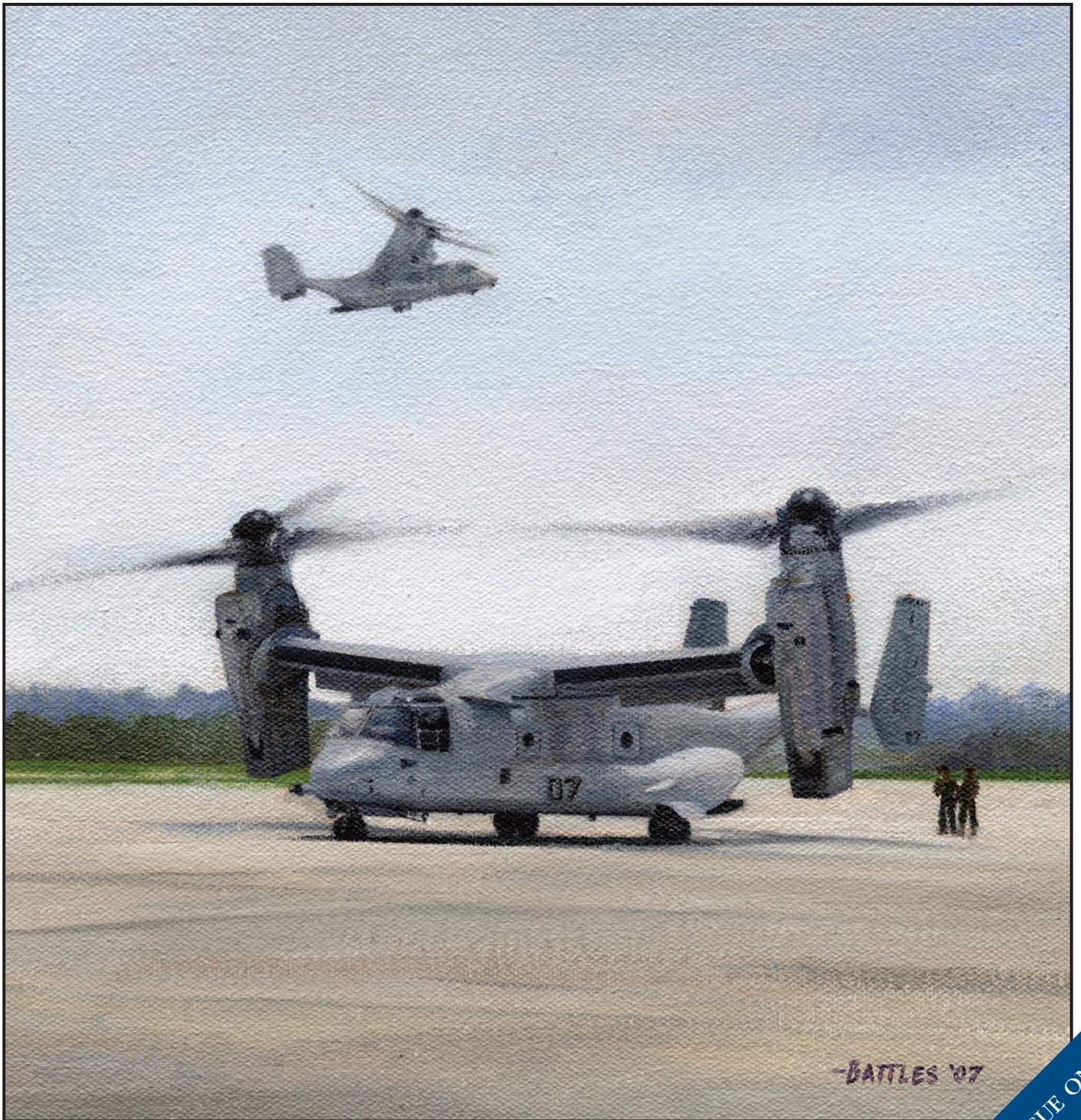


# FORTITUDINE

BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME 32, NUMBER 4

2007



WHAT MAKES MARINES...SPIRIT AND LEGACY OF MARINE AVIATION...MARINE NIGHT FIGHTER IN KOREA  
A HISTORY OF THE 6TH CIVIL AFFAIRS GROUP...60 YEARS OF MARINE CORPS ROTARY WING AVIATION  
V-22 OSPREY TILTROTOR...LIFE AND WARS OF COL DAY...UNEXPLORED FRONTIER-MARINE AVIATION

PASS THIS ISSUE ON  
TO ANOTHER MARINE

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

PCN 10401220100



## HISTORY DIVISION

**PRESIDENT**  
MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY  
MajGen Donald R. Gardner, USMC (Ret)

**DIRECTOR**  
Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer  
**Secretary to the Director**  
Mrs. Jeanne Riffe

**CHIEF HISTORIAN**  
Mr. Charles D. Melson

**HISTORIES BRANCH**  
Mr. Charles R. Smith (Branch Head);  
Dr. Nathan S. Lowrey; Mr. Paul  
Westermeyer; Mrs. Wanda F. Renfrow

**HISTORICAL REFERENCE BRANCH**  
Mr. Danny J. Crawford (Branch Head);  
Mr. Robert V. Aquilina; Ms. Lena M.  
Kaljot; Ms. Kara R. Newcomer; Ms.  
Annette D. Amerman; Mrs. Shelia  
Boyd

**ORAL HISTORY BRANCH**  
Dr. Fred H. Allison (Branch Head); Mr.  
Robert Taglianetti

**FIELD HISTORY BRANCH**  
Col Michael D. Visconage; Field  
Historians: Col Stephen Evans; Col  
Patricia Saint; LtCol David Benhoff;  
LtCol Kurt Wheeler; LtCol Craig  
Covert; LtCol Jeffrey Riley; Maj Daniel  
Sparks; Maj Valerie Jackson; Maj  
Joseph Winslow; Capt Cameron  
Wilson; 1stLt Mark Newman; CWO-4  
Michael Sears; CWO-3 William  
Hutson; MGySgt Robert Yarnall; GySgt  
Michael Coachman; LCpl Michael  
Satkovich

**FORTITUDINE STAFF**  
Maj Valerie Jackson  
Mr. William S. Hill  
Mrs. Peggy F. Frierson  
Mr. Greg A. Macheak

**Marine Corps History Division**  
3079 Moreell Avenue  
Quantico, Virginia 22134  
Telephone (703) 432-4877  
<http://www.history.usmc.mil>  
[history.division@usmc.mil](mailto:history.division@usmc.mil)

# FORTITUDINE

*Motto of the United States Marine Corps in the 1812 era*

Historical Bulletin Vol. 32, No. 4

2007

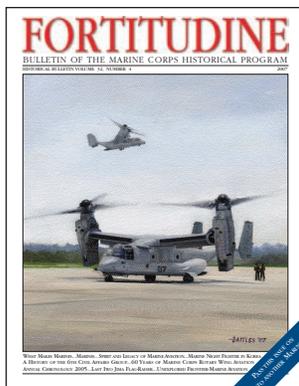
*“We can only know who we are by being certain of  
who we have been.”*

Gen Leonard F. Chapman, Jr.  
24th Commandant of the Marine Corps

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Memorandum from the Director: What Makes Marines...Marines</i> <i>Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer</i> .....	3
<i>Features: Remembering the Pioneering Spirit and Legacy of Marine Aviation: VMM-263 Marines Launch Revolutionary Osprey</i> <i>Col Patricia D. Saint</i> .....	5
<i>Oral History: Marine Night Fighter Aerial Victories in Korea</i> <i>CMSgt David P. Anderson, USAF</i> .....	10
<i>Field History: A History of the 6th Civil Affairs Group</i> <i>Col Jeffrey Acosta, LtCol Ray Decker, &amp; SSgt Greer Saunders</i> .....	11
<i>Field History: Breaking Skids</i> <i>Capt Christopher Wilson</i> .....	13
<i>Field History: Marines at the Battle of Drewry's Bluff</i> <i>2ndLt Brian A. Kerg</i> .....	14
<i>National Museum of the Marine Corps: Museum Preserves 60 Years of Marine Corps Rotary Wing Aviation</i> <i>Ben Kristy</i> .....	15
<i>Marine Corps Chronology: Highlights from the 2005 Annual Chronology</i> <i>Kara R. Newcomer</i> .....	17
<i>Library of the Marine Corps: The V-22 Osprey Tiltrotor Aircraft</i> <i>Kimberly Adams &amp; Rachel Kingcade</i> .....	20
<i>The Unexplored Frontier-Marine Aviation Records of the Gray Research Center</i> <i>Dr. Jim Ginther</i> .....	21
<i>In Memoriam: Sergeant Major Dailey Passes</i> <i>Robert V. Aquilina</i> .....	22
<i>Books in Review: Life and Wars of Colonel Bud Day</i> <i>Dr. Fred Allison</i> .....	23

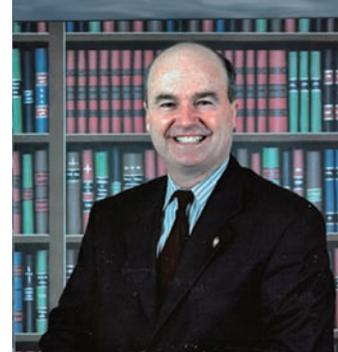
## ABOUT THE COVER



**About the Cover:** Osprey Number 7 of VMM-263 taxis on flight line at Marine Corps Air Station, New River, North Carolina. By Sergeant Kristopher Battles.

This bulletin of the Marine Corps historical program is published for Marines, at the rate of one copy for every nine on active duty, to provide education and training in the uses of military and Marine Corps history. Other interested readers may purchase single copies or four-issue subscriptions from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office. The appropriate order form appears in this issue.

## What Makes Marines...Marines



*Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer*

At the 2007 U.S. Naval Academy History Symposium, I presented a paper on the U.S. Marine Corps intervention in Nicaragua, 1912-1933. My original idea for selecting this topic was to demonstrate parallels between the Marine Corps' counterinsurgency effort of 1920s and what is taking place in Iraq today. And while it was indeed true that there were a significant number of similarities between the two operations, what struck me more about Nicaragua was the crucial role that the campaign played toward the development of the Marine air-ground task force.

I have long believed that if the Marine Corps ever allowed itself to become separated from its own organic air assets, it would soon cease to be the Marine Corps. I remain convinced that in the type of warfare faced by

*Capt Ross E. Rowell posed for this painting by James Montgomery Flagg that was used for a recruiting poster.*



today's 21st century Marine Corps, the air-ground task force concept needs to be seen as sacrosanct. It is also clear that it is the effective use of organic air and ground assets that sets the Marine Corps apart from the other Services and provides the nation with a truly ready and capable "911" expeditionary force. This particular edition of *Fortitudine* is dedicated to Marine Corps aviation. It is only fitting that we remember the pioneers of the Marine air-ground task force concept.

When one thinks of the Corps' aviation pioneers, one aviator in particular, Major General Ross E. "Rusty" Rowell, comes immediately to mind. It was Rowell who first seemed to intuitively grasp the inherent advantages that aviation gave to the ground combat commander. While Marine air and ground components had operated together in earlier venues, it was during the Nicaraguan campaign that the concept of blending Marine air and ground assets into operational war plans came into its own.

"Rusty" Rowell was already a fairly famous Marine even before arriving in Nicaragua in 1927 with his observation squadron, Marine Observation Squadron 1. In fact, many Marines today probably have seen his face without really knowing it. In 1916, Captain Rowell was on temporary assignment with a Marine recruiting detachment in New York City and had been selected by renowned artist James Montgomery Flagg to model for his now famous "First in the Fight" recruiting poster. This poster is still sold at the National Museum of the Marine Corps and shows a Marine standing with a raised pistol, in field uniform and campaign cover, wearing a blanket roll across his chest. The poster was designed to encourage young men to join the Marine Corps in anticipation of possible U.S. involve-

ment in World War I. Interestingly, while Rowell's visage became a national fixture throughout the Great War, he did not see combat in France. What is even more amazing is that Rowell did not even become an aviator until after he was promoted to the rank of major. He attended formal flight school at Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, in 1923 but only after having served for nearly two years as a self-taught naval aviator in Haiti. However, it was clear from his record book that Rowell was a naturally gifted aviator.

Rowell's first chance to demonstrate the value of aviation to his ground brethren came during the 16 July 1927 battle of Ocotal. As Rowell remembered it, a Marine relief force was over 50 miles away when a Marine detachment under the command of Captain Gilbert Hatfield was violently attacked by Augusto Cesar Sandino's guerrillas. The fighting at Ocotal was vicious and at times at close quarters. Hatfield and

*Legendary and highly-decorated Marine aviator, MajGen Ross E. "Rusty" Rowell.*



his Marines were barricaded inside City Hall and Sandino's forces largely controlled the rest of the town. Dodging thunderstorms and mountain peaks, Rowell's World War I era DeHavilland bombers wended their way to Ocotal and arrived over the town around two in the afternoon. Fortunately, Hatfield had placed several air panels out to mark his own location and Rowell was able to spot the main concentration of Sandinistas from the air. Other than panels, there was no other form of communication available to the ground commander at the time. Rowell's planes dove on the rebel positions one at a time, releasing a single bomb on each run, with the aircraft's rear machine-gunner suppressing enemy fire after the bomber had pulled out of its dive. Nonetheless, upon returning to his home field near Managua, Rowell counted 44 bullet holes in his aircraft

fuselage. The Marine squadron had proven decisive in the battle and their bombs and machine guns had completely disrupted Sandino's attack. For his action at Ocotal, Rowell became the first Marine aviator to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for a combat action. He would also be the first Marine aviator to achieve the ranks of brigadier and major general.

Throughout the entire Nicaraguan intervention, Marine aviators provided air cover for nearly every patrol conducted in the rough and mountainous jungle terrain. In a 1929 presentation that he made to the U.S. Army War College, Rowell noted that Marine Corps aviation:

probably did more for the troops in this campaign than has ever been accomplished in any other military operation....Our columns

were so far flung that they were almost beyond control....It fell to the lot of the airplanes to bind the organization together, to make it a whole, and to make it possible to function as an organization.

Since Nicaragua, the Marine air-ground task force concept was further refined by those who followed in Rowell's trace. Rowell left Nicaragua in 1928, and in 1935, he became the Director of Marine Corps Aviation. Serving as senior Marine aviator throughout World War II, Rowell's Nicaraguan experience had been instrumental in the formulation of the Marine air-ground team that won the war in the Pacific. From then on, the Marine air-ground task force has been confirmed as the essential doctrinal element in what made Marines... Marines. □1775□

*The DeHavilland biplane (DH-4) was used as a bomber by the Marines, for the first time in the battle of Ocotal, Nicaragua. During this fight with Augusto Sandino's guerrillas, the Marines dive bombed and machine gunned the guerrillas as they attacked the Marines on the ground,*

*killing about 100 guerrillas. The DH-4 also transported medicine to the Marines and evacuated the wounded. In this photo, the DH-4 is seen flying in formation over Nicaragua.*



# Remembering the Pioneering Spirit and Legacy of Marine Aviation

## *VMM-263 Marines Launch Revolutionary Osprey*

by Col Patricia D. Saint  
Deputy Director

### Early Years of Marine Aviation

Marine aviation made its official debut more than 95 years ago when Naval aviator number five soloed with only two hours and 40 minutes of instruction in a Wright Brothers Model B-1 single-engine, twin-propeller aircraft. First Lieutenant Alfred A. Cunningham made this historic flight on 20 August 1912 as a student of the United States Naval Academy aviation camp in Annapolis, Maryland. The flight was actually logged at the Burgess Company and Curtiss factory headquarters at Marblehead, Massachusetts, where Lieutenant Cunningham was ordered to find a flight instructor and an available aircraft. The factory executives paid their civilian instructors generous salaries to train military pilots, and personal accounts of Lieutenant Cunningham's 160-minute flight training revealed that he had experienced only two previous instructor-controlled landings during bad weather conditions before he was encouraged to make his first solo. On a calm August afternoon, he made a series of circular patterns over the bay area until the fuel gage neared empty and touch-down was inevitable. The inexperienced, yet confident Lieutenant Cunningham landed without incident and proudly wrote the opening chapter of Marine aviation.

Lieutenant Cunningham continued to add precious hours to his logbook, despite mounting problems that centered on reduced engine power performance as the aircraft aged on a non-standard inventory of aircraft replacement parts. Cunningham's logbook entries for flights 371 through 383 documented, "Engine stopped in air on nearly all flights." Regardless of the operational and maintenance hurdles, the young Marine aviator forged



*Naval aviator number five and Marine aviator number one, 1stLt Alfred A. Cunningham.*

onward and completed almost 400 flights in a one year period. Lieutenant Cunningham's unwavering belief in the future of Marine air paved the path for new aircraft designs and for gutsy aviators who followed him. Cunningham himself was later awarded the Navy Cross for his actions during World War I. On 18 September 1912, fellow Marine pilot, First Lieutenant Bernard L. Smith, followed Lieutenant Cunningham's path and earned his status as Naval aviator number six.

### Expanding the Role of Aviation during the World Wars

Marine aviation continued to evolve with a mix of success stories, setbacks, and skepticism and with pioneers who remained committed to the journey. During the First World War, interest in Marine air capabilities increased, and by 1918 the Marine air arm totalled 282 officers and 2,180 enlisted Marines. Even though the next two decades were plagued by low budgets and outdated aircraft,

Marine pilots continued to gain precious hours and experience by participating in long distance flights and air races which strengthened military commitment and gained public endorsement. One particular air race in Saint Louis, Missouri, in 1923 highlighted the aerial skills of pilots, First Lieutenant Ford O. "Tex" Rogers and Second Lieutenant Horace Dutton "Hoke" Palmer, and their observers, First Sergeant Benjamin F. Belcher and Sergeant Peter P. Toluscisk. Headquarters Marine Corps authorized this venture and the two crews flew the longest distance yet recorded in two DH-4 aircraft from Haiti to Saint Louis to participate in the National Aircraft Races. Just three weeks earlier, these Marines received the aircraft at their duty station in Haiti and readily identified defective engines. Working in rotating shifts, the Marines rebuilt the engines, assembled the air frames, and installed dual controls in both aircraft in a mere four days to meet the departure timeline. Inspiring stories like this one were plentiful during the first two decades as Marine aviation marked its place.

The Marine Corps continued its quest for aviation options and evaluated the auto-gyro aircraft with a rotary-wing concept for potential medical evacuation, troop transport, and logistics missions. The Pitcairn OP-1 auto-gyro rotary-wing design was field-tested in Nicaragua in 1931 to determine its ability to carry military payloads to and from restricted areas. Serving as the Commanding Officer, Aircraft 1, Fleet Marine Force, Quantico, Lieutenant Colonel Roy S. Geiger evaluated the auto-gyro capabilities, recorded the disappointing payload results, and forwarded a negative recommendation to his brigade



Department of Defense Photo

*Marine Corps Corsairs of a fighter squadron of the 2d MAF fly in formation on a rocket strike against Japanese positions south of the front lines of Okinawa. The squadron was commanded by Major George C. Axtell, Jr.*

commander. Lieutenant Colonel Geiger was a well-respected First World War Marine Corps Navy Cross recipient whose comprehensive report weighed heavily with decisionmakers and led to the halt of further auto-gyro research or funding. Despite the initial setback, this research and experimental period set the stage for follow-on helicopter development as a means of troop and cargo mobility.

On 8 December 1933, the role of aviation was further defined when the Fleet Marine Force was established as the foundation for developing amphibious operations. This strategic organizational event did not occur overnight and it was a turning point for the long-term survival of Marine aviation. It also generated the need for a corresponding doctrinal publication, *Tentative Landing Operations Manual*. The manual outlined key aviation functions that included: reconnaissance, fighter cover for transports and landing craft,

striking enemy airfields and artillery, neutralizing beach strong points, and close air support. Marine Colonel Thomas C. Turner, was a contributor to this manual based on earlier flying expertise gained in China during its 1927 civil war and while serving as Director of Aviation from 1920 through 1925. Colonel Turner's squadron did not participate in combat operations, but it offered a forward peace-keeping presence, perfected flying skills, and flew more than 3,000 sorties. Tragically, the Distinguished Flying Cross recipient would not participate in the Fleet Marine Force organizational strides and growing acceptance of aviation. In 1931, he piloted an inspection flight in a new Sikorsky amphibian aircraft to Haiti and was killed after touchdown. His aircraft rolled off the runway and the landing gear sank into nearby sand. In the midst of his post-flight inspection, Colonel Turner was tragically struck by the plane's propeller. His ultimate sacrifice, long-term

contributions, and pioneering spirit greatly enhanced the evolution of aviation in the Marine Corps during these critical years.

During the Banana Wars and the Second World War, Marines faced small-scale guerrilla warfare which expanded the aviation role as pilots defined and fine-tuned close air support tactics. The grueling island battles with Japanese aviators on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Guam, Iwo Jima, and Midway demonstrated the worthiness of the McDonnell Douglas F4-U Corsair aircraft and it became a legendary symbol of air superiority in the Pacific region. Mavericks like Colonel Gregory "Pappy" Boyington from the Marine Fighter Attack "Black Sheep" Squadron 214 shot down countless enemy aircraft. He was later a prisoner of war and Marine ace. Boyington, and Colonel John H. Glenn, Jr., the first astronaut to orbit the Earth and an elected United States Senator later in his career, were testimonies of the old breed of daring

pilots who helped mold a new generation of fliers.

The United States Navy and Marine Corps leveraged their close air support capabilities and success stories as viable alternatives for the lack of available artillery. When the war ended, the Marine Corps had grown to six divisions and five air wings with 485,000 supporting troops. Marine aviators from the “greatest generation” logged 125 aces, recognized eight Medal of Honor recipients, and earned the nickname, “Flying Leathernecks.” It was these unselfish Marine fliers who demonstrated that aviation could effectively support the ground troops and further enhance air-ground amphibious operations.

#### Quantico Leadership Endorses Rotary-Wing Capabilities

By 1943, growing interest in amphibious operations caused the Marine Corps to revisit the rotary wing concept and to initiate discussions with the United States Navy that focused on developing a helicopter program for the Sikorsky aircraft. Russian-born Igor I. Sikorsky designed the first practical helicopter that sparked serious military interest. In 1946, the 18th Commandant of the Marine Corps and Medal of Honor recipient, General Alexander A. Vandegrift, task-organized a colonel-centric study group to review and improve amphibious landing techniques. An underlying study objective was to find a solution that would not repeat massive troop movements like those executed in Normandy and Okinawa, but instead would disperse small groups of troops to minimize operational vulnerabilities. One year later, the board recommended further investment in rotary-wing transport capabilities. General Vandegrift directed the formation of Marine Helicopter Squadron 1 (HMX-1) at Quantico, Virginia.

Colonel Edward C. Dyer was HMX-1's first commanding officer and he began selecting personnel for the start-up squadron in early 1947. During one of his recruiting briefs, he addressed a group of 60 officer students at Quantico to solicit interest in the future employment of helicopters



Department of Defense Photo  
*HMM-263 Major Bruce L. Shapiro pilots a CH-46 and lifts a 1st Marine Division reconnaissance team to a secure zone southwest of An Hoa Combat Base, Vietnam in May, 1970.*

and to screen for personnel joins. His presentation challenged the group to be part of this evolutionary era, yet two-thirds of the officers left without further interest, indicating a level of skepticism that still lingered even among the junior officers. The squadron commissioning was slated for July, yet delays in pilot training and aircraft transfers resulted in the official squadron launch on 1 December 1947—another monumental milestone for Marine air.

Despite initial setbacks, by April 1948, HMX-1 had 12 officers and 32 enlisted Marines on board with 12 other personnel in the training cycle. The first real test of the squadron was a ship-to-shore movement by five Sikorsky HO3S-1 “Dragonfly” helicopters during Operation Packard II. The helicopters lifted-off the deck of the USS *Palau* that was anchored off Onslow Beach, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The exercise showcased the transport capability of assault troops using rotary-wing aircraft.

#### Helicopters Support Marine Air-Ground Task Force Concept

Following World War II, a new concept gained official endorsement by

the 20th Marine Corps Commandant, Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., as a response to operational scenarios within the Pacific region. The integration of Marine air and the vision of the air-ground task force concept became a reality on 19 January 1953 with the activation of the 1st Provisional Marine Air-Ground Task Force at Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. Comprised of a reinforced infantry regiment and a reinforced air group, it was re-designated 1st Marine Brigade in 1954. More than 40 years since the birth of Marine aviation, the single command structure provided flexibility and scalability and employed all components of the air-ground team in support of amphibious operations.

Helicopters were used extensively in the Korean War during the battles for the Pusan Perimeter, Inchon and Seoul, and the Chosin Reservoir. Regardless of the strides and newfound believers in the employment of helicopters, severe budget cuts after Korea temporarily slowed development, training, and procurement. The Vietnam conflict led to phased helicopter squadron rotations to support South Vietnamese ground units against Communist guerrillas during Operation Shufly. The growing dependence on a multi-mission inventory of fixed-wing and helicopters proved that Marine air could operate from land or sea bases with the primary responsibility of supporting Marine ground units.

During Vietnam, the Marine Corps introduced a new workhorse to its helicopter inventory—the Boeing Vertol CH-46 Sea Knight, with its dual General Electric T-58-16 engines. The Marine Corps purchased 600 aircraft in 1964 to serve in combat and peacetime humanitarian missions. The Sea Knight is a medium lift assault support helicopter that requires a crew of four and can carry 9-16 passengers. Since the mid-1960s, the aviation logistics and maintenance support personnel achieved mission readiness levels and applied required equipment modifications and enhancements to sustain the CH-46 to its current “E” model configuration. Throughout its 40 plus-year



Photo courtesy of VMM-263

*Ospreys on a mission during VMM-263 training in spring 2007.*

life cycle, the CH-46 has proudly served the Marine Corps, beginning in Vietnam to the current participation in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The Boeing Bell V-22 Osprey Tiltrotor aircraft will begin a phased replacement of the aging Sea Knight starting in 2007. The fleet of Marine medium helicopter squadrons will gradually transition to Marine medium tiltrotor squadrons.

*“Thunder Chickens” pictured left to right: Maj John W. Spaid (copilot), SgtMaj Robert G. VanOostrom, LtCol Paul J. Rock, Jr. (pilot), and SSgt Jeffrey E. Poling (crew chief).*

Photo courtesy of VMM-263



### Osprey Tiltrotor Capabilities Termed Revolutionary

Almost a century after Lieutenant Cunningham’s historic solo, the Marine Corps will add a new volume to the aviation library when the “Thunder Chickens” from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 (VMM-263) based at Marine Corps Air Station, New River, North Carolina, officially launch the first operational fleet of Ospreys during an upcoming desert deployment. The Osprey repre-

sents the new generation of rotary-wing aircraft that has been termed as revolutionary, rather than evolutionary. The unique design that combines the best aerodynamic capabilities of fixed-wing and rotary flight is nothing short of a monumental feat.

The \$71 million dollar Boeing-manufactured Osprey is the only operational aircraft to date with the combined vertical lift capabilities of a helicopter and the range, speed, and altitude of a fixed-wing design. The Osprey’s dual-piloted flexibility to fly twice as fast and high, coupled with its improved range and aerial refueling capability will provide air planners

### VMM-263 Command Group

Lieutenant Colonel Paul J. Rock, Jr. is a United States Naval Academy graduate, who has spent half of his military career associated with the Osprey program serving as a test pilot, an instructor, in various maintenance and safety officer roles, and as a future operations planner during Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-06. Ironically, his first fleet assignment was with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263 in 1990 where he flew the CH-46E aircraft. He stood-up VMM-263 on 3 March 2006 as its first commanding officer. The executive officer of VMM-263, Lieutenant Colonel Paul P. Ryan, is also a Naval Academy graduate and a 10-year Osprey veteran. Lieutenant Colonel Evan G. Leblanc is the squadron operations officer who joined the Osprey family in 1997. The commanding officer refers to Sergeant Major Robert G. VanOostrom as the “motivator” of the squadron. The son of a retired sergeant major, VanOostrom exercises his daily management philosophy of taking care of his Marines by walking around the squadron halls, hangars, and flight decks with his flight suit and maintenance coveralls hanging nearby.



Photo courtesy of VMM-263

*An Osprey from VMM-263 supports a parachute jump for field exercises conducted in eastern North Carolina.*

with a valuable asset that will complement the Marine air-ground task force and drastically improve time-critical transportation for medical evacuations.

The Osprey can ferry as many as 24 Marines at a time or haul up to 20,000 pounds of cargo. During 2007, VMM-263 Marines conducted several familiarization training flights to include nearly 100 soldiers from the Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division, and approximately 250 Marines from 2d Marine Division's, 2d Marine Logistics Group, and II Marine Expeditionary Force. Ground forces from 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were also introduced to the Osprey when they exited out the rear doors during Marine air-ground task force integration training.

The 25-year-old Osprey project has generated its share of controversy, but civilian and military program managers and proponents of the aircraft have overcome design, mishap, and budget hurdles that are not uncommon throughout a phased new aircraft design, test and evaluation, and pre-launch life cycle. The deployment for

training to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma in Arizona and participation in the Desert Talon exercise in 2007 were first-class training highlights. This spring, the squadron earned its initial operational certification based on the impressive operational and combat readiness results achieved in the southwestern deserts. This major milestone was a crucial check-in-the-box requirement that confirmed the decision to deploy forward, and for two sister squadrons that are mirroring the VMM-263 training cycle.

#### **VMM-263 Marines Focused and Ready to Deploy without Fanfare**

Lieutenant Colonel Paul J. Rock, Jr., commanding officer of VMM-263, will lead his 150-plus Marines on the historic desert deployment; more than one third of the squadron are combat veterans. The media is no stranger to the "Thunder Chicken" Marines, yet the additional deployment attention does not distract the humble squadron. Lieutenant Colonel Rock understands the high profile significance of the upcoming deployment, but directs his leadership on ensuring his Marines are focused on what is most important—training and mission readiness. Lieutenant Colonel Rock's

command group shares this mindset and emphasizes regularly that VMM-263's mission is "to provide assault transport of combat, troops, supplies and equipment across the spectrum of expeditionary ops."

As Lieutenant Colonel Rock explains: "The Osprey will perform the same mission as the CH-46, but the variance will be demonstrated in the application of the Osprey's capabilities. The Osprey can fly higher, faster, haul a bigger payload, and it can undergo aerial refueling. The goal is to exploit the capabilities in its application."

Lieutenant Colonel Rock knows his VMM-263 Marines will embark on a historic mission, yet he is deeply focused on doing the job and bringing everyone back. He and his command group continually remind the Marines: "We have earned the right to deploy. We will prove ourselves during combat operations. We are a medium lift assault support that happens to fly the V-22. I want us to be a good V-22 squadron, but most importantly I want us to be a great Marine unit and our success will be because of the Marines." □1775□

## Marine Night Fighter Aerial Victories in Korea

by CMSgt David P. Anderson, USAF,  
Air National Guard History Office

For night missions in the Korean War, Marine aviators used four particular aircraft designed for night interdiction, and engaging and destroying enemy aircraft. The Douglas F3D-2N Skynight, Vought F4U-5N Corsair, Grumman F7F-3N Tigercat, and the Douglas AD-4N Skyraider, all performed well in night aerial operations, and all are credited with shooting down Communist aircraft.

Three Marine squadrons operated these aircraft. Marine Night Fighter Squadrons (VMF) 513 and 542 operated a mixture of F4U-5N, F7F-3N, and F3D-2N aircraft. The third Marine unit, Marine Composite Squadron 1 was activated in September 1952 to perform a variety of specialized missions such as electronic countermeasures, night interdiction, and airborne early warning. This squadron flew different versions of the AD Skyraider.

From 30 June 1951 to 15 June 1953, Marine night fighter aircraft shot down 11 North Korean and Communist Chinese aircraft. Pilots assigned to VMF-513 all had aerial victories, except one. The last (Marine night fighter) victory of the war was made by a pilot assigned to the composite squadron. Of the 11 aircraft scored, the F3D shot down the most with six victories (4 MiG-15s, 1 PO-2, and 1 Yak-15), followed by the F7F (two PO-2) and F4U (one PO-2 and one Yak-9) each credited with two, and one credited to an AD-4NL (PO-2).

In June 1951, United Nation forces began encountering harassment raids by enemy light planes at night along the frontlines and even in the area around Seoul. Pilots from VMF-513 had made continuous attempts at intercepting the pesky night hecklers, but failed to get a good radar track on the fabric-covered PO-2 biplane. However, on 30 June 1951, an F7F-3N flown by Captain Edwin B. Long and his radar operator, Chief Warrant Officer Robert C. Buckingham shot down a PO-2. The following month,



Photo courtesy of GySgt R.V. Jobe  
*LtCol James R. Anderson, Commanding Officer, VMF-513, and his radar observer before a mission in Korea, 1951. Radar observers were used in the two-seat F7F Tigercat but not in the Corsairs.*

on 13 July, Captain Donald L. Fenton, flying an F4U-5N, shot down another PO-2. On 23 September 1951, Major Eugene A. Van Gundy and his radar operator, Master Sergeant Thomas H. Ullom had the squadron's last aerial victory for 1951.

In 1952, there was an increase of three aerial victories from the previous year to nine, including four won by night fighters. The first six months of 1952 found the pilots of VMF-513 without an aerial victory. However, they were certainly busy making the night a dangerous time to be out for Communist troops as Tigercats and Corsairs made numerous interdiction raids against Communist supply lines and killed hundreds of enemy troops in contact with Marine infantry. First Lieutenant John W. Andre got the squadron's first aerial victory for 1952 on 7 June, after he shot down a North Korean Yak-9 while flying an F4U-5N. The squadron would not log another victory until November 1952, five months after the unit received a fleet of 12 Douglas F3D-2N Skynight aircraft, bringing them to full operational capability. On 3 November 1952, Major William T. Stratton, Jr., and Master Sergeant Hans C. Hoglind were flying a night combat air patrol near the Sinuiju airfield when Master Sergeant Hoglind picked up a contact on his intercept radar, which was

passed to him by a ground radar station. Eventually, Major Stratton made a visual contact of a jet exhaust straight in front of the F3D. After getting clearance to fire, Major Stratton put three long bursts of 20mm cannon into a Yak-15. The enemy aircraft was seen exploding three times and then plunged towards the enemy airfield below. This aerial victory marked the first time that an enemy jet had been destroyed at night by use of airborne intercept radar equipment in a jet fighter. Five days later, Captain Oliver R. Davis and Warrant Officer Dramus F. Fessler would do it again against a MiG-15. Captain Davis expended only 20 rounds of 20mm cannon fire. Of the four aerial victories credited to VMF-513 for 1952, F3D crews achieved three. On 12 January 1953, Major Elswin P. Dunn and Master Sergeant Lawrence J. Fortin got the squadron's first kill of the year by shooting down a PO-2. The squadron's F3D crews shot down two more MiG-15s in January, and closed their MiG killing streak for the duration of the war.

In the early morning hours of 15 June 1953, Major George H. Linnemeier and Chief Warrant Officer Vernon Kramer took off in their AD-4NL from Kimpo airfield to intercept an inbound "bogey." Once airborne, it took Chief Warrant Officer Kramer less than three minutes to make contact with the unknown aircraft. The radar contact was tracked for about 20 miles before Major Linnemeier got a positive visual identification of the plane as a North Korean PO-2. He maneuvered his AD-4NL behind the enemy aircraft, and fired a burst of 20mm cannon into the PO-2 causing one wing to rip off, and plunging the rest of the airplane into the ground. This victory was the last aerial victory for Marine night fighters. It was also the only aerial victory credited to Marine Composite Squadron 1, and the only aerial victory achieved by the Douglas AD-4NL Skyraider in the Korean War. □1775□

## A History of the 6th Civil Affairs Group

*by Col Jeffrey Acosta, LtCol Ray Decker, and SSgt Greer Saunders*

As the United States entered the second year of Operation Iraqi Freedom, it became apparent to the Marine Corps that the intensity and duration of combat operations in Iraq was stressing its limited civil affairs force structure. The 3d and 4th Civil Affairs Groups deployed to Iraq in 2003 and 2004 and were in need of rest and reconstitution. Headquarters Marine Corps and Marine Forces Reserve resolved this operational and personnel tempo challenge by establishing two “provisional” civil affairs groups from units within the Selected Marine Corps Reserve. The 5th Civil Affairs Group would be built around the 4th Combat Engineer Battalion and the 6th Civil Affairs Group around the 4th Maintenance Battalion. In March 2005, a series of messages from the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Atlantic and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve set in motion the process to activate the 6th Civil Affairs Group “as a separate and detached command, reporting directly to Commander, Marine Forces Reserve.” Further, they directed that the group be “composed of a headquarters detachment and four civil affairs detachments” in order “to provide civil/military operations support to the Marine Expeditionary Force in OIF.” The 6th Civil Affairs Group activated on 1 June 2005 and deployed to Iraq in September 2005 for seven months.

Colonel Paul W. Brier commanded. His new staff and a major portion of the table of organization of 65 Marine officers, 2 Naval medical officers, 125 Marine enlisted personnel, and 5 Navy corpsmen came from the 4th Maintenance Battalion. The balance of the organization was recruited and filled by volunteers from the Active Reserve, Selected Marine Corps Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve, and retired Marines who volunteered for duty in Iraq. The next immediate challenge was training as only Colonel Brier and 13 other 6th Civil Affairs

Group Marines had the civil affairs training, education, and operational experience necessary to qualify as civil affairs officers or noncommissioned officers.

The 6th Civil Affairs Group began training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, with 138 Marines and sailors on 4 June 2005. While most Marine units have at least one year to develop the skills, experience, and teamwork necessary to ensure combat effectiveness before deployment to

based on lessons learned from the 3d, 4th and 5th Civil Affairs Groups during their deployments in Iraq. Throughout the summer, the Marines and sailors of the unit executed a rigorous training schedule at bases stretching from California to Finland. When the 6th Civil Affairs Group began deploying to Iraq in August 2005, the unit’s strength stood at 193 Marines and sailors from 27 states, all of whom completed Colonel Brier’s training objectives.

The group deployed to Iraq in several echelons with the last echelon arriving at the Taqaddum Forward Operating Base on 11 September 2005. The following day, the group’s civil affairs detachments, teams, and liaison elements were flown throughout Anbar Province to join the units of the 2d Marine Division they were assigned to support. The group’s headquarters was co-located with the 2d Marine Division’s command post at Camp Blue Diamond in Ramadi, and provided a civil-military operations planning team to the Headquarters, Multinational Force West (II Marine Expeditionary Force Forward) at Camp Fallujah and liaison officers to various headquarters in Taqaddum, Fallujah, Karbala, and Baghdad.

On 21 September 2005, the group completed the relief in place and transfer of authority with the 5th Civil Affairs Group. During the ensuing four months, the 6th Civil Affairs Group supported two major counter-insurgency operations: Operations Sayaid (Phase II) and Steel Curtain. The objectives for both operations were to gain control of the upper Euphrates River valley in order to create a secure environment that would enable the people of Iraq to participate in the Iraqi constitutional referendum and the national elections. Civil affairs activities provided by the group ranged from support to the municipal and provincial governments to assisting displaced persons. The 6th Civil



*The unit crest for the 6th Civil Affairs Group, created in May 2005, symbolizes service with 2d Marine Division. The colors are those of the Iraqi flag. The scroll and sword, and the eagle, globe, and anchor are symbolic of a Marine Corps civil affairs unit.*

theater, Colonel Brier and his staff had only three months. His objectives for pre-deployment training were that all Marines: (1) be civil affairs qualified and possess an operationally relevant understanding of Iraqi culture and language; (2) complete combat refresher training; (3) complete required U.S. Central Command training for operations in Iraq; and (4) complete mission-oriented civil affairs, and security and stabilization operations training

Affairs Group coordinated the delivery of humanitarian assistance supplies that included 15,000 blankets, 15,000 sweaters, 5,000 heaters, 1,100 cooking sets, 2,250 hygiene kits, food, and water during the operation.

Coalition force support to the Iraqi constitutional referendum, 15 October 2005, and the Iraqi national election, 15 December 2005, was called Operation Liberty Express. The 6th Civil Affairs Group sent Lieutenant Colonel Ray Decker to the 2d Marine Division operations section to assist in planning support to election activities. Other civil affairs Marines from the group were sent to assist election support teams throughout Anbar Province. The group's Marines at the Fallujah civil-military operations center and the government support team at the Provincial Government Center in Ramadi facilitated planning and coordination between the Coalition forces, Iraqi Transitional Government, the Independent Election Commission of Iraq, United Nations observers, the provincial and municipal governments of Anbar Province, and the media throughout the operation. According to records kept by the Independent Election Commission of Iraq and the United Nations, 259,919 citizens of Anbar Province voted in the constitutional referendum and 369,755 people cast ballots during the Iraqi National Election, representing 55 percent of eligible voters. The increased voter participation, resulting in the first democratically elected permanent government in the history of Iraq, can be attributed to the success of the three operations conducted by the 2d Marine Division and the 6th Civil Affairs Group working with the Iraqi government.

In January 2006, the 6th Civil Affairs Group became a major subordinate element of Multinational Force-West when II Marine Expeditionary Force and 2d Marine Division staffs were merged. This resulted in the group's headquarters moving to Camp Fallujah. The civil-military operations planning team was then reattached to the headquarters element. Additionally, to support and reinforce the success of operations in the upper

Euphrates River valley, the 6th Civil Affairs Group redistributed existing civil affairs teams, created new civil affairs teams, and established two additional civil-military operations centers in Hadithah and the al-Qaim region. Finally, a field history team was established to document the operational history of the 6th Civil Affairs Group and write the unit's command chronologies.

As a major subordinate command of Multinational Force-West, the Marines and sailors of the 6th Civil Affairs Group shifted their focus from supporting counterinsurgency operations and elections, to "presence" patrols, processing damage claims, making condolence payments, and building the governance and economic capabilities of the provincial and municipal governments of Anbar Province. The Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee, an Iraqi body chaired by Governor Ma'Moon Sami Rashid al-Awani, was the primary organization that the group supported in this effort. They usually met once a week to propose, prioritize, plan, and execute reconstruction projects nominated by the municipal government or identified by the Provincial Director Generals. At times, progress was slow due to Iraqi management methods and cultural imperatives, as well as a murder and intimidation campaign conducted by insurgents,

*Major Karl E. Johnstone (second from the left), a 6th Civil Affairs Group team leader, speaks to the leaders of a small Iraqi farming community outside of Ramadi, Iraq, as part of a presence patrol and civil affairs assessment.*

Photo courtesy of Col Jeffrey Acosta



foreign fighters, and terrorists. The group played an essential role in convincing the provincial and municipal governments to continue to operate and push forward despite this terror campaign. The U.S. State Department's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office credited the 6th Civil Affairs Group, working with Anbar municipal and provincial government officials, for the delivery in record time of 43 statements of work worth \$105 million to the Iraqi National Government and the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. Work on the projects began during the final days of the group's tour of duty.

In early March 2006, as II Marine Expeditionary Force Forward was replaced by I Marine Expeditionary Force Forward, the relief-in-place began between the 6th and 3d Civil Affairs Groups. The 6th Civil Affairs Group arrived back at Camp Lejeune on 4 April 2006 to begin the demobilization process. On the morning of Friday, 7 April 2006, the group held its final formation as a unit. Brigadier General Darrell L. Moore, Commanding General, Marine Corps Mobilization Command, addressed the formation, thanking them for stepping forward to serve in Iraq and congratulating them on their dramatic accomplishments. On the morning of 8 April 2006, the Marines and sailors of the 6th Civil Affairs Group began their journeys back to their home training centers for final demobilization processing, terminal leave, and release from active duty. The final duties for the group were completed by the field history team who organized and delivered 153 oral history interviews, 1,500 classified and unclassified documents, and 30 artifacts to the U.S. Marine Corps History Division, the Major General Alfred M. Gray Marine Corps Research Center Archives, and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. These primary source materials will ensure that the civil affairs activities, as well as the lineage and history of the 6th Civil Affairs Group, are preserved for research and study by future generations of Marines. Mission complete, the group was deactivated on 31 May 2006. □1775□

## Breaking Skids

*by Capt Christopher Wilson  
Field History Public Affairs*

Captain Vernice G. Armour (call sign “Junk”), the Chicago, Illinois, native and Cobra pilot with Marine Light Attack Squadron 169 (HMLA-169), remembers vividly how quiet everything was that night. It was her first flight into enemy territory, and as one must imagine it is for any pilot, the memory was brilliantly clear for Armour.

The pounding of the blades was the only discernable sound being made as her flight division of four Cobras and their crews flew over foreign territory. She had been trained well, her squadron making sure that 95 percent of their flights were done in a tactical mind-set; however, nothing can ever truly prepare you for the actual truth of the moment. Now here she was, at this moment, no radio chatter, blades humming, and all the while she clearly recalls plotting the Cobra’s progress on the map and stating, “Okay, we are crossing the border right now.” They had been trying to contact the forward air controller from the time they were 15 kilometers from the border, but were unsuccessful making contact on any of the frequencies. Meanwhile, they were going further into enemy territory. They had been skimming slightly below a giant layer of black haze created by the oil fires hanging up in the nighttime air, starting 10 kilometers before the border. There were vehicles that were blown up, on fire, and turned over everywhere. What added to these incredible visuals was the realization that they did not know where all the friendly forces or any of the enemy forces were located. At this point, Armour felt like molding back a little further into her seat, which is the only real armor in the aircraft, knowing that the windows on the Cobra were Plexiglas and could easily be pierced by a round. The unknown elements in the situation made for a very intense ride.

Armour describes her experience:

We didn’t want to fly too deep into enemy territory without being in contact with someone. As we flew around, we flew over numerous friendly positions and burning enemy vehicles. It looked like everything was going well. After trying to make contact to no avail, we landed at a forward air refueling point inside Iraq to sleep for a few hours. I was tired and very cold. I laid my body armor down for cushion as we slept out on the ground next to a dirt bank to get a little rest. We took off a few hours later and again had no success contacting a FAC. We headed home, south of the border. As we crossed back over into ‘friendly’ territory, a sense of relief and accomplishment washed over me. We went in and made it back out, all crews and aircraft intact. It was still nighttime, but not quite as dark because the moon was now high in the sky. We made it back to the air base, landed, and took all our gear inside. We had completed our first successful night mission. We were safe...for now. I thanked God for another day as I watched the faint signs of the sunrise to come.

Armour is one of a number of female pilots who have been involved in combat missions since operations in Iraq and Afghanistan began. In the aviation community, women in the Marine Corps are still blazing trails, or more appropriately put, breaking skids. The first woman to step to the forefront was Sarah Deal, who earned her gold wings on 21 April 1995.

First Lieutenant Deal had a long-held passion for flying. She attended Kent State University and was commissioned as a Marine Corps officer in 1991. She initially trained as an air traffic control officer since women were not permitted to be pilots at the time.



*Capt Vernice Armour readies for a mission in her AH-1W Cobra.*

In her spare time, Deal pursued her life-long dream by logging flight hours. In 1993, the so-called “risk rule” that banned women from certain specialties within the military was finally removed, allowing Deal, after passing the aptitude test, to proceed to Naval Flight School in Pensacola, Florida. After successfully completing the course of instruction, she reported to San Diego, California, for her first assignment as a Marine aviator with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466.

Not long after Deal pinned on her wings, First Lieutenant Jeanne Buchanan earned her wings and also became the first female Naval Flight Officer on 16 August 1996. Another milestone was reached in February of 1997 when First Lieutenant Keri Lynn Schubert earned her wings and became the first female Naval Flight Officer for the F/A-18 Hornet jet. Schubert said of the accomplishment at the time: “I feel like just another Marine. I don’t think of myself as any different than the guys going through the program. It’s not a physical thing. It’s tactics and coordination and a team atmosphere where we work together.” Lieutenant Buchanan echoed those sentiments when she said of her achievement, “I’m first a Marine.” □1775□

## Marines at the Battle of Drewry's Bluff

by 2ndLt Brian A. Kerg  
Intern

The Civil War was characterized by the bitter rivalries inherent in domestic conflict, hallmarked by battles conducted between peers. Men educated at the same service academies, who had served and fought together throughout their careers, were forced to destroy one another.

This effect was compounded between the U.S. and Confederate Marines due to the unique nature of Marines as “soldiers of the sea.” Marine guard detachments were assigned to naval ships, which were largely limited to engagements along the coasts and rivers of the continental United and Confederate States. The relatively small navies of the warring nations were destined to collide, along with their subordinate Marines.

Before secession, there were 63 officers in the United States Marine Corps. Twenty-eight left U.S. service throughout the war. Nineteen of them joined the Confederate Marine Corps. These men, formerly brothers-in-arms, would clash repeatedly in the amphibious assaults and riverine campaigns that dominated naval warfare throughout the conflict.

United States and Confederate States Marines fired on one another for the first time in the mostly bloodless duel at Ship Island on 8 July 1861. Their next battle occurred on 12 October 1861 at the Head of the Passes before Pensacola, Florida, with significant casualties on both sides. At the Battle of Drewry's Bluff on 15 May 1862, these rival Corps would face some of the most intense fighting they had seen to date.

Seven miles south of Richmond, Virginia, Corporal John F. Mackie and 12 U.S. Marines under his command fought at their posts on board the USS *Galena*, exchanging musket fire in a bitter duel with two companies of Confederate Marines sniping from the banks of the James River. Shells fired from rebel shore batteries on Drewry's Bluff, towering some 90 feet above,

exploded all around the Union squadron for several hours on that May morning. Eight and 10-inch artillery shots tore into the sides of their ships, sending shrapnel and splinters to cut into the crewmen. In the words of Corporal Mackie, the artillery was, “smashing every one of our six small boats, cutting up so many holes in the smokestack that it reminded one of a nutmeg grater, tearing great gaps in our spar deck.”

Scattered across the decks of the six ships of the squadron, the U.S. Marines fought on, desperately supporting the gun-crews that returned fire on Drewry's Bluff. Sailors and a handful of Marines worked the guns, resolutely bracketing their target while bombs burst over their heads. More and more Marines were forced to put down their muskets and attend the naval guns as sailors fell, dead and wounded from the blistering Confederate shells and gunfire.

Suddenly, a shot from *Galena's* 890-pound Parrot Rifle struck true. The 2.9-inch, 10-pound ball crashed among the Confederate artillerists, temporarily driving them from their field pieces. The U.S. Marines had plenty of reason to celebrate—of the eight guns in the Bluff's earthworks, three had been emplaced by Colonel Robert Tansill, Confederate States Army, a former 28-year U.S. Marine Corps veteran.

The *Galena* prepared to fire for

*Cpl Mackie firing at the Confederates on the bluff in a painting by Col Charles Waterhouse.*



effect on the battery they had hit, but its success made it a prime Confederate target. Over the course of the battle, it was struck by shells 43 times. Captain John D. Simms, the battalion commander of the Confederate Marines, and another former U.S. Marine officer, directed the fire of his sharpshooters and killed many crewmen on board the *Galena*. The rebel Marines' fire silenced the guns of the ship several times. Those same snipers also shot and killed the commanding officers of both the USS *Aroostook* and the *Port Royal*, throwing the command and control of a third of the squadron into disarray.

On the deck of the *Galena*, the situation became dire when a 10-inch shot crashed into the ship. When the smoke cleared, the Marines found that the entire after division was killed or wounded. Corporal Mackie, surrounded by this carnage and still under intense fire, sprang into action. With a shout of, “Come on, boys, here's a chance for the Marines!”, he rushed forward, leading the effort to remove the wounded and put them under cover. After clearing the deck of the dead and debris, he and his fellow Marines manned the *Galena's* Parrot Rifle until the end of the fight. It was this remarkable leadership under incredible duress that made him the first recipient of the Medal of Honor in Marine Corps history.

At the end of the battle, the Union squadron was checked by the Confederate Marines. The location became “The Gibraltar of the Confederacy,” as well as the headquarters of the Confederate States Marine Corps. The Federal ships were forced to retreat back down the James River. Amid the destruction wrought on the ships and their comrades, U.S. Marines saw how vicious the fighting against their Confederate rivals could be. And the soldiers of the sea would continue to draw each other's blood for the rest of the war. □1775□

## Museum Preserves 60 Years of Marine Corps Rotary Wing Aviation

*by Ben Kristy  
Aviation Curator*

Sixty years ago, the Marine Corps faced the daunting challenge of developing the equipment and doctrine needed to conduct amphibious operations in the “Atomic Age.” Massive World War II style landings were no longer possible against an enemy armed with atomic weapons. The solution came in the form of the concept of “vertical assault” and the helicopter. Through its collection of historic rotary wing aircraft, the National Museum of the Marine Corps tells the story of how the helicopter came to be such a vital part of the Marine Corps.

Marine Helicopter Squadron 1 (HMX-1), the Marine Corps’ first helicopter squadron, stood up on 1 December 1947 and received its first helicopter in February 1948. Tasked

with creating the doctrinal elements needed to employ rotary-wing aviation in amphibious operations, HMX-1 set to work creating a helicopter force from scratch. Four small Sikorsky HO3S-1s of Marine Observation Squadron 6 were the first Marine helicopters to arrive in Korea after the outbreak of hostilities in 1950. The helicopters quickly took to the many tasks assigned them: reconnaissance, medical evacuation, command and control, search and rescue, artillery spotting, and even laying communication wire. HMR-161, the world’s first helicopter transport squadron, arrived in Korea in September 1951. Flying larger Sikorsky HRS-1s, the squadron routinely delivered men and supplies under combat conditions, proving the viability of vertical assault. The contri-

butions of Marine Corps helicopters in Korea illustrated the impact that rotary wing aviation could have on the battlefield.

In the years between the Korean and Vietnam wars, the Corps continued to refine the vertical assault doctrine. Fielding a truly suitable assault helicopter, however, continued to be problematic. Mechanical issues plagued the massive Sikorsky H2RS, the Marine Corps’ first heavy lift helicopter. The HRS-1’s interim replacement, the UH-34D entered service in 1957, but would soldier on into the late 1960s due to ongoing technical challenges associated with producing a larger assault helicopter. Marine helicopters entered combat in Vietnam in April 1962 and flew their final mis-

*This exhibit at the National Museum of the Marine Corps depicts a machine gun squad exiting a HRS-1 as part of Operation Summit, 21 September 1951, the first use of Marine Corps helicopters to deliver Marines directly onto the field of battle.*

Photo courtesy of Eric Long Photography



sions in April 1975. The Corps finally received its long sought after assault helicopter with the introduction of the turbine powered Boeing-Vertol CH-46A Sea Knight in 1964. By the end of the Vietnam War, the helicopter had become as crucial to the Marine Corps as the rifle or the canteen.

In the post-Vietnam era, frequent upgrades and improvements kept the Corps' fleet of helicopters in the air and in the fight. Marine helicopters supported military and humanitarian missions around the world. Often Marine Corps helicopters were the first American military assets to arrive in response to natural disasters or to protect American interests overseas. Time and wear have taken their toll, particularly on the CH-46 fleet. The Corps identified the urgent need for a CH-46 replacement in the early 1980s and the Navy selected the revolutionary Bell V-22 tiltrotor Osprey as the replacement for the ubiquitous Sea Knight in 1983. In September, the V-22s of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 will deploy to Iraq, marking the first use of the tiltrotor aircraft in combat.

Since the mid-1960s, the National Museum of the Marine Corps and its predecessors have collected examples of helicopters utilized by the Marine Corps. Today, the museum holds

more than 40 rotary-wing aircraft, including one of five V-22 Full-Scale Development airframes. The striking display of an HRS-1 disgorging a Marine machine gun team onto a hilltop in Korea in the fall of 1951 introduces museum visitors to the vertical assault concept. An example of an HO3S-1, the Marine's first helicopter, waits in the Korean War Gallery. Inside the Vietnam Gallery, visitors walk through the rear half of a CH-46 (itself a combat veteran with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265) into the museum's recreation of Hill 881 South. Suspended just outside the gallery is the Bell UH-1E Huey gunship with which Captain Steven Pless and his crew heroically rescued the crew of a downed U.S. Army helicopter from overwhelming Viet Cong forces on 19 August 1967, earning Pless the Medal of Honor and his three crewmembers Navy Crosses.

Other significant Corps helicopters held by the National Museum of the Marine Corps are on display at museums and military installations across the country. Among the museum's examples of the beloved UH-34D is Bu147191, which made the final flight of a Marine UH-34 in 1973. This helicopter now sits proudly outside Marine Corps Air Station New

River. The museum also holds the CH-46 from which, on 31 January 1970, Medal of Honor recipient Private First Class Raymond M. Clausen, Jr., repeatedly ventured into a Vietnamese minefield to rescue wounded Marines. The Carolinas Aviation Museum, located in Charlotte, North Carolina, has restored this helicopter, badly damaged in Afghanistan in 2004, to its Vietnam configuration and will put the CH-46 on display later this fall. The Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum, located at MCAS Miramar, displays the CH-46 that lifted Ambassador Graham Martin out of the American embassy in Saigon on 30 April 1975 during Operation Frequent Wind, and a Bell AH-1J Sea Cobra that participated in Operation Desert Storm. Both helicopters are part of the National Museum of the Marine Corps' collection.

In the six decades since the creation of HMX-1, Marine Corps rotary-wing aviation has become a critical player on the Marine's air-ground team. Through its holdings of historic rotary-wing aircraft, the National Museum of the Marine Corps honors the dedication, courage, and ingenuity of the Marines who have operated the "Whirlybirds," "Eggbeaters," "Deuces," "Husses," "Phrogs," "Hueys," "Snakes," and "Ospreys" since 1947. □1775□

*HMM-161'S "Yankee Romeo 31" moves in for an external pickup in a landing zone near the Rockpile. Gear and supplies were transferred from one landing zone to another by this method.*

USMC Photo A192732



## Highlights from the 2005 Annual Chronology

by Kara R. Newcomer  
Reference Historian

The “Annual Chronology of the Marine Corps” serves as a valuable source of information on significant events and dates in contemporary Marine Corps history. Since 1982, the Historical Reference Branch of the Marine Corps History Division has compiled the yearly chronology by researching numerous primary and secondary sources each week. The following excerpts highlight key entries from the 2005 Chronology including the ongoing Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. To see past annual chronologies as well as the complete 2005 Chronology, please visit the Frequently Requested section of the History Division’s website at [www.history.usmc.mil](http://www.history.usmc.mil).

**January** – Marines were among the U.S. Armed Forces sent to render aid to the tsunami-devastated countries of Asia. The massive tsunami swept across the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004, killing and displacing hundreds of thousands of people. The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) was diverted from the Western Pacific and was among those sent to help in the

humanitarian effort, Operation Unified Assistance. Troops stayed in the area for about six weeks.

**26 January** – A tragic helicopter crash in western Iraq claimed the lives of 30 Marines and one sailor. The CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter from the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing was transporting personnel conducting security and stability operations near Ruthbah in the Anbar Province. Twenty-seven of the victims were from 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, stationed out of Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

**9 February** – Marine administrative message 057/05 (MarAdmin 057/05) was issued stating that casualty assistance officers would no longer wear the dress blue uniform but a service alpha uniform when notifying families of a Marine’s death.

**27 March** – I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) completed a relief in place. Lieutenant General John F. Sattler, I MEF commanding general, transferred authority to II MEF commanding general, Major General

Stephen T. Johnson, during a ceremony in Fallujah, Iraq. Marines with I MEF began arriving home at Camp Pendleton, California, the next day.

**31 March** – The Marine Corps announced that Marines would no longer be sentries for the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, after the end of 2005. Marines had been guarding the school since 1851 but the need for more active duty troops dictated the change.

**7 April** – Two new campaign medals were announced in recognition of service members’ contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Inclusive dates for the Afghanistan Campaign Medal were 24 October 2001 to an undetermined future date, while the Iraqi Campaign Medal dates were 19 March 2003 to an undetermined future date. Troops were eligible for both awards if they meet all required criteria for each.

**11 April** – Insurgents claiming to be linked to al-Qaeda tried to overrun a Marine base on the Syrian border using gunmen, suicide car bombs, and a fire truck loaded with explosives. The raid on Camp Gannon at Husaybah resulted in three wounded Marines but no American deaths.

**15 April** – Marine General Peter Pace was nominated to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President George W. Bush. General Pace was the first Marine to be selected for the nation’s top uniformed military post and only the second Joint Chief’s chairman to rise from vice chairman.

**7-14 May** – Marines lead the successful coalition offensive campaign Operation Matador near the Iraq-Syria border. The major offensive included

*Marines render aid to the tsunami-devastated countries of Asia as part of Operation Unified Assistance, January–February 2005.*





Courtesy of Cpl Rocco DeFilippis

*Marines from across the U.S. rushed to the Gulf Coast region to offer assistance following the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in late August 2005.*

nearly 1,000 troops backed by warplanes and helicopter gunships sweeping through desert outposts along ancient smuggling routes believed to be the staging areas for foreign fighters slipping across the border. Nine Marines were killed and 40 wounded during the fighting.

**9 May** – Marines clashed with a band of insurgents in eastern Afghanistan. The battle began after Marines received a tip about insurgents operating in Laghman, an opium-producing area 60 miles east of Kabul. The insurgents opened fire with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades before splitting into two groups, one fleeing to a village and the other to a cave on a nearby ridge. The five-hour fight left two Marines and an estimated 23 rebels dead.

**13 May** – The Pentagon recommended closing nearly 180 military installations and offices across the U.S. in the first major restructuring of the nation's military network in a decade. The findings were then sent to the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission that spent the

summer reviewing them in public hearings and installation visits. The impact on the Marine Corps was considered light with no major bases being recommended for closure.

**25 May** – The U.S. Mint announced the release of a commemorative coin in honor of the Marine Corps' 230th Birthday. One side featured the famous Iwo Jima flag-raising while the other depicted the Corps' emblem and motto. The Mint is permitted to release only two official commemorative coins each year by Congress.

**21 June** – Former Commandant of the Marine Corps and Medal of Honor recipient, General Louis H. Wilson, Jr., passed away at his home at the age of 85. He received the highest award for bravery, the Medal of Honor, for taking and holding a key position on Guam during World War II, and later became the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps on 1 July 1975. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

**23 June** – Iraqi insurgents carried out the deadliest attack against U.S.

female service members to date when a suicide car bomber rammed a convoy in Fallujah. Five Marines (three male and two female) and one female sailor were killed in the attack and 13 others wounded, 11 of whom were female.

**1 July** – The History and Museums Division of the Marine Corps was reorganized into two separate divisions, with both the History Division and the Museums Division (later renamed the National Museum of the Marine Corps) standing up as separate units under the Marine Corps University. The History Division was then relocated from the Washington Navy Yard to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, on 1 September 2005. The Marine Corps Historical Center closed its doors after nearly 30 years.

**5 July** – Marine administrative message 335/05 announced the realignment and redesignation of all four force service support groups into Marine logistics groups.

**15 July** – The Senate approved Marine General Peter Pace to be the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Pace was nominated to the position three months earlier.

**3 August** – Fourteen Marine Reservists and a civilian interpreter were killed in Haditha, Iraq, when the amphibious assault vehicle they were traveling in was struck by a roadside bomb. Two days earlier, six other Marines were killed near the same city by enemy gunfire. Nineteen of the 20 killed in those two days were from the same Ohio-based unit, 3d Battalion, 25th Marines.

**13 August** – Marines and Afghan troops launched an offensive in the remote Afghanistan Korengal Valley. The operation was aimed at rebels, believed to have killed 19 U.S. troops in June 2005, hiding out in the eastern Kunar Province near the Pakistani border. Only two Marines were wounded during the offensive.

**29 August** – Marines from across the U.S. rushed to aid the devastated Gulf



*The U.S. Postal Service unveiled a set of commemorative stamps honoring four prominent Marines on 10 November 2005 as part of the Marine Corps Birthday celebration.*

Coast region after it was pummeled by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Troops helped rescue stranded people immediately following the storms and then assisted with the ongoing clean-up effort. The last of the active duty Marines with Task Force Katrina returned to their home bases in early October 2005.

**16 September** – General Robert Magnus assumed the duties of Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, replacing General William L. Nyland. General Nyland retired from active duty on 1 November 2005 after 37 years of service.

**7 October** – The site of the future Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Marine Corps History Center was unveiled by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Michael W. Hagee, during a ceremony at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. Once completed, the Simmons History Center will be a wing on the Marine Corps University's Gray Research Center and will be the home of the

Marine Corps History Division.

**8 October** – The Kashmir region of Pakistan was devastated by a 7.6-magnitude earthquake. Marines and sailors from III Marine Expeditionary Force deployed later the same month to render needed aid to the area. Approximately 240 members from 3d Marine Logistics Group set up near Muzaffarabad to provide humanitarian assistance.

**26 October** – U.S. and Japanese officials reached an agreement to relocate the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Camp Schwab, both located on Okinawa. This agreement preceded later talks between the two nations, including one three days later where it was decided that nearly 7,000 Marines from Okinawa would be relocated to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam over a six-year period.

**28 October** – The Marine Corps was given approval to create a special operations unit that would deploy alongside the special forces of the

other military services. The Marine Corps Special Operations Command's component, known as MarSoc, was created after several years of discussion by the Pentagon and the Marine Corps, and the success of a test unit, Detachment 1, in 2003.

**10 November** – Marines around the world, including those serving in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, celebrated the Marine Corps' 230th birthday. As part of the celebrations, the U.S. Postal Service unveiled a set of commemorative stamps honoring four prominent Marines. Those featured were Medal of Honor recipients Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone and Sergeant Major Daniel Daly, and Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune

and Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller.

**16 November** – The Marine Corps issued a recall of more than 10,000 combat vests that did not pass ballistic requirements when manufactured. MarAdmin 544/05 announced the recall following a Pentagon-initiated review revealed that several lots of vests were accepted and fielded despite originally failing ballistic tests. Five thousand other vests had been recalled in May.

**21 December** – Marines with I MEF began deploying to Iraq to relieve the Marines of II MEF in the fourth large-scale deployment the Marine Corps had undertaken in the past two years in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. More than 25,000 Marines and sailors with I MEF were expected to be in western Iraq by January 2006.

**31 December** – The strength of the U.S. Armed Forces was 1,418,514 of whom 178,704 were U.S. Marines.

□1775□

## The V-22 Osprey Tiltrotor Aircraft

by Kimberly Adams and Rachel Kingcade  
Reference Librarians

Mention the word Osprey and some civilians envision the sea hawk known for its spectacular ability to rip a fish from the water with razor sharp talons in the blink of an eye; among the military community, however, the word Osprey means the odd-looking and controversial tiltrotor aircraft designed to perform the missions of a helicopter with the power of an airplane. The controversy surrounding the V-22 Osprey did not begin with the 20 July 1992 accident at Quantico that claimed the lives of seven crewmen in front of a crowd of Congressmen and government officials; problems were evident when the program's operation budget rose from \$2.5 billion in 1986 to \$30 billion in 1988. The Library of the Marine Corps is an ideal place to study the troubled history of this aircraft which will deploy to Al-Asad Airfield, Iraq, in September 2007 for its first combat mission.

Included in the Congressional Information Service collection available in the library, is the transcript of the August 1992 House Armed Services Committee hearing on the status of the V-22 program, during which a representative for the Department of Defense, which was opposed to the Osprey mostly because of budget concerns, offered alternatives to the program, including accepting new craft proposals from contractors and revising the Corps' medium-lift mission. The Osprey's Marine Corps proponents argued the craft's vertical lift assault capabilities—which make the capabilities of the already-crumbling CH-46 fleet archaic—would push the Corps into the twenty-first century of warfighting. Civilians further foresaw the craft's long-range commercial potential as documented by Crawford Brubaker in his article, "U.S. Should Retain V-22 to Encourage Development of Civilian Tilt-Rotor," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*



Courtesy of Darby Allen

*Ahead of a US-led Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFX) on the Eastern seaboard of the United States, HMS Illustrious welcomed the very first embarkation of a US Marine Corps Bell/Boeing V-22 Osprey onto a United Kingdom ship today.*

(June 11, 1990). Tiltrotor aircraft could ease airport congestion in "high density air traffic corridors," and new vertiport construction and aircraft procurement could boost the economy. The V-22 survived under modified budget constraints.

Following the April 2000 Osprey test crash that killed 19 Marines and the subsequent December crash that killed an additional four, on 15 December 2000, Secretary of Defense William Cohen established an independent panel to review how the following factors relate to strategy and the effectiveness of the aircraft: training, engineering and design, production and quality control, suitability to satisfy operational requirements, and performance and safety. Among the panel to review the V-22 program's conclusions was that the Osprey had the best probability out of existing and alternative craft to meet the mission needs of the Marine Corps and

U.S. Special Operations Command. The panel's full report is available for check out.

The Library also has access to electronic resources such as Nexis, which has the transcript of the official 13 April 2007 Marine Corps briefing on the deployment of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263, the first Osprey squadron, to Iraq in September. During the question and answer session, Deputy Commandant for Aviation, Lieutenant General John G. Castellaw, explained in detail why the Corps is so excited about the many capabilities of the craft. "What we have is an aircraft that goes twice as fast. It goes three times as far. And it is the most survivable by about six or seven times of what the aircraft it replaces is."

Examining the Osprey from a different perspective, Christopher Jones proffers the V-22 program as an example of the difficulty in halting the

development of a weapons system once started. In his 2001 article, "Roles, Politics, and Survival of the V-22 Osprey" in the *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, available in the library, Jones credits the Osprey's initial survival amid a spotty safety

record, skyrocketing costs, and strong opposition from the first Bush Administration to bureaucratic politics, with a coalition of contractors, Congress, and the Marine Corps, acting under varying interests, ensuring the project's survival.

Whatever the interest in the V-22 Osprey or Marine Corps aviation in general, the Library of the Marine Corps is a valuable resource. And as always, a reference librarian is available to assist patrons with their research needs. □1775□

## The Unexplored Frontier—Marine Aviation Records of the Gray Research Center

by Dr. Jim Ginther  
Archival Team Leader

In an article for the *Marine Corps Gazette* in 1920, Alfred A. Cunningham, the Marine Corps' first pilot, put forth the proposition that "the only excuse for aviation in any service is its usefulness in assisting the troops on the ground to successfully carry out their operations." This idea remains the doctrinal bedrock for the employment of Marine Corps aviation ever since. The Marine air-ground task force concept gives the Corps a unique identity and capabilities not found in any force of similar size in the world. Yet, the history of the "air" side of this team remains relatively uncharted when compared to the study the Corps' legendary infantry units. This may well be due to the lack of knowledge of the resources available to researchers.

The Archives and Special Collec-

*Alfred A. Cunningham, the Corps' first pilot, firmly believed that aviation existed to support the troops on the ground.*



*Roy S. Geiger, a commander of both air and ground units during World War II, was the Marine Corps' fifth aviator.*

tions Branch maintains a number of resources for anyone interested in the history of Marine aviation. The research collection contains after-action reports from all major conflicts since World War I. There are also command chronologies for units serving in combat since the Korean War. Little known gems include the materials on Marine air doctrine development contained in the Historical Amphibious files and the Research and Development files contain a wealth of information on aviation related ordnance and equipment considered by the Corps primarily from the 1950s to 1970s. Among the personal papers collections are the

papers of aviation legends like Alfred A. Cunningham, Roy S. Geiger, Christian F. Schilt, and Keith B. McCutcheon. Also not to be missed is the archive's collection of film and video which covers Marine air operations from the 1930s to the present.

The vital role that Marine aviation has played in Marine Corps operations in the last century should prompt Marine Corps historians to cast a wider net and exploit these valuable resources. Only then can a complete picture of the unique contributions the Corps has made to warfighting in the last century be truly appreciated. □1775□

## Sergeant Major Dailey Passes

by Robert V. Aquilina  
Assistant Head, Reference Branch

*Sergeant Major Joseph W. Dailey*, the fifth and oldest living Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, died 5 July 2007 in Newport Beach, California, at the age of 90. The Black Mountain, Arkansas, native enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1941, and following recruit training, served at Roosevelt Base, Terminal Island, California. During World War II, he served with the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, and participated in combat operations in Eastern New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago, Western Carolines, and Okinawa. He was awarded the Silver Star Medal for conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy on Okinawa.

Reenlisting in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1948, he was promoted to the rank of staff sergeant. He remained in an inactive status until ordered to active duty in October 1950 at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, California. He was promoted to technical sergeant in August 1951.

During the Korean War, he earned the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism while serving with 2d Battalion, 5th Marines. He later received a Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" and a Purple Heart for wounds received while serving as a company gunnery sergeant. He integrated into the regular Marine Corps in 1953 and was promoted to master sergeant in August 1953.

He served at a wide variety of commands following his return to the United States, and was promoted on 31 December 1955 to sergeant major. He later saw duty as the regimental sergeant major with the 2d Marines at Camp Lejeune, and deployed with that unit in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis. From 1964-1965, he served as Post Sergeant Major, Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C.

During the Vietnam War, he served as battalion sergeant major of 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, and later as battalion sergeant major of the 11th



Department of Defense Photo  
*Sergeant Major Joseph W. Dailey, 5th  
Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps.*

Engineer Battalion. From 1968 to July 1969, he served as the Sergeant Major of the 3d Marine Division. He earned the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" for his service during this latter tour. In August 1969 he was appointed as the fifth Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps and served in this assignment until he retired from active duty on 31 January 1973.

*Charles W. Lindberg*, a former Marine and Silver Star recipient, who helped raise the first American flag atop Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima on 23 February 1945, died 24 June 2007 in Edina, Minnesota, at the age of 86. The Grand Forks, North Dakota, native enlisted in the Marine Corps in January 1942 at Seattle, Washington, and trained at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, and at Camp Elliott, California, before deploying to the Pacific Theater with the 5th Marine Division. During the Iwo Jima campaign, he served as a flame-thrower operator with Company E, 28th Marines and was awarded a Silver Star for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" during the period 19 February to 1 March. On the morning of 23 February, (then) Corporal Lindberg joined several other Marines from a 40-man patrol, who fought their way to the top of Mount

Suribachi, and finding a steel pipe, affixed an American flag and raised it over the island. This symbol of victory sent a wave of strength to the battle-weary Marines below, and struck a further psychological blow against the island's defenders. The moment was captured by Marine Sergeant Lou Lowery, a photographer from *Leatherneck* magazine.

The second flag-raising atop Mount Suribachi occurred several hours later, and was captured on film by Associated Press Photographer Joe Rosenthal.

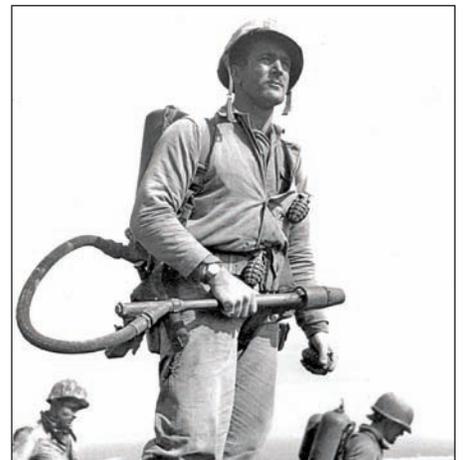
Several days later, on 1 March, Corporal Lindberg was wounded while engaged in an attack on an enemy cave position, and subsequently evacuated. He was discharged from the Marine Corps in January, 1946, and later moved to Richfield, Minnesota, where he became an electrician. In recent years, he helped to raise awareness of the first flag-raising atop Mount Suribachi by appearances before schools and veterans' groups.

The Marine Corps Historical Center at the Washington Navy Yard was honored by a visit from Mr. Lindberg and his wife in the fall of 1985.

□1775□

*Cpl Charles W. Lindberg, who was awarded the Silver Star for bravery at Suribachi's base, looking for cave entrances along crater's rim.*

Courtesy of Lou Lowery



## Life and Wars of Colonel Bud Day

by Dr. Fred Allison  
Head, Oral History Branch

Robert Coram, *American Patriot: The Life and Wars of Colonel Bud Day*, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2007

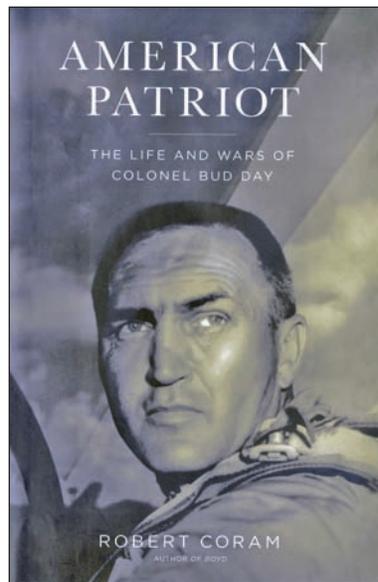
Colonel George E. “Bud” Day, United States Air Force, had a hard time getting into a war. He joined the Marines and became a combat rifleman in World War II only to be stationed on forlorn Johnston Island. When Korea popped up, he joined the Air Force and learned to fly night fighters, but not in time to get into the war. When he went to Vietnam in 1967, he finally had his war, and what a war it was. He stood up and commanded the Air Force’s first squadron of “fast” forward air controllers, the noted “Mistys.” On one mission just north of the Demilitarized Zone he was shot down and captured, and, except for a two-week period when he escaped, he was in the clutches of the enemy from August 1967 to March 1973. In this book, writer Robert Coram chronicles the life and experiences of Day.

This is the second time Coram has written a biography of an Air Force officer that has a direct relevance to the Marines. He wrote the well-received biography of Colonel John Boyd, diviner of the “OODA-loop” theory, which profoundly influenced Marine maneuver theory. Where Boyd was a theorist, Day was an idealist. He believed in the United States and what it was doing in Vietnam, and his ideals were severely tested in the hell of the Hanoi Hilton.

Coram warns the reader that he has “gone native” in writing this book and that he was completely “suborned” by Day’s life story. There’s a personal aspect to this; Coram, in writing about Day, purges some demons leftover from his youthful rebellion against his father, an Army top sergeant. Objectivity is lost Coram admits, but not his professionalism as a historical writer. Coram is convinced that Day is genuine and deserves a biography that

gives him his due status as a warrior, loyal patriot, and indeed an American hero.

Coram’s research is thorough. He covers Day’s entire life (up through 2004, that is). Day grew up on the bad side of Sioux City, Iowa. He joined the Marine Corps in World War II, and besides missing out on combat, he also got in trouble on liberty in Honolulu. For this he never got a Marine Good Conduct Medal. That is until 1993 when in a poignant presentation dur-



ing a Dining Out, General Walter Boomer pinned one on him. Thus symbolically, the Marine Corps recognized Day as one of their own. The Marine Corps remained an abiding and positive influence on Day.

The book’s big story is the prisoner of war experience, which earned Day a Medal of Honor. Coram cogently describes the horrific conditions and treatment the prisoners of war endured. Of particular interest is the inner world of the prisoner of war community Coram gives us. There are compelling characterizations of the famous prisoners of war, James Stockdale, John McCain and Marine, Orson Swindell, all of whom like Day, endured the worst. Not all the prisoners maintained such high standards;

some quickly gave in to the enemy, indeed even encouraged the others to. For their cooperation they were released early. The “early-released” thereafter became objects of great disdain by the other prisoners of war.

The book’s weakness is just what Coram warned us of, that he has compromised his objectivity. Day is given consistently favored treatment. Beyond North Vietnamese torturers and the “early released,” there are others who stand in stark contrast to Day’s heroism and try to thwart Day’s endeavors. The reader is not sure if they deserve Coram’s negative portrayal. Included are Air Force officers depicted as self-serving and politically-minded. President Gerald Ford is suspect because Day believes he delayed his Medal of Honor presentation for political reasons. Even John McCain, who is Day’s best friend amongst the prisoners of war, is regarded as too political and not remaining fully committed to the cause. What is the cause? We see it revealed in Day’s post-Air Force endeavors, the other “wars” of Day: carrying on the Reagan-revolution, sustaining and enhancing veterans’ benefits, and working to ensure that John Kerry did not get elected president in 2004.

Well written and engaging, Coram’s biography of Day is revealing, informative and important. Coram portrays a real warrior, who kicked in the enemy’s teeth over the battlefield and remained loyal when thrust into a completely different and incredibly trying situation. Lost objectivity does not negate the book’s impact in this case. Coram makes a convincing case that Day truly is a heroic individual—someone who did the right thing under the most trying circumstances even when assured that the right thing would earn him brutal treatment. In so doing, he accomplished his mission; he “returned with honor.” It’s a gut check—it makes us wonder what we would have done in the same situation. □1775□

