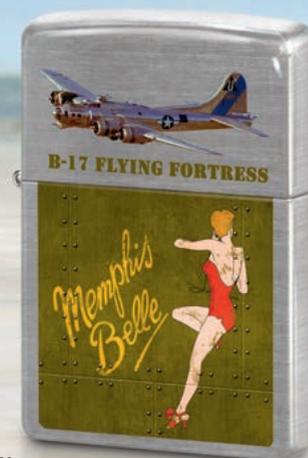
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COURTESY OF CPL ROBERT DANIELS

Robert Daniels, left, and "Hoot" Houghton drink a beer at Twentynine Palms, Calif., after returning from Okinawa in 1960. Hoot was killed in an accident while loading a bomb on the wing racks of an A-4D Skyhawk at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, in 1962.

also a forward observer for artillery, and he would drop us a six pack. The above photo shows us having a beer in the desert. I tried to reenlist with Houghton, but I wanted choppers and electronics school. Houghton said, "Heck, just give me air wing and I will take my chances." He got it, signed, and went to Memphis, Tenn. That was the last time I heard from him. I sent Christmas cards hoping he would let us know where he was. His mom finally wrote me a letter saying he was killed when a bomb fell on him but gave no details.

I am glad "Old Put" found someone that knew what happened. Houghton has been on the minds of us old Marines after all these years.

Thank you from all of us that shared a time with Shouting Houghton or Hoot, as he was called, with you guys. We still talk about him at the reunions we have had.

Cpl Robert L. Daniels

USMC, 1958-1962

Hope, Ark.

We now have the full story after 60 years. We never would have known without *Leatherneck*. Thanks for bringing lifetime memories back to a bunch of old guys proud to be Marines. I just renewed my membership for another three years. At 82 I'm optimistic. Sound Off is the first thing I read in the magazine. Thanks again and keep up the good work!

Cpl Putnam

Operation Desert Storm

Many thanks to Dr. Edward T. Nevglowski for his August *Leatherneck* article,

"The Genesis of the Second Breach" on Operation Desert Storm and the decision made to breach the Iraqi mine belts at two locations. I served as the sergeant major for Task Force (Breach) Alpha under the command of Major Gary Wines. Our 500 Marines of combat engineers and mine breaching tanks were attached to the 6th Marines of Colonel Larry Livingston and cleared six lanes the width of a tank through each of the two mine belts.

It was a glorious day for the Marines in the battle and I have enjoyed telling this war story to my grandchildren. Author Rick Atkinson wrote about the war and Task Force (Breach) Alpha in his 1993 book "Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War" and this 2022 article by Dr. Nevglowski provides the reader with a clear understanding about the planning and the important decisions that went into preparing for the battle. Thank you, *Leatherneck*.

SgtMaj John C. Harlow, USMC (Ret)

Dillon, S.C.

"The Letter" Struck a Chord

The article, "The Letter," in the July issue struck a chord with me about America and warfighting. America helped our Allies defeat two of the greatest armies ever assembled. The Japanese army and the German army were formidable opponents but by 1945, both armies and navies were reduced to the trash heap of history. China and Russia were saved from defeat by the United States and Allies.

In 1965 my ship, USS *Galveston* (CLG-3), was WestPac-bound to Yankee Station in the Tonkin Gulf. I was 22 and knew

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Brad Bradshaw MD JD LC is a law firm. Dr. Brad Bradshaw is not licensed in North Carolina and works/assists on Camp Lejeune water cases with staff attorney Chris Johnson (who is the only firm lawyer licensed in North Carolina). On Camp Lejeune cases we may work with additional North Carolina attorneys, such as local counsel, and/or via pro hac vice, plus the O'nder Law Firm who are members of the team that obtained some of the multi-million dollar verdicts in the J&J talc cases, but are not licensed in North Carolina. Brad Bradshaw MD JD LC, North Carolina office: 3807 Wrightsville Ave, Suite 20 Wilmington, NC 28403. USA flagship office: 201 W. 47th St, Kansas City, MO 64112. Additional offices in Seattle, Springfield, MO, and St. Louis. The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements. All offices are by appointment only. We work with and refer cases to other lawyers. Dr. Brad Bradshaw is licensed to practice law in Washington D.C. (inactive), Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Washington, Hawaii, and is applying for licensure in North Carolina. Dr. Bradshaw is licensed to practice medicine in Missouri and Hawaii. See BradBradshaw.com for more information. Client may be responsible for costs or expenses. Past results afford no guarantee of future results and every case is different and must be judged on its own merits. No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers. Services may not be available in all states.

nothing about war tactics. I figured if we dropped an atomic bomb on Hanoi and destroyed the command structure, we could take over and combine North and South Vietnam into one democratic Vietnam. It was not a crackpot idea. General Douglas MacArthur and Gen Curtis LeMay requested permission from President Harry Truman to “nuke” Peking in the 1950s. Gen MacArthur was terminated and here we are in 2022 with tension in the South China Sea. I hope we have peace in our world, so our military does not have to engage in war.

My hero is President Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt whose motto was, “Speak softly, but carry a big stick.” The United States Marine Corps is part of those sticks. The earth is covered mostly by water and our Navy is the seagoing transport. Hope for peace and enjoy a peaceful world for all.

John Sanchez
USN, 1961-1966
Hanford, Calif.

Marines Never Salute Unless Covered

When I was in the Marine Corps from 1945 to 1951, one of the basic protocols was Marines never salute unless covered. What is going on with the picture on page 35 of the August issue of *Leatherneck*?

Half of these people are hatless. It was one of the defining differences between Marines and soldiers who saluted everything that moved and some that did not.

Marines always removed their headgear upon entering a building, thus no saluting except when under arms. Please don't tell me that woke has taken over my beloved Corps. Editor, please address this issue. It is prevalent throughout the former Marine status.

Cpl John D. Mixon
USMC, 1945-1951
Hockley, Texas

• I'm going to assume that the Marines in the photo meant no disrespect to our Corps by saluting uncovered and in civilian clothes. I've seen other veteran Marines salute in similar ways, and while I would not, I'll give them the benefit of the doubt and believe their intentions are honorable. But I'm also happy to provide the official Marine Corps position on saluting. Sergeant Major Kevin Bennett, Director of Professional Development for the Marine Corps Association, reminded me that while the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 allows veterans and military personnel not in uniform to render a salute when the national anthem is played, a subsequent All Marines mes-

sage from General James T. Conway, 34th Commandant of the Marine Corps, provided additional guidance for Marines: "A recent change to the law has authorized active-duty and retired servicemembers to salute the National Colors whether covered or uncovered, indoors or out. By custom and tradition, Marines do not render the hand salute when out of uniform or when uncovered. Let there be no confusion; that has not changed."—Editor

“Proud to Be a U.S. Marine” Hit Home

I was reading the August *Leatherneck* and there was a poem, “Proud to be a U.S. Marine” in Sound Off but when I looked at it, it was long, and I really don't read poetry, so I skipped over it and read all the other articles.

I then came back to the poem and read it. Was I ever glad I did! There are 40 stanzas and they all brought back memories of Parris Island in 1963. Every paragraph hit home. I have cut out the poem and am showing it to all my fellow Marines. Thank you, Cpl Michael Guilio Tozzi. Semper Fi.

Sgt Mike Skorich
USMC, 1963-1966
Leesburg, Fla.
[continued on page 62]

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DARWIN, AUSTRALIA **U.S., Australian Forces Combine** **in Austere Environments**

Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D) conducted Exercise Koolendong 22, a complex training event to enhance combined and joint interoperability with elements of the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia, July 10-Aug. 2.

Koolendong historically has served as the culminating exercise for MRF-D and has highlighted large-scale, combined arms capabilities of the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF), along with allied and joint forces. This year's exercise was similar as Koolendong 22 featured a combined and joint force of MRF-D Marines and Sailors, U.S. soldiers and airmen, as well as soldiers, sailors and airmen from the ADF. Instead of featuring large-scale combined arms live-fire, however, MRF-D 22 shifted Koolendong's focus to expeditionary advanced base operations (EABO) and challenged the team to command and control the force across massive distances, multiple locations and difficult terrain.

"We will have U.S. Marines, Sailors, soldiers and airmen alongside ADF

soldiers and personnel conducting live and non-live fire, and command and control, in Darwin, Mount Bunday, Broome, Curtin and Yampi, across hundreds of miles of air, land and sea lines of communication," said Colonel Chris Steele, the MAGTF commander, when providing his initial commander's intent for the exercise. "In my mind we always need to be ready to fight alongside our Australian allies and our joint partners, and Koolendong 22 provided us the opportunity to practice just that."

With support from the ADF and other assets, MRF-D transported hundreds of personnel and equipment pieces more than 1,000 kilometers from the Northern Territory to Western Australia. MRF-D utilized various air, land and sea methods to conduct logistics throughout the exercise, including a U.S. Army logistics support vessel (LSV) from the 8th Theater Sustainment Command and Royal Australian Air Force C-17 Globemasters. The distance and terrain forced the Marines of MRF-D to be creative, flexible and detailed in the overall logistics plan, which was reflective of potential future operations across the Indo-Pacific.

"This annual exercise allows the ADF to rehearse with the U.S. Marines in a com-

bined arms littoral combat scenario," said Col Marcus Constable, the commander of Headquarters, Northern Command. "Koolendong strengthens the U.S.-Australian relationship, advances and validates USMC-ADF interoperability and demonstrates preparedness to respond to a regional crisis."

Following the complex logistics effort, the exercise force completed a wide variety of training events to further replicate potential crisis response operations in support of regional allies and partners of the United States. Koolendong 22 was a full MAGTF effort, led by the command element which controlled the exercise force and maintained real-world awareness of regional events and operations. While two rifle companies from the ground combat element conducted company attacks and patrolling, another company executed an air assault across the entire distance from Darwin to Curtin in Western Australia. Simultaneously, the logistics combat element conducted movements and resupplies in both training locations, utilizing the combat logistics company construct and Role II medical capability. The aviation combat element supported multiple air assaults along with simulated air defense operations and battlespace awareness repetitions utilizing modern aviation radar capabilities.

Once the MRF-D rifle company seized key terrain in Western Australia, the focus of the exercise shifted to long-range fire support. Taking advantage of the massive Yampi Sound training area in Western Australia, MRF-D and combined fire support experts conducted strategic targeting alongside strategic U.S. Air Force assets and Australian jets. U.S. B-2 Spirit stealth bombers from the 509th Bomb Wing and Royal Australian Air Force F-35A Lightning IIs flew combined bombing missions in support of the exercise.

"The fire support coordination exercise at Yampi Sound was a tremendous and unique opportunity to integrate joint and combined forces in order to set conditions in an expeditionary environment," explained Lieutenant Jenn Rapach, USN, Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company officer-in-charge. "Coordinating with both U.S. and Australian Air Force assets alongside Marine Corps and Australian controllers was a rewarding experience and is incredibly important to any future operation in the Indo-Pacific."

In addition to the MAGTF, an air assault



CPL CEDAR BARNES, USMC

Marines with 3rd Bn, 7th Marines, MRF-D, prepare to board an MV-22 Osprey during an airfield seizure event, part of Exercise Koolendong at Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin, NT, Australia, July 18.



CPL CEDAR BARNES, USMC

Above: LCpl Dexter Madrigal, a rifleman with 3rd Bn, 7th Marines, MRF-D, and Australian Army Pvt Daniel Rochford of 16th Bn, Royal Western Australian Regiment, participate in an airfield seizure during Exercise Koolendong in Australia’s Northern Territory, July 19.

company from 1st Brigade seized key terrain in the nearby Mount Bunday training area, executing an MV-22 Osprey insert followed by force-on-force evolution against elements from the Australian 13th Brigade. Pairing Australian ground combat forces with American aviation combat forces was one of the many ways the

bilateral team conducted interoperability training.

In total, Exercise Koolendong 22 took key components of future EABO and put them into realistic practice. This included combined air assaults to seize key terrain and process follow-on forces, long-range joint fire support coordination, long-range

air and sea logistics, and in-depth communication pathways across challenging terrain.

“You have to be able to monitor [maritime choke points] to engage an adversary who wants to close it down,” said General David H. Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps, during a round table event in Canberra, Australia, during the rotation. “We need things like anti-ship capabilities, the surveillance, the collection capabilities in the maritime domain. We need the ability to move laterally both by air and on the surface at a tactical level with greater frequency and in smaller numbers.”

Capt Joseph DiPietro, USMC



CPL CEDAR BARNES, USMC

Marines with 3/7 maneuver through Royal Australian Air Force Base Curtin, Western Australia, during Exercise Koolendong 22, July 19. Exercise Koolendong was a combined and joint force exercise focused on EABO and conducted by Australian Defence Force personnel and U.S. Marines, soldiers and airmen.

OKINAWA, JAPAN Marines Improve Marksmanship With Aerial Sniper Training

Eight Marine scout snipers conducted aerial sniper training during the 22.2 iteration of the Urban Sniper Course at Camp Schwab, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, June 15. After completing the training and graduating from the course, the Marines were certified to conduct aerial sniping for future missions, exercises and training events.



LCPL JONATHAN BEAUCHAMP, USMC

Sgt Trevor Hancock, a rifleman with 3/2, 2ndMarDiv, aims an M110 semi-automatic sniper system during the aerial portion of the Urban Sniper Course on Camp Schwab, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, June 15.

The snipers, armed with M110 semi-automatic sniper systems, waited for a Navy Sikorsky SH-60 Seahawk helicopter to arrive. When the aircraft arrived, the snipers boarded in pairs followed by an instructor who oversaw the training. The training was led by Marines and civilian contractors with the Expeditionary Operations Training Group to enhance participating Marines' skills in urban environments through precision fires and engaging targets from an aircraft.

Once inside, the Marines set a stabilization frame with ratchet straps in the hatch of the aircraft. They then signaled the pilots to take off and fly at varying altitudes towards eight life-sized moving targets.

While flying to the target, the snipers worked in two-man teams, each consisting of a spotter and a shooter. The spotter would sit directly behind the shooter, placing a hand on their shoulder and motioning toward the targets, and then tap the shooter when they had a confirmed hit. The shooter would sit in front of the spotter, near the entrance, shooting in a kneeling firing position. As the aircraft swayed, the shooter would adjust their position, placing their reticle on the kill zone of the simulated enemy.

"Practicing marksmanship from a helicopter helped me become extremely accurate in an environment other than the ground," said Sergeant Todd Smith Jr., a rifleman with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment. "I engaged targets while positioning myself in a stable markman-



LCPL JONATHAN BEAUCHAMP, USMC

Mobile targets are staged to simulate enemies for aerial sniper training during the Urban Sniper Course on Camp Schwab, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, June 15. The training is designed to enhance scout snipers' skills in urban environments through precision fire and engaging simulated targets from an aircraft.

ship position as the aircraft hovered, turned and approached targets at an angle. This training increased our capabilities as snipers in support of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit."

Gunnery Sergeant Augusto Zapata, the chief instructor of Expeditionary Operations Training Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, explained that the Marines gained familiarization with the aircraft and what they need to be able to do as aerial combatants. He said that the training provided the students an opportunity to utilize all the marksmanship techniques they have learned in this course while engaging static and moving targets on an aircraft.

"The 31st MEU deems its aerial sniping capabilities as a critical element of the Maritime Raid Force," said Zapata. "It allows us to complete mission essential tasks within a specific mission set."

A scout sniper's mission involves gathering information for intelligence purposes by denying enemy advancement through targeting hostile leaders, weapon systems, and forward or counterintelligence personnel. These Marines also conduct close reconnaissance and surveillance operations for the infantry battalion in support of unit operations.

"I know the training I received will help me save lives and protect this country," said Smith. "I look forward to taking the skills I have learned during this training and passing it to other Marines continuing our mission as snipers."

LCpl Jonathan Beauchamp, USMC

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.
“Pioneering” Blue-Green Team:
Engineers Prepare for
Future Operations

In accordance with Force Design 2030, Marines are returning to their amphibious roots as they continue to integrate with their Navy counterparts across the fleet.

In North Carolina, the “Pioneers of the Fleet Marine Force” completed a two-week joint exercise aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune this summer during which they fulfilled the Commandant’s intent by doing what Marines do best: preparing for combat.

Marines with 8th Engineer Support Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 27, 2nd Marine Logistics Group conducted a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation (MCCRE) while participating in Exercise Summer Pioneer 2022 alongside Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1, Naval Construction Group 2, July 15-29.

Summer Pioneer ran concurrently with the unit’s MCCRE, enabling the battalion commander to formally evaluate combat readiness while enhancing interoperability with their active-duty Navy counterparts who would be integral in the fight against a near-peer adversary.

“Working with the Seabees has been great,” said Captain Scott Davoren, a combat engineer officer with 8th ESB. “To be able to get them out here in an exercise like this, where we’re sleeping in a tree line and living together, eating together, working together, it’s improving our proficiency in our own [military occupational specialty] and allowing us to widen our perspective of how we understand engineering as a whole.”

Summer Pioneer 2022 not only showcased the joint engineering proficiency that Marines and Seabees have maintained for decades, but also helped to build camaraderie between the sea services.

“The biggest challenge we faced was integrating not only with Seabees that we’ve never worked with before, but Marines from across the battalion that have never worked together,” said Davoren. “Over the course of the exercise, we’ve seen a drastic improvement in teamwork, proficiency and camaraderie across the board.”

Lieutenant Zeke Shaffer, USN, the officer-in-charge for Detachment Lejeune, NMCB 1, shared a similar sentiment and highlighted the enhanced capabilities the blue-green team demonstrated during the exercise.

“Having the Marines here has been great. We’re able to use them with all of our projects we have tasked. They’re able to provide extra hands, we’re able to pound

hammers quicker and get more projects done faster,” said Shaffer.

While conducting Summer Pioneer 2022, 8th ESB also trained to a variety of mission-essential tasks and training objectives to complete their MCCRE, from bulk fueling to patrolling to rope bridging—all with the overarching goal of preparing the battalion for combat. The old adage, “The best offense is a good defense,” was taken to heart by the Marines during the MCCRE.

The naval engineering professionals planned and assembled an expeditionary defensive position curated specifically for an expeditionary advanced base environment. The battalion employed vertical construction, heavy equipment operators and utility support to fabricate underground bunkers—a capability especially important in forward-deployed austere

locations where cover and concealment is paramount and hardened structures may not be readily available.

Following the battalion’s culminating 15-kilometer hike and subsequent retrograde, the Marines and Sailors redeployed to their respective headquarters, which meant the Seabees of NMCB 1 headed back to their home station in Gulfport, Miss.

Though Summer Pioneer 2022 has concluded, the rigorous training made the Marines and Seabees undeniably prepared for future joint operations.

“Having the Marines and Sailors together was huge,” said Shaffer. “It showed that we’re all saying, ‘Hey, we can work together and get after it.’ We are all working towards one mission.”

LCpl Jessica Mazzamuto, USMC



Marines with 8th ESB, CLR-27, 2nd MLG, and Navy Seabees with NMCB 1 build a SWA hut during Summer Pioneer 2022 at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., July 19. The naval engineering exercise demonstrated integrated Navy-Marine Corps formations to establish and sustain EABs and maritime domain awareness.

LCPL MESHAO HYLTON, USMC



A U.S. Air Force MQ-9 Reaper with the 163rd Attack Wing, California Air National Guard, refuels during ITX 4-22 at MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., July 20. The MQ-9 received fuel via aviation-delivered ground refueling from a Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey with VMM-764.

LCPL JENNIFER DELACRUZ, USMC

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF. Reservists Provide Air-Delivered Ground Refueling for MQ-9

Reserve Marines with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 764 provided aviation-delivered ground refueling to a remotely piloted MQ-9 Reaper from the 163rd Attack Wing of the California Air National Guard during Integrated Training Exercise 4-22 at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., July 20-21.

The airmen from the 163rd Attack Wing integrated with Marine Air-Ground Task Force 23 to provide close air support during the fire support coordination exercise,

which tests a MAGTF’s ability to conduct complex coordination of multiple fires assets in support of maneuver forces.

This marked the first occurrence of U.S. Air Force MQ-9 Reapers being refueled by a joint platform and only the second time an MQ-9 received fuel from another aircraft, according to Major Shanna Ream, USAF, the assistant director of operations for the 163rd Attack Wing. The training also allowed the 163rd Attack Wing to practice “Reaper ACE,” or “agile combat employment,” which shifts operations from centralized physical infrastructures to a network of smaller, dispersed locations.

Ream explained that the MQ-9 has been dependent on a large footprint overseas to launch and recover the aircraft. The Joint Force will likely not have the ability to establish large air bases overseas in future conflicts, which requires adaptation in the employment of the MQ-9 platform.

“Now we’re making it expeditionary where we can hop to different places with a very small footprint, refuel, rearm, get back up in the air and continue supporting,” said Ream.

This training and integration are essential to both the Air Force and Marine Corps as the services continue to search for ways to be more agile, lethal and expeditionary. The Marine Corps is also procuring the MQ-9 and will look for ways to employ the aircraft with as small of a footprint as possible in support of Force Design 2030.

“Working with the Marine Corps is very important because the Marine Corps just acquired the MQ-9. So, a lot of those tactics, techniques and procedures [...] we’re helping to develop that,” said Ream.

The 163rd Attack Wing participated in Integrated Training Exercises in the past, but had not integrated to this level, receiving aviation-delivered ground refueling, coordinating with Marine Corps F/A-18s and directly supporting ground maneuver forces.

As the Marine Corps Reserve continues to work towards goals established in Force Design 2030, integration with Joint Forces will continue to be a priority in future training exercises.

1stLt Gregory Dreibelbis, USMCR



Maj Erik Buford, USMC, the airfield operation company commander with MWSS-473, right, speaks to Air Force Maj Shanna Ream, assistant director of operations for the 163rd Attack Wing, during ITX 4-22 at MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., July 21. MQ-9 Reapers from the California Air National Guard’s 163rd Attack Wing provided close air support to ground forces during the fire support coordination exercise.

LCPL JENNIFER DELACRUZ, USMC

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Gil Hodges Enshrined in Baseball Hall of Fame

World War II Veteran
had a Reputation
as the Nicest Guy
in the Major Leagues

By Kater Miller

Gilbert R. “Gil” Hodges was enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame on July 24. It is an honor that is well-deserved and long overdue. Hodges was the eighth U.S. Marine inducted into the Hall—the first since the 1992 induction of Tom Seaver, the New York Mets pitcher.

Gil Hodges was born in Princeton, Ind., on April 4, 1924. His father, Charles, worked in coal mines, where he suffered many injuries, including several that were life-threatening. He broke his back, had three toes cut off and lost his right eye. One day before he entered the mineshaft for work, a gas pocket exploded, killing and maiming many miners. Charles was only saved because he was changing clothes in the locker room. Because of the horrible conditions in the mines, Charles, who eventually died from Black Lung Disease, pushed his sons to play sports. Gil said that his hard-working father “knew everything about two things—baseball and coal mines.”

Gil was always known as an easygoing, nice guy. His renowned temperament was a gift from his mother, Irene. The Hodges family was deeply religious, attending Mass at their Catholic church every Sunday, a habit that Gil would continue for the rest of his life, even during arduous road trips. He even tried to quickly attend a 7 a.m. Mass while his wife, Joan, was in labor with their first child.

He participated in baseball, track and field, football, and basketball. He was athletic enough to jump and touch his



COURTESY OF THE LOS ANGELES DODGERS

From left to right: Roy Campanella, Duke Snider and Gil Hodges pose at Yankee Stadium before the first game of the 1955 World Series. Hodges recently joined his two teammates in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

forearm to the basketball rim. After graduating from high school in 1941, he went to college with his brother Bob; they both received athletic scholarships at St. Joseph’s College, a school in rural Indiana.

Like almost all Americans of the era, the Hodges brothers’ lives were upended in the wake of the Pearl Harbor attacks. After the United States declared war on

Japan, Gil considered enlisting in the military but wanted to graduate from college first. In the summer of 1942, he started thinking about joining the Marine Corps. While waiting to join, the Hodges brothers worked in factories in the summer and played on industrial league baseball teams until Bob joined the Army in the spring of 1943.



COURTESY OF MARJORIE HODGES MAYSENT

Gil Hodges reported to boot camp in the autumn after he played in his only Major League Baseball game of the 1943 season. Hodges is on the top row, sixth from the right.

In the early days of World War II, hundreds of Major League baseball players left the league to join the service. Baseball Commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis wrote to President Roosevelt and offered to suspend operations, but because he felt that baseball was important for the morale of the country, the president declined. Baseball teams at all levels searched high and low for talent, often obtaining players who were too old or too young for military service. The Brooklyn Dodgers held an open tryout in August 1943 to replace the players who were leaving the team to join the war effort and paid for Hodges to travel to upstate New York for a tryout. Branch Rickey, the general manager of the Dodgers, liked Hodges' hitting abilities but was less sure of where to put him on the field. Rickey also loved his personality and demeanor, so he signed him to a contract. Hodges enlisted in the Marine Corps on Sept. 27, a day off for the team, as they traveled from Chicago to Pittsburgh, and he remained with the team until the season ended.

Hodges played in one game before he



COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

Hodges embarked on LST-803 on March 25, 1945, and arrived off of Okinawa on April 3. The 16th AAA Bn took three LSTs and began debarking on April 7 and finished unloading on April 11.

shipped off for boot camp when on Oct. 3 in Cincinnati, Dodgers manager Leo Durocher put his rookies in for the last game of the season. Hodges played third base instead of catcher and committed two fielding errors. At the plate, he went 0-2 with two strikeouts and a walk, but

he stole second base. It was hardly an auspicious start to the career of the future hall of famer.

After the game in Cincinnati, Hodges went home to visit his family before embarking on an arduous train ride to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

According to biographers Tom Clavin and Danny Peary, Hodges took a catcher's mitt with him. He graduated from boot camp in December, then trained as an automatic rifleman at Camp Elliot, Calif. He departed California for Hawaii, where he would join the 16th Defense Battalion in April 1944.

Defense battalions were composite units containing air defense, coastal defense, tank companies, and sometimes, provisional infantry companies. They were initially organized to defend island outposts from enemy invasion. As the war progressed, the Marine Corps became less concerned with Japanese counterattacks on islands wrested away from them. As a result, all but three defense battalions were reorganized and designated as anti-aircraft artillery battalions. After the change, the newly designated battalions no longer carried provisional infantry companies, so Hodges became a clerk in the Headquarters and Service Battery in the newly redesignated 16th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion. The 16th AAA Battalion trained in Hawaii until December then deployed to Tinian.

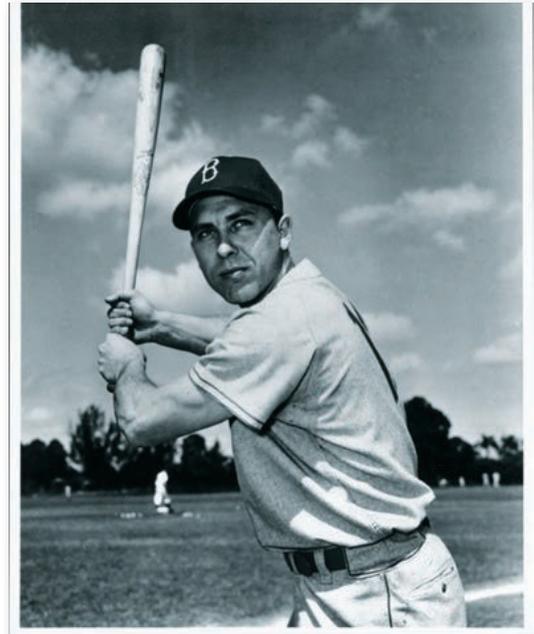
On Tinian, they set up anti-aircraft positions protecting the airfields and rehearsed operations in a deployed posture. They augmented the island's air de-

fenses and prepared for further deployment in support of the war. The Marines of the battalion not only watched for enemy aircraft, but also had to remain alert because of Japanese troops still hiding on the island. In February, the 16th AAA Bn set up ambush sites for Japanese troops still on the island and to practice security operations for whatever battle would be next. The battalion did see limited ground combat on Tinian, firing at enemy troops and uncovering a few hidden weapons.

In early 1945, the III Marine Amphibious Corps grouped four AAA battalions to support the invasion of Okinawa. They were the 2nd, 5th, 8th and 16th, forming the 1st Provisional Antiaircraft Group, which in turn fell under the X Army's 53d Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade. The 2nd and the 16th AAA Bns were chosen as the assault battalions due to the fact that they happened to have more extensive training than the other two and would go on to land on Okinawa first. The group planned on being tactically deployed for at least nine months. Their orders stated that the two assault battalions would land behind the ground combat elements to support them with anti-

aircraft fire. After the initial assault, control of the 1st Provisional Anti-Aircraft Groups would fall to the U.S. Army's 53d AAA Brigade, so that the anti-aircraft defense of the island would be unified to make it more effective. After the assault phase of Okinawa was completed, the two other battalions of the group landed to bolster the invasion force's defenses.

The 1st and 6th Marine Divisions began



Above right: Gil Hodges poses in his batting stance. He was one of the best hitters of any first baseman of his era, eventually hitting 370 home runs. (Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Dodgers)

Below: Marines moving across Yontan Airfield, Okinawa, Japan, in April 1945. American forces took Yontan Airfield and Kadena Airfield on the first day of the invasion and began operations there almost immediately. Hodges' unit set up between the airfields a week later.

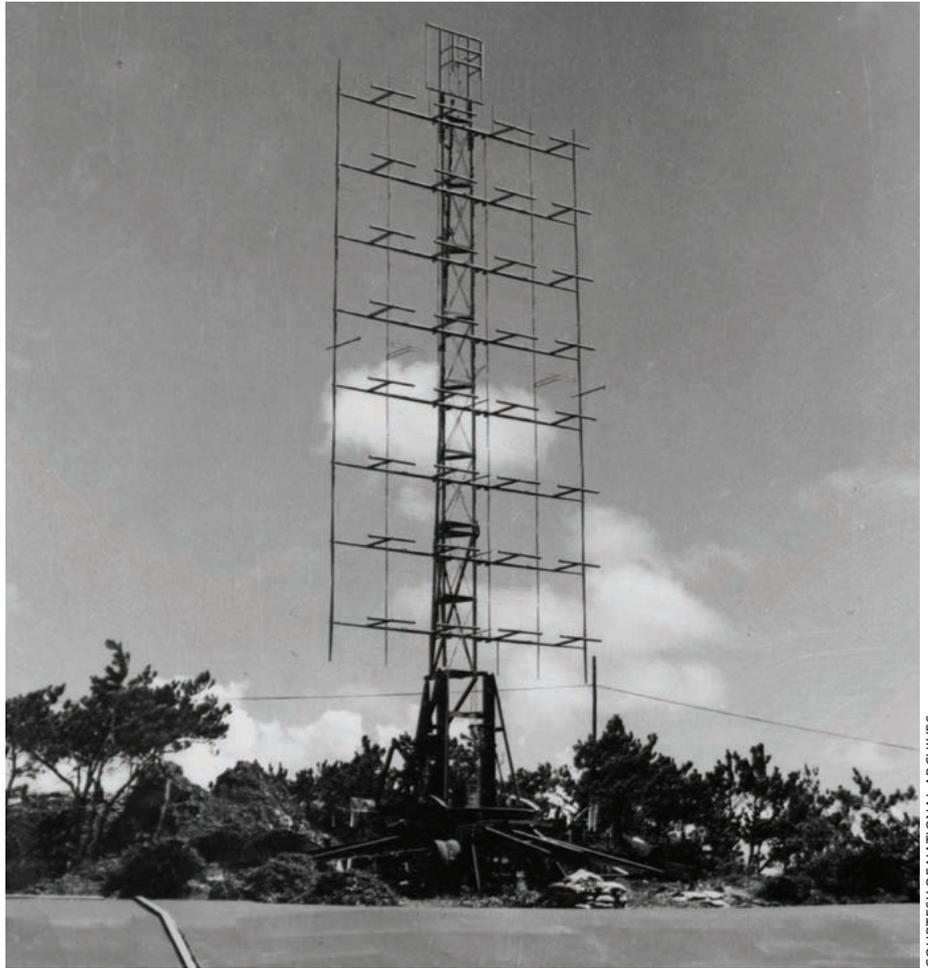


COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

the invasion on April 1st. It was both April Fools' Day and Easter Sunday. Eugene Sledge stated in his autobiography that the Marines did not know whether that was a good omen or a bad one. It seemed good at first; the initial assault went well for the Marines. The Marines landed on the western beaches and turned north, but the Japanese had reinforced the southern part of the island and built formidable defenses on the Shuri Line. The Marines would later turn south and reinforce the Army divisions that were being ground down by the entrenched Japanese defenders. There, things would turn truly horrific.

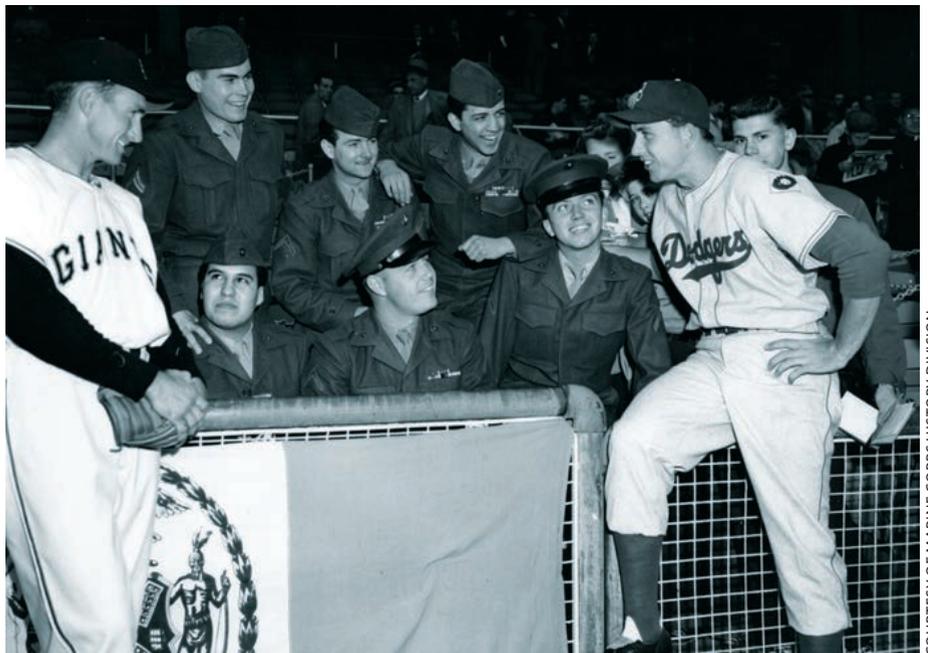
The X Army outlined two major objectives for the first day, Kadena Airfield and Yontan Airfield. Both airfields were captured by noon on April 1st, with the U.S. Army's 7th Division taking Kadena and the 6th Marine Division taking Yontan. Meanwhile, the 16th AAA Bn waited for their turn to unload their LSTs. A Kamikaze pilot hit an LST near Hodges' unit as they awaited debarkation, unnerving many of the Marines waiting at anchor. On April 3, Hodges left LST-803 as part of a 12-man advanced scouting party. The remainder of the battalion started coming ashore on April 7th, finishing on April 11th. After debarking, the battalion set up their guns in between the airfields to protect from Japanese aerial attacks. The Battle of Okinawa is significant because of the sheer number of kamikaze attacks, but these suicidal missions generally focused on destroying Allied ships. In fact, more Sailors died during the battle than Marines or soldiers. But there were still plenty of bombing and strafing runs against American forces on the ground.

The Japanese military forces were adapting to the increasingly complex defense schemes of American anti-aircraft defenses. Japanese pilots flew so low that radar operators had trouble finding the airplanes in Okinawa's rugged terrain. Sometimes, Japanese pilots followed closely behind landing American aircraft, then strafed American positions. The tactic confused fire control radars and rendered them less effective, but Japanese planes using this method inflicted little damage to Yontan or Kadena airfields. In addition to flying behind American planes, Japanese pilots transmitted "friendly" Identification, Friend or Foe responses, but American anti-aircraft radar operators were still able to distinguish between friendly and enemy aircraft due to differences in the radar signatures. At the end of April 22, the 16th AAA Bn had



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: Anti-aircraft units on Okinawa used this type of radar array to detect Japanese airplanes during World War II. Hodges, working in the intelligence and operations section, had to quickly assemble and disseminate information from the radar networks and tactical fighter networks to the gun batteries in the unit.



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

Gil Hodges, right, and Alvin Dark of the New York Giants meet with a group of Marines at the 1951 season opener at the Polo Grounds. Like Gil Hodges, Alvin Dark served in the Marine Corps during World War II.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Marines and soldiers inspect the aftermath of the attack by Japanese forces on Okinawan airfields in May 1945. The surviving Japanese troops rushed from the airplane to inflict as much damage as possible before being killed by American forces the following morning.

destroyed four enemy planes, damaged two, and likely destroyed two others, and also turned back dozens of aircraft raids.

On May 24, the Japanese Army sent nine cargo aircraft filled with special forces troops equipped with demolition charges on suicidal missions to land on the airfields and try to destroy American airplanes. Only one plane made it through the anti-aircraft fire to crash on Yontan airfield. The raiders destroyed several aircraft and damaged dozens more before a Marine patrol could clear the airfield of

the infiltrators. Several times, Japanese paratroopers parachuted onto the island and tried to infiltrate American lines. The 16th AAA Bn killed several would-be infiltrators who likely parachuted onto the island in May. The Marines of the battalion dug trenches and defensive positions around their guns and radars to protect their equipment. Hodges manned these defenses throughout the campaign.

Hodges biographer Mort Zachter explained the situation in which Hodges found himself while in the control center.

Zachter noted that while the Marines in the gun batteries had a chance to shoot back at their attackers, the Marines in the control center could only compile data as accurately as they could to give the battalion a good chance to shoot down enemy airplanes. Because the Marines expected the control center to be attacked, they also set up two redundant control centers in case the main one got hit. Hodges was commended for his professionalism and diligence. But he also started smoking, a habit he was never able to break.

The Marines of the 16th AAA Battalion remained on the island until the autumn of 1945, well after the cessations of hostilities. Though Okinawa was within striking distance of airplanes based in Japan, air attacks slackened substantially after June. Even so, the 16th AAA Bn went into alert status nearly daily through July, and even destroyed some enemy airplanes in August in the days before Japan's surrender. The troops still on the island endured several typhoons during their stay but fortunately, the damage was limited to tenting and housing areas. On Oct. 21, Hodges and his battery embarked on USS *Meriwether* (APA-203), arriving at Camp



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

Veteran Marines Gil Hodges, center, and Alvin Dark of the New York Giants meet with a group of Marines before a baseball game at the 1951 season opener at the Polo Grounds.

Pendleton, Calif., in November. The 16th AAA Bn was disbanded on the last day of November, and many of the Marines were given orders to begin the process of their eventual discharge.

In late 1945, the Marine Corps began a large demobilization effort. To help aid the drawdown, the Corps set up two separation centers. Hodges reported to the Marine Separation Center, U.S. Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill., and was granted furlough status. He returned home to Indiana, but he did not stay there long. Though he was filled with doubt about resuming his baseball career, his father told him that he should go to spring training and if the Dodgers did not want him, they would tell him.

Hodges reported to spring training in February 1946. Still designated as a catcher, but with limited experience at the position, Rickey assigned Hodges to the Class B Newport News Dodgers for a stint in the club's massive 21 team farm system. He did find some success at the position, but he was also competing against other minor leaguers in the most comprehensive farm system in all of baseball.

In the 1947 season, he made the Brooklyn

Dodgers roster as the third-string catcher, which put him in a position to be with the team, but he spent most of his time in the bullpen as the warmup catcher. The 1947 baseball season is remembered as the year that Jackie Robinson broke through the color barrier in baseball. There was another historic first as well. The first black pitcher in Major League Baseball made his debut with the Dodgers that year as well, and it was a Montford Point Marine named Dan Bankhead.

Being the bullpen catcher with a low batting average, Hodges considered quitting baseball to focus on basketball. He continued to attend community college and played basketball for Oakland City College in Indiana during the off season. He also played for some semi pro basketball teams too.

As luck would have it, the Dodgers made some personnel movements that allowed Gil Hodges to remain on the team. Jackie Robinson played most of his historic 1947 season at first base because the Dodgers were afraid that antagonistic base runners might try to spike him. Robinson was more familiar with second base so they moved him over for the 1948 season.

Hodges then moved over to first and spent most of the rest of his career there. The Dodgers tried to bring in an established first baseman for the 1949 season, potentially leaving Hodges in a lurch. But the team could not find a veteran first baseman, so Hodges remained at first.

His increased playing time saw his batting improve tremendously. He went from a .156 batting average with 91 plate appearances in 1947 to a .285 batting average with 676 plate appearances in 1949. Gil Hodges's newfound skill at the position made him an All-Star by the break. His star only rose from there. He went on to become one of the best defensive first basemen to ever play the game. He won the very first Gold Glove Award for first baseman in 1957. Gold Gloves were awarded to the best position player of either league. He went on to win the National League Gold Glove Award for the next two seasons. By the end of his playing career, Hodges had stacked up quite a few accolades. He was an eight-time All-Star and won two World Series with the Dodgers, one in Brooklyn and one in Los Angeles.

Hodges is still remembered for being

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COURTESY OF NEW YORK METS

Hodges took the helm of the New York Mets in 1968 and led them to win the World Series the following year against the Baltimore Orioles.

one of the nicest guys in baseball. Most baseball reporters said they could spend all day with him, and he would not say anything worth writing about. He was known as a family man. He married Joan Lombardi, who was from Brooklyn, N.Y., which became the Hodges family's full-time home. The family-oriented Branch Rickey let Hodges miss more than a week of spring training to be with his wife for the birth of his son in 1950, and the next year, a new general manager allowed him to miss part of spring training for the birth of his first daughter.

Brooklyn fans loved him. He was only booed one time by fans, and that was when he crashed into Reds second baseman Bobby Adams and broke Adams's ribs while trying to break up a double play. Even when Hodges went 0-21 in the 1952 World Series, then started the 1953 season in a slump, the faithful Dodgers fans did not jeer at him. Instead, Father Herbert Redmond of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church told his congregation, "It's too hot for a sermon today. Go home and say a prayer for Gil Hodges," to awaken his bat. It seemed to work because he went on to become an All-Star that year too.

The Dodgers moved to Los Angeles after the 1957 season, and Hodges played four seasons there before returning to New York. He joined the New York Mets for their inaugural 1962 season, but he saw reduced playing time. In 1963, he

was traded to the Washington Senators, where he retired from playing to focus on being the team's manager. He held that position until hired by the Mets in 1968. In 1969, he led the team to a World Series championship, known as the "Miracle Mets." The team had two other Marines as well—future Hall of Famers Tom Seaver and Tug McGraw. (*Editor's note: See the*



COURTESY OF NEW YORK METS

Gil Hodges was known as one of the nicest guys in baseball. He died in 1972.

August 2019 issue of Leatherneck to learn more about the Marines of the Miracles Mets.)

After the World Series, the short-lived *Jock* magazine planned a cover photo depicting Mets' players hoisting a championship flag on the pitcher's mound, mimicking the famous Iwo Jima

flag raising photo. Hodges opposed the photo on the grounds that to pose in that manner would mock the Marines who lost their lives in the Pacific for a gimmick. He refused to have his players participate, and the magazine used models in place of his players.

Gil Hodges led the New York Mets through the 1971 season. He died on Easter Sunday in 1972, two days before his 48th birthday. Mourners at his funeral mass crowd exceeded the church's capacity, and his adoring fans lined the streets vying to pay their respects. The New York Mets retired the number 14 in his honor.

The Hall of Fame—Finally

At long last, Gil Hodges is enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Hodges had several swings and misses at Hall of Fame induction and the closest he came to enshrinement previously was in 1993 with the Veterans' Committee. Hodges had a huge network of support for inclusion in the Baseball Hall of Fame from fans, baseball writers, broadcasters and Major League Baseball teams. Vin Scully said, "There were two others I always hoped and prayed that I would see get into the Hall of Fame, number one was Walter O'Malley ... The other player who never made it absolutely breaks my heart, and that was Gil Hodges, the great first baseman of the Dodgers who never got the call." Of course, the Marine Corps knew better, inducting Gil Hodges in the Marine Corps Sports Hall of Fame in 2007. Major League Baseball followed 15 years later.

Gil Hodges, by all accounts was a terrific human being, and should be remembered not just for his baseball prowess, but his personality. He was a religiously devout, generous, kind, humble, and soft-spoken player and manager, devoted family man, and patriotic Marine. He never talked or bragged about his service, and those close to him said that his time on Okinawa haunted him. On the brink of quitting baseball, his drive to achieve greatness led him to taking on a position he had never played before. With quiet tenacity, he built up the sound fundamentals to become one of the best first basemen in baseball history. If that's not a hallmark of a Marine, what is?

Authors bio: Kater Miller is the outreach curator for the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. He served in the Marine Corps from 2001-2005 as an aviation ordnanceman. 🇺🇸

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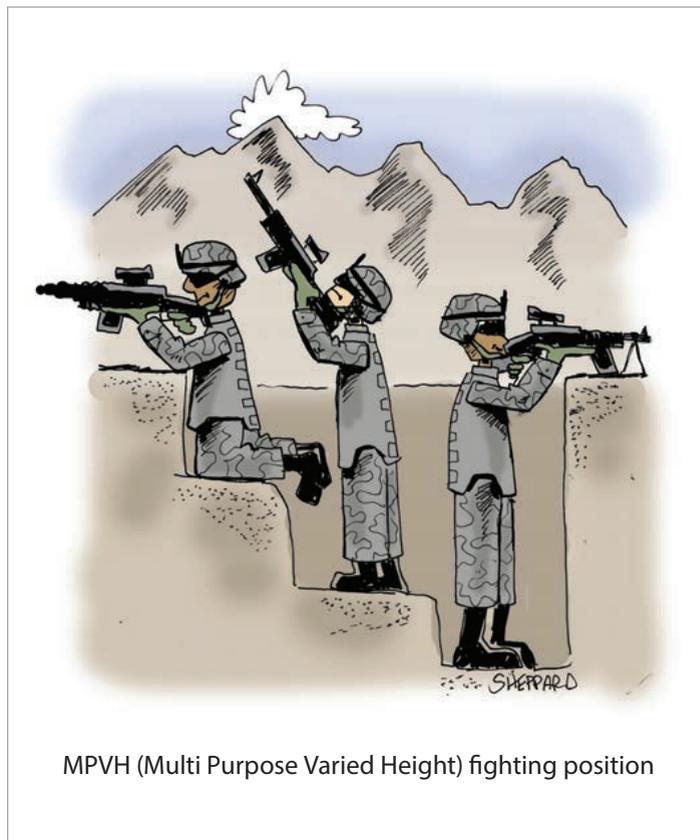
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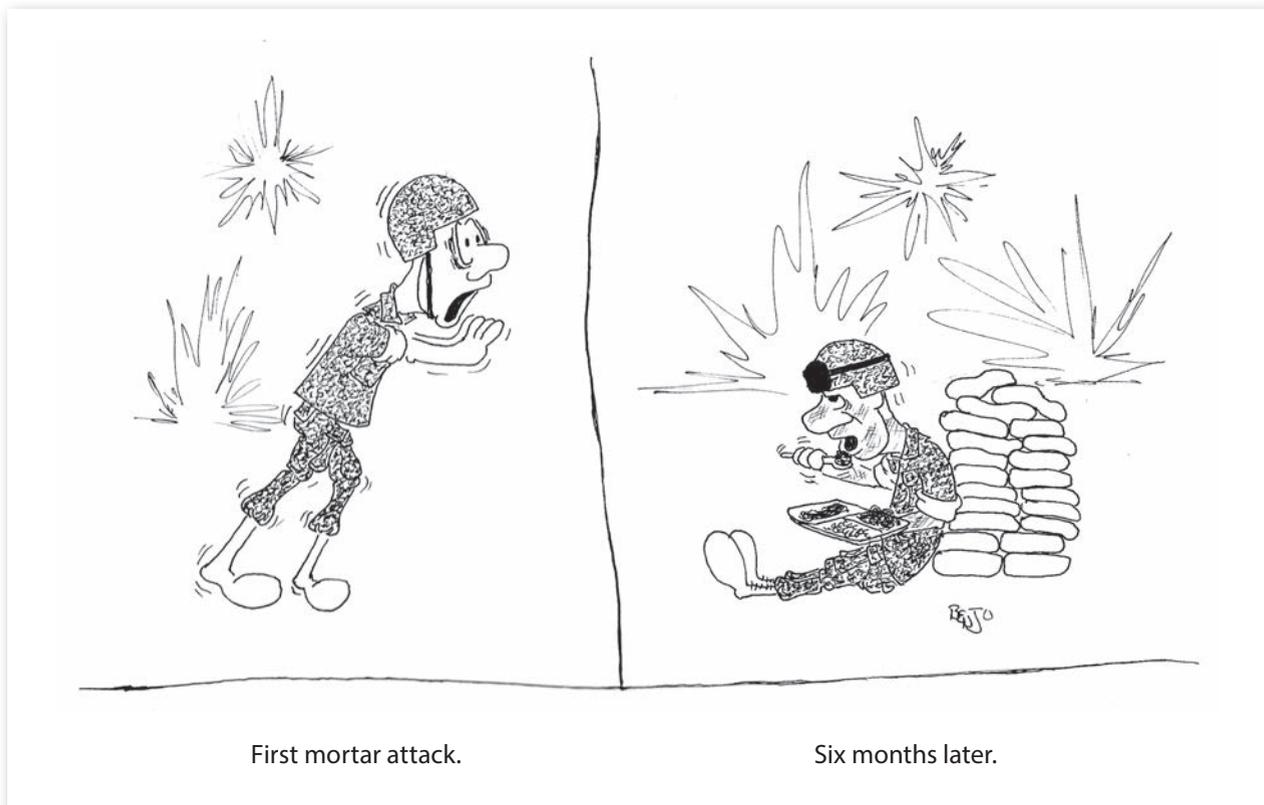
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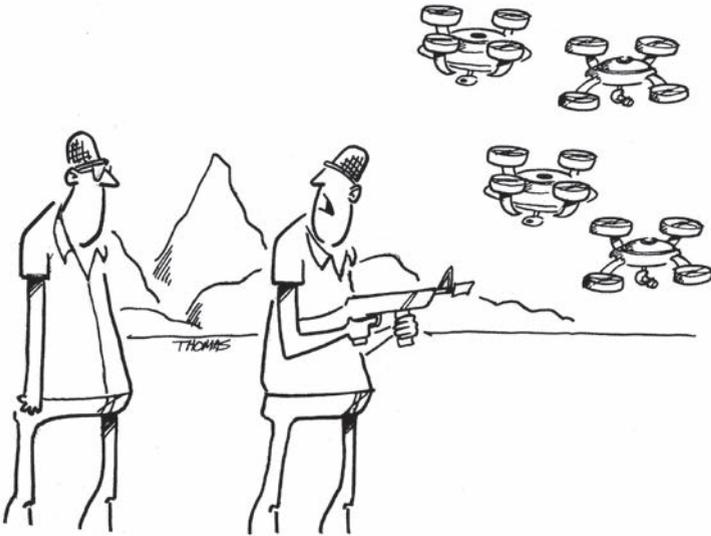


MPVH (Multi Purpose Varied Height) fighting position

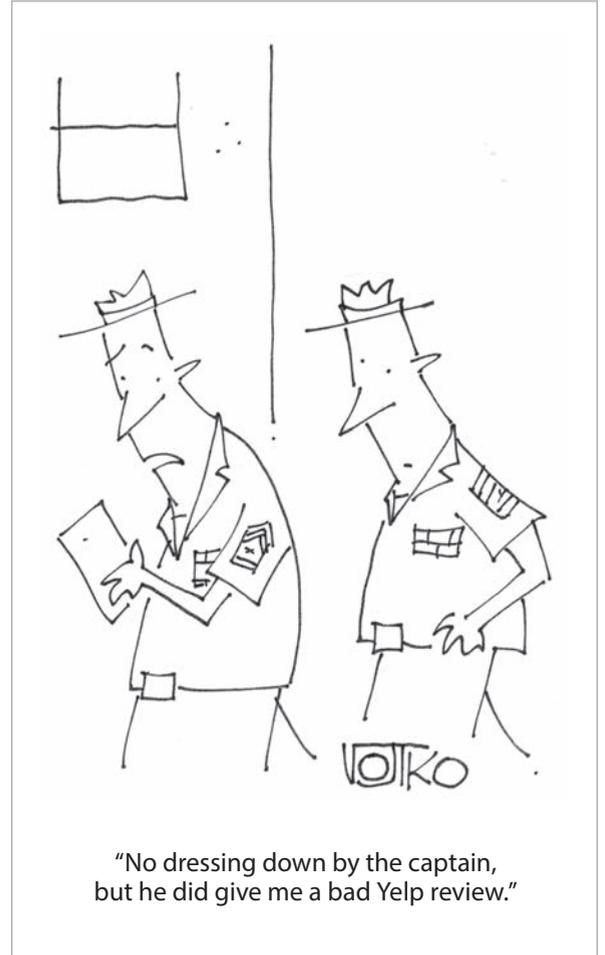


First mortar attack.

Six months later.



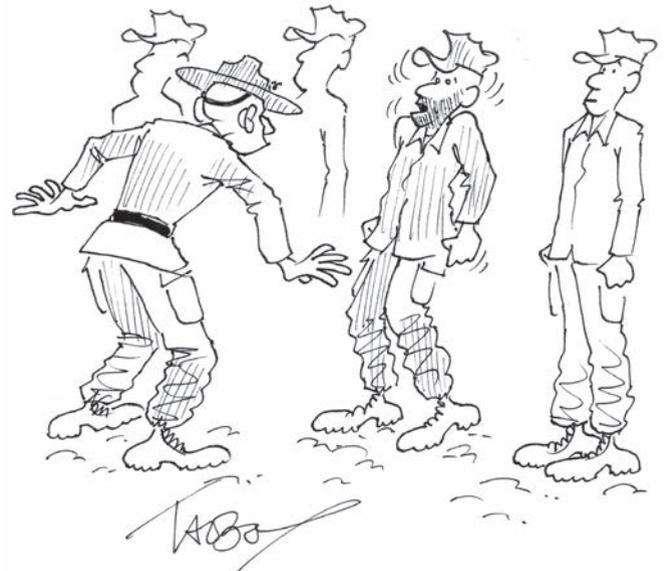
"I'm taking them out on a recon mission."



"No dressing down by the captain, but he did give me a bad Yelp review."



"Looks like Gunny ripped him a new one."



"Sir, in the rush in the head, I think I shaved someone else!"



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: Two CH-6 Sea Knight helicopters are parked aboard the amphibious assault ship USS *Guam* (LPH-9) during Operation Urgent Fury in October 1983.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Marines patrol in the town of Grenville on the island of Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury.

Grenada, 1983

Operation Urgent Fury

By Capt Michael A. Hanson, USMC

The 133-square-mile island of Grenada became embroiled in turmoil just five years after gaining independence from Great Britain. In 1979, Maurice Bishop and the Joint Endeavor for Welfare, Education, and Liberation, seized power in a coup following the unpopular rule of Prime Minister Sir Eric Gairy. The new order sidelined the island's representative to the British Monarchy, Governor-General Sir Paul Scoon, while diminishing Grenada's democratic foundations and exchanging them with Marxist institutions. Bishop cracked down on critical forms of media, canceled elections and annulled the constitution, thus solidifying his role as dictator. The United States became alarmed as he increasingly steered Grenada toward alignment with the Communist Bloc by signing arms and trade deals with the Soviet Union and other communist countries.

Despite its veneer, Bishop's regime was marred by a power struggle that resulted in a coup against him by hardliners in the Grenadian Communist Central Committee. On Oct. 12, 1983, Bishop was put under house arrest by Bernard Coard, his deputy prime minister. Bishop's confinement was short-lived, however, and after only a week he was freed by a crowd of 3,000 supporters. With his cohorts, he marched on Grenadian army headquarters at Fort Rupert to reassert his authority. Armored personnel carriers and troops under General Hudson Austin, the commander in chief of the Grenadian Armed Forces, opened fire on the crowd, killing around 40 people and he took Bishop prisoner once again. Rather than detain him, the troops executed Bishop along with other civic leaders who remained loyal to him.

In response to the failed counter-coup, General Austin abolished the government and assumed authority of the country as head of a Revolutionary Military Council. With the Iranian hostage crisis fresh in their minds, senior American officials worried about the welfare of American citizens in Grenada, specifically, 600

American students at St. George's School of Medicine.

On Oct. 17, the United States' Regional Interagency Group (RIG) of the National Security Council (NSC) requested the military begin planning to evacuate the American citizens from Grenada. The RIG met again on Oct. 19 and recognizing the threat of several

At 10 p.m. on Oct. 22, the MAU was ordered to make for Grenada. In addition, the USS Independence Battle Group, also on its way to the Mediterranean, changed course as well.

hundred armed Cubans on Grenada, recommended to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to plan for a worst-case situation—an evacuation against armed resistance from Grenadian and Cuban military forces. Later that night the JCS ordered planners to “submit alternative courses of action for a three- to five-day noncombatant evacuation operation to include one or more of the following options: seizure of evacuation points, show of force, combat operations to defend the evacuation, and post evacuation peace-keeping.” As plans began to be devised, forces began to be allocated for the operation.

Late on the night of Oct. 20, the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) consisting of 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment (2/8), Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 261, and MAU Service Sup-



JASON MONROE



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Point Salines Airport during the multiservice, multinational Operation Urgent Fury.

port Group 22 embarked aboard the ships *USS Guam* (LPH-9), *USS Trenton* (LPH-14), *USS Fort Snelling* (LSD-30), *USS Manitowoc* (LST-1180), and *USS Barnstable County* (LST-1197) received orders to change course and head for the Caribbean Sea. The 22nd MAU had deployed from Morehead City, N.C. only two days before for a peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon. At 10 p.m. on Oct. 22, the MAU was ordered to make for Grenada. In addition, the *USS Independence* Battle Group, also on its way to the Mediterranean, changed course as well. Twenty-one American warships carrying 2,000 Marines steamed toward Grenada.

American intelligence agencies estimated 1,500 Grenadian People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) soldiers, 3,000 Grenadian militia, 400 police, as well as several hundred Cuban troops to be on the island. Though this was primarily a light infantry force, it did possess six BTR-60 armored personnel carriers, four ZU-23 23 mm anti-aircraft guns, and several 12.7 mm anti-aircraft guns with well-trained crewmen. Intelligence analysts concluded these forces were

capable of offering stiff defense on the small island.

These estimates necessitated changes to the operational plan. "Given the uncertainty, the JCS determined that a military operation should be a coup de main ... a surprise attack with overwhelming force. While catching the enemy off guard, such an operation could perform

rescue missions and seize key military targets vital to the enemy's command and control of defensive operations." However, the forces organic to the MAU would not be enough to conduct an operation of this scope alone and the operation was expanded to include rapidly deployable forces from the U.S. Army. Special Operations Forces, 22nd MAU, and two Army Ranger



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Marines aboard a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter during Operation Urgent Fury in October 1983.

battalions would form the forces used to seize key terrain and evacuate the American citizens while elements of the 82nd Airborne Division arrived immediately in transport aircraft to assume control of the island and conduct peace-keeping operations.

As the 22nd MAU approached Grenada, its Marines devised plans for the non-combatant evacuation operation. The Marines were tasked to take Pearls Airport and its nearby town of Grenville up north. Oct. 25 was designated D-day and H-hour was set for 5 a.m., little more than 24 hours away.

The Marines planned to land at dawn in a simultaneous operation using helicopters and amphibious vehicles. Hours before the assault was to begin, Navy SEALs performed reconnaissance of the beaches near the airport. Judging the surf conditions, the SEALs reported that, “amphibious tractors might land with great difficulty and other landing craft not at all.” In fact, the seas were so rough that a SEAL team was lost at sea. The amphibious assault was postponed, and landing plans adapted for an assault on Pearls Airport and Grenville by two rifle companies flown in by helicopter.

Shortly before sunrise on Oct. 25, 1983, Marines landed on Grenada. CH-46 Sea Knight transports, escorted by AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters, achieved surprise. The initial wave landed unopposed as the men of Company E, 2/8 quickly secured their landing zone and prepared to move onto their objective, Pearls Airport. Two Grenadian 12.7 mm anti-aircraft guns located in the hills above the landing zone fired on a successive wave of helicopters but were immediately dispensed with by 20 mm canon fire and 2.75-inch rockets of the AH-1 escorts. By 7:30 a.m. Pearls Airport was under the control of Company E after a quick engagement between the Marines and Grenadians guarding the airstrip. The Grenadians fired on the Marines breaking through a chain link fence and bolted as soon as the Marines returned fire. Shortly afterwards, the Marines captured two 12.7 mm anti-aircraft guns and a weapons cache in the hills nearby. The Grenadians manning the position did not resist; instead, they ran off into the countryside.

Immediately after inserting Company E, the helicopters returned to USS *Guam* to bring in Company F for the seizure of Grenville. Company F landed unopposed and by 6:30 a.m., secured Grenville. The Marines received a hearty welcome from the Grenadian people, who, “Far from regarding them as invaders, welcomed them as liberators from the rule of Hudson’s military council, which many



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: Marines examine equipment inside an abandoned building during Operation Urgent Fury on the island of Grenada in October 1983.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

An aerial view of Point Salines Airport on Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury.

Grenadians were describing as a gang of criminals and thugs.” Citizens assisted the Marines in identifying Grenadian troops that had shed their uniforms and sought to blend into the civilian population. They took the Marines to weapons caches and provided intelligence.

Meanwhile, events had not gone according to plan on the southern part of the island. Delays caused the Rangers to parachute onto Salines Airport in broad daylight under significant groundfire from

Meanwhile, events had not gone according to plan on the southern part of the island. Delays caused the Rangers to parachute onto Salines Airport in broad daylight under significant groundfire.



A Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter from HMM-261 "Raging Bulls" was shot down by antiaircraft fire on Oct. 25, 1983, during Operation Urgent Fury.

DOD

As Grenadian troops closed on the downed Marine pilots, the other gunship strafed them with 20 mm canon fire and 2.75-inch rockets. This suppressed the Grenadian troops long enough for a Marine CH-46 to land and rescue Capt Howard ...



Marines aboard an LVTP 7 tracked landing vehicle after arriving near the town of Saint Georges, Grenada, during Operation Urgent Fury.

COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Grenadian antiaircraft units. The Rangers landed, scattered, and took casualties from Cubans defending the airfield. However, the two Ranger companies overcame this resistance and accomplished their mission of seizing the airport, capturing 250 Cubans and enabling two battalions from the 82nd Airborne to land within 30 minutes. Furthermore, within just a few hours, the Rangers evacuated 138 American students from St. George's University

Medical School's True Blue campus which was close to the airport. Unfortunately, the Rangers learned that more than 200 Americans were at a school annex in Grand Anse.

As the Rangers fought for control of the Salines area, Marine AH-1 Cobras were dispatched to provide close air support to them. Under direction from Army forward air controllers, the gunships engaged Grenadian forces inside Fort

Fredrick. After four attack runs, one gunship, manned by Captain Timothy Howard and his copilot/gunner Captain Jeb Seagle, were shot down by antiaircraft fire. Both crewmen survived the crash, although Capt Howard was seriously wounded. As Grenadian troops closed on the downed Marine pilots, the other gunship strafed them with 20 mm canon fire and 2.75-inch rockets. This suppressed the Grenadian troops long enough for a Marine CH-46 to land and rescue Capt Howard, although Capt Seagle was killed by the Grenadian troops. Capt Seagle later was awarded the Navy Cross, posthumously. As the CH-46 lifted off with the wounded pilot aboard, the remaining gunship was shot down and crashed into the sea, killing both Major John "Pat" Guigerre and First Lieutenant Jeff Sharver who would each be awarded the Silver Star posthumously.

Despite these losses, Marine air support to the Rangers continued. When the Rangers ascertained the location of the remaining 200 American students at Grand Anse Beach, HMM-261 assisted in their rescue and evacuation. Marine helicopters carrying Rangers landed under fire on the beach while artillery, mortars, and fires from American aircraft rained down on Cuban and Grenadian positions. The Rangers secured the annex and began the evacuation of the students to the waiting Marine helicopters under fire, rescuing 224 American students without any casualties.

While the Marines experienced only sporadic resistance up north, St. George's and Point Salines proved to be where the majority of the defenders were deployed. Navy SEALs encountered heavy resistance in St. Georges as well while attempting to rescue Governor-General Scoon, who had been placed under house arrest by Grenadian forces. They managed to reach the residence and even wrest the Governor-General from his captors,



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: An aerial view of Fort Frederick showing damage sustained during Operation Urgent Fury in October 1983.



DOD

Cubans who were captured on Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury.



TS/SGT M.J. GREEN, USAF

American students sit inside an airport terminal waiting to be evacuated by U.S. military personnel during Operation Urgent Fury.

but soon the mansion was besieged by Grenadian forces with heavy machine guns and armored personnel carriers. The SEALs held out, but it was unclear how long they could last.

Company G, 2/8, still aboard ships after their amphibious landing near Grenville had been postponed, received a new mission: land at Grand Mal Bay and lift the siege of the SEALs at the Governor-General's mansion. The amphibious assault vehicles came ashore in the dark, establishing a beachhead by 7 p.m. Navy landing craft brought in tanks, jeeps, heavy weapons, and other equipment as Marines and Sailors worked through the night to consolidate their foothold ashore. HMM-261 brought Company F in from Grenville before dawn as well. The two companies of Marines, led by tanks and amphibious assault vehicles, pushed toward St. George's as the sun rose meeting minor resistance from rocket propelled grenade fire. When the Marines captured a Grenadian officer, he told them that his men had fled upon hearing the sound of the oncoming Marine tanks in the dark.

The Marines pressed on toward the Governor-General's mansion where they successfully relieved the SEALs, Mr. Scoon, and his family. The Marines then turned their attention to Fort Frederick, taking it without a fight. In addition to many abandoned weapons, the Marines found discarded uniforms lying about the place. They also discovered valuable intelligence

documents describing defending forces on the island. A Grenadian major they captured explained that Grenadian forces, "did not expect a combined helicopter and surface assault at night and did not expect an attack of any sort north of St. George's." Furthermore, "This combined night assault was a psychological shock to the PRA, whereby the few remaining senior officers present opted and agreed to pass the word to lay down their arms and return home." Within 72 hours of the invasion, the mission reached a turning point. Resistance on Grenada could be characterized as fleeting engagements as American forces consolidated their positions and shifted into stability operations. However, the Marines did encounter some friction.

With three companies spread across the island and unit sectors continuing to expand, the 22nd MAU needed more Marines on the ground. The battalion landing team's organic artillery battery was sent ashore as a provisional infantry company. The artillerymen contributed immensely to operations ashore by relieving two infantry companies tied down in St. George's. Furthermore, this provisional infantry company captured important members of the Grenadian regime in hiding, specifically Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard. These former officials were identified with the help of Grenadian locals that did not want them to return to power.

Since D-day, paratroopers of the 82nd

A Grenadian major they captured explained that Grenadian forces, "did not expect a combined helicopter and surface assault at night and did not expect an attack of any sort north of St. George's."

Airborne Division continued to arrive and occupy battlespace, growing to 6,140 men on the island. The main island of Grenada was secure, but the attention of the expeditionary force shifted to the nearby island of Carriacou. Intelligence efforts noted a Grenadian military headquarters there and gathered reports that some Grenadian forces had fled to Carriacou, where they remained armed. Therefore, the amphibious task force received a follow-on mission to seize Carriacou in a "combined surface and air landing."

Marine forces on Grenada were relieved by paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division and immediately turned to their next mission. The Marines and all of their gear returned to their ships by 8 p.m. on Oct. 31, and prepared for the next landing, scheduled to occur in less than 10 hours. Company F touched down in helicopters at 5:30 a.m. while Company G went ashore in assault amphibians. Carriacou was taken without a shot fired, and the locals welcomed the Marines once again.

The seizure of Grenada was achieved in just over one week. During the course of Operation Urgent Fury, the U.S. military suffered 19 killed and 89 wounded in action. The Army took the brunt of the casualties with 12 dead and 71 wounded. The Marines lost three killed and 15 wounded while the Navy had four dead and three wounded. Grenadian losses were 45 killed and 377 wounded, including civilians. Cuban forces on the island suffered 24 killed, 29 wounded, and 600 captured. American objectives were achieved with the successful evacuation of 599 American citizens, none killed or injured. Free elections were held in Grenada on Dec. 19, 1983, four days after the last American troops left.

Author's bio: Capt Hanson is Wpns Co commander of 3rd Bn, 4th Marines at Twentynine Palms, Calif. He is a contributing editor of The Connecting File, an online newsletter dedicated to infantry tactics, techniques, procedures and leadership.

AT HOME AND AT THE BALL



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SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

Barnum & Bailey Circus Had New Meaning

In 1971 at Officer Candidates School in Quantico, Va., Staff Sergeant Tallent marched our platoon very close to the nearby train tracks. We were stretched out so that we were one long line that ran parallel to the tracks just a few feet in front of us. He had us stand at parade rest facing the tracks. With a scowl on his face, he impatiently looked at his watch. We were bewildered until we heard an oncoming train, and he started to smile. He ordered us to stand at attention and within seconds a very long Barnum & Bailey Circus train, adorned with colorful animal and circus themes, came rumbling by. We could feel the “whoosh” of the air as the train sped by and we sensed SSgt Tallent watching us closely. He was itching to nail someone if we didn’t remain at attention with our eyes directed straight ahead.

We never broke rank, and we could tell by the look on his face that he was disappointed that he didn’t have the opportunity to unload some of his colorful and imaginative profanities on one or more of us. After the train passed, he gave us an order. That night we were to write a letter to our parents and tell them that our wonderful drill instructor had taken us to see the circus. That was his idea of being funny and playing with our minds at the same time.

Capt Bob Canepa
USMC, 1971-1974
Mill Valley, Calif.

Lucky Strike Cigarettes Came in Handy

A few of us airdales were assigned to A-4D school at MCAS El Toro, Calif., in May 1961 before shipping out to Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. A friend, Phil L., and I were walking fire watch one night after lights out. A bunch of the wild ones just back from liberty in Tijuana came staggering into the squad bay causing a heck

I had a brainstorm. I got the aluminum foil out of my pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes and folded it into two silver bars and tacked them on my shoulders. I marched back in and loudly asked Phil which of these s---heads were making trouble.

of a row. One guy had his arm in a sling, and another had a bandage wrapped around his head. Phil asked them to kindly keep it down which drew their ire, so they chased him out into the street.

I had a brainstorm. I got the aluminum foil out of my pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes and folded it into two silver bars and tacked them on my shoulders. I marched back in and loudly asked Phil which of these s---heads were making trouble. Phil responded, “Over here, Lieutenant” at which time there was calm in the barracks as the perps

crept under their blankets and I walked up and down the barracks like the newly commissioned officer I had just become.

Norm Spilleth
USMC, 1960-1964
Minneapolis, Minn.

Seabag Nightmare

I was serving on Okinawa in 1958 and was due to rotate back to the States when I got a letter from a buddy who had left the month before. He was happy, except for the nightmare of retrieving his seabag from the nearly 4,500 bags piled on the parade deck at Treasure Island. He said it took more than three hours for him and even longer for others to find their bags. I wasn’t looking forward to that experience.

The next month I rotated back to the States. While we were at processing and having breakfast at Treasure Island, our seabags followed from our ship and were laid out in neat groups of four. It was a dark green canvas nightmare for all of us except for one Marine who confidently walked over to the only seabag that had its bottom painted white.

William Ranger Clark
Natick, Mass.

Baked Beans Don’t Mix With Ambushes

I was a squad leader for Weapons Platoon, H/2/9 in early 1966 in Vietnam. My company had just come out of the “hills” area northwest of Da Nang on various search and sweep operations. The normal procedure was to go back to our battalion base camp to take care of equipment needing repairs or replacement and to get replacement grunts for our infantry platoons.

Some of us were sent to

other “in the rear” details for those few days versus back at the battalion area. On this occasion my weapons platoon sent two gun and rocket teams to secure and protect an old railroad bridge crossing a river that was being used as a road for supplies between Da Nang Air Base and our outlying battalion areas. Compared to mountains and rice paddies and eating C-rations for weeks on end, this was a real break in our daily routine of being shot at and seeing booby traps everywhere.

A special highlight was mail call. One day I received a large box from my wife and mom back home in Jersey. After tearing open the box I found an institutional-sized can of Van Camp’s pork and beans. It had to have been a 100-oz. can.

My buddy “Bugs” and I got a local motor pool guy driving down to Da Nang to get us a case of Hires root beer. That day Bugs and I ate the whole can of beans and drank a case of root beer. It was the highlight of my tour in Vietnam.

Later that night when we had to send out our ambush teams around the bridge/river area, Bugs and I had to stay in the rear since our “ambush sound discipline” was out of control. Bugs and I still laugh about how we ate that entire can of beans and all the noise it created in our bunker that night.

Cpl Ed Hark, USMC (Ret)
Georgetown, Texas

A Marine Corps Tradition

On the morning of June 16, 1956, I was one of 13 NROTC midshipmen who walked out of Hill Auditorium at the University of Michigan and received our initial salutes

as newly commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps. In our left hands we each clutched a one-dollar bill which we extended to the Marine staff noncommissioned officer (SNCO) who had initiated the salute. This was in compliance with information we had previously received concerning a “hallowed Marine Corps tradition.” The source of this information remains vague in my memory bank, but I suspect it was our aforementioned NROTC Marine SNCO instructor.

We didn’t question the veracity of this information. If it wasn’t a tradition it seemed to us that it should be, and we were pleased to be part of it. I’m certain the SNCO was equally pleased to be the recipient of \$13—equivalent to \$140 in 2022. I don’t recall if the newly minted Navy ensigns also participated in a similar tradition, but I later learned that it was, in fact, a tradition in all U.S. services. The tradition specified a silver dollar, but these were not easily acquired in 1956. In today’s world a silver dollar from the U.S. mint would cost a minimum of \$64.

Col R.H. Stableford, USMC
(Ret)
Dumfries, Va.

No Purple Heart

During my first tour in Vietnam in 1966, I was a private first class in Chu Lai. Most of us non-rates were assigned to head detail. Our duties were to burn the outside heads each morning. It wasn’t pleasant, but someone had to do it.

There were two types of heads. The basic was a two-hole sit-down type, which was positioned over a 6-foot hole. There were several outhouses on our hill, and we had a mechanical mule provided to us for the transport of the gas cans. The method of burning was to tip over the outhouse,

expose the hole, pour a mixture of gas and diesel into the hole, step back and throw a match. There were also deluxe model heads that were three-seaters with 55-gallon drums as the bottom portion. In the rear of the outhouse were three doors that opened, and the cut-off drums were pulled out and burned.

One day we had a new private assigned. He was instructed on how to burn the outhouses. Initially, he was doing well, but about an hour into the detail he made a mistake. He tipped over a two-seater then lifted a can of gas and diesel mixture and poured it down the hole. He then stepped back, lit the match, and threw it. The match did not ignite the hole. He then picked up another can of fuel, went to the hole, looked down and started to pour the fuel when a huge explosion erupted. He took the brunt of the blast but was still maneuvering

One day we had a new private assigned. He was instructed on how to burn the outhouses. Initially, he was doing well, but about an hour into the detail he made a mistake.

around. His body was smoking, and his eyelashes and brows were about gone. He had skin sagging from his face and his eyes looked like large saucers. I know it’s not funny, but he looked like Wile E. Coyote after the Roadrunner did him harm.

He was walked to sickbay and then flown to the Philippines for treatment. He stayed there for a couple of months then returned for duty. He received a few

scars but was very lucky. No Purple Heart was awarded.

CWO-3 Jack Wing, USMC
(Ret)
Apopka, Fla.

A Memorable Event

I was at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, in the early part of 1961. I was assigned to the comm section of “Hotel” Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines as a field radio operator and wireman. I had not been off base for about six months because I had had my liberty card pulled for a minor infraction and I was too stubborn to ask for it back. I spent all my free time working out at the battalion gym, lifting weights, and punching a bag. These activities resulted in my being in pretty good physical condition.

The battalion decided to have a pugil stick competition and divided all the men into three groups: heavyweight, middleweight, and lightweight. I was put into the middleweight group.

The competition consisted of timed one-minute bouts with all “killing” blows counting to determine the score and whomever got the most hits won the bout. The participants wore helmets with face masks, body protection and boxing gloves.

After several bouts, I was fortunate to win the middleweight division. I was then pitted against the winner of the lightweight division and won. Between bouts, I practiced the slash, butt stroke, and jab techniques used in bayonet fighting. Then they put me up against the winner of the heavyweight division.

I squared off with this seemingly giant Marine. Thinking that I must do something quick before he bowled me over with his sheer size and weight, I quickly went to high port and jabbed him three times in the face mask before he knocked me over. I was

laying there with my pugil stick pinned behind my back and he was standing over me ready to pile drive his stick into me when I lunged out with my right foot and kicked his pugil stick out of his grip. It went sailing, and by the time he recovered it and we squared off again, the whistle blew. I had won because I had been the only one to score any blows.

The battery picked me up and paraded me around

I squared off with this seemingly giant Marine. Thinking that I must do something quick before he bowled me over with his sheer size and weight, I quickly went to high port and jabbed him three times ...

in celebration, and I was awarded three days liberty for my efforts. I picked up my payday poker winnings from the company safe that I had been saving and enjoyed five days liberty including a weekend at Waikiki Beach, learning to surf.

Cpl Francis J. Flaga
USMC, 1958-1964
Guthrie, Okla.

Do you have any interesting stories from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? We would love to hear them. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: 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 membership for the “Sea Story of the Month.” 🍷

“WE CAME IN PEACE”

Beirut Marines

Find a Voice

in Forthcoming
Documentary Film

By Sara W. Bock

When Greg Wah shops for Marine Corps-related souvenirs or mementos, he never seems to have any trouble finding items specific to those who served in World War II, Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan. But conspicuously absent from the typical lineup of offerings, he says, is a part of the Corps' history that many seem to have forgotten, but he can't go a day without remembering: Beirut, Lebanon.

The veteran Marine recalls having just celebrated his 18th birthday—“I was still wet behind the ears,” he quips—when the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), with Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment as its landing force, was ordered to replace the 22nd MAU in war-torn Lebanon after the April 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. As the year went on, complex and long-festering hostilities among warring factions and militias led to an influx of small arms, rocket and mortar fire specifically targeting the Marines, who as members of a multinational peacekeeping force were not permitted to adequately defend themselves. America may not have officially been at war, but the reality on the ground told a vastly different story. According to a 2003 article in *DAV Magazine*, by Oct. 22, the eve of one of the most tragic events in Marine Corps history, seven Marines had already been killed and 64 wounded by enemy fire.

Wah, who says that only in recent years has he begun to process the trauma he



COURTESY OF MICHAEL IVEY

Director and filmmaker Michael Ivey, left, interviews retired Marine MajGen James Lariviere about his experiences as a young first lieutenant in Beirut, where he served as a reconnaissance platoon commander with 3rd Bn, 8th Marines. Scheduled for release in October 2023, “We Came in Peace” allows those who were there to tell the “boots-on-the-ground truth.”

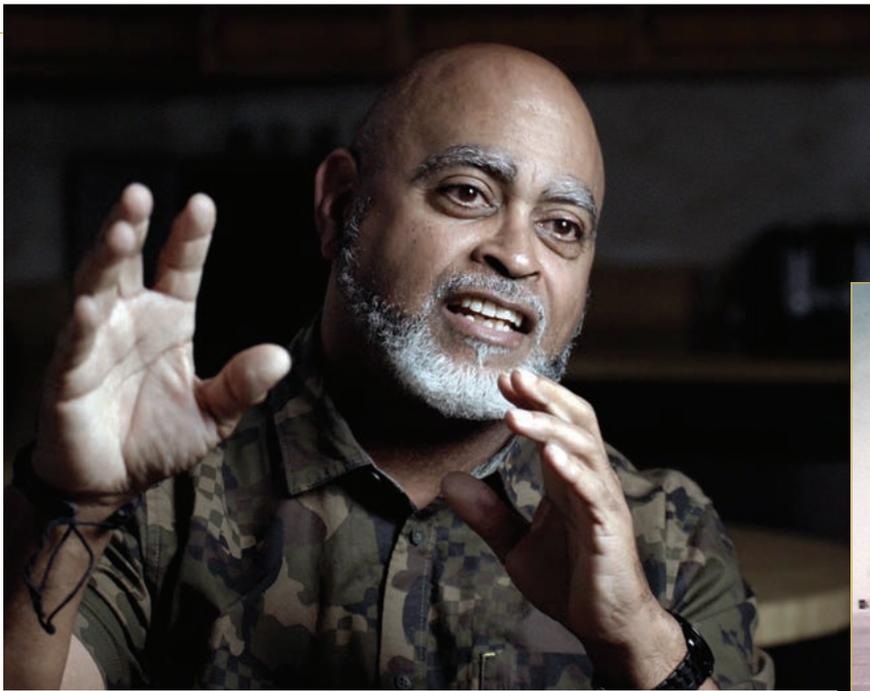
experienced in Beirut, is not alone in his sentiments when he expresses frustration about the manner in which the entire mission was handled. In his words, “the whole thing has been swept under the rug.”

For decades, Marines who served in Beirut between 1982 and 1984 have, like Wah, felt largely overlooked. But an upcoming documentary, “We Came in Peace: U.S. Marines in Lebanon,” aims to change that narrative by allowing the people who were there to tell the story themselves—a story that, according to filmmaker and director Michael Ivey, has gone untold for far too long.

Still in production, “We Came in Peace” is expected to premiere next year on the 40th anniversary of the Oct. 23, 1983, suicide bombing that decimated the four-story reinforced concrete BLT 1/8 head-

quarters building in Beirut and killed 241 Americans—220 of them U.S. Marines. The date would go down in history as the Corps' deadliest since the Battle of Iwo Jima in 1945.

The film is a labor of love for Ivey, as well as for Elisa Camara, one of its producers, who at just 17 years old received the news that her beloved older brother, Sergeant Mecot Camara, USMC, was among those killed in the devastating blast. After she wrote the 2013 book, “American Brother,” in which she told the heartfelt story of Mecot's upbringing in rural West Virginia, his service in the Marine Corps, and his tragic death, Camara began attending the annual Beirut Memorial Observance Ceremony at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., held each October, and became closely



Left: Marine veteran Greg Wah, who served with Co A, 1/8, 24th MAU, is one of the Beirut Marines who shared his story during the production of “We Came in Peace.” (Photo courtesy of Michael Ivey)



COURTESY OF ELISA CAMARA

Above: Mecot Camara, pictured on the far left, was one of the 241 Americans killed in the bombing of the BLT 1/8 headquarters building in Beirut, Lebanon, on Oct. 23, 1983.



LCPL JUDITH HARTER, USMC

Left: Mecot Camara’s sister, Elisa Camara, speaks to attendees at the 31st annual Beirut Memorial Observance Ceremony in Jacksonville, N.C., Oct. 23, 2014. Her conversation with a Beirut survivor was the impetus for “We Came in Peace.”

Right: Sgt Mecot Camara, pictured here in his boot camp graduation photo, is the subject of Elisa Camara’s 2013 book “American Brother.” Her work on the book connected her with Marines who served with Mecot in Beirut, many of whom have been interviewed for the documentary.



USMC

acquainted with many of the Marines who had served alongside him. There, she found herself part of a “family” bonded by tragedy.

“They were just so embracing of my heartache, and they have their own heartache too,” Camara said with emotion in her voice. “They said, ‘You lost your brother, but you gained a platoon of brothers who will always be there for you.’” It came as no surprise, then, that when Dan Brown, who served in Beirut, approached Camara after a 2019 Memorial Day gathering of Beirut

Marines and family members in Washington, D.C., and asked for help, she was determined not to let him down.

His request was straightforward: “Can you help us tell our story, so we’re not forgotten?”

That conversation was the impetus for “We Came in Peace,” but it certainly didn’t happen overnight. Camara had previously thought about trying to get a documentary made about the Beirut Marines, but she had no idea where to begin. And then there was the issue of

funding. When she’d inquired with a Los Angeles-based producer, the cost—\$500,000 up front—was insurmountable. As fate would have it, a mutual friend connected Camara with Ivey, who also is a West Virginia native and was already familiar with Mecot’s story. A member of the Director’s Guild of

America and former commentator on National Public Radio’s long running “All Things Considered,” Ivey had recently made a commitment to creating what he refers to as “work that matters,” when the story of the Beirut Marines fell into his lap.

“I feel like the angels are behind this one, and it all starts with Elisa and her brother,” said Ivey, adding that he con-



Above: To raise funds for the production of the documentary, Camara started the American Brother Foundation, which honors the memory of Mecot Camara and strives to ensure that future generations understand what the Marines who served in Beirut endured.

siders it an honor and a privilege to leverage his experience as a storyteller to make the film the Beirut Marines and their families deserve.

Lacking the funding to get the project started, Camara first set out to create a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the American Brother Foundation, that both honors Mecot Camara's life and funds the production of the film. Up to this point, "We Came in Peace" has been made possible solely through private donations. Ivey has avoided soliciting completion money from networks, who generally exert a heavy influence over the production process, because he's determined to keep his promise to let the Marines tell the story themselves. Instead, as donations have trickled in, Ivey has traveled around the country to conduct on-camera interviews, the first of which took place in February 2021. As of late July, he's collected the stories of 45 different individuals, including General Alfred M. Gray, USMC (Ret), who served as the commanding general of 2nd Marine Division at the time of the Beirut bombing and later as the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps; retired Colonel Timothy J. Geraghty, who commanded the 24th MAU and the U.S. Multinational Peacekeeping Force; and Lieutenant Colonel Larry Gerlach, the commanding officer of BLT 1/8 who survived the bombing of the headquarters.

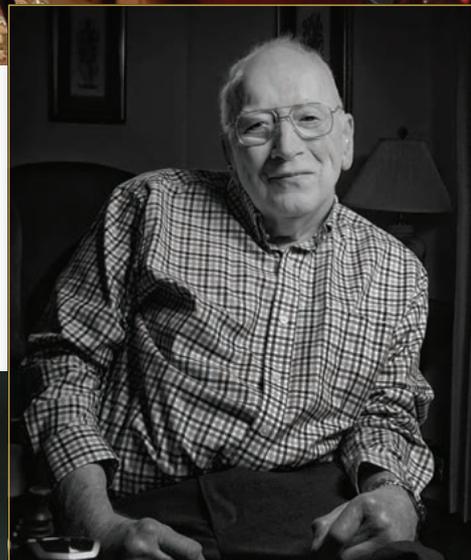
For Greg Wah, sharing his story on camera brought back a barrage of memories he had long suppressed.

"I think this documentary is going to bring a lot of healing because a lot of the Marines have done the same thing that I have done," said Wah, who was shot in the

Below: Retired Marine Col Timothy Geraghty, who commanded the 24th MAU in Beirut, shares his recollections of the experience during an interview for "We Came in Peace." (Photo courtesy of Elisa Camara)



Right: LtCol Larry Gerlach, USMC (Ret), was the CO of BLT 1/8 in Beirut when its headquarters building was bombed on Oct. 23, 1983, killing 220 Marines. He shares his story of survival in "We Came in Peace."



COURTESY OF MICHAEL IVEY



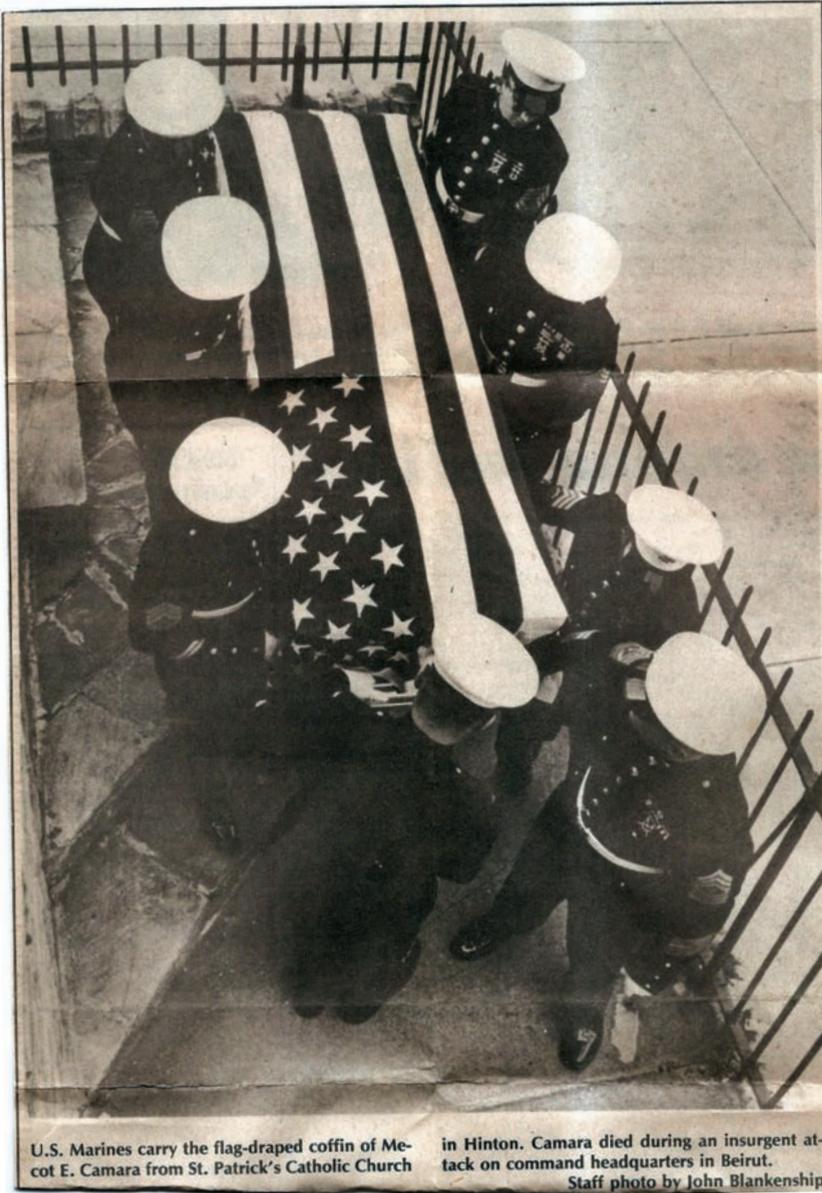
Left: Retired Marine GySgt Danny Joy, who was a corporal serving in Dragon Plt, Weapons Co, 1/8 in Beirut, is one of the 45 individuals who have been interviewed for the documentary thus far. (Photo courtesy of Michael Ivey)

leg on his very last day in Beirut, Nov. 7, 1983, just two weeks after the bombing. "When I got out of the Corps, I didn't talk to anybody about my experience, not even with my own family [...] It was bottled—put in a bottle never to be opened."

Retired Gunnery Sergeant Danny Joy, a friend of Mecot Camara's who served with Weapons Company, 1/8, is thankful that he and his fellow Beirut veterans finally have been given an opportunity to tell

their story. "No one has ever asked us," he said with a tinge of sadness in his voice. But while he's appreciative, that doesn't mean it's an easy topic for him to talk about, especially around the anniversary of the bombing each year.

"Every year it comes around and it's like picking a scab off this wound, and now I'm opening the wound up again. It's emotional, and really, it's tough," said Joy, who describes the survivor's guilt he



COURTESY OF ELISA CAMARA

Above: Elisa Camara and her brother Mecot are pictured on his wedding day in Hinton, W.Va., in May 1981. Mecot Camara left behind a wife and young child when he was killed in the Beirut bombing just over two years later.

Left: Elisa Camara saved this newspaper clipping featuring a photo from her brother's funeral in West Virginia. (Photo courtesy of Elisa Camara)

and others who made it home continue to struggle with decades later. "There's certain things you saw that you can't ever unsee."

The film, which has received the endorsement of the fraternal organization Beirut Veterans of America, is devoid of the narration and reenactments that are common within the documentary genre. With neither scripted voiceovers nor actors, both Camara and Ivey insist that the film lives up to its claim of telling the "boots-on-the-ground truth" as told by those who were there.

"We're not doing some revisionist piece," Ivey said emphatically.

Camara considers those who have participated by sharing their stories to be collaborators in the project, and notes that the major contributors to the funding of the film thus far have been Beirut veterans themselves.

"It's deeply personal to everyone in-

Right: Camara, left, has been honored to get to know Marines like retired Gen Al Gray, 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, right, during the production of "We Came in Peace."

involved, [...] and it's not an easy story to share," said Camara. "We want to share it for history, but we also want to share it to honor the ones that didn't come home, and the ones that live with it every day."

For Camara, a highlight of the entire experience came when she had the opportunity to accompany Ivey to the home of Gen Gray to film his on-camera interview.

"He [Gen Gray] was wonderful, and the



COURTESY OF ELISA CAMARA

last thing I said before we went out was, 'I can assure you that this will be done with grace and dignity or we will not do it at all, Sir. I can promise you that,' " she recounted. "And he looked at me and he pointed his finger at me and said, 'I am holding you to that, young lady!'"

It's a commitment she takes seriously. So much so, that last October, in concurrence with the annual observance ceremony in Camp Lejeune, they held a



COURTESY OF ELISA CAMARA

Beirut veterans and family members attend a private screening of the six-minute trailer for “We Came in Peace” at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., in 2021. The trailer can be viewed by the public on the documentary’s website.

private screening of the six-minute trailer and asked for feedback and suggestions from the Marines and Gold Star family members in attendance.

The trailer, which can be viewed on the documentary’s website, is a high-quality sample of the hours of interviews Ivey has conducted to date, featuring honest, raw and emotional accounts that invite the viewer to think critically about an important and often-overlooked moment in America’s history.

“It’s time, especially with what’s going on in the world right now,” Camara said. It’s her hope that future generations of Americans will not only know what happened in Beirut, but also will learn valuable lessons that may help prevent history from repeating itself.

There are still Beirut Marines left to interview for the film, and Ivey also aims to secure funding that will allow him to interview diplomats, journalists, and other international peacekeepers—namely, Italians and French—who also supported the multinational effort. The film also will detail the concurrent suicide bombing of the French Paratrooper Detachment in Beirut on Oct. 23, which killed 58 French servicemembers. He hopes that adding additional perspectives will “broaden the circle” and provide an even greater context for viewers to consider.

For retired Marine Gunnery Sergeant Don Inns, a Beirut veteran who served with Mecot Camara in “Charlie” Co, BLT 1/8, the recent loss of three members of his old platoon in a span of only five weeks

served as a reminder of the importance of telling this story sooner rather than later.

“Sadly, they took their stories to the grave nearly four decades after Beirut,” said Inns. “This documentary is our last best hope of illuminating the cause and cost of our country’s entanglement in Lebanon [...] Supporting it is the least we can do in remembrance of those that sacrificed the most. It is also the best investment we can make for future generations of Marines, as what’s past is prologue.”

According to Camara, the film will be pitched to Netflix and other streaming platforms, and premieres are anticipated to take place in October 2023 both at Camp Lejeune and in West Virginia.

It’s Ivey’s hope that their efforts will help shed light on what really happened in Beirut nearly 40 years ago.

“Maybe we can do something to make it right, learn the lessons, recognize the people that were there, recognize that it was an undeclared war, and it can effect positive change,” Ivey said. But most of all, he emphasizes, he’s doing it for those who served and sacrificed there. “They live with this every single day,” he added.



Interested in Learning More or Helping the Story be Told?

- Watch the trailer and keep up with the progress of the film at <https://wecameinpeace.us>
- Donate to support the completion of the film by visiting <https://www.americanbrotherfoundation.org>



Caring for Marines Through A Legacy Gift

Join the Samuel Nicholas Society

SSgt Gerald “Jerry” Schommer was proud to have served his country as a Marine mortarman. Jerry rose to the rank of staff sergeant in four years serving with the 6th Marine Regiment at Camp Lejeune, and spent nearly two years in Adak, Alaska. From his own service, Jerry understood the importance of helping those Marines following in his footsteps. He supported Marines by donating to the Marine Corps Association Foundation since 2009 and also decided to include the Foundation in his will. In so doing, he joined the Marine Corps Association Foundation’s Samuel Nicholas Society.

Sadly, Jerry passed away in July 2021, but his legacy lives on to help Marines now and in the future through the legacy gift he made to the Marine Corps Association Foundation. Jerry’s gift will ensure Marines receive the professional development programs they need to be ready for the challenges they face.

If you’d like to be a member of the Samuel Nicholas Society and support Marines through your estate plan or will, contact the Foundation at m.collins@mca-marines.org or visit our website for more information at mca-marines.org/legacy-gift-planning/the-samuel-nicholas-society.



Jerry Schommer (far left) and fellow Marines, Alaska, 1951.

Northport, N.Y.



COURTESY OF BILL OBER

American Legion Post Pays Tribute to Servicemembers Killed in Kabul

Members of American Legion Post 694 in Northport, N.Y., dedicated the opening of their June 22 meeting to honor the 11 Marines, one soldier and one Navy corpsman who were killed in the bomb attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 26, 2021. Each of the fallen servicemembers was represented by an empty chair draped in black with a blue ribbon and a card bearing their name, age, and hometown. The post chaplain, Jerry Jerome, offered a brief prayer and then read each name aloud before post commander Bill McKenna rang a bell in their memory. Bill Ober of the Marine Corps League also addressed the legionnaires in attendance, offering a thoughtful remembrance in honor of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Submitted by Bill Ober

Quantico, Va.

Longtime Friend, Marine Shop Staff Work Together On Memorial Gifts

After retired Marine Master Sergeant Frankelly Santana of Stafford, Va., passed away unexpectedly in April at the age of 62, his longtime Marine buddy Paul Nugent was determined to help do something special for each of Santana's seven surviving children. After accompanying Santana's widow, Itzel, to The Marine Shop at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., to order a ribbon bar for his burial in uniform, Nugent came up with the idea to order seven additional sets of Santana's ribbons and medals to be displayed in seven 8x10 shadowboxes that are available for purchase in the store.

With the help of general manager Karen Crawford-Birden and her team, Nugent connected with Clare Mugno, owner and operator of Five Star Medals in Alexandria, Va., which provides all of The Marine Shop's ribbon and medal mounting services. Typically, the turnaround time for these items is approximately one month, but given the circumstances, Mugno was able to rush the order and complete the shadowboxes in just a few days. During the funeral, Nugent had the honor of handing the gifts out to each of the children, which he hopes will be a special way for them to remember their father and his 22 years of service to the Marine Corps.

MCA



KAREN CRAWFORD-BIRDEN

San Diego

After Heroism in Hue, Marines Receive Long-Overdue Recognition

Two Marines and a Navy corpsman who served during the Vietnam War were awarded the Bronze Star on the parade deck at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., June 24, more than 54 years after the Battle of Hue City during which their valiant actions occurred. Larry D. Lewis, Michael B. Ker and John Ligato III, who is pictured receiving his medal from retired Major General Ray L. Smith, finally were recognized for their achievements in combat during what is now regarded as the longest and bloodiest battle of the Vietnam War. According to their award citations, all three men put themselves in the line of enemy fire to complete their mission as well as rescue their fallen comrades.

After their commander was injured in battle, the men of Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines followed the lead of Gunnery Sergeant John L. Canley, who received a Silver Star in 1970 for his actions in Hue City. Fifty years after the battle and a more than decade-long campaign led by Ligato, Canley, then a retired sergeant major, saw his award upgraded to the Medal of Honor in 2018. Despite his own recognition, Canley, who



CPL GRACE KINDRED, USMC

passed away on May 22 this year, was a strong advocate for the recognition of his junior Marines for their heroism.

"Surprisingly, nobody wanted this," Ligato said following the ceremony. "It was SgtMaj Canley that was most angry that his junior enlisted Marines got nothing, and he was the impetus for this. He put the [award] packages in."

Capt Joshua Collins, USMC

Easton, Pa.



JOE POKOJNI

Three Generations Connect at Memorial Day Parade

Members of Northampton County Detachment 298, Marine Corps League, crossed paths with Marine recruiter Staff Sergeant Ryan R. Packard and some of his future Marines when they all participated in a Memorial Day Parade and service in Easton, Pa., May 30. The group of past, present and future Marines spent time talking and getting to know one another, and their meeting was particularly meaningful to the members of the detachment. Pictured with the staff sergeant and his poolees are Richard Kondash, Frank Scott and Buddy Yeager.

"SSgt Ryan Packard and his poolees gave us veterans, the older generation, the feeling that our Marine Corps is in good hands and showed the Easton, Pa., community that young people still have patriotism and spirit," said Detachment 298 member Joe Pokojni. "I feel they enjoyed talking to us older veterans and we enjoyed talking to them. They are country, three generations, and one Corps."

Submitted by Joe Pokojni

"Corps Connections" highlights the places and events through which active-duty and veteran Marines connect with one another, honor the traditions of the Corps and recognize the achievements of their fellow leathernecks.

We welcome submissions of photos from events like the ones featured here. Send them to: *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to k.watts@mca-marines.org. Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos. 📷

Marines Apply Future Concepts Through Wargaming

Marines with II Marine Expeditionary Force attended the Basic Analytic Wargaming Course (BAWC), which culminated with a wargame scenario on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., July 18-22. The BAWC is a five-day course that provides students a hands-on experience with designing, executing and analyzing a wargame in an instructor-led environment.

Wargaming simulates warfare in a realistic tabletop environment, allowing participants to replicate historical military scenarios or create new ones. The practice allows military personnel to train in the art of strategic thinking as well as to study real-world battles and anticipate future fights.

“The idea is we bring a group of students up to speed on wargaming and what it does to allow us to examine the human decision-making process, which is key to executing plans, getting ready to go into theater, and doing the things we have to do in wartime,” said Dr. Jeff Appleget, a senior lecturer at the Naval Warfare Studies Institute, Naval Postgraduate School, and a retired U.S. Army colonel.

According to Appleget, students in the BAWC learn the scope, objectives and issues of the game as well as key

constraints, limitations and assumptions. He went on to say that learning wargaming is a crucial part of the military planning process and is important to the future of II MEF and ultimately the Marine Corps’ implementation of Force Design 2030.

“Force Design 2030 has given us the Commandant’s vision: what the service will be able to provide in the future fight in terms of capabilities in certain conditions and certain capacities, integrated with the naval force,” said Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Driscoll, the II MEF deputy assistant chief of staff for plans.

Wargaming is an important element of the Force Design 2030 Annual Update published in May and is included in its “directed actions” and “areas of further analysis.” It gives the Marine Corps insight into future operations and new concepts being developed so the force can better anticipate how to adapt to challenges that may be overlooked.

“If we don’t utilize wargaming, we’re much more likely to be surprised on the battlefield with decisions that we don’t anticipate,” said Appleget.

It is important for II MEF personnel who have a key role in decision making or planning processes to know how to wargame properly and use it as a tool benefitting the force in the long term, especially as the Marine Corps postures

to compete and win against adversaries of the 21st century.

“II MEF is building its wargaming capability,” said Major Daniel Yurkovich, II MEF modeling and simulations officer. “It helps us to take generally broad questions and distill them down into detailed questions in which we can then place players into an experiential learning environment to answer the questions that senior leaders may have.”

Wargaming is also a critical part of the Marine Corps’ “campaign of learning.” Marines can continue to learn in the fleet as they apply maneuver warfare tactics as well as scenarios that assess stand-in force concepts such as expeditionary advanced base operations (EABO).

“As a student, I’ve learned a better understanding of how to think through designing a wargame, which will then allow all of us students to be able to take this to future situations and replicate and build out new and different wargames,” said Driscoll.

Cpl Eric Ramirez, USMC

On the Defense: I MEF Marines Win Latest Cyber Games Challenge

On April 8, after nearly five days of putting their defensive cyber operations (DCO) capabilities to the test, the Marines of I Marine Expeditionary Force’s DCO-Internal Defensive Measures (IDM) emerged victorious from the Deputy Commandant for Information’s Marine Corps “Capture the Flag” Cyber Games 2022.

This fourth iteration of the Marine Corps Cyber Games, hosted at the Naval Air Warfare Center via the National Cyber Range in Orlando, Fla., was the first to force teams to focus on defensive cyber skills rather than offensive cyber skills. Here, teams earned points by capturing cyber flags in a simulated contested environment, which ranged in difficulty from apprentice to journeyman to master.

For Corporal Ian Bergman, a cyberspace warfare operator with I MEF’s DCO-IDM winning team, the uniqueness of this year’s event challenged him and his fellow Marines to try new methods of analyzing data to reach a common goal.

“Although cyber analysts have similar jobs, everyone gets tasked either as a pair, a team, or individually to try and solve these puzzles and capture these flags,” said Bergman. “We utilized the skills that certain Marines are better at to chase down flags. While every analyst had a



CPL ERIC RAMIREZ, USMC

Marines with II MEF take part in a wargame scenario during BAWC at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., July 22. The five-day course provided students a hands-on experience with designing, developing, executing and analyzing wargames.



CPL JUSTIN FRALEY, USMC

Cpl Ian Bergman, a cyberspace warfare operator with I MEF's DCO-IDM, was a member of a team of 10 Marines that took home the title at this year's Marine Corps Cyber Games.

job to capture their individual flag, we all needed to be willing to offer a hand where we could fit in order to win.”

The team agreed that constructive communication and fluidity between all ranks involved is unique in the cyber community and paramount to its success. Lance Corporal Thomas Feuerborn observed that many solutions to scenarios would not be solved without the ability to learn from each other.

“The Marine Corps is heavily based on leadership, where if someone makes a mistake, a lot of people will end up covering down to fix that mistake,” Feuerborn said. “Any one person in cyber can be the key to unlocking a specific problem. A lot of it has been instilled from the bottom up: teaching your Marines to be better than you are.”

Bridging the gap between talent management and problem-solving in a simulated

environment was a new challenge for the Marines to overcome. Staff Sergeant Keith Wolf, the team leader for DCO-IDM, credited the team's success with understanding whom to employ where in various scenarios throughout the competition.

“You have to use talent management to know where to start, who's good at what, and being able to look at questions from every different angle,” said Wolf. “There's a set number of total flags, which get unlocked as you progress. Most of the time, you have to solve one question to even know how to get the next question to answer. The way that you could lose points was by being locked out of a question by answering it wrong too many times.”

Feuerborn said the experience of this year's competition brought a new level of camaraderie and cohesion to the team, which enabled them to score almost 400 points higher than last year's winning team.

DCO is categorized as “passive and active defense operations” to defend the Department of Defense and other friendly cyber spaces. Offensive cyber operations are categorized as operations intended to project power by the application of force through cyberspace.

Because of competitions like the Marine Corps Cyber Games, team analyst Sergeant Robert Gerbec said he and the other members of the team found that they were more equipped for real-life scenarios they may have in the future.

“Exercises like this help us hone our eye



SSGT AARON PATTERSON, USMC

V FOR VALOR—Sgt Jonathan P. Painter was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat “V” device for valor during a ceremony at Camp Barrett, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., July 25. While serving in Kabul, Afghanistan, as a squad leader with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command in support of Operation Allies Refuge in August 2021, Painter was supporting the withdrawal of personnel from Hamid Karzai International Airport when a suicide bomber attacked the gate, killing 13 U.S. servicemembers. “Upon the detonation of a suicide vest, Sgt Painter was immediately peppered with shrapnel, engulfed in flames and tear gas, and surrounded by critically wounded Marines. Despite his injuries and the gas, he worked amidst the gunfire to set his squad into security before moving to assist with the evacuation of the most critically injured. Through his decisive leadership, he undoubtedly saved the lives of Marines with his courageous actions,” said a statement from Headquarters Marine Corps.



CPL MITCHELL JOHNSON, USMC

TECOM leaders and honored guests take part in a July 1 ribbon cutting ceremony at the newly renovated Marshall Hall, which now serves as TECOM headquarters aboard MCB Quantico, Va.

for the sort of obscure situations we may face,” said Gerbec. “You’re not always going to know where the adversary is going to be, what kind of systems they’re going to use, how they’re going to get into your network, or what their ultimate end goal is. [During the Cyber Games] we had a write-up of what the scenario was, so we had kind of a baseline of what our adversary’s suspected eventual goal is, so we knew to check these certain things.”

The other four teams participating in the Cyber Games were from Marine Corps Cyberspace Operations Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, 8th Communications Battalion and Marine Forces Special Operations Command.

Sgt Dana Beesley, USMC

TECOM Assumes New Headquarters

A July 1 ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opened Marshall Hall on Marine Corps Base Quantico as the new headquarters building for Training and Education Command (TECOM).

Marshall Hall is named after Corporal James Marshall, the first Marine Security Guard killed in the defense of a U.S. Embassy. The building previously served as the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group headquarters before its recent renovation.

“This new building provides us with the right venue to holistically modernize training and education under Force Design 2030,” said Lieutenant General Kevin Iiams, the commanding general of TECOM. “Thank you to everyone who

had a hand [in] this renovation project and providing TECOM with the means to carry out our mission well into the future.”

After being spread across several locations aboard MCB Quantico, almost all TECOM personnel will now work within Marshall Hall, providing the staff with a centralized environment for the conduct of day-to-day operations.

Capt Danielle Phillips, USMC

WSA Course Tests Endurance, Underwater Skills

Thirteen Marines stationed across Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, graduated from the Water Survival Advanced Course at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, July 22.

WSA is the highest swim qualification that Marines can obtain before becoming Marine Corps Instructors of Water Sur-



LCPL THOMAS SHENG, USMC

Marines participating in the WSA course at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, Japan, retrieve their rifles from the bottom of the pool, July 21. WSA is the highest swim qualification that Marines can obtain before becoming Instructors of Water Survival.

vival. The course consists of aquatic conditioning, endurance swimming and underwater rescue training.

Taught by six Marine Corps Instructors of Water Survival, students endured a physically demanding week of eight-hour training days in the water.

“These students went through a lot of aquatic conditioning, underwater confidence training exercises and team-building exercises,” said Sergeant Bryantruc Nguyen, a network administrator with Marine Air Control Squadron 4, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. “Underwater conditioning is extremely important because it gives students a foundation before we transition them into making open water rescues.”

Nguyen explained that one of the most difficult parts for the students was underwater conditioning. The purpose of underwater training was to physically prepare students for tasks they would have to complete while making rescues. The students were required to complete two sessions of rifle-ups. During rifle-ups, students dropped their rifles in the deep end and once the rifles were at the bottom, the Marines would dive down to retrieve their rifles and stay underwater until instructed to return to the surface. Instructors increased the time spent underwater after every succeeding repetition of rifle-ups. During this iteration of the course, some students could not complete the task and were forced to exit the pool due to the difficulty of the task.

“Students also struggled with Marine Corps rescues because they were forced to make open water rescues in their full combat utility uniform without panicking,” said Nguyen. “As MCIWS we make this course difficult so we can fully trust trainees to make rescues and supervise future swim qualifications.”

Per Marine Corps Order 1500.542D, the intention of swim qualification courses is to ensure that each Marine meets the expectation of being “amphibious by nature.” This requires Marines to be prepared if they ever need to make a rescue while on active duty.

“Swimming in combat utility uniforms was my weakness. I was a distance swimmer in high school, but I never swam in full gear,” said Lance Corporal Tyge Watts, a motor vehicle operator with 3rd Transportation Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group. “That’s a big obstacle you have to face because it disrupts your form, and you have to go back and focus on the basics of swimming.”

In conjunction with underwater conditioning, students completed rescues and endurance swims. During the rescues, students underwent four different scenarios



LCPL THOMAS SHENG, USMC

WSA course participants dive into the water for a timed swim at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, Japan, July 21. Throughout the course, students endured aquatic conditioning, endurance swimming and underwater rescue training.



LCPL THOMAS SHENG, USMC

Marines rescue simulated “distressed victims” during the WSA course on MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, Japan, July 22.

for rescuing a thrashing victim and properly escorting them out of the water in their full utility kit.

Watts explained that the 1,500-meter swim and rescues in full uniform were the most difficult challenges for him. Each day, students swam up to a mile, performed timed conditioning swims and focused on different swimming techniques that helped them maneuver comfortably in the water in their full kits.

Nguyen explained that this iteration of the WSA course saw 12 out of 21 stu-

dents successfully graduate. The average dropout rate for each cycle is around 75 to 85 percent due to intense physical demand.

“WSA is definitely not a course for everyone. It’s a very big jump from the intermediate swim qualification course,” said Nguyen. “It’s definitely a great course, but only a select few can say that they are advanced swim qualified.”

MCIPAC





CPL YVONNA GUYETTE, USMC

Senior defense leaders from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland watch an MV-22 Osprey assigned to 22nd MEU take off from the *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship *USS Kearsarge* (LHD-3), during a key leader engagement and tour on June 8.

MARINES OF 22ND MEU

Staying Sharp Through Training, Preparation



SGT MA SON ROY, USMC

Marines with BLT 2/6, 22nd MEU, fire an 81 mm mortar during a live-fire and maneuver exercise in Jaegerspris, Denmark, July 14.

Compiled by Patricia A. Everett

The 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) recently returned from a six-month deployment to Europe and Africa. Embarked on *USS Kearsarge* (LHD-3) Amphibious Ready Group which included *Kearsarge*, *USS Arlington* (LDP-24) and *USS Gunston Hall* (LSD-44), the MEU was comprised of a command element, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines, VMM-266, and Combat Logistics Battalion 26. The Marines of the MEU visited more than 10 countries from Iceland to Turkey and participated in training and exercises with partner and allied nations from the Arctic Circle to the warm sands of Tunisia.

Below: 1stLt Alessandro Olajide, Weapons Platoon Commander, "Echo" Co, BLT 2/6, 22nd MEU, plots targets prior to a live-fire range during Exercise EFES 2022, near Izmir, Turkey, June 3.



Above: HM3 Michael Dominguez, "Golf" Co, BLT 2/6, 22nd MEU, poses for a photo during a live-fire exercise aboard the *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship *USS Kearsarge* (LHD-3), in the Atlantic Ocean, June 28.

CPL KYLE JIA, USMC

CPL YVONNA GUYETTE, USMC



Marines with BLT 2/6, 22nd MEU are extracted by Landing Craft Utility boat 1662, assigned to Assault Craft Unit 4, during BALTOPS 22 in Ustka, Poland, June 15.

CPL YVONNA GUYETTE, USMC

Below: Sgt Joseph Singletary, left, a reconnaissance Marine with Recon Detachment, 22nd MEU and French Army Sgt Jean Garnier, a long-range sniper with Sniper Plt, 3rd Marine Infantry Regiment, participate in a bilateral live-fire exercise in Beignon, France, July 8.



Cpl James Vroom, left, and SSgt Patrick Lauria, operate a light armored vehicle during a live-fire exercise aboard USS *Kearsarge* (LHD-3) in the Atlantic Ocean, June 28.



SGT ARMANDO ELIZALDE, USMC

SGT ARMANDO ELIZALDE, USMC



Hellenic Special Forces members with Z Amphibious Raiding Squadron assault a beach with combat rubber reconnaissance crafts for a combined forces event during Exercise Alexander the Great 2022, in Skyros, Greece, May 17.

CPL HENRY RODRIGUEZ II, USMC

2ndLt Alana Phillips, 2nd Bn, 10th Marine Regiment, instructs Marines with the 22nd MEU on how to execute casualty evacuations in Setermoen, Norway, April 15.



CPL YVONNA GUYETTE, USMC



SSGT BRITTNEYVELLA, USMC

Marines celebrate after shooting down an unmanned aerial system flying 2 nautical miles away during Fleet Battle Problem 22-1, March 20. The missile was fired from the flight deck of USS Kearsarge (LHD-3).

Leatherneck Laffs



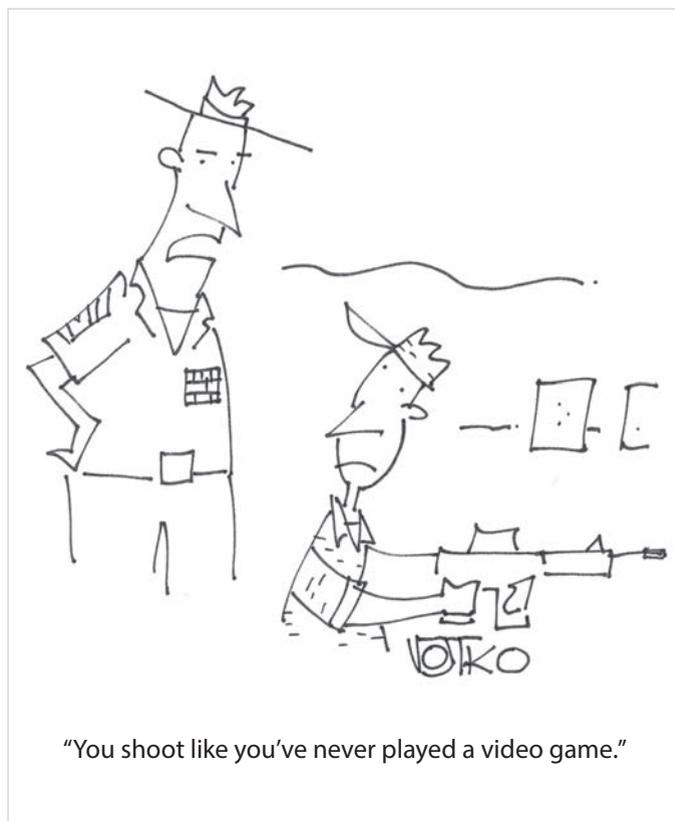
"I could put my rifle back together blindfolded, but I'm stumped with anything from Ikea."



"That's the last time I let you pick the wall paper."



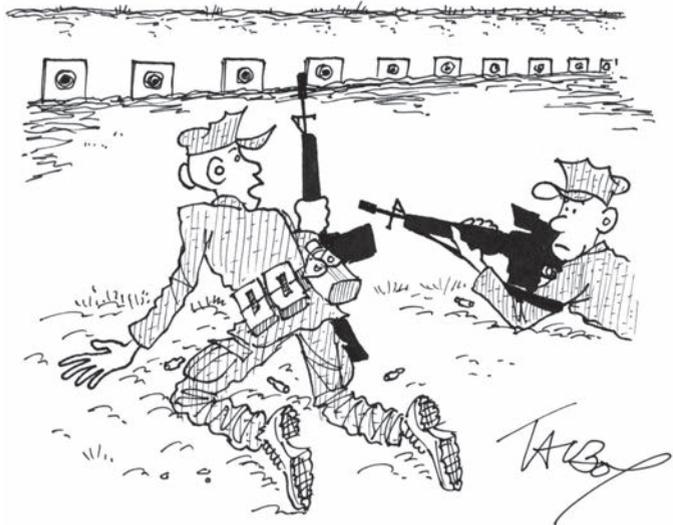
"No, no ... you field-strip your weapon!"



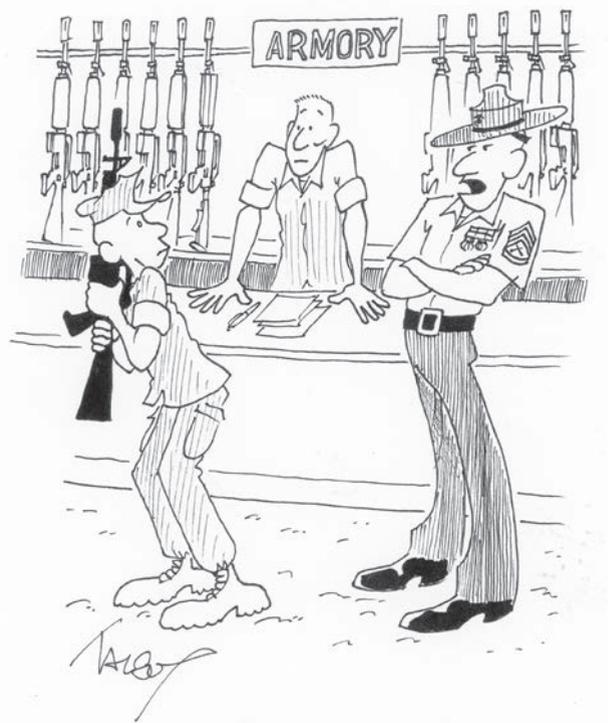
"You shoot like you've never played a video game."



"These aren't for target practice. They're for the urinals."



"Cover me! I'm going to work around behind them!"



"You can't keep your rifle as a boot camp souvenir."

In the Footsteps of Marines

The Battle of First Manassas

Story and photos by William Treuting

The Marine Corps is historically an expeditionary force, bound either to the ships of the Navy or sent across the globe to conflicts both large and small. Some of the Marine Corps' most hallowed sites—Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, or Hue City—are located far away, and to study these battlefields in person can be an expensive undertaking. However, not all of the Marine Corps' storied battles were fought on the other side of the globe. In fact, the United States is home to a variety of battlefields where Marines fought the nation's wars against all enemies—foreign and domestic.

This article is the first in a series to feature some of the Corps' lesser-known battles and illustrate what role the Marines played while also providing the exact locations where Marines fought. Readers can embark on their own journeys to enhance their understanding of the Marine Corps' role in these battles, while also paying homage to previous generations of Marines by following in their footsteps across the battlefields of the United States.

The Battle of First Manassas

Manassas National Battlefield Park, located less than an hour from Quantico and Washington, D.C. is the site of one of the Marine Corps' lesser-known and perceivably less "glorious" battles—the Battle of First Manassas (also known as the First Battle of Bull Run) was the first major battle of the American Civil War. On July 21, 1861, a battalion of Marines was expelled by force from the field of battle by their Confederate foes and driven into a headlong retreat. The defeat, however, is not considered a black mark on the Corps' history: 10 Marines were killed, 22 wounded, and eight were missing—most were new recruits who had only been in service for a few weeks. These men gave their last full measure of devotion in the opening battle to a war that would go on to last for several more years and claim hundreds of thousands of more lives but the cause for which they laid down their lives in the heat of July 1861 prevailed. Their journey is worth remembering.

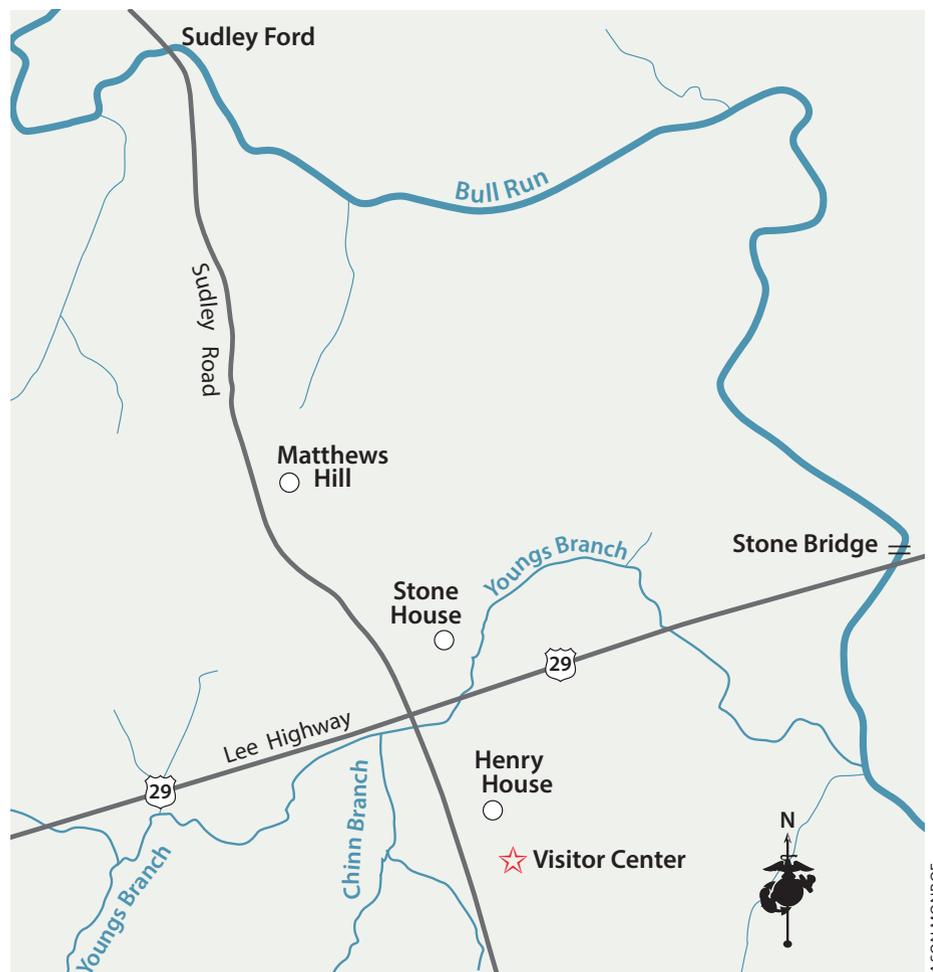
Prologue to Battle

The Marine battalion which fought at the Battle of First Manassas was not the hardened, well-trained force that the Marine Corps of today prides itself on being. As the nation was torn asunder, the Marine Corps saw almost a third of its officers resign to serve in the Confederacy, taking with them the experience and leadership necessary to train the vast amounts of men volunteering to fight to preserve the Union. In early July, a Marine battalion, under the command of Major John G. Reynolds, was formed at the Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., eventually numbering 352 men and officers by mid-July.

Despite the best efforts of their leadership, the Marine battalion—much like the majority of the Union Army of North-

eastern Virginia based around Washington, D.C.—had only minimal training when they were attached to the 1st Brigade (commanded by Colonel Andrew Porter), 2nd Division (commanded by Colonel David Hunter) for an advance on the Confederate capital of Richmond, Va. Despite the quality of his troops, the Army commander, Brigadier General Irvin McDowell, was under pressure from President Abraham Lincoln to move on the enemy. Contributing to the sense of urgency was the fact many of the men serving had enlisted for only 90 days—and their enlistments were due to expire soon.

McDowell began marching his men south on July 16; his plan was to take his Army of roughly 35,000 men across the overland route toward Richmond, Va., by



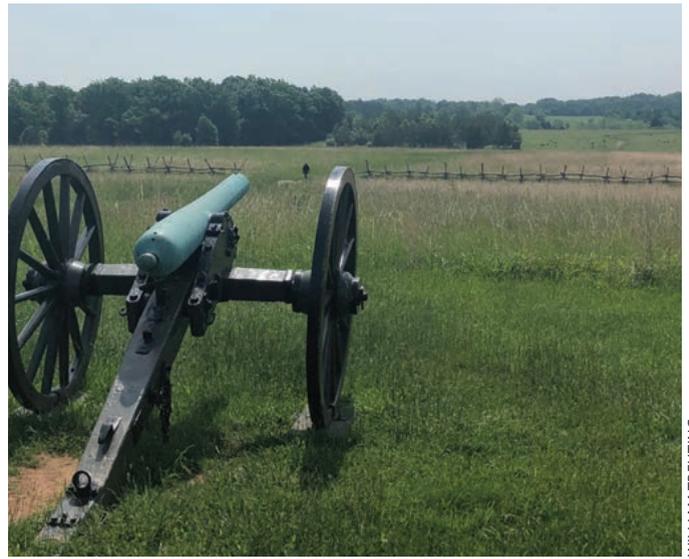


WILLIAM TREUTING

This image was taken near Sudley Church facing in the direction of the Union advance. The Marine battalion passed by this location on the morning of July 21, 1861, as part of the Gen McDowell's attempt to outflank the Confederates positioned along Bull Run Creek.

way of Manassas Junction where Brigadier General P.G.T. Beauregard's Confederate Army of the Potomac had entrenched itself behind the natural fortification of Bull Run Creek. While McDowell hoped to outflank the Confederate positions along the creek, his plan depended on Major General Robert Patterson's smaller Army of the Shenandoah keeping Confederate Brigadier General Joseph Johnston's similarly named Army of the Shenandoah from departing the Shenandoah Valley and reinforcing Beauregard along the Manassas line. As the Army of Northeastern Virginia advanced across the humid Virginia countryside, Johnston's Army managed to evade Patterson unnoticed and traveled by rail to reinforce the Confederates positioned along the Bull Run, all unbeknownst to McDowell, with the Army completing its arrival by the morning of July 21. By July 18, McDowell's forces reached Centreville, Va., only a few miles from the entrenched Confederate forces behind the Bull Run Creek. A brief skirmish near a crossing point at Blackburn's Ford later that day convinced McDowell that he would need to outflank the Confederate line. His plan was to pin the Confederates south of Centreville with a holding force; next, a division was to demonstrate against the Confederate defenses along Stone Bridge to west; finally, two divisions including

This image shows where the Marine battalion advanced to support Capt Charles Griffin's battery. They were positioned across this road and moved toward the left of the image.



WILLIAM TREUTING

The Union main line of advance faced the Confederate position on Matthews Hill, as seen today. The Marine battalion was positioned on the right of this location to guard the Union's western flank.

the Marines of Hunter's division would flank north at Sudley Ford and advance on the Confederate rear.

McDowell ordered that the movement begin around 2:30 a.m.; unfortunately, the flanking force was stuck behind the division moving toward Stone Bridge, delaying their advance several hours and minimizing the chances of surprise. It was not until around 9 a.m. that the flanking column began crossing the Sudley Ford. The Marines and their Army counterparts, tired after a sleepless morning and hours of marching, were about to meet the enemy on the field of battle.

Area of Study I: Matthews Hill

After crossing Sudley Ford, the Marine battalion marched south along the Manassas-Sudley road toward the sounds of battle developing across Matthews Hill. As the Union line began to develop in parallel to the Confederate forces on Matthew's Hill, the Marine battalion was ordered to support Capt Charles Griffin's battery which had moved into position along Dogan Ridge to the west of the Confederate position. From here, the Marines were able to support Griffin's artillery as it fired into the Confederate left flank. The Marines only lightly en-



WILLIAM TREUTING

gaged the enemy at this position, incurring few casualties as a result of artillery fire. While the Marines lay down in support of Griffin's guns to avoid more artillery fire, the battle occurring on Matthews Hill was reaching its climax, as the Union division across Stone Bridge pressed forward to support the flanking column forcing the

Confederates off Matthews Hill. The Confederates then began regrouping on a hill just south of Matthews Hill: Henry Hill. Rather than launching a vigorous pursuit across his entire line, McDowell stalled and instead ordered his artillery forward to continue firing on the Confederates.

Area of Study II: Henry Hill

Griffin's battery, with the Marine battalion following suit, quickly advanced down the Manassas-Sudley road to the western edge of Henry Hill where they anchored themselves again on the extreme right of the advancing Union position. To the left of Griffin's battery was another commanded by Capt James B. Ricketts; the Marines positioned themselves in support between these two batteries and continued to lay down to avoid Confederate artillery.

As the Union artillerist duelled with their Confederate counterparts, a fatal mistake occurred. The 33rd Virginia—a Confederate unit equipped with blue uniforms—appeared before Griffin's battery. The confusion in uniforms allowed the 33rd Virginia to get within close range of Griffin's guns and deliver a devastating volley which helped to shatter the right flank of the Union line. With their flank exposed and having sustained a few casualties, the Marines panicked and retreated to the crossroads in the direction of Matthews Hill.

The Marines, however, were able to rally and re-form their ranks. Supporting the 14th Brooklyn, the Marine battalion advanced forward again up Henry Hill near the location of Rickett's battery where they engaged in a chaotic fire-fight within 50 yards of Brigadier General Thomas Jackson's brigade of Virginians. Unfortunately, the Marines were unsupported in their advance and were thus forced into another disorganized retreat in the face of overwhelming fire-



A view of where the Marine battalion advanced to assault the extreme left of the Confederate defenses on Henry Hill—which appears toward the left side of the image.

WILLIAM TREUTING



WILLIAM TREUTING

This image is taken from the position of the Confederate line on Matthews Hill facing in the direction of where the Marine battalion supported Capt Griffin's Battery.



WILLIAM TREUTING

These two cannons represent the position of Capt Griffin's battery, which anchored the Union line. The Marine battalion occupied the ground around the where the visitor's center and parking lot are now located.

power. Again, the Marines regrouped near the crossroads and attempted another assault on the Confederate position on Henry Hill but events on the extreme right of the Union line doomed any further efforts as Confederate reinforcements succeeded in turning and routing the entire right flank of the Union line forcing the Union army to retreat from the field. After a brief rearguard attempt, the Marines, as well as the entire Union Army at this point in the battle, fell into a disordered, headlong scramble to avoid being captured or killed by their pursuing enemy. The exhausted Marines retreated up through Sudley Ford and joined the chaotic mass of men seeking safety within the limits of Washington, D.C.

Author's bio: William Treuting is a military historian and associate editor for Marine Corps Gazette. He is one of the co-hosts and producers of "Scuttlebutt—an MCA podcast." 🦖

The route the Marine battalion took on their assault against the Confederates defending Henry Hill as seen today. The Confederate position along the treeline behind the reverse of the hill sheltered them from Union fire.



WILLIAM TREUTING

Cheers to 247 years

AND TO CELEBRATING
THE BIRTHDAY
TOGETHER!
GET YOUR BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION
SUPPLIES AT
THE MARINE SHOP.

BROWSE
THE
CATALOG
ONLINE



247th Birthday
Letter Opener
\$29.95



247th
Birthday Ball
Ka-Bar
\$139.95

247th Birthday
Ball Coin
\$8.95

247th
Birthday Ball
Mug
\$7.95



247th
Birthday
Ball Koozie
\$14.95

Crossing the Finish Line

The Retirement of Running Industry Legend, RICHARD G. NEALIS

“The lure of the Marine Corps and the marathon proved to be strong as Nealis returned to become the first civilian race director of the marathon. His Marine Corps knowledge and event experience would be the catalyst in the evolution of the Marine Corps Marathon.”



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

MCM Race Director and Hall of Fame member Rick Nealis.

Focused. Motivated. Resilient. Three words that can be associated with a Marine. Three words to describe a marathon runner. Three words that have been constant throughout the 30-year career of Richard G. “Rick” Nealis, the Marine Corps Marathon race director. Nealis will retire in 2023, but not before he directs “The People’s Marathon” one more time.

The Marine Corps Reserve Marathon made its debut in 1976 with 1,175 participants, the largest first-time marathon in the country. The event became the Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) in 1978 when the Marine Corps Reserve transferred responsibility to the active-duty Marines. Major Richard G. Nealis was assigned to the billet of race coordinator of the MCM in 1993 with a staff of three officers and 12 enlisted Marines. Around 10,000 runners finished the marathon each year.

“The marathon was having management issues, and I was stationed here at Quantico, so I was asked to take a look at the financials,” explained Nealis. “I did such a great job, they rewarded me by telling me to stay. Our function was to handle the operational aspects and be the nucleus of the execution.”

Nealis retired from the Marine Corps on Aug. 1, 1995, but later returned to the marathon. His return would be the start of evolution for the MCM as it would grow to become one of the biggest marathons in the world, adding numerous auxiliary events and more.

By Kristin Loflin

Getting to the Start Line

Nealis was born on Dec. 15, 1953, in Philadelphia, Pa., a city that provided an unusual path to his future within the United States Marine Corps. “In the summer of 1971, I worked with the Philadelphia Phillies in the brand-new Veterans Stadium, doing field work,” said Nealis. “I was one of two in December of ’71, who were employed for the Phillies in Clearwater, Fla., as part of the grounds crew to cut grass. When I turned 18 that December, the Vietnam War was going on and you [had to] register for the draft. I went down and met this young Marine who told me that they have grass-cutting duties in the Marine Corps, and I could sign up.”

At the time, Nealis was attending Villanova University and spent the summers of 1972 and 1974 as part of the Platoon Leaders Course at Officer Candidates School. He was commissioned a second lieutenant after graduating from college with a bachelor’s degree in accounting. He went on to serve for 20 years as a supply officer in units including 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 31st Marine Amphibious Unit, 1st Marine Brigade and 3rd Force Service Support Group. His twilight tour was as the race coordinator for the MCM.



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

Oprah Winfrey

The Oprah Impact

During his tenure as the active-duty race coordinator, Nealis recruited one of the event’s most recognizable finishers, TV talk show host, Oprah Winfrey. After learning



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

Above: Thousands of runners prepare to run the MCM, which is held each fall in the Northern Virginia-Washington, D.C., area.

Right: In 1997, Rick Nealis MCM race director, right, congratulates Vice President Al Gore on finishing the 22nd MCM.

that she was preparing to run the Chicago Marathon in celebration of her 40th birthday, Nealis sent Winfrey “a handwritten letter to run Marine Corps, and about six weeks later her security detail wrote that they were coming to run with us.” Oprah’s time of 4:29:15 in 1994 is a bar that many MCM runners still strive to beat, and her participation in the MCM led the way for the likes of Vice President Al Gore, Drew Carey (a veteran Marine) and other celebrities to participate in The People’s Marathon with so many other runners.

“That was probably one of those stepping stones because she [Winfrey] ran Marine Corps and brought in a security team,” said Nealis. “The owner of that company offered me a job, so I resigned from the Marine Corps and started working in running security.”

In this new position, Nealis served as the Olympic Torch Deputy Caravan Coordinator for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Ga. His team escorted the Olympic Flame from Greece to Atlanta for roughly 200 days and nights. “It was an incredible experience as it taught me a lot about putting on events down to the smallest detail,” explained



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

Nealis. “The biggest takeaway was working with Coca Cola who was the premiere sponsor. When I returned [to the MCM], I immediately said that the first thing we need to do from a financial standpoint is get into sponsorship.”

The lure of the Marine Corps and the marathon proved to be strong as Nealis returned to become the first civilian race director of the marathon. His Marine Corps knowledge and event experience would be the catalyst in the evolution of the Marine Corps Marathon.

A young runner is accompanied by a Marine while taking part in the MCM Kids Run.

Milestones Along the Way

The growth of the Marine Corps Marathon Organization (MCMO) under Nealis' leadership is most evident in the other events added throughout the years. In 2000, MCM Weekend introduced the Healthy Kids Fun Run, later renamed the MCM Kids Run. "We were coming off the 2000 Olympics, and we [the United States] couldn't even put a full team in the men's and women's category for the full marathon. I thought, we have to get kids inspired and it goes back to our mission to have a crop of runners today from 20 years ago," said Nealis. "We got into the kids race and it fit our missions of community goodwill and promoting a healthy lifestyle." The organization would continue to expand MCM weekend with the MCM 10K in 2006 and the MCM 50K in 2019, the largest ultra-marathon in the country.

"A couple years ago, having your ear to the culture on what's out there, it struck me that we could go to a 50K," said Nealis. "Normally ultras are in state parks because they do not have the money or the base to shut down urban streets. Now we have this urban marathon, and by adding a couple extra metropolitan police spots, we are able to do an urban ultra and basically double the size of any other



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

"We were coming off the 2000 Olympics, and we [the United States] couldn't even put a full team in the men's and women's category for the full marathon.

I thought, we have to get kids inspired."

—Richard G. Nealis

ultra in the United States. I think only the Marine Corps pulls it off."

Even more events were created to serve additional communities including the MCM Event Series which was established in 2006 when the organization received permission to execute events on a military reservation. The addition of the Marine Corps Historic Half events in Fredericksburg, Va., in 2008 was another significant addition to the MCM's races.



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

Runners carry flags in honor of those killed and injured in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The 2001 marathon was held just weeks after the attacks and runners could see the damage to the Pentagon, which was just yards from the course.

Pushing Through Breaking Points

The last 30 years hasn't been challenge-free, but like the Marine Corps itself, the marathon has endured, adapted and overcome obstacles every time. "We are constantly adjusting this operation and how we integrate with the Marine Corps, but never lose sight of the three pillars of why we exist," explained Nealis.

The most notable challenge came in the wake of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, six weeks before the 26th MCM. Instead of running in fear, the MCM participants ran in honor of those lost on that horrific day as thousands of runners carried flags throughout the course that ran 50 yards from the charred and damaged wing of the Pentagon.

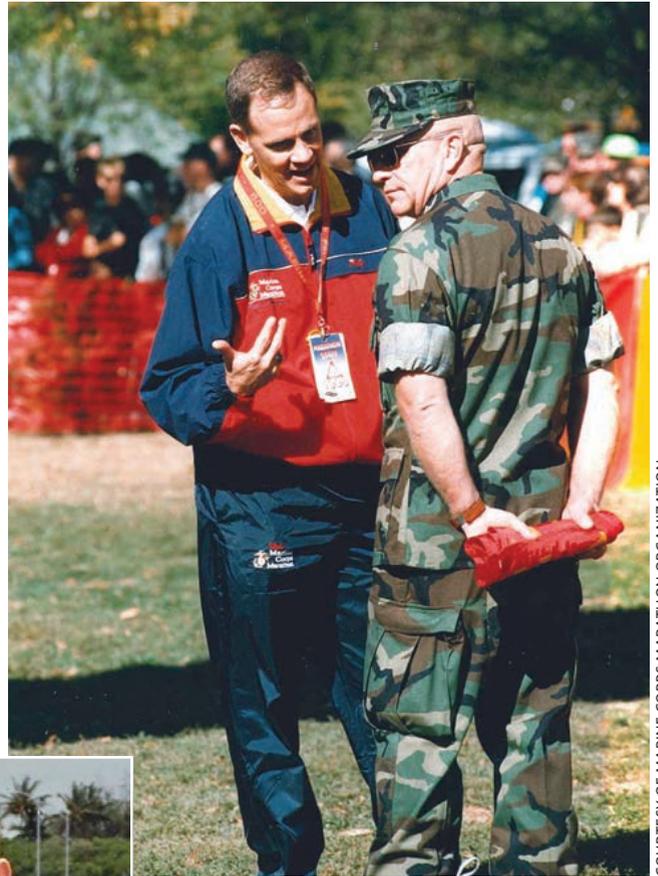
More recently, like most large events around the world, the MCM was shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nealis and staff still found a way to bring the marathon to the running community by transitioning to virtual offerings. "Runners were still able to earn the 45th commemorative medal featuring sands from Iwo Jima by mentally overcoming the stressors of the pandemic and taking on the distance from wherever they may be," Nealis said. Individuals became their own race directors, a notable occurrence as MCMO had never offered a virtual option before. This new challenge event introduced a unique experience as runners were able to take on the Trifecta, a chance to complete the MCM, MCM50K and MCM10K for a special challenge coin. This model proved to be vital as the MCM once again had to shift to virtual-only for the second year in 2021. Virtual options have remained in 2022.

Additionally, these challenges included ever-changing safety precautions and multiple technology advancements. Nealis and team were always at the forefront pushing the industry. His innovation and contributions to the sport have led to many awards and accolades to include being inducted into Running USA's Hall of Champions in 2009 and awarded the Road Race Management Race Director of the Year in 2010.

Nealis entered the MCM's own Hall of Fame in 2017.

A runner to the core, Nealis' accomplishments within the sport include completing six marathons, four of which were The People's Own. Nealis' personal record, 3:09:50, came during a 1983 MCM. "To be a long-distance runner, you have those same traits that we look for in the Marine Corps," explained Nealis. "You have to have someone that's going to be dependable. You are going to be waking up every morning to get those runs in. You have to have endurance to put in the mileage, speed work and all the training. The mental courage is important as long-distance running is brutal and sometimes you want to stop."

His love for the sport may have begun with running itself, but it flourished as a race director. His favorite part? "It's the only sport that you have an amateur and a world class runner at the same event, running the same course under the same conditions. You don't get that at Nationals Park," expressed Nealis.



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS MARATHON ORGANIZATION

Above: MCM Race Director Rick Nealis speaks with a Marine during the 23rd MCM.



COURTESY OF RICK NEALIS

Left: Then-Maj Nealis in Hawaii in 1986. A supply officer throughout his career, Nealis continued to serve the Marine Corps through his leadership of the Marine Corps Marathon.

The Finish Line

So, what does one do after dedicating 50 years to civil service, 30 of which were to the Marine Corps Marathon? Return as a runner, of course. "I will be 69 when I retire. Any good runner would be looking at that 70 to 74 (age group), so I am going to tell you that I am going to use 2023 to get myself back into a little better shape, maybe do a little speed work and I will be on the podium to get some of that bling," said Nealis. "When you run five Marine Corps [marathons], you get a patch and a certificate from me saying that you are in the [MCM Runners] Club. If you're in this club, you get first right to registration. My goal is to come back, run my fifth and get in the club because if I ever want to run MCM again, I can get in."

Let the new MCM journey begin with a goal of October 2024 when Nealis crosses that finish line once again.

Author's bio: Kristen Loflin is the MCMO public relations coordinator. She came to the Marine Corps Marathon Organization with more than eight years of tourism and event public relations experience. She is a Marine Corps spouse and a two-time Marine Corps Marathon finisher.



SOUND OFF
[continued from page 8]

Thinking Back as a U.S. Marine

Reading your magazine each month is a real pleasure for me and brings back the desire to return to active duty. I retired in February 1975 after serving 22 wonderful years as a Marine to include 13 months in Vietnam (October 1967 to November 1968). I do think about my wonderful buddies and how we looked after each other.

I was with 1st Marine Division serving in Da Nang and Chu Lai, Vietnam. A lot of people ask me, "Weren't you scared?" My answer was, "No, we had a job to do, and we did it." It would be good to be able to talk to some of my buddies again. Some are gone now but to hear from others would be a great moment for me. We all fought side-by-side under rocket attacks, mortars, machine-gun fire and whatever else the Viet Cong could throw at us. I served with many fine officers like Jim Stewart, Sam Hope, Lockwood (can't remember his first name) to mention a few. When I leave this world, these wonderful memories will go with me along with the Red Cross delivering a note to me on July 10, 1968, in the heat of battle, announcing the birth of my second daughter.

ter. These memories are treasured by me.

I served as a recruiter in Pittsburgh, Pa. During that tour of duty, I had dinner with President Dwight D. Eisenhower and helped enlist the Everly Brothers and Ronnie Eckstein whose father was "Mr. B," a very popular entertainer during 1963 to 1967. Lest we forget.

Lauren P. Bands Sr.
Virginia Beach, Va.

I Saw an Old Marine

I saw an old Marine,
Sitting there with saber keen.
So, I sat right by,
Said "Semper Fi,"
And asked about battles he had seen.

He said: "I was there in '75,
When our Corps came alive.
And I was there on New Providence,
And at all the battles ever since."

"I was one of the eight aboard,
When Eaton earned the Mameluke sword.

And I was there near Washing-tan,
When against four thousand we made a stand."

"I was with the Grand Old Man,
When he led us to the Seminole land.

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And when the Army breathed
Mexican air,
It was I who beat them there.”

“I shed a tear at Drewry’s Bluff,
And hoped one battle would be enough.
As Marines in blue fought Marines in
gray,
I fought on both sides that dreadful
day.”

“I was there at Belleau Wood,
When our fighting spirit was first
understood,
By the world at large,
With Dan Daly leading the glorious
charge.”

“I fought beside John Basilone,
And I helped to take every single stone,
That our brothers gave so much for,
In the Second World War.”

“I was there with the yellowlegs,
In Korea, chilled to the bone.
I listened as one man begs,
To God to please just take him home.”

“I was there in Vietnam,
Where we won the fight at Khe Sanh.
And I was there with Hathcock, C.,
When he killed all of his 93.”

“I was there in Lebanon,
When we lost so many to the bomb.
And I was there through Desert Storm,
When through the foe we valiantly
tore.”

“I was there, young man,
When you went to Parris Island.
I watched over you,
And saw the strength that pushed you
through.”

“I sang with you on that last hike,
And all the parts you didn’t like.
I sent the bugs and violent storms,
And the dreaded heat in which you were
forged.”

“I was there, though I wasn’t seen,
When you first were told ‘Congratu-
lations, Marine.’
Along with you I wept and cried,
As you vowed to honor those before
who died.”

I talked with an old Marine,
Sitting there with saber keen.
I paid for his drink,
And toasted to the battles he had seen.

LCpl James Beatty
New Roads, La.

WAYS TO SOUND OFF



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The newly rededicated Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., now includes a “Wall of Remembrance” that lists the names of all U.S. servicemembers who were killed during the war.

Rededicated Korean War Memorial Lists Names of Fallen

The Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., was rededicated July 27 with a new feature: a “Wall of Remembrance” that features the names of the more than 43,000 U.S. servicemembers and Korean augmentees to the U.S. Army who were killed during the war.

“We commemorate the sacrifice of those Americans and Koreans who bravely fought together, side-by-side, to defend our freedom, laying the foundation for a thriving Democratic Republic of Korea and a strong, unbreakable United States/ Republic of Korea alliance,” Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff said during a speech at the rededication ceremony.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall in Washington was first dedicated 27 years ago on July 27, 1995. The latest round of construction began in March 2021, a \$22 million project that was funded by donations from the people of the United States and South Korea.

The names on the Wall of Remembrance

are arranged in order of rank and branch of service to demonstrate to visitors how the war’s burden fell unevenly across the military. Another important element of the wall is that the names of U.S. servicemembers and Korean augmentees to the U.S. Army are not listed separately. Instead, they’re mingled together—just as they fought together during the war.

Korean augmentees to the U.S. Army, or KATUSAs, are members of the Republic of Korea Army who are or were assigned to the U.S. Army, wear U.S. Army uniforms and are equipped with the same gear as the U.S. soldiers they live and fight alongside. The KATUSA concept was first developed during the Korean War and continues today.

“This wall reminds us of the depths of their sacrifice and instills in us a call of duty to carry on their fight,” Korean Ambassador to the United States, Cho Tae-yong, said. “The servicemembers we are here today to honor stood their ground in battlefields so that future generations could live in a vibrant democracy—in-

deed, the Republic of Korea is a vibrant democracy today. Recognizing this, I promise to follow their lead and work to build an even stronger ROK/U.S. alliance. On behalf of the whole of Korean people, I’d like to express my gratitude to all the veterans of the Korean War and their families. We are eternally and profoundly grateful.”

According to statistics from the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, the Wall of Remembrance features the names of 29,857 U.S. soldiers, 4,522 U.S. Marines, 668 U.S. Sailors, 1,587 U.S. airmen and 7,174 Korean augmentees to the U.S. Army. In total, 43,808 names appear on the wall.

“It’s a beautiful monument,” Emhoff said. “It’s a poignant reminder of the individual sacrifices of the more than 36,000 U.S. servicemembers and the more than 7,000 Korean troops who served together and died together in Korea. Their names are now forever engraved here on our incredible Washington mall.”

In addition to the Wall of Remembrance,

work at the Korean War Veterans Memorial included refinishing the 8-foot-tall stainless-steel statues that represent servicemembers from each of the U.S. military services that fought in the war; replacing the engraved names of participating countries and casualty figures with stainless-steel letters; and extensive landscaping efforts.

Chairman of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, retired Army General John H. Tilelli Jr., said the Wall of Remembrance and enhancements to the memorial will better educate visitors on the importance of remembering the Korean War.

“We are hopeful that this memorial will remind the millions of people who visit here each year that freedom is not free,” GEN Tilelli said. “Today, we honor the veterans of the Korean War and the families of the fallen heroes. With this dedication ceremony, I hope that it is no longer the ‘Forgotten War,’ but the ‘remembered victory’ that was won by these veterans.”

C. Todd Lopez

Museum Highlights Astronauts In Temporary Exhibition

The National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va., takes visitors one step beyond the air, land and sea with “Spaceflight: The Marine Astronauts,” a new temporary exhibition featuring artifacts and imagery from Marine astronauts who have made and continue to make significant contributions to the space program.

Marines have served on space flight missions since the 1960s. The accomplishments and sacrifices of individual Marine astronauts have provided substantial contributions to NASA’s space exploration missions.

“The Marine Corps has always been a multi-domain force, fighting in the air, on land and sea. This new exhibit looks at Marines in yet another environment: space. Marines have been a part of America’s space program from the very beginning and will continue to contribute at all levels into the future. I think visitors will be surprised to see just how much Marines have contributed to the exploration of space,” said the museum’s aviation curator, Larry Burke.

The exhibit is divided into three sections that cover the distinctive phases of the space program. Artifacts, imagery and personal narratives tell stories that are literally “out of this world.” Artifact highlights include the custom flight suit that Colonel Randy “Komrade” Bresnik wore on the Marine Corps Birthday while in orbit as commander of the International

Right: The temporary exhibition “Spaceflight: The Marine Astronauts” at the National Museum of the Marine Corps includes a Russian-made flight suit worn by Randolph “Komrade” Bresnik to celebrate the Marine Corps birthday in 2017 when he was in command of the International Space Station; a Skylab 4 flight jacket and trousers; a U.S. naval aviator polo shirt; and a SpaceX Crew Dragon polo shirt worn by Marine astronaut Doug Hurley.



COURTESY OF NMMMC



COURTESY OF NMMMC

Left: The communication’s headset used by astronaut Walter Cunningham during the Apollo 7 mission is temporarily on display at the National Museum of the Marine Corps as part of the exhibition “Spaceflight: The Marine Astronauts.”

Space Station; the communications headset that Marine astronaut Ronnie Walter Cunningham used on Apollo 7; and the rescue harness sling and crook used to recover Alan B. Shepard after his *Freedom 7* spacecraft landed in the Atlantic Ocean.

“Spaceflight: The Marine Astronauts” runs through January 2024. Check the museum’s social media and website, www.usmcmuseum.com, for special programming during the run of this temporary exhibition.

NMMC

NHHC Debuts New Naval History And Research Center

Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to showcase its newest conservation and preservation site at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., Aug. 8.

Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Mike Gilday, USN, who attended the groundbreaking ceremony two years ago,



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On display at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va., is this Apollo-Soyuz intra-vehicular cover layer and gloves worn by astronaut Vance Brand in July 1975.



ARIF PATANI

Chief of Naval Operations ADM Mike Gilday delivers remarks during a ribbon-cutting ceremony showcasing NHHC's newest conservation and preservation site at the Washington Navy Yard, Aug. 8. The new state-of-the-art Naval History and Research Center will house various collections as well as the Navy Library and Archives Branch.

spoke at the event for the new NHRC site.

"History shows that the Navy that adapted better, learned faster and improved faster gained warfighting advantages over the long haul. Stories of the past help us heed the warnings of history while helping us to reflect on and sustain our legacy as the world's premier maritime force," said ADM Gilday. "This building and the stories and artifacts within will preserve the experiences and lessons of the past, use the Navy's legacy of valor and sacrifice to inspire current and future generations of Sailors, and let those who serve today know that their sacrifice will always be remembered, honored and valued."

The new site, made up of two former ordnance factories and warehouses, has been refurbished into a single state-of-the-art, two-floor structure that maintains the building's National Historic District status.

"The Washington Navy Yard is significant to the early history of the U.S. Navy, the development of Washington, D.C., and the nation for its role in the manufacturing of ship equipment, advances in ordnance, and naval administration," said NHHC Director Sam Cox. "Not only will this building continue to be a historic site, but it will be dedicated to preserving all our future naval artifacts."

NHHC and Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Washington began collaborations in 2018 to convert the two adjoining buildings. The NHRC will now house NHHC's Navy Art Collection and Underwater Archaeology Branch of the Collection Management Division and

Histories and Archives Division, including the Navy Library and Archives Branch.

These divisions have long served researchers and the public in their research and inquiries about naval history.

NHHC is entrusted to protect and present naval art, artifacts and archaeological collections to the public, and these renovations have modernized the command's artifact protection capabilities. The upgrades also comply with mandates to create a facility that can preserve artifacts and restore pieces for future generations.

The building complies with Navy Facilities Criteria 4-760-10N ("Navy Museums and Historic Resource Facilities"), and the archives now meet National

Archives and Records Administration Directive 1571 for archival requirements for temperature, humidity and daylight control.

"[UAB] is thrilled to be moving into the renovated spaces," said Kate Morrard, Director, Archaeology and Conservation Laboratory. "The archaeological collections recovered from U.S. Navy sunken and terrestrial military crafts will benefit considerably from these improved facilities and an updated curation environment. These buildings will contribute to each branch's mission and long-term preservation of the Navy's unique and irreplaceable cultural resources."

NHHC 



ARIF PATANI

From the left, Kenneth Terry, vice president and operations manager at Grunley Construction Company; ADM Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations; NHHC Director Sam Cox; and Yeoman 2nd Class Lynnett Evans, USN, cut the ceremonial ribbon during the official opening of the new NHRC at the Washington Navy Yard, Aug. 8.

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PFC Robert E. Simanek

Private First Class Robert E. Simanek, who threw himself on a grenade to save his fellow Marines during the Korean War, died Aug. 1, in Novi, Mich. He was 92.

On Aug. 17, 1952, PFC Simanek was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Reinforced). He was serving as a radio-man on a routine patrol to Outpost Irene when his unit was ambushed by the enemy. Up to that point, Outpost Irene had been fairly quiet, and no action was expected. Simanek took a magazine with him to read when they arrived at the outpost. The enemy had other plans. They had been lying in wait at the outpost and opened fire as soon as the Marines arrived. After suffering heavy casualties, the unit's surviving Marines located a trench nearby and took cover.

"Determined to save his comrades when a hostile grenade was hurled into their midst, he unhesitatingly threw himself on the deadly missile, absorbing the shattering violence of the exploding charge in his own body and shielding his fellow Marines from serious injury or death," according to the award citation.

In an interview for the Library of Congress Veterans History Project (VHP), Simanek said that from his position in the trench, he was able to eliminate two Chinese soldiers with his .45-caliber side-arm before two enemy grenades landed in the opening of the trench. Simanek kicked the first one away but said he didn't think he had time to remove the second grenade, so he covered it in order to protect his fellow Marines from the blast.

"It was training. There wasn't any decision on my part at all. It was just an automatic thing," he said during his VHP interview of his actions in Korea. "No matter how much we love our country, we fought for each other. It was by far the most important priority," he said, adding that "any sacrifices we made were for each other."

Simanek's legs were peppered with shrapnel from the grenade, and he was unable to walk. A relief party arrived on the scene and evacuated the most serious casualties. Simanek remained behind, continuing to operate the radio while the fighting raged on. Eventually he began crawling back toward the Main Line of Resistance. He was rescued and med-evacked out.

"I enjoyed that helicopter ride so much,"

Simanek later said. "I couldn't get over how beautiful it was."

He spent the next seven months in military hospitals recovering and regaining the use of his legs. At one point he was told he may never walk again.

He was back at his old job at General Motors in Detroit, Mich., one year later when he learned that he was going to receive the Medal of Honor. The medal was presented to him by President Dwight D. Eisenhower during a White House ceremony on Oct. 23, 1953.

"One of the hardest things about the medal is that you're really not allowed to forget about it. The people that wear [the Medal of Honor] and are OK with it ... have learned the fact that you won't be allowed to forget. It'll always remind you of something ... bring about some memories that maybe you'd like to get rid of," Simanek said.

Nancy S. Lichtman

Sgt Joseph J. Abdella, 99, in Webster, Mass. He enlisted in 1942 and served as an aviation electrician and later as an aviation gunner. He completed 56 combat missions as a rear gunner in dive bombers. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross with one star and the Air Medal with five stars.

Catherine A. Aito, 82, of North Ridgeville, Ohio. She was a Marine Corps veteran who later worked for Ford Motor Co.

MGySgt Joseph Ayze, 78, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served for 30 years then returned to school where he earned a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Robert A. "Bob" Bartella Sr., 82, of Sobieski, Wis. He enlisted after his 1958 high school graduation and served at MCB Twentynine Palms.

Cpl Joe B. Bass, 86, of Moses Lake, Wash. He enlisted in 1953. He was a seagoing Marine who served aboard USS *Manchester* (CL-83). He later became a civilian pilot and flight instructor in the Pacific Northwest.

Cpl Charles W. Callear, 83, of Athens, Pa. He served from 1957-1959 as a seagoing Marine assigned to USS *Newport News* (CA-148). He later spent 41 years as a machinist.

Cpl Michael T. Civitello, 97, of Hamden, Conn. During WW II he was assigned to VMTB-233 and served in the South Pacific. His awards include the Air Medal with two gold stars.

LtCol Justin Constantine, 52, of

Fairfax, Va. He joined the Marine Corps during law school and was a JAG officer for six years. In 2006, as a reservist, he was deployed to Iraq as a Civil Affairs Team Leader attached to an infantry battalion. He was shot in the head by an enemy sniper and nearly died on the battlefield. Following the intensive recuperation from his injury, he resumed his Marine Corps career, graduating with honors from Command and Staff College.

He wrote extensively about leadership and had two books published. After his retirement from active duty, he founded a nonprofit that focuses on veterans' families. He was named a Champion of Change for Veterans by President Barack Obama and his portrait was painted by President George W. Bush for the book "Portraits of Courage."

Cpl Charles Costos, 96, in Jacksonville, Fla. He was an MSG Marine who served at Camp David. He later had a career with Itek Corporation, managing the team tasked with developing the camera used on the Mars Viking Lander in 1976.

SSgt Michael R. Creighton, 67, of Carson, Wash. He enlisted in 1973 and served until 1981. Assignments included 4th Battalion, 12th Marines, 3rd Marine Division and 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines, 1stMarDiv. He also served on recruiting duty.

SSgt Roy Goddard, 73, of Birmingham, Ala. He was a sniper during the Vietnam War, and he served for almost 30 years. He later worked as a truck driver.

Richard "Dick" Isenard, 86, of Green Bay, Wis. He enlisted after his 1954 graduation from high school and served until 1957. He later had a 35-year career with the US Corps of Engineers.

GySgt Robert C. "Bob" Jones Jr., 85, of Dillon, S.C. His 22 years in the Marine Corps included three tours in Vietnam as a communications Marine.

Nicholas W. Koslicki, 41, of Spotsylvania, Va. He served in the Marine Corps before beginning a career with the Virginia State Police, where he was a sergeant.

LtCol Everett "Sonny" Long III, 77, in Chapel Hill, N.C. He served in Vietnam and later was the commanding officer of MWCS-28 and 7th Communications Bn.

LCpl Donald R. Lyons, 80, of Columbus, N.C. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve after his high school graduation and served for eight years.

Donald Malueg, 86, of Black Creek,

Wis. He enlisted in 1954 and served for two years.

Bernard McCall, 92, of Green Bay, Wis. He served in the Korean War. After he recovered from wounds received in combat, he was assigned to cooking duties, eventually working as the personal chef for his CO. After the war, he and his wife opened a supper club in Green Bay.

Sgt Josephine A. (King) Miller, 98, of Foxboro, Mass. She enlisted during WW II. She was a member of the VFW, serving as treasurer and chaplain of her local post.

Harry J. "Joe" Newby, 92, of Yuma, Ariz. He was a veteran of the Korean War.

Alfred L. Pino Sr., 83, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served at Camp Pendleton in the early 1960s.

Col A. Charles "Ace" Reali, 99, of Glenview, Ill. He was a Corsair pilot and flew 126 combat missions during the Korean War. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross, six Air Medals and the Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V." During his career he accrued more than 4,000 flying hours in 21 different airframes.

Lawrence M. Repanshek, 73, of Fredericksburg, Va. As a corpsman assigned to M/3/7 in Vietnam, he was wounded during a patrol in 1969 when a

booby trap was triggered by the Marine in front of him. He sustained two broken arms, a broken leg and multiple shrapnel wounds. He later had a career as a draftsman and surveyor. Throughout his life he maintained contact with his fellow Mike Co veterans.

MSgt Frankelly R. Santana, 62, of Stafford, Va. He enlisted after his high school graduation and served for 22 years.

GySgt Anthony J. Scardina Sr., 89, in Portsmouth, Va. After enlisting in the Pennsylvania National Guard, then serving in the Army, he transferred to the Marine Corps. He served in Vietnam as a combat aircrewman for a helicopter squadron. His last assignment before his 1972 retirement was as an HMX-1 crew chief. His awards include five Air Medals.

Cpl Richard Schuler, 85, of Houston, Texas. He served from 1955-1959 and was assigned to TBS at MCB Quantico. He also served in Hawaii. After leaving active duty, he worked as a teacher and later owned and operated a pest control company in Houston.

LtCol John Short, 82, of Lake Ridge, Va. He was commissioned in 1962 after earning a bachelor's degree in business from Holy Cross College, and he served 20 years as an infantry officer. He also earned a master's degree in computer

science from American University in Washington, D.C.

David Townsend, 89, of Alamogordo, N.M. He was a veteran of the Korean War. He later taught history at the high school and college levels.

James T. "Doc" Welby, 68, of Albuquerque, N.M. He enlisted and completed a combat tour in Vietnam. He later had a career as a mechanical engineer.

Cpl Joseph H. Westcott, 87, of De Pere, Wis. He served in the Marine Corps from 1953-1957.

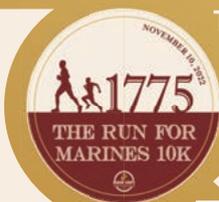
James H. Whalen, 82, of Seeley Lake, Mont. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after his high school graduation.

David E. Wiegert Sr., 83 of Greenleaf, Wis. He was an amtracker who served for two years at Camp Pendleton.

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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Reunions

• **Force Recon Assn.**, Nov. 17-19, San Antonio. Contact Dave Jarvis, (760) 716-3713, jarvisda77@gmail.com, www.forcerecon.com.

• **Marine Corps Disbursing Assn.**, May 21-25, 2023, Louisville, Ky. Contact MGySgt Kevin Gascon, USMC (Ret), (760) 458-2655, usmcdisbursers@hotmail.com, www.usmcdisbursers.com.

• **1st MAW Assn. (RVN)**, Oct. 13-15, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Al Frater, (201) 906-1197, teanal330@gmail.com.

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

• **2/9 (all eras)**, Nov. 8-12, Arlington, Va. Contact Danny Schuster, (978) 302-4126, twoninecoic@aol.com, www.2ndbattalion9thmarines.org.

• **F/2/7 “Utter’s Battalion” (RVN, 1965-1966)**, Oct. 16-19, Savannah, Ga. Contact Ivo Alvarez, (352) 250-6583, ivojoe@aol.com.

• **Co A, 3rd Engineer Bn/BLT 1/9 (RVN, 1970-1971)**, is planning a reunion. Contact Gene Spanos, (847) 532-2963, genethemarine@gmail.com.

• **Marine Security Forces, NWS Earle**, Oct. 7-10, Colts Neck, N.J. Contact

Dusty Wright, (618) 553-2205, slickstuff@nwcable.net.

• **TBS, Co D, 4-73**, June 15-18, 2023, Arlington, Va. Contact Col Bill Anderson, USMCR (Ret), (540) 850-4213, binche57@yahoo.com, or Col Bob Donaghue, USMCR (Ret), (617) 840-0267, ip350haven@comcast.net.

• **Plt 352, Parris Island, 1962**, Oct. 6-7, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Charlie Ducar, (518) 391-0137, educar@nycap.rr.com.

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

• **Marine F-4 Phantom “Phoray” (all hands)**, Oct. 26-30, Dallas. Contact Donnie Herrin, dherrin@vmfareadyroom.com.

Mail Call

• SgtMaj Kenneth Miller, USMC (Ret), (828) 499-0224, to hear from current and former **drill instructors** who are interested in becoming members of the **East Coast Drill Instructors’ Assn.**, Parris Island chapter. For more information, visit www.parrislanddi.org.

• Elizabeth Dreaper, P.O. Box 52, Dobbs Ferry, NY, 10522, nyleatherneck1979@aol.com, to hear from or about former **SSgt Jesse MORRIS** and former **Sgt Jay LUPO**, who were **field radio operators** assigned to Base Communications (Sup-

port Bn), **MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., 1979-1982**.

• Former Cpl Mike Cutini, (716) 773-7220, (716) 868-2531, kmcmc@roadrunner.com, to hear from Marines he served with in **3rd Plt, Co D, 1/26, RVN**.

Wanted

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

• Robert Bunting, (480) 227-1342 (text only), rvbunting@yahoo.com, wants a **high shooter trophy or trophy topper** like those presented at **MCRD San Diego** around **1961**. The brass-colored figure depicts a standing rifleman wearing a WW I campaign cover and aiming an M1903 Springfield rifle.

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 k.watts@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 Jennifer Castro

FOUND IN THE RUBBLE—In 1982, President Ronald Regan sent Marines to Beirut, Lebanon, on a peacekeeping mission as part of a multinational force. At 6:22 a.m. on Oct 23, 1983, a truck carrying 2,000 pounds of explosives drove into the Marine compound near the Beirut airport and crashed into the barracks of the Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1st Battalion, 8th Marines. Three hundred Marines and other military servicemembers had been living in the four-story building at the airport and 220 Marines and 21 other U.S. servicemembers were killed by the truck bomb.

The bombing was the single deadliest day for the Marine Corps since the 1945 Battle of Iwo Jima and was traced to Hezbollah, a militant and political group that originated in Lebanon in 1982. Iranian and Syrian involvement was also suspected.

This black leather-covered and battle-scarred steel case marked with white stenciled letters on the side reading "BAS 1/8 BATTALION SURGEON" was found in the rubble by Navy corpsmen during the recovery efforts. At the time of the attack, Lieutenant John Hudson, USN, was the BLT's doctor; he was killed in the



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bombing. The surgeon's kit is now in the collection of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va.

Author's bio: Jennifer Castro is the Cultural and Material History Curator for the National Museum of the Marine Corps.



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- Kidney Cancer
- Lung Cancer
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- Miscarriage
- Parkinson's Disease
- Neuro Behavior Effects
& Many More

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