

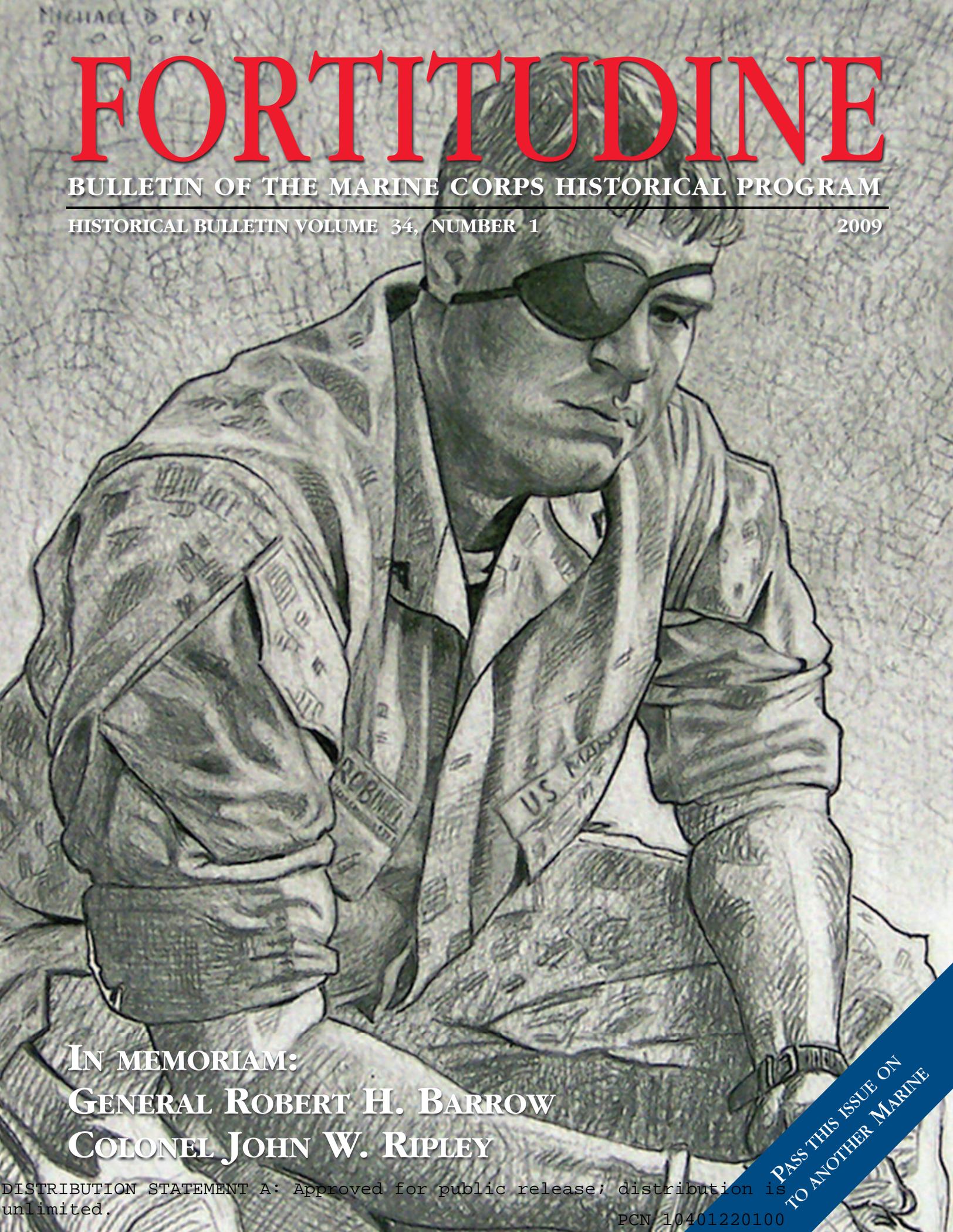
MICHAEL D. FAY
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FORTITUDINE

BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME 34, NUMBER 1

2009



IN MEMORIAM:
GENERAL ROBERT H. BARROW
COLONEL JOHN W. RIPLEY

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Motto of the United States Marine Corps in the 1812 era

Historical Bulletin Vol. 34, No. 1

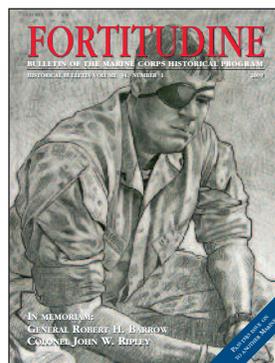
2009

“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

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Cover: Cover drawing by WO-1 Michael D. Fay is of LCpl Robinson while he was recuperating at Bethesda Naval Hospital after sustaining injuries from an improvised explosive device.

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.

Marines Own



Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer

The year 2008 will likely be remembered in American history as one of turmoil and change. It was the year that America elected its first African American President and the year when Americans experienced more financial turmoil than at any time since the Great Depression. In all the turmoil of the economy and excitement of the election, and little noticed outside the Marine Corps, two legendary Marines passed away—General Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Colonel John H. Ripley, former director of the Marine Corps History and Museums Division. Their heroism, service, and devotion to the Corps will be remembered for years to come.

I first met General Barrow when I was a young first lieutenant recently assigned as the Head of the Officer Promotion Branch at Headquarters, Marine Corps. At the time, the administration of the officer promotion boards was an important but fairly mundane job. What I did not know at the time was that the Head of the Officer Promotion Branch was required to directly walk the board report to the Commandant for his signature, bypassing all the usual staff officers who normally screened correspondence going into the Commandant's office. Thinking that I would just hand off the report to the Commandant's military secretary and wait for the signed report, I was surprised when the "Mil-Sec" told me that the Commandant would see me immediately.

At the time, the Commandant's office was located in the corner of the second deck of the first wing of the Navy Annex, known today as Federal Building 2. I walked in with the report, centered myself on the Commandant's desk, and announced that I had the latest officer promotion board report for the Commandant to sign. I thought he would simply sign the report, and I could escape. However, General Barrow started to chat, and he motioned me to sit down in a chair next to his desk. I thought I was in serious trouble and

was as nervous as I had ever been. But General Barrow had a way about him. He was a southern gentleman and immediately put me at ease. As we chatted, it was clear that I was talking to a great man. I never got over the command presence that General Barrow seemed to naturally possess and decided to research why he had this attribute.

It didn't take me long during my research to determine the reasons behind General Barrow's command presence. Quite simply, General Barrow had done it all. He left college and enlisted in the Marines in 1942, doing such a fine job at boot camp that he was retained as a drill instructor to train other new recruits. Not long afterward, he won a spot at Officers Candidate School and was in combat in the Pacific Theater, leading a team of Americans who were assisting Chinese guerrillas in Japanese-occupied China. This assignment called for initiative and courage, which then-Second Lieutenant Barrow possessed. During the Korean conflict, then-Captain Barrow led a company ashore at Inchon and was later awarded both the Silver Star and Navy Cross for gallantry in combat. During Vietnam, he commanded the legendary 9th Marine Regiment and led the unit to a number of successes, including Operation Dewey Canyon, for which he was awarded the U.S. Army's Distinguished Service Cross.

For all of General Barrow's courage and combat leadership skills, his greatest contribution to the Marine Corps came during peacetime assignments. While serving during the mid-1970s as Commanding General Recruit Depot, Parris Island, and later as Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower at Headquarters, Marine Corps, General Barrow continued the reforms begun by his mentor, the 26th Commandant, General Louis H. Wilson Jr. His decision to continue the reforms was not overly popular with some of the "old hands" at the time, but he was ultimately proven correct by the level and quality of recruits the Marine Corps has produced since that time. As Commandant, he and General Paul X.

Kelley were the driving forces behind the creation of Maritime Prepositioned Shipping. As a result of their foresight, Maritime Prepositioned Shipping enabled the Marine Corps to "get to the fight" during Operation Desert Storm quicker than anyone thought was possible, including Saddam Hussein. In sum, General Barrow was a fearless, principled commander who exuded a natural command presence and immeasurably influenced Marine Corps history.

The recent passing of Colonel John W. Ripley, a former director of the History and Museums Division, was another blow to the Marine Corps family. When I was a second lieutenant going through Basic School in the mid-1970s, I heard and remembered the tales of his combat record. At the time, Vietnam was still fresh in everyone's mind, and being new to the Corps, I heard the older veterans tell stories about impressive Marine leaders whom they knew during the war and afterward. Names like then-Gunnery Sergeant Jimmy E. Howard, then-Captains G. Ron Christmas and Michael P. Downs at Hue City, and then-Captain Ripley's heroism at the Dong Ha Bridge were frequent subjects of discussion. Years later, Colonel John Grider Miller provided me with a signed copy of his book, *The Bridge at Dong Ha*, and after having read it, I am still amazed at how consistently the Marine Corps finds such successful combat commanders. Colonel Ripley was certainly one of those men, and may his story long be told to newer generations of lieutenants and Marine recruits.

Both of these outstanding Marines epitomize the best of the Marine Corps, and they will be missed. However, for every generation of passing warriors, another Marine emerges to take his place. Possibly the next General Barrow or Colonel Ripley is going through The Basic School right now or perhaps is already serving as a platoon commander in Afghanistan or Iraq. Let us hope to get such men for decades to come. □1775□

General Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps

by Robert V. Aquilina
Assistant Head, Reference Branch

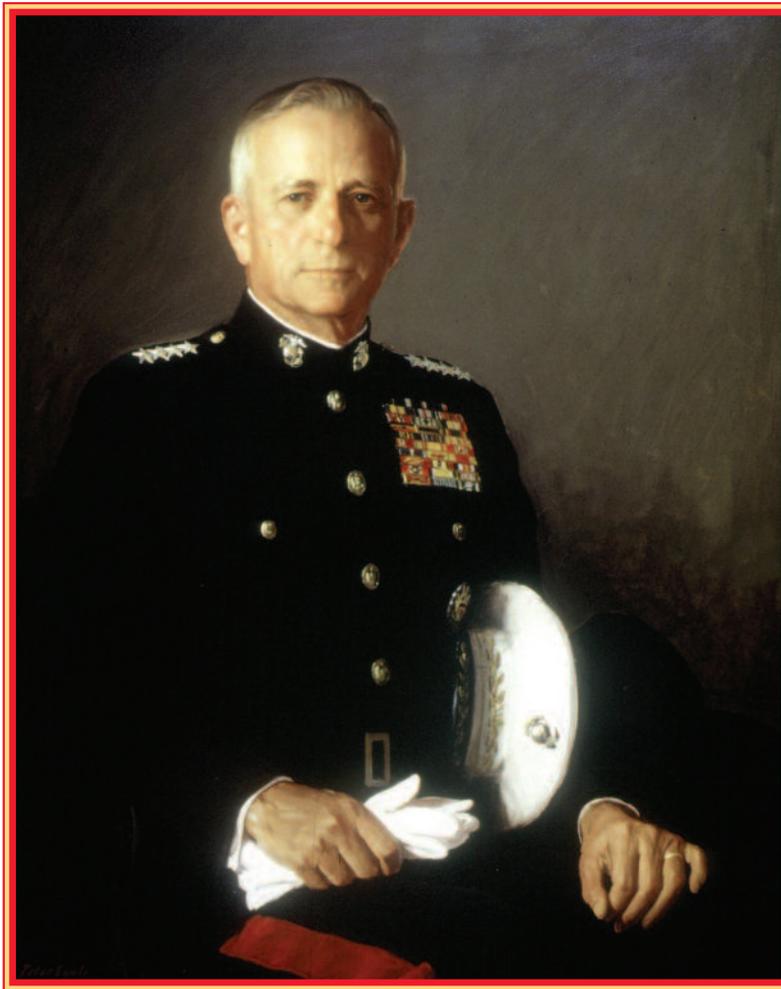
General Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps, died 30 October 2008 in his home town of St. Francisville, Louisiana, at the age of 86. The Baton Rouge, Louisiana, native enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1942 after attending Louisiana State University. After graduation from boot camp in San Diego, California, he served for a period as a drill instructor before his selection to Officer Candidate School. He was commissioned a Marine second lieutenant in May 1943. During World War II, Barrow was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat "V" for his service as the officer-in-charge of an American team that served with Chinese guerrilla forces in Japanese-occupied central China.

After the war, Barrow served for two years as aide-de-camp to the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, and then completed the Amphibious Warfare School, Junior Course, at Quantico, Virginia. From 1949 until 1950 he served as Commanding Officer of Company A, 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

During the Korean War, he led Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines during the Inchon-Seoul operation and the Chosin Reservoir campaign. For his service in the latter operation, he was awarded the Navy Cross. The citation accompanying his award lauded then-Captain Barrow's "gallant and forceful

leadership, great personal valor and fortitude in the face of overwhelming odds" in the bitter fighting near Koto-ri, Korea.

Following the end of the war, Barrow served as Officer In Charge, Infantry Desk, Enlisted Assignments, Headquarters, Marine Corps. He was



then sent on a classified assignment to the islands north of Taiwan, near mainland China. In February 1956, Barrow began an 18-month tour with the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, at Camp Lejeune. From the summer of 1957 to the summer of 1960, he served as the Marine officer instructor at the Navy

Reserve Officer Training Course at Tulane University, New Orleans. He then completed a tour with the Landing Force Development Center at Quantico, and in 1963, attended the Officer's Senior Course.

Barrow graduated in 1968 from the National War College and then deployed to the Republic of Vietnam, where he commanded the 9th Marines, 3d Marine Division. During the nine months he served as commanding officer of the regiment, the 9th Marines participated in numerous combat operations in the vicinity of the Demilitarized Zone, Khe Sanh, and Da Krong and A Shau Valleys. For extraordinary heroism during Operation Dewey Canyon, he was awarded the U.S. Army Distinguished Service Cross. The citation accompanying the award noted that then-Colonel Barrow "continuously exposed himself to deadly enemy fire while leading his regiment in a series of rapidly executed combat assaults." He "repeatedly inspired his troops to maximum efforts, which resulted in numerous small unit victories despite the enemy's determined efforts to halt

his advance."

After promotion to brigadier general, Barrow served as Commanding General, Camp Butler, Okinawa. On further promotion to major general, he was appointed Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. He was pro-

moted to lieutenant general in 1975 and assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps as Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower. In 1976, he was named Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, at Norfolk, Virginia. General Barrow became the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps in July 1978 and served in that billet until his promotion to general and appointment on 1 July 1979 as the 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

General Barrow was the first Commandant to serve, by law, a regular four-year tour as a full member of

the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was instrumental during his commandancy in acquiring approval for production of the Harrier aircraft. He also awakened interest in new and improved naval gunfire support, and in obtaining new amphibious ships in the Navy's construction programs where Marines' equipment could be prepositioned in potential combat zones. General Barrow also instituted reforms and revamped training methods at the Marine Corps recruit depots, which helped to attract and retain quality men and women.

General Barrow retired as Commandant on 30 June 1983 and returned to his native state of Louisiana. In retirement, he continued to serve his Corps and country by appointment by President Ronald Reagan to the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and by service on the Packard Commission, which focused on defense management. General Barrow also served as Chairman of the Board of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College Foundation and was active in numerous state and local organizations in Louisiana.

□1775□

In Memoriam

John C. Chapin and Samuel E. Stavisky

by Robert V. Aquilina

Assistant Head, Reference Branch

The History Division was greatly saddened to hear of the passing of a member of its extended family, **Captain John C. Chapin**. He died 14 August 2008 in Manchester, Vermont, at the age of 87. A native of Grosse Point Farms, Michigan, Captain Chapin graduated in 1942 from Yale University and accepted a commission the same year as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. During World War II, he served as a rifle platoon commander in the 24th Marines, 4th Marine Division, and was wounded in action during the assaults on Roi-Namur in the Marshall Islands and Saipan in the Mariana Islands.

Returning to the United States, Chapin was assigned duty at Headquarters Marine Corps, where he researched and wrote the first official histories of the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions. At the conclusion of the war, he transferred to reserve status and earned a master's degree in history from George Washington University. In retirement, Captain Chapin was a volunteer for many years at the Marine Corps Historical Center at the Washington Navy Yard. During this period, he authored numerous monographs for the then-History and Museums Division, including four booklets in the Marines in World War II Commemorative Series, covering campaigns in the Marshalls, Saipan, Bougainville, and Marine aviation in the Philippines. He was also the author of the highly successful and



Capt John C. Chapin

acclaimed *Uncommon Men: The Sergeants Major of the Marine Corps*.

Captain Chapin was a tireless worker for the Episcopal Church for 20 years, first at the Diocese of Michigan and then at the Washington National Cathedral, where he served as communications warden. He was also a special assistant to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, George Romney, and was active in the Republican Party in Michigan, Washington, D.C., and Vermont.

His many civic accomplishments notwithstanding, Captain Chapin's yearly summer research visits to the Marine Corps Historical Center will be remembered fondly by remaining History Division staff. His formidable intellect and knowledge of Marine Corps history was accompanied by a gentle sense of

humor and genuine interest in those of us who had the good fortune to know him over the years. He will be missed.

Mr. Samuel E. Stavisky, a noted *Washington Post* newsman who served as a Marine Corps combat correspondent during World War II, died 21 September 2008 in Montgomery County, Maryland, at the age of 93. A native of Chelsea, Massachusetts, he was a graduate of Boston University and later worked for several newspapers before joining the *Washington Post* in 1938. Although rejected by the military services because of poor vision, he nevertheless volunteered in 1942 to serve as a Marine combat correspondent. Mr. Stavisky's personal accounts from the battlefield during World War II brought home to thousands of Americans the day-to-day realities of war as experienced by the average Marine "grunt." His participation in a number of Pacific Theater campaigns were later retold in his 1999 book, *Marine Combat Correspondent: World War II in the Pacific*, which received excellent reviews.

Following the war, Stavisky returned to the *Washington Post* as a reporter, editorial writer, and columnist. He also wrote articles for a number of magazines, including the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life*. In 1954, he started a successful public relations firm, Stavisky and Associates, that he operated until his retirement in 1989. □1775□

Colonel John W. Ripley, Former Director of Marine Corps History and Museums Division

*by Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer
Director*

The sudden passing of legendary Marine Colonel John W. Ripley sort of caught everyone in the Marine Corps community by surprise. He had peacefully passed away in his sleep on the evening of 28 October 2008. Death had to sneak up on Colonel Ripley because it never could have taken him without a fight had he been awake.

Colonel Ripley was a native Virginian. A longtime student of military history, as a youth he enjoyed reading about the exploits of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, whose legions trod the land where he grew up. Joining the Marine Corps in 1957, it was not long before he received a fleet appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. From that moment, Ripley

demonstrated a lifelong affection for that institution that culminated with his widely attended funeral in the Academy chapel and continuing with his internment in the Academy's cemetery overlooking the Severn River. It was a fitting resting place for an incredible Marine and warrior. John Ripley had come home at last.

Anyone who served in or was affiliated with the Marine Corps these past 40 years is well aware of Ripley's most famous exploit during the Vietnam War—blowing up Dong Ha Bridge and stopping a column of North Vietnamese armor and infantry. It was Easter Sunday 1972, and then-Captain Ripley had been assigned as an advisor to a South Vietnamese Marine unit under heavy attack by North

Vietnamese regular forces who had recently launched what became known as the Easter Offensive. Ordered to "hold and die," Ripley recognized that blowing up the bridge would halt the North Vietnamese advance. Swinging hand over hand under the girders of the bridge while under enemy fire, Ripley was able to place and set off a series of demolition charges to destroy the bridge, stalling the North Vietnamese column. For this exploit, Ripley received the Navy Cross.

Ripley received commendation for other exploits during the war. As "Lima" Company Commander, 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, then-Captain Ripley was awarded the Silver Star for

A reconnaissance aircraft photographed the Dong Ha Bridge shortly after its destruction on 2 April 1972. To the left is "The Triangle" road junction of Highway 1 and 9 and to the right is the Dye Marker bunker and the burning bridge. At far right are communist armored vehicles pulled off the road, exposed to air attack and unable to advance further.

Photo provided by Col John W. Ripley





At the 3d Battalion (Vietnamese Marine Corps) command post at Dong Ha, the American, second from the left, is then-Capt Ripley. Bending over the map is the battalion com-

mander, Maj Le Ba Binb. Note the number of radios used to control the unit and the M113 armored personnel carrier.

David Burnett Contact Press Images

gallantry against the enemy. On 21 August 1967, Ripley's unit became pinned down by a vastly superior enemy force. Leading a relief force, this group also came under intense enemy fire. Disregarding his own safety, Ripley mounted a vehicle and fired a machine gun at the concealed enemy and led a counterattack against enemy forces for over three hours while also coordinating highly effective artillery fire and air strikes. His battlefield leadership enabled the successful extraction of his command from its perilous situation. By the end of his Marine career in 1992, he had been awarded the Navy Cross, the Silver Star, two Legions of Merit, two Bronze Stars with Combat "V," and the Purple Heart. In addition to numerous other personal decorations, Colonel Ripley was the recipient of the South Vietnamese Army Distinguished Service Order and Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star. There were few Marines with more decorated combat service than John Ripley.

Always interested in leadership, history, and education while on active duty, in retirement, Colonel

Ripley focused his vast energy in these particular fields and served as president of Southern Virginia College in Buena Vista, Virginia, and Hargrave Military Academy before he accepted the position as director of the Marine Corps History and Museums Division in 1999. While director, he was instrumental in executing plans to create the National Museum of the Marine Corps, which opened to wide acclaim on 10

Col John W. Ripley



November 2006. Fully retiring from federal service in 2005, Colonel Ripley remained an active lecturer on Marine Corps history.

Recently plagued with failing health due to liver disease he likely contracted while on duty in Vietnam, Colonel Ripley's personal courage and dignity were evident to all as he endured two liver transplants. During one particularly grim hospital stay when it appeared that the redoubtable colonel might not survive, he was visited by General James L. Jones, the 32d Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Marine Corps color sergeant who had the Corps' official Battle Colors in tow. Posting the color sergeant with the colors inside Colonel Ripley's room, the Commandant remarked that "the colors don't leave the room until you do." According to Colonel Ripley's son, Thomas, the sight of the Marine Corps Battle Colors near his bedside gave him the will to live on—and he did. This single episode epitomizes just how important Colonel Ripley was to his beloved Corps and his country. He will be dearly missed. □1775□

Intelligence Community History

by Charles D. Melson
Chief Historian

What was the key terrain, what was the effect of weather, where were the enemies' forces deployed, what were their capabilities, how did they react to friendly forces, and what was the opposing commander thinking? These are questions that historians and intelligence analysts ponder. Historians determine what happened in the past, while intelligence analysts concentrate on the present and the future. History and intelligence follow similar processes to different ends. These disciplines apply critical thinking skills to "direct, collect, process, and disseminate." Within the intelligence community of the United States, a number of historians are contemplating these goals.

The Director of National Intelligence sponsors a Senior Historian Panel with representatives from the various agencies and services that comprise the community. Citing the National Security Act of 1947 as amended on 29 August 2007, Director of National Intelligence J. Michael McConnell approved Intelligence Community Directive Number 108, which stated the community "has an obligation to learn from its history and its performance and to document its activities." With this directive, each agency or organization should establish and maintain a professional historical capability, consisting of a formal history office as appropriate, to document, analyze, and advance an understanding of its history and that of its predecessors. This included the Marines, with the History Division providing representation for the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Brigadier General Richard M. Lake.

The Marine Corps intelligence community consists of a variety of individual disciplines, units, and institutions. These have evolved over time, beginning with individual participation in the Office of Naval Intelligence since

1882 and as defense attachés with American embassies to foreign nations with the Department of State. Many of the technical aspects of intelligence are products of the scientific advances in the 19th and 20th centuries such as photography, communications and signals intercepts, and the variety of surface and airborne platforms. Other skills have a longer heritage, including cartography, reconnaissance, interrogation, and translation techniques. In this century, all of these disciplines are now more in demand than ever before with the Global War on Terrorism and widespread deployment of Marine forces on worldwide missions.

At present in the Marine Corps, there are those involved in reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence activities to include Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps Intelligence Division, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, the various schools and training detachments, intelligence and intelligence support battalions, radio battalions, Marine cryptologic security bat-

alion and companies, tactical electronic warfare and unmanned aerial vehicle squadrons, and special operations or specialized reconnaissance units. This includes not just those with the "O2" intelligence military occupational specialties, but all of those who make up the activities involved regardless of their assigned occupation. Some specialties and subspecialties such as counterintelligence and interrogator-translators are small in numbers but high in demand. Other Marines serve individual assignment outside of the Marine Corps for other government agencies. All of these have their own history and heritage from earlier organizations and individuals. This is in part underscored by the Director of Intelligence's reading list.

At first, documenting these disparate efforts seems daunting, particularly since in the U.S. Armed Services, intelligence is not an end in itself but a part of staff support to commanders. But a review of the

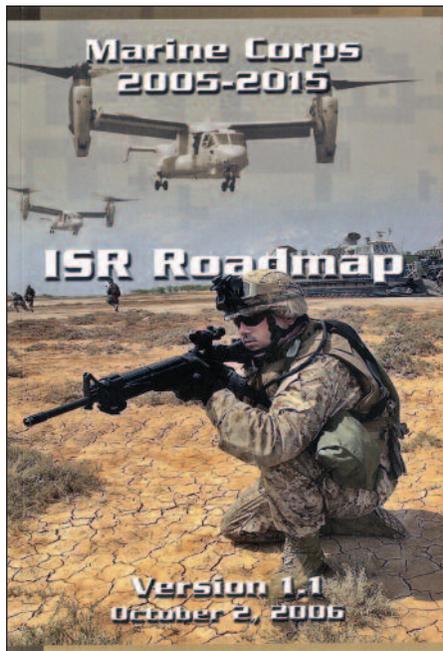
A Marine intelligence specialist uses an interrogator and translator to question Chinese prisoners of war captured in Korea during the 1950s conflict. Combat information gathered from a broad range of sources is analyzed to provide information to Marine commanders about what is happening on "the other side of the hill" in enemy territory.

Department of Defense Photo



existing Marine Corps Historical Program, put forward under MCO P5750, indicates that if applied diligently, the story of the activities of the Marine Corp intelligence community could be fully documented. First and foremost, records management across the board causes documents and files (electronic and otherwise) to be retired for disposition through the Marine Corps and eventually the National Archives and Records Administration. Next, scheduled reporting monthly, biannually, or annually is required through the annual summary of activities and command chronology program that also serves as the means to forward essential documentation as well as formatted reports for historic purposes. All of these vary in quantity and quality and have handling and storage concerns that have to be met for subsequent use. This is a command responsibility that applies to the headquarters staff, commands, and units down to the battalion or squadron level. In addition, there is a relevant section of all Marine Corps commands and units with assigned staffs for the assigned intelligence officers to make their input to command chronologies. In one recent case, a Marine division used its intelligence officer to draft the narrative of the command's combat operations. These command chronologies are collected and reside with the Library of the Marine Corps, Alfred M. Gray Research Center at Quantico, Virginia.

At the Marine Corps History Division, color-bearing units have lineage and honors certificates prepared



with relevant unit reference files, including relevant unit awards. At the History Division, information of previous units can also be found. Biographic files exist for distinguished Marines, and the commemorative naming program provides opportunities for recognizing those individuals who made contributions to their field. Previous public affairs orders required colonels and above to maintain and submit biographic forms. (This no longer occurs, requiring a reduced collection effort.) Intelligence Marines such as Colonel William A. Eddy, Colonel Peter J. Ortiz, and General Alfred M. Gray Jr. have been recognized in this way. A certain number of subject matter files exist, including files for intelligence, signals-intelligence, and reconnaissance, that are

being digitized and placed upon the History Division's SharePoint portal with access for Common Access Card holders. The digitized History Division publications are also accessible in this manner and are word-searchable for selected topics.

With the growth and increased contribution of the Marine Corps' intelligence community in recent years, a focus on its past is in order. The current historical program provides the structure and resources for this, if systematically pursued, and if individuals take advantage of these resources for their research. The various intelligence veterans groups have been active in putting together oral history or self-history memoirs, personal papers, and personal narratives that eventually will also reside at the Gray Research Center. One intelligence Marine, Lieutenant Colonel John J. Guenther (Ret), is engaged in putting together an intelligence anthology that has promise for subsequent publication. Additional full-time or even part-time personnel resources are needed to allow a dedicated focus on this unique part of the Marine Corps contribution to national defense. These assets do not reside within the History Division's current structure or mission. In addition, necessary secure storage and communications does not exist to accomplish anything but a superficial documentation of the Marine intelligence effort and history. Follow-up and focus are needed to generate the synergy that this community requires and deserves.

□1775□

The National Intelligence Community Represented by the Senior Historian's Panel

Center for Cryptologic History
 Center for the Study of Intelligence
 Department of Energy
 Department of Homeland Security
 Department of Treasury
 Defense Intelligence Agency
 Department of State
 Drug Enforcement Administration
 Federal Bureau of Investigation

National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
 National Reconnaissance Office
 Office of the Director, National Intelligence
 U.S. Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Security Agency
 U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command
 U.S. Coast Guard
 U.S. Marine Corps Director of Intelligence
 U.S. Navy Office of Naval Intelligence

Current Intelligence Specialties in the U.S. Marine Corps

Air Intelligence
 Air-Ground Task Force Intelligence
 Counterintelligence
 Geographic Intelligence
 Ground Intelligence

Human Intelligence
 Imagery Intelligence
 Signals Intelligence
 and Civilian Marines in Government Service

“On Target”

by Charles D. Melson
Chief Historian

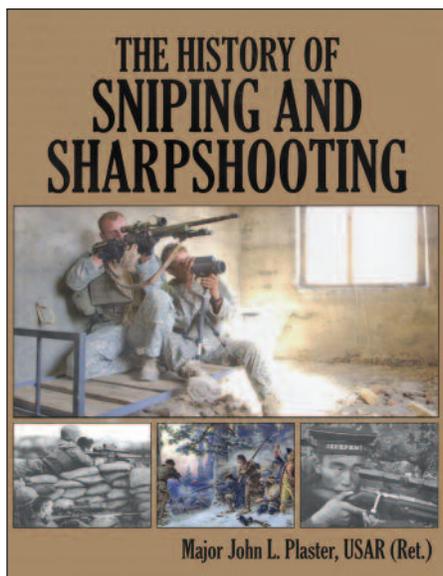
Major John L. Plaster, USAR (Retired). *The History of Sniping and Sharpshooting* (Boulder, Colo: Paladin Press, 2008). ISBN 13: 978-1-58160-632-4.

Major John Plaster has done it again! He previously presented the “A to Z” of the techniques of military and police sniping in his book *The Ultimate Sniper* (Paladin Press, 1993, 2006). His current work provides the backstory of the development of sharpshooting to current modern precision sniping. His focus is on the integrated evolution of technology and techniques to show why we are where we are today with this vital battlefield skill. This is a one-stop reference for the military or police sniper, riflemen of all callings, and for the historian and enthusiast. It is a combination of research and experience without equal and a must for riflemen and snipers in order to know yourself and your enemy. Skilled and trained riflemen can still dominate the battlefield, particularly in irregular combat.

Where his first book was focused on “tactics, techniques, and procedures” in use, this new volume is based on the background study that led to the current state of the art. Military sniping has been a wartime skill that has an on-and-off-again development that comes to the fore when bullets are flying but suffers from budget cuts when peacetime fiscal restraints and shortsightedness are the reality. The U.S. Marine Corps began its renaissance of this battlefield skill in 1977 at Quantico, Virginia’s Weapons Training Battalion. Other American Armed and Police Forces followed from this example. Yet as Plaster shows, this is backed by a long tradition of rifle shooting. The volume consists of six parts organized in chronological order. These developments are

described with research, examples, and extensive illustrations. The work is indexed and is documented by a bibliography.

The book starts with a 1400s reference to a rifled bore firearm that allowed an increase in accuracy to predictable standards. The author traces these developments to a sharpshooting revolution in the 1700s when a distinct class of rifleman emerged from the massed ranks of musket-firing infantry. As Marines, we should appreciate this sharpshooting function performed



aboard ship by continental soldiers of the sea. At a time when the musket was valued more as a platform for the bayonet, sharpshooters hit targets they deliberately aimed at—officers, couriers, and gun crews. While the focus of the book is on American developments, the influence of overseas experience is not neglected, as Plaster considers what happened in the United Kingdom, Europe, and elsewhere with the development of riflemen as light infantry, jaegers, and rangers (the source of the Marine Corps “rifle” green uniforms with black buttons and emblems). About half the book is devoted to developments through

the U.S. Civil War. The remainder of the book considers the modern period of 20th century developments, both irregular and conventional conflicts.

The core of Plaster’s book begins with sharpshooting in transition and ends with sniping in the 21st century. This is the period when firearms and optical technology developed to the point that scientific sniping emerged from the art of sharpshooting. This was from World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, and current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that witnessed the combination of field craft, scouting, patrolling, observation, and shooting techniques. Personalized vignettes consider sharpshooting and sniper pioneers Ferguson, Berdan, York, Zaitsev, Wermuth, Janis, Hathcock, and Land. One of these, Major (Ret) Edward J. Land Jr. (currently the National Rifle Association’s secretary), wrote: “There are many authors who have published works on sniping based on old memories or anecdotes. However, John has done his homework . . . John’s information is right on the money in every respect.”

Plaster’s research was based on his background in Vietnam with the Military Advisory Command Vietnam “Studies and Observation Group” and a career as a precision shooting advocate and instructor with military, police, and contract organizations. In the current Global War on Terrorism, he has been challenged by “Juba,” the mythical terrorist sniper of Baghdad. Plaster’s response was to train more American snipers and sharpshooters with the mentality that “hits count” in the long war.

As such, this work is highly recommended to Marines as the best single-volume source of information on this essential skill and trade of “every Marine a rifleman.” □1775□

In the Wrong Hands: A Colt Pocket Pistol

by Alfred V. Houde Jr.
Curator of Ordnance

One of the Colt handguns in the collection of the National Museum of the Marine Corps made its way from the Colt factory in Hartford, Connecticut, to the jungles of Nicaragua, into the hands of a U.S. Marine general. Most of the details surrounding this journey are lost to history, but the curators are definitely intrigued and want to know more about its provenance.

Colt handguns have a rich historical tradition, as well as great commercial and military appeal. Indeed, the Colt is one of the most easily recognized products of U.S. manufacture and figures prominently in American material culture. No other country can boast of a single group of firearms so widely known, used, or sought after. Unfortunately, the Colt handgun has not always been used by honorable, law-abiding citizens. Gangsters, thieves, murderers, and other unsavory characters have frequently wielded Colt handguns against the side of law and order and an innocent population. Sometimes these weapons were obtained by open purchase, capture, or outright theft. The Museum's Colt Model 1908

Hammerless Pocket Automatic in .380-caliber, serial number 97058, was reportedly in the "wrong hands" in 1930.

When introduced in 1908, the .380 Hammerless Pocket Automatic was identical to the .32-caliber pistol already in production by Colt. The great firearms designer John M. Browning and William M. Thomas of the Union Metallic Cartridge Company collaborated on the design of the new .380 cartridge. It had more stopping power and was superior to the smaller .32 cartridge. Combined with the light handy pistols chambered for it, the .380-caliber quickly became popular. Introduced in Europe by Fabrique Nationale in 1912, the round became known as the 9mm Kurz, or "short," on that continent.

Colt advertising of the day described the Hammerless Pocket Automatic as a well-balanced, lightweight arm—compact in design, smooth, and "flat as a book"—powerful, accurate, and utterly dependable. It is easy to see the appeal the pistol had on both sides of the law.

Through its many distributors in the U.S., Colt shipped firearms for sale to Mexico and Central and South America.

From March 1929 to January 1931, General Douglas C. McDougal, was director-in-chief of the Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua. Born in San Francisco in 1876, McDougal was appointed a second lieutenant on 12 March 1900. Known for his outstanding shooting ability, General McDougal was an influential member of Marine Corps' shooting teams and was captain of the first Marine Corps' rifle team to win the National Match. Clearly, he was no stranger to a wide range of firearms.

One of General McDougal's guns, a Colt .380 Hammerless Pocket Automatic, came to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in 1974 through his family with the following notation: "Taken from a murderer in Nicaragua in 1930." How General McDougal and the accused "murderer" came to meet is unknown.

What we do know is that General McDougal was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the President of the United States and the Medal of Distinction and Medal of Merit by a grateful President of Nicaragua. General McDougal served a long and honorable career and retired on 1 January 1940 with the rank of Major General. He died on 20 January 1964.

In honor of General McDougal, the staff at the National Museum will exhibit two rifles built and used by him during his illustrious competitive shooting career. Both rifles will be displayed in the competitive marksmanship case in the "First to Fight—Age of Expansion" gallery. This gallery, along with two others, will tell the story of the Marine Corps from 1775 through World War I and will open in April 2010. □1775□

Colt Hammerless Pocket Automatic serial number 97058

Photo by Alfred V. Houde Jr.



“Marines Have Always Believed in this Aircraft”: Marine Mechanics Helped Rescue the Osprey

by Dr. Fred H. Allison
Historian

The deployment of Osprey-flying VMM-263 into Iraq and into combat in October 2007 was the culmination of 25 years of effort by the Marine Corps to obtain tiltrotor technology for its operating forces. The Osprey’s increased range and speed mark it as a generational step forward in assault support capability. Lieutenant General George J. Trautman, head of Marine aviation, remarked that the Osprey “collapsed the al-Anbar battlespace, like making Texas seem like Rhode Island.”

Although Marine leaders had shown a strong interest in tiltrotor technology earlier, especially after the a tiltrotor prototype, the XV-15, began flying in the mid-1970s, official Marine Corps commitment began in late 1982 when Lieutenant General William H. Fitch, then deputy chief of staff for aviation, signed the operational requirement for the aircraft that would eventually become the MV-22 Osprey.

The story of how the Osprey got from operational requirement to combat is a complex and convoluted one. Many dedicated Marines, from ranking officers at Headquarters to air crews, made important contributions toward that goal. Often overlooked in this story is one key group—the aircraft mechanics. At a critical juncture in the development of the Osprey, a small group of warrant officers and non-commissioned officers, all experienced in aircraft maintenance, recommended making necessary changes to the aircraft that resulted in a better combat-capable Osprey.

There were several occasions when the Osprey program almost died, as when Dick Cheney, then the secretary of defense, cancelled the program in late 1989. At no time during the 25-year developmental history of the Osprey, however, was it as close to dead as it was after the two crashes in April and December 2000. Squadron

morale was entirely deflated in Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron 204 (VMMT-204), the squadron responsible for flying and testing the Osprey at that time. The squadron rallied, though, and out of VMMT-204 and other units, a group of experienced Marine aircraft mechanics, some who had been with the Osprey program since its earliest days, integrated with Bell-Boeing engineers and designers to affect key changes in the MV-22. One of them, Gunnery Sergeant Terrence L. Steele, expressed the mechanics’ perspective on their mission: “We took the initiative, we were down there for a reason, and that was to make a better product.”

Besides initiative, the Marines brought a Marine Corps work ethic and real-world experience in aircraft maintenance, specifically on the Osprey, to the Bell-Boeing team. The Marine mechanics helped improve the routing of critical hydraulic lines,

Ospreys in flight from Squadron VMM-263



especially in the engine housings. While the hydraulic line layout looked good on an engineer's computer, it did not necessarily mesh well with other systems when stuffed into the tight confines of the engine housings. The Bell-Boeing team members made the necessary changes: they established clearance specifications for lines, wrapped the lines in composite material to prevent chaffing, and reorganized the engine housings, decreasing the hydraulic line by 14 feet.

Another key change that the Marines initiated, fought for, and attained was the installation of clam shell doors on the engine housings to facilitate inspections. Now aircraft mechanics can release four fasteners to open the clam shells and expose half of the inner components of the

engine housing for inspection. Prior to this change, about 60 mini-mark 4 fasteners had to be unscrewed to take off an engine housing panel.

These are a couple of examples of the substantial changes wrought in the Osprey's redesign, resulting from the Marine/Bell-Boeing integration. There were others, including software changes. But these changes serve to point out that despite the seeming hopelessness of the situation in late 2000, Marine mechanics accepted the challenge of redesigning the Osprey. They had much invested in the Osprey; many had been with the program from the beginning and had developed a personal attachment and loyalty to their aircraft. As Chief Warrant Officer-2 James Mabe attested, "Marines have always believed in

this aircraft. We have always believed in this technology."

In the case of these Marines, this affinity had an extra dimension. Most of them had friends who had been killed in Osprey crashes. Some of them were first on the scene at the crash sites. Seeing the Osprey succeed would in a way ensure that their fellow Marines did not die in vain, the battle had not been lost. They also were cogently aware that this was the first time that the Marine Corps had gone it alone on the development of an aircraft. The Marine Corps had committed to the MV-22 Osprey; producing a combat-operational aircraft meant mission accomplishment. As Mabe expressed it, "With Marines, if you give them a mission, they are going to make it happen." □1775□

Histories Branch

Marine Innovators and the Creation of Bomb Racks

by Dr. Fred H. Allison, Historian

Marines have a superb reputation for quality air support, the ability to put steel on targets close to ground Marines. Marines often have had to be innovative and creative in adapting their aircraft or associated equipment to best do this. A case in point is bomb racks, ordinary pieces of equipment that nevertheless are critical for close air support.

In the earliest days of Marine aviation, Marines improved air support by making better bomb racks in the field. Evidence of this is found in Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller's oral history. In 1919, Puller was in Haiti as an enlisted Marine commanding a company of gendarmerie. A pilot in the Marine squadron that was there to provide air support was Lieutenant Lawson M. H. Sanderson. Both Puller and Sanderson would have noteworthy Marine Corps careers. Puller rose to three-star rank and is the icon of a Marine combat leader; his Navy Crosses bear witness to that. Sanderson retired a major general and commanded a number of Marine air units during World War II. Sanderson is best remembered as an innovator. During this Haiti tour, he was credited with pioneering dive or glide bomb-



One Marine F4U Corsair squadron that Charles Lindbergh visited in his Marshall Island tour in the fall of 1944 was Major Rudy York's VMF-224. In this photo, Lindbergh is on the left and York on the right.

ing techniques. According to Puller, they worked together on a bomb rack for the JN-4 "Jennies," the biplane that the Marines were flying in Haiti at that time. Here's how Puller described it:

"A truckload of bombs reached Mirebalais, [Haiti] and [Major E. A.] Osterman [a ground officer] said, 'Try the bombs.' And Sanderson returned

to Osterman, 'We have no bomb racks.' [The model of Jennies that the Marines had at that time in Haiti did not have bomb racks, but the DH-4s (de Havillands) that did have bomb racks were on the way.] Osterman said, 'Improvise bomb racks.' Well, I went with Lieutenant Sanderson. He asked me if I had any ideas. My reply was 'No, I've never even seen a bomb rack.' Well, he said, 'I got an idea.' We went to the mail tent and got two mail sacks . . . and then we went to the quartermaster and got four lengths of window sashing cord; they were both about six feet long. From the quartermaster we went to the shoe shop. In those days, every company had a cobbler; we had him secure two pieces of window cord to the open ends of the sack. Then we went out to the airstrip, it was only a couple of hundred yards from camp. And Sanderson with the use of nails and bolts secured the closed end of the sack under the fuselage. And he found cleats and put one in the cockpit. That would raise the mouth of the sack and secure it in the cockpit. Then we went and got a bomb—it weighed either 27 or 32 pounds . . . that's all they weighed, that's the biggest we had—put that in

the sack and secured the open end by the piece of sash cord into the cockpit. There was an old French fort built on the hillside overlooking Mirebalais; and we flew over the fort, and Sanderson says, 'Unleash it when I hold up my right hand.' We flew over and I untied the damn sash cord and I leaned over to take a look, and you could see that mail sack just [open]. The bomb floated out of there and we got a near miss . . . didn't miss far."

This was a very temporary and primitive substitute for a bomb rack. In World War II, however, Marines in combat adapted their fighters to drop bombs better and thus played a part in turning one of the best fighters of the era, the F4U Corsair, into a great fighter/bomber.

The first Corsairs that the Marines flew, the F4U-1s, were as one pilot described it: "clean, slick, and a straight fighter." The plane's only armament was six wing-mounted 50-caliber machine guns, which could spew 40 pounds of lead every three seconds. But these Corsairs could not drop bombs. Not having bombs was fine for the Marine squadrons that flew in the Solomon Island campaign where the fight was against enemy aircraft. However, in the Marshall

Islands, Marine Corsair squadrons' main mission was striking bypassed Japanese island bases to keep them subdued and isolated. The Marines needed to drop bombs and therefore needed bomb racks.

It is not clear exactly who first built bomb racks for the Corsair. One source says it was a Navy fighter squadron, VF-17, the "Jolly Rogers" flying in the Solomon Islands. Noted aviation historian Barrett Tillman, however, credits aircraft mechanics in VMF-111, a Marshall Islands-based MAG-31 squadron commanded by Major J. Frank Cole, with building the first bomb racks. By 18 March 1944, VMF-111 flew their first mission with 1,000-pound bombs hung on their Corsairs with field-engineered bomb racks. Major John M. Elliott, an aviation historian who spent his Marine Corps career with aviation ordnance and Corsair squadrons, surmises that since the Corsair was "built like a Mack truck," and bomb racks already existed on other aircraft, what the MAG-31 Marines did was make an adapter or brace that could be attached to the rear engine mount and the wing main spar in the fuselage from which a standard Navy MK-51 bomb rack could be hung.

Aircraft manufacturers employed

civilian technical representatives to visit forward bases to find out what improvements were needed. One of United Aircraft Corporation's (the parent company of Chance-Vought, which built the Corsair) technical representatives was none other than Charles Lindbergh. In late 1944, Lindbergh visited the Marine squadrons on Marshall Islands and did some field engineering with bomb racks so the Corsair could carry a bigger bomb load.

Lindbergh not only queried Marine pilots about the Corsair and its needed improvements, but he flew combat missions with them—something he was not supposed to do as a civilian and celebrity whose capture would have been a tremendous coup for the Japanese. Working with a "young Lieutenant Clark," they built an adapter for a bomb rack that was stout enough to carry a 2,000-pound bomb. He then "tested" it by dropping a 2,000-pound bomb on a Japanese antiaircraft installation on Wotje Atoll. Lindbergh noted in his diary that "so far as we know, this is the first time a 2,000 pound bomb has been dropped by a fighter." A few days later, Lindbergh flew a mission with a 2,000-pound bomb and two 1,000-pound-

Marine Corps Corsairs, November 1944, somewhere in the Pacific carrying bombs hung from field-engineered bomb racks.

Official Marine Corps Photo



ers—a phenomenal load for a fighter. He then flew a mission with the Marines, salvaging all 4,000 pounds on a Japanese gun installation on Wotje Atoll.

With the military working with industry representatives, it was not long before aircraft manufacturers included bomb racks and other adaptations on newer variants of the Corsair. Marine fighter pilots employed it in the ground attack role with good effect in the war's closing battles in the Philippines and Okinawa, and five years later in the Korean War.

Less than 10 years after the Korean War, Marines again built bomb racks in the field to make their aircraft, now jets, into better close air support platforms. Again, Marines were flying an aircraft, the A-4 Skyhawk, that was not optimized for supporting troops. The Skyhawk's primary mission was as a nuclear bomber. Captain William H. Fitch, a future lieutenant general, served in 1959 as a test pilot in the U.S. Navy's aviation test squadron, VX-5, at China Lake, California. He recalled the emphasis at that time on nuclear warfare and lack of interest in conventional tactics: "After doing hundreds of flights in VX-5, with loft

maneuvers, high dive, cruise control, and aerial refueling, I was convinced that we could go to that nuclear war and do a great job of defeating the enemy with nuclear weapons . . . most of us felt [however] that use of nukes was improbable. We felt that conventional warfare was what we needed to be concerned with."

The A-4 could carry only three bombs, one hung on each of its pylons, which would have been plenty if they were nuclear devices, but these were not nearly enough bombs for close air support missions. Captain Fitch came up with an idea to create a "rack on a rack," a bomb rack that could carry multiple bombs attached to the A-4's factory installed pylons. He shared his idea with another Marine VX-5 test pilot, Major K. P. Rice. Rice was enthusiastic, and they went to work developing a multiple carriage bomb rack. Fitch had the support and protection of VX-5's commanding officer, Commander Dale W. Cox Jr. (USN), who saw the value of the multiple carriage bomb rack. At Fitch's suggestion, Cox kept knowledge of the project from the Navy's Bureau of Naval Weapons. Fitch and Cox wanted to have "the momentum of fleet support, both Marine and Navy

aviation, so that the Bureau of Naval Weapons couldn't turn it over to bureaucrats and keep it on the shelf for years."

With Captain Fitch and Major Rice advising, squadron metalsmiths and avionics personnel built the multiple carriage bomb racks around Aero 15 racks and wiring harnesses salvaged from junked AD-1 Skyraiders. The only new materials required were channel iron and steel tubing. They produced three multiple carriage bomb racks at a cost of less than \$3,000. On 30 September 1959, only three months after developing the idea, Fitch made the first test flight with a multiple carriage bomb rack. The multiple carriage bomb rack was solid, weighing about 500 pounds. Fitch made a high-speed, low-altitude pass in front of control tower personnel at Charlie Range at China Lake in an A-4, and the rack held together. The next day, Fitch dropped six MK-81 (250 pound) inert bombs using the multiple carriage bomb rack. "It worked great," he recalled. In following flights, Fitch flew with wing-mounted multiple carriage bomb racks, which also worked well. Captain Fitch, Major Rice, and Commander Cox a few years later attained a U.S. patent for the multiple carriage bomb rack.

Underside of A-4 with multiple carriage bomb racks during an early test flight, flown by the racks' developer, then-Capt Fitch, 19 November 1959.

Photo provided by LtGen William H. Fitch



Douglas Aircraft Company, which built the A-4, took Fitch's idea and began mass-producing bomb racks, increasing its bomb carrying capacity from 3 to 16. From the Douglas racks came the ubiquitous multiple ejector racks and triple ejector racks used on Vietnam-era attack jets of all services—F-4s, A-4s, A-6s and even B-52s—which increased the bomb carrying capacity of these aircraft many fold.

For Marines, the best use of bombs was and still is in support of troops, and therefore, bomb racks are essential. As such, when aircraft weren't initially designed with bomb racks, Marine innovators created bomb racks that not only improved the functionality of their aircraft, but fulfilled the dynamic role of close air support so necessary to the ground missions of Marines in various climes and areas of the world. □1775□

Women Marines Train the Sisters of Fallujah

by Sara C. Pappa, Virginia E. Reynolds, and Laura J. Thiessen
History Division Interns

Lieutenant Colonel Christopher S. Dowling, commander of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, stationed in Fallujah, had a dilemma. The cultural and religious custom that prohibits a man from touching any woman who is not his wife led to the cursory searching of women passing through entry control points. This development had resulted in a lack of security because insurgents used women to smuggle in illegal items. Although women Marines were placed at such points, their other responsibilities prevented them from becoming full-time searchers. Lieutenant Colonel Dowling realized that these Marines needed to train Iraqi women who could adequately search other women entering the city. He needed to initiate a plan that would keep the city safe while also respecting Iraqi tradition.

In December 2007, a select group of seven women military personnel from Combat Logistics Battalion 8 were formed into the Sisters of Fallujah training team, under First Lieutenant Stephanie P. Drake, and were attached to the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. Their goal was to train more than 20 local Iraqi women, the Sisters of Fallujah, to search women entering the city. Chief Warrant Officer-2 Brian P. Callaway, officer in charge of the training program, was the liaison between the team and 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, and in charge of the Marines' training and logistics. He explained in a recent interview that in order to train female Iraqis, "I needed to have a female training team."

Training from the women Marines accommodated Iraqi culture and presented an opportunity neither group would ever forget. The training team members included six Marines (First Lieutenant Stephanie P. Drake, Staff Sergeant Sonya T. Hampton, Sergeant Monica C. Hardin, Lance Corporal Cassandra B. Hoffman, and Corporals



Top Row, Left to Right: HM3 Ali M. Bates; 1stLt Stephanie P. Drake; SSgt Sonya T. Hampton; LCpl Cassandra B. Hoffman; Bottom Row, Left to Right: Cpl Valarie J. Ward; Cpl Rachael C. Henderson; Sgt Monica C. Hardin.

Rachael C. Henderson and Valarie J. Ward) and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Ali M. Bates (USN). First Lieutenant Drake had the opportunity to hand-select whom she wanted to go and what she described as "an amazing group."

According to First Lieutenant Drake, "having some people with experience in different areas really helped." She described some of the attributes in a recent interview with the History Division's Oral History program. She observed that Corporal Ward "is very experienced with weapons and her job is to fix them and account for them whereas my military police [Lance Corporal Hoffman] knew her policing tactics. She knew how to search; she knew how to incorporate that part of her knowledge into what we were doing." Drake added that "my two other Marines were there because they had gone on so many female search teams, they knew exactly what they were doing, and they could relate it to

the actual search environment that those women were going to be in."

The Marines embraced the opportunity to participate on the training team. Corporal Ward was "more than willing" when recommended to First Lieutenant Drake. "It's a chance of a lifetime to work with these women . . . I was actually going to . . . be able to make a change and hopefully set forth a new pattern," recalled Lance Corporal Hoffman. Corporal Henderson said she "got lucky" and happened to be in the right place at the right time. A staff sergeant said she would ask the next noncommissioned officer she came across. It happened to be Corporal Henderson, who "jumped" at the chance to participate. Like Sergeant Hardin, all were "excited" to join the team.

The Sisters of Fallujah team trained internally before linking up with 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, about two weeks prior to meeting the Iraqi women. Under the instruction of Chief

Warrant Officer-2 Callaway, the Marines practiced combat marksmanship since they were operating in the battalion's area of operations. They also learned the standard operating procedures of 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. According to Callaway, "it is 3/5's responsibility that they are prepped for combat."

Teaching in Fallujah required special preparation on behalf of the Marines. Chief Warrant Officer-2 Callaway prepared the program's curriculum and basic lesson plan, derived from the manual used by the Iraqi Police Force Academy, and helped train the Sisters of Fallujah training team. Lecture topics included search techniques—body and vehicular—as well as communication, history, and weapons handling. Hospital Corpsman 3d Class Bates' primary duties were to provide medical support and teach women's health and first-aid courses to the women. The Marines, having served at entry control points themselves, drew from their experiences to help teach the Sisters of Fallujah. First Lieutenant Drake made the courses flexible and the information more accessible for the Iraqis by replacing words with images. She stated that "my Marines and my sailor did a fantastic job. They just started showing them, demonstrating to them even without any way to communicate to them verbally."

Employing women Marines also encouraged "serious cultural bonding," according to Chief Warrant Officer-2 Callaway. Although the training period for the Sisters of Fallujah lasted only six days, it was time enough to build a relationship. He stated that "it works out a lot better when you have the females there to train the female Iraqis because they have things to relate to and they can share things culturally." The joint effort also permitted the Marines to see the women in a new light. Corporal Ward felt it was easy to connect with the Iraqi women because, to a certain extent, both were misjudged. Lance Corporal Hoffman remembered a lesson she learned when the Marines were teaching take-downs. "I had one take me to the ground, and she was a lot stronger than I thought she would be. I know not to underestimate them." First

Lieutenant Drake felt that "as much as we were teaching them, we learned a lot about them on the whole . . . It was really interesting to see their personalities."

The training that the Sisters of Fallujah received made for a smooth transition to their duties at entry control points. Their presence also lifted responsibility from the Marines. Sergeant Hardin recalled that "it made it easier for us because we just had to supervise what they were doing and make sure they were doing it right. We didn't have to take our eyes off anything at any time. We could watch them and watch what was going on all at the same time." Just one day after their graduation, the Sisters of Fallujah prevented a woman from entering the city with a large sum of money, demonstrating both the need and effectiveness of the program. Also, Iraqi women were surprised but pleased to be searched by other Iraqi women and preferred this arrangement.

Success did not come without some difficulty and challenges along way. On the first day, the Marines found themselves without an interpreter or electricity for their image-rich PowerPoint slide show. Also, the Iraqi women, not driven by a Westerner's sense of time, were not always punctual by the Marines' standards. More serious concerns were threats of attacks, forcing the team to relocate frequently. The language barrier was the most taxing for the women Marines. It was challenging and frustrating to teach

through an interpreter. Corporal Ward described it as being "mentally exhausting," and Sergeant Hardin found it "frustrating." By using practical teaching techniques, the problems encountered did not prove insurmountable. Hands-on demonstrations, and hand and arm signals were used throughout the training. Marines incorporated experienced-based learning, broke into smaller groups, and even taught one on one.

The women Marines enjoyed seeing the Iraqi women, usually submissive and mild in public, come together in one room, talking and laughing and becoming "feisty" and "active." First Lieutenant Drake said that "you learned a lot about them that you wouldn't have learned just riding by them in a truck." The training team was also glad it was given the opportunity to help the Iraqi women take control of their city's security. Lance Corporal Hoffman stated that "I know that I helped these women help themselves in a sense in keeping their city safe and I made a difference." In addition, the Marines took great pride in the fact that they were doing something a male Marine could not do. Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Bates felt that the experience afforded her "the potential to stand out as a female," and Corporal Henderson believed that the Marines' accomplishment was "something to be proud of." Chief Warrant Officer-2 Callaway summed up the experience by stating that "they were outstanding Marines, and I have the utmost respect for them." □1775□

Top Row, Left to Right: Cpl Valarie J. Ward; SSgt Sonya T. Hampton; CWO-2 Brian P. Callaway; 1stLt Stephanie P. Drake, Bottom Row, Left to Right: LCpl Cassandra B. Hoffman; Sgt Monica C. Hardin; Cpl Rachael C. Henderson; HM3 Ali M. Bates.



Marines and the Transformation of al-Anbar Province, 2004–2008

By CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams
Field Historian

In November 2004, after a seven-month unilateral cease-fire following Operation Vigilant Resolve, the U.S. Marines experienced the most intense urban fighting in Fallujah, Iraq, since the battle to retake Hue City, Vietnam, in 1968. However, the two hard-fought battles for Fallujah in 2004, along with the numerous engagements with Iraq's committed insurgents, are only part of the Marines' story in Iraq. The other part of the story is how the Marines took the initiative with the civil affairs component of their mission and created relationships that helped transform al-Anbar Province and Fallujah. Fallujah, once considered the symbolic epicenter of Iraq's bitter and bloody insurgency, is now representative of the Marines' efforts to bring security and stability to the region. Their success is as significant to Marine Corps' history as the two vicious battles in 2004.

Located along the Euphrates River valley 40 miles west of Baghdad, Fallujah is an important political and economic center with a population of

around 250,000. Since ancient times, Fallujah has been a dangerous and unruly city. Its proximity to Baghdad along the important trade routes leading from Syria and Jordan made it a crossroads for the smuggling trade. Amid this environment, Fallujah's tribes competed for business and political power, and organized crime thrived. With 72 major mosques and three Islamic colleges, Fallujah was Iraq's Wahhabi capital. Under Saddam Hussein, Fallujah's Wahhabi element posed a threat to the Ba'ath Party regime, causing Hussein to station many of his best Republican Guard troops on a cluster of bases outside the city, along with the Iranian division composed of defectors and expelled dissidents belonging to the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq. Besides the Wahhabi and criminal elements, Fallujah's volatility and anti-Western resentment had been increased by clashes with the British during the British Mandate and World War II, by an errant bomb that killed civilians during the Gulf War, and by a decade

of sanctions and inspections by the United Nations.

When U.S. Army soldiers arrived in April 2003, they were never able to fully pacify the city. The Fallujans, like other Sunnis and Ba'athists, believed that they were the target of the war and protested the Coalition invasion. Many vowed revenge for the loss of income, pensions, and the humiliation of Coalition occupation. A number of leading Ba'athists, who had enjoyed paternalistic privilege and protection under Hussein, continued to fight alongside Iraqi nationalists, Saddam Fedayeen, secret police, and foreign fighters who came to Iraq to fight the enemies of Islam. Many former generals and officers, who held key positions in Hussein's military, along with around 40,000 troops they once commanded on the bases outside Fallujah, also joined the growing insurgency.

A week after Baghdad's fall, on 28 April 2003, Hussein's birthday, a protest in Fallujah turned into a fight between Fallujan insurgents and U.S. soldiers. Clashes became more common and more violent as the insurgents ignored the laws of war by using civilians to mask their attacks and movements while baiting U.S. soldiers to return fire. Soon, U.S. forces could no longer move through Fallujah without incident, and danger kept Western journalists away. Amid this environment, Iraq's insurgency grew. Fallujah became the base of operations for insurgent groups to launch attacks on the Shi'a to prevent them from attaining power and against Coalition targets to erode both international and U.S. public support. The insurgents also sought to exert control over the city through intimidation that included murdering Iraqis working for the Coalition for their "collaboration." Along with the terror campaigns, Fallujah's insurgent leaders made

Marines with the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, Bravo Company, in Fallujah walk away after clearing a house and gathering intelligence and weapons.

Photo by LCpl Jeremy W. Ferguson



effective use of propaganda to achieve their goals, attributing any incidents resulting in civilian casualties, regardless of who caused them, to U.S. forces and embedding Arab journalists into their operations. Meanwhile, Fallujah's larger tribes, along with Ba'athists, criminal gangs, and foreign-supported Salafi groups competed for control of the city. The secular Ba'athists wanted to regain their power, while the Salafis and foreign insurgent groups sought creation of an Islamic state in Iraq with Baghdad as its capital.

Over the next 11 months, confrontations between U.S. forces and Fallujans became more frequent and intense. Although U.S. soldiers succeeded in capturing or killing many Ba'athist leaders, Wahhabists like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi began to gain control of Iraq's Sunni insurgency. Moreover, while the U.S. Army viewed its work as a success, many Iraqis perceived the U.S. Army's tactics and use of force as both excessive and insensitive to their culture, which further alienated the population and aided insurgent recruitment.

When Marines returned to Iraq in March 2004 to provide security and stability to a region, Fallujah earned a worldwide reputation for violence and danger. When the Marines of Regimental Combat Team-1 took over responsibility of Fallujah from the U.S. Army's 82d Airborne on 28 March 2004, they had already endured 36 hours of fighting. Three days later, on 31 March 2004, Fallujah became the center of the media's spotlight when insurgents ambushed and killed four American contractors working for Blackwater USA. Al-Jazeera's images of charred, mutilated bodies being pulled apart and hung from a bridge over the Euphrates River elicited U.S. public anger—and a strong U.S. response. Multi-National Coalition commanders ordered Marines to secure the city and clear it of insurgents. With few Western journalists on the scene, al-Jazeera and the Arab media dominated combat coverage in a way favorable to the insurgents and reported the false insurgent claims of excessive force and targeting civilians. These erroneous reports increased Iraqi public anger,

and the Multi-National Coalition commanders ordered the Marines to end their assault. The unilateral cease-fire that followed Operation Vigilant Resolve allowed insurgents to regroup, impose Islamic Shari'a law on the city, and delayed decisive operations that finally came in November under Operation al-Fajr, or New Dawn, which finally brought a decisive military victory and paved the way for successful Iraqi elections in 2005.

Although Fallujah received much of the world's attention, it was not the only hostile city in western Iraq at the time. Marines also engaged tenacious insurgents in cities along the Euphrates River valley from ar-Ramadi, capital of the province, to the Syrian border where foreign fighters continued to enter the country. Many of these cities, including those such as ar-Rutbah on the main highway to Jordan, acted as hubs for foreign fighters entering from Syria. Outside al-Anbar Province, sectarian violence increased as Sunni and Shi'a groups vied for control of Baghdad. In August 2004, Marines helped put down the Mahdi Militia rebellion in an-Najaf, which at the time was the latest in a series of efforts led by Shi'a cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to assert Shi'a supremacy in Iraq.

For the next two years after Operation al-Fajr, Iraqis in al-Anbar Province remained isolated and largely did not participate in the landmark elections of 2005. Like Fallujah, insurgents in Ramadi declared Shari'a law and began to assert control over the

The King Faisal Bridge, named after the first king of Iraq, King Faisal I, is shown below at the rededication of the bridge on 5 April 2008. The bridge made headlines in 2004 when four Blackwater USA employees' bodies were hung from the bridge.

Photo by Capt Estban T. Vickers



population through murder and intimidation. Over the course of 2005, Marines engaged in several operations (New Market, Matador, and Steel Curtain) to destroy al-Qaeda in Iraq and other insurgent networks, along with cutting the influx of foreign fighters coming into Iraq from Syria. Meanwhile, Civil Affairs teams continued to engage the population, provide humanitarian assistance, and rebuild infrastructure. Information operations pursued a course of public diplomacy to convey the consistent message that U.S. forces wanted to help stabilize and improve the region and were not there for long-term occupation or to proselytize the population. When al-Qaeda in Iraq's leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, succeeded in destroying the al-Askari, or Golden Mosque, in Samarra on 22 February 2006, violence across all of Iraq increased significantly. Although Marines continued operations into 2006, by the end of 2006, many U.S. and Iraqi officials had written al-Anbar Province off as uncontrollable.

What those officials did not realize was that a transformation in al-Anbar Province was already taking place. Al-Qaeda in Iraq's brutality and indiscriminate attacks against civilians caused resentment, and the local tribes began to resist al-Qaeda in Iraq. Meanwhile, the relentless efforts of the Marines to purge al-Qaeda in Iraq from the province had weakened insurgent networks. Ongoing humanitarian operations and engagement efforts, coupled with a consistent message of good will backed by consistent actions, had begun to erode long-standing cultural barriers and improve credibility with the people.

In Ramadi, 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, working with the U.S. Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Armor Division, conducted aggressive counterinsurgency operations that not only weakened al-Qaeda in Iraq and other insurgent groups but also sought to engage key provincial and tribal leaders. Sheikh Abdul Satter abu Risha, who had lost his father and three brothers to al-Qaeda in Iraq murder, was receptive to this effort and forged an alliance with the 1st BCT to recruit

Documentation of Marines in Iraq

The Marine Corps History Division continues its efforts to document Marine engagement in Iraq. Its field historians have collected more than 4,500 interviews to date. *Among the People: U.S. Marines in Iraq*, by Lieutenant Colonel David A. Benhoff, a field historian with the History Division, is one of first published works to document the positive impact of civil affairs efforts in al-Anbar Province (published in 2008 by Marine Corps University Press).

The History Division has published *U.S. Marines in Iraq, 2003: Anthology and Annotated Bibliography* (2006) and *U.S. Marines in Iraq: Basrah, Baghdad, and*

Beyond (2007), with follow-on operational volumes in the works. A battle study of Marines in the August 2004 fight for an-Najaf is at press, and others on Fallujah and an-Nasiriyah are nearing completion, as are books on the Aviation Combat Element and Combat Service Support in Operation Iraqi Freedom I, Special Operations Command Detachment One, and a narrative overview of Marines in Iraq for the 2003-2006 period. *U.S. Marines and Irregular Warfare, 1898-2007: Anthology and Selected Bibliography*, newly published by Marine Corps University Press, includes two articles on Iraq.

more Iraqi police. As police recruitment grew, al-Qaeda in Iraq retaliated in a manner that only served to strengthen tribal resolve in Ramadi—bombing police stations and murdering a leading sheikh.

When 1st Battalion, 6th Marines (1/6) replaced 3/8, they worked with the 1st BCT and Iraqi Army units to expel al-Qaeda in Iraq from the city from September through December 2006. They sealed the city and controlled access through checkpoints, searching everyone who entered and requiring identification cards for all Iraqis. Marines also divided cities into neighborhoods or precincts to control movement, and Marines moved from hardened bases into smaller outposts within these “gated communities,” where they lived with the Iraqi police and conducted joint patrols to engage the population and root out remaining insurgents. At the same time, Marines and soldiers engaged in humanitarian and reconstruction operations that helped prevent al-Qaeda in Iraq attacks and regain popular support. Meanwhile, many of the tribal militias who helped expel al-Qaeda in Iraq from the population centers became what came to be called the Sons of Iraq, who patrolled their own neighborhoods and staffed the checkpoints between precincts inside the cities. These tribal efforts not only improved the quality of life, but also brought normalcy and hope to Iraqis in al-Anbar Province. With security improved, children returned to school, and many adults, throughout the province, returned to one of the 17

campuses of al-Anbar University.

As more tribes joined the Sahwa or the Awakening movement, U.S. Marines and soldiers and their Iraqi partners secured the populations in cities and towns up the Euphrates River valley and across al-Anbar Province. Iraqi police and military

Gen John F. Kelly, Commanding General, Multinational Force-West, on right, and SgtMaj Neil O'Connell, Multinational Force-West, on left, cases the colors signifying the transfer of Multinational Force-West's headquarters to al-Asad Air Base. Kelly ordered the closing of Camp Fallujah and the base to be handed back to the Iraqis. More than 8,000 Marines from the camp have been relocated throughout al-Anbar Province or sent home.

Photo by MSgt Willie Ellerbrook



forces quickly grew as the Awakening gained momentum, and U.S. Army and Marine transition teams provided the necessary training for the Iraqi police and military to defeat al-Qaeda in Iraq. By living and working with the Iraqis, mentoring them, and setting examples for them to follow, U.S. Marines and soldiers built camaraderie, trust, and respect. The Iraqis, Marines, and soldiers played soccer and volleyball together and enjoyed conversations and friendships. It was common for an Iraqi soldier to protect a U.S. Marine or soldier during an engagement by placing his own body as a shield, and some even gave their lives to save American friends. Some U.S. Marines and soldiers risked their lives to save Iraqi friends. These relationships not only contributed to the improved proficiency of the province's police and military, but also allowed Marines to turn to the outlying areas to destroy remaining al-Qaeda in Iraq cells hiding in the desolate desert regions.

Having been taught the fundamentals of Arabic and Iraqi culture, U.S. Marines and soldiers engaged the population daily as they patrolled the streets with Iraqi police. They succeeded in building trust among Iraqis and frequently played soccer with Iraqi children or were invited into Iraqi homes for meals and tea. Meanwhile, commanders engaged local sheikhs and government leaders. In the eyes of many, Americans were no longer seen as the enemy or occupier but as partners and friends, working toward common goals of keeping Iraqis safe while working toward a secure and stable

future. With new confidence in their police and military, residents of Ramadi were not only pointing out weapons caches but also insurgents and their supporters.

As security improved, Coalition forces and other U.S. agencies in the form of Provincial Reconstruction Teams worked closely with the Iraqis to improve al-Anbar Province through six social processes—security, essential services and infrastructure, local government, the economy, communication, and the rule of law. This U.S.-Iraqi cooperation created new hospitals, schools, and government buildings, along with urban renovation programs that erased signs of fighting and hostility. These combined efforts also improved roads, railways, and bridges and built new power plants and sewage treatment facilities, oil refineries, and fuel distribution centers.

Since 2004, Marines and other agencies made great strides in improving governance and the rule of law by helping the Iraqis build provincial and municipal governments that provided self-governance, self-reliance, and—importantly—reconciliation. Although the citizens of al-Anbar Province largely abstained from participation in the 2005 elections, tribal leaders became supportive of the democratic process because they were included in it. As a result, new political parties emerged and became active in Iraq's political process. Women, once excluded from governance and the debate on important issues, began participating in Iraqi

government and society. Similarly, the legal system of al-Anbar Province became more robust with improvements in the courts, police forces, and corrections programs. By mid-2008, Iraqi police independently patrolled city streets and manned checkpoints, the Iraqi Highway Patrol covered major roadways, and the Iraqi Army conducted independent operations against al-Qaeda in Iraq, other insurgents, and criminal groups.

As a result of the security and stabilization efforts of the Marines, U.S. agencies, and the Iraqis themselves, other effects from the six social processes began to transform al-Anbar Province. U.S. agencies helped create business development centers to enable Iraqi entrepreneurs in obtaining micro-financing and foreign investment while encouraging wealthy Iraqis to invest in their country's future. Improved communication outlets, such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and the Internet, helped the Iraqis break free of the former state-dominated media and provided the means to educate and illuminate the citizens of al-Anbar Province on the current issues in Iraqi as well as in other countries throughout the world. These new communication mechanisms allowed the local leaders of al-Anbar Province to engage the people in ways never seen before. U.S. and Iraqi cooperation also developed adult literacy and vocational training programs and civil service organizations like the Iraqi Women's Engagement

Program that helped empower Iraqi women and meet the needs of widows, the disabled, and the elderly.

By January 2008, U.S. soldiers and Marines could walk the streets of Ramadi without helmet or flak jackets, and all of al-Anbar Province had followed Ramadi's lead. Al-Qaeda in Iraq was effectively defeated in al-Anbar Province and its ideology essentially rejected among the majority of the population. Marines reduced their presence in the cities and began turning more responsibility over to the Iraqis. On 1 September 2008, Major General John F. Kelly formally turned over the governance of al-Anbar Province to Ma'amoun Sami Rashid al-Awani, governor of al-Anbar Province, and turned over security to Major General Murthi Mush'hen Almalawi, commanding general for all Iraqi Security Forces. Al-Anbar Province became the 11th of 18 provinces to be handed back to Iraqi control. On 14 November 2008, Marines turned over Camp Fallujah to Iraqis in another milestone.

Al-Anbar Province has been transformed from a hostile, politically intractable region, written off as a lost cause by many U.S. and Iraqi leaders, to a politically and economically maturing region that is the model for the rest of Iraq. Although the U.S. Marines were not alone in their endeavors to stabilize and secure the province, their efforts helped to energize the process toward Iraqi self-government and self-sufficiency. □1775□

Marine Corps Chronology

Highlights From the 2007 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 2007 Chronology, including the ongoing Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. To see past annual chronologies as well as the complete 2007 Chronology, please visit the Frequently Requested section of the History Division's website at <www.history.usmc.mil>.

5 January – The 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployed as

part of the Bataan Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), taking with it the first Marine Special Operations Company (MSOC) to ever be deployed.

10 January – President George W. Bush announced plans to increase the end strength size of the Army and Marine Corps. The following day, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates proposed adding 65,000 soldiers and 27,000 Marines over the next five

years at a cost of \$10 billion annually.

11 January – President George W. Bush presented the Medal of Honor to Corporal Jason L. Dunham's family during a White House ceremony. Corporal Dunham, who died of wounds sustained in combat in April 2004, was not only the first Marine to receive the nation's highest military award for valor for Operation Iraqi Freedom, but also the first Marine to receive the award for any action since 1970.

19 January – The Marine Corps changed its policy and will no longer automatically deactivate a reserve Marine who becomes pregnant on active duty per Marine Administrative Message (MarAdmin) 027/07.

2 February – The countries of Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Tanzania, and Tunisia were added to the list of designated areas of eligibility for Marines to receive the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. It was the third time the list of eligible countries has been

Maj William D. Chesarek Jr. became the first American since World War II to be awarded the British Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions during combat. Maj Chesarek served in Iraq as an exchange officer with the British 847 Naval Air Squadron.

Official Marine Corps Photo 070321-M-3892P-001



expanded for the medal since its introduction in 2004.

7 February – Five Marines and two sailors were killed when their Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter was shot down by insurgents about 20 miles northwest of Baghdad, Iraq. It was the fifth U.S. helicopter to be shot down in a three-week period.

9 February – II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) assumed command of Multi-National Force-West from I MEF in Iraq's al-Anbar Province. The last of I MEF Marines were able to return home to Camp Pendleton, California, by 15 February.

4 March – Marines with the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MarSoc) opened fire, killing at least eight Afghan civilians in eastern Afghanistan. Different versions of the events led to tensions between U.S. forces and the local population, with the Marine unit being expelled from the country later in the month by the Army general in charge. The incident also sparked an investigation into whether the Marines responded with appropriate force to an ambush or if they had opened fire without provocation.

21 March – Major William D. Chesarek Jr. was awarded the British Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) in a ceremony at Buckingham Palace, London, by Queen Elizabeth II. Major Chesarek was serving as an exchange officer with the British 847 Naval Air Squadron and was deployed to Iraq with that unit. His actions on 10 June 2006 supporting British ground troops lead to him becoming the first American since World War II to receive a British DFC.

1 April – The Marine Corps officially stood up the Wounded Warriors Regiment, whose mission was to help injured Marines through their recovery and an often difficult bureaucracy. The regiment is headquartered at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico, Virginia, but has two established battalions, one on the West Coast and another on the East Coast.

18 April – The Marine Corps formally reactivated the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, in a ceremony at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The reactiva-



Official Marine Corps Photo 070418-3790H-M-001
A Marine from 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, marches with a company guidon during the pass in review at the unit's reactivation ceremony on 18 April 2007.

tion was originally slated for 2005 but was delayed due to manpower and equipment issues. The battalion had been deactivated in September 1994.

25 April – Sergeant Major Carlton W. Kent assumed the position as the 16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, replacing Sergeant Major John L. Estrada. Sergeant Major Estrada later retired from the Marine Corps in June 2007 after 34 years of service.

4 May – The Marine Corps Reserve promoted its first female reservist to brigadier general during a ceremony in Arlington, Virginia. Colonel Tracy L. Garrett, who was the acting commanding general for 4th Marine Logistics Group in New Orleans, Louisiana, was slated to take over as head of Marine Corps Mobilization Command in Kansas City, Missouri, following her promotion.

5 May – Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, former director of the Marine Corps' History and Museums Division, well-respected author and historian, passed away at the age of 85. Brigadier General Simmons served in the Marine Corps during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, retired after 36 years in uniform, and then served another 17 years as a civil servant. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, on 25 July 2007.

15 June – MarAdmin 364/07 announced the awarding of the Navy Unit Commendation to 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, for service from 26 December 2005 to 31 May 2006 during

Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

28 June – President George W. Bush nominated Navy Admiral Michael G. Mullen to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Marine General James E. Cartwright to serve as vice chairman. Originally, General Peter Pace was expected to be renominated for another two-year term as chairman, but Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates instead recommended Admiral Mullen after concluding that General Pace's Senate confirmation process would be too contentious.

13 July – The Marine Corps reactivated 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, in a ceremony at Camp Lejeune. The unit absorbed the men assigned to the Anti-Terrorism Battalion that was deactivated the same day and was part of the Marine Corps' long-range plans to increase its end strength numbers.

14 July – Regimental Combat Team 2 began Operation Mawtini along the Euphrates River in Iraqi towns long used as insurgent sanctuaries. The operation involved more than 9,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops and was aimed at establishing control in remote areas of western al-Anbar Province.

31 August – General James E. Cartwright was sworn in as the eighth vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates at a ceremony held at the Pentagon. General Cartwright had been serving as vice chairman since his confirmation by the Senate on 3 August, but his official ceremony was delayed until his family could be in attendance. It was the first time in history that two Marine officers held the top two military spots since General Peter Pace was still serving as chairman of the JCS.

17 September – Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 (VMM-263) became the first combat squadron to deploy with the MV-22 Osprey aircraft. VMM-263 departed from Marine Corps Air Station at New River, North Carolina for a seven-month deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The first of the Ospreys landed in Iraq in early October.

1 October – Africa Command



Defense Imagery Photo 071110-M-7404B-075

Two MV-22B Ospreys from Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 (VMM-263) refuel at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. VMM-263 was the first combat squadron to deploy with the aircraft.

(AfriCom) was stood up as the newest regionally focused major Department of Defense command. The command was created to help tackle diplomatic initiatives, humanitarian aid, and counterterrorism operations in all of Africa except Egypt, which remained under the control of U.S. Central Command.

10 October – Lieutenant General James N. Mattis ordered that a court of inquiry be convened to investigate the actions of a Marine Corps special operations company on 4 March 2007 in Afghanistan, which left several civilians dead and wounded. The court of inquiry is a rarely convened high-level administrative investigatory body and not a criminal proceeding.

11 October – The U.S. Naval Academy agreed to temporarily return to South Korea (initially for a two-year period) a Korean flag captured by Marines during a brief 1871 battle. The giant banner had been displayed in the Naval Academy museum since undergoing preservation treatments in 1913. The 1871 Korean Campaign occurred when U.S. officials sought to open what was then Korea to trade and resulted in six Marines receiving the Medal of Honor.

2 November – Marines, assigned to Task Force National Capital Region, were deployed to Iraq for seven months. Made up of more than 200 Marines, nearly all volunteers, from various commands in the Washington, D.C., area, the unit was formed in June in order to give Marines a chance to deploy from usually non-deployable duty stations such as Marine Corps Base, Quantico.

17 November – Marines and sailors with the 13th MEU returned home to Camp Pendleton following a seven-month deployment to the Persian Gulf with the Bonhomme Richard ESG (Expeditionary Strike Group) that included a ground combat tour in Iraq.

17 November – Marines with 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion (1st MSOB), U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, returned to Camp Pendleton following the unit's historic first deployment. While deployed, 1st MSOB conducted special operations in the Philippines and Afghanistan.

31 December – The strength of the U.S. Armed Forces was 1,409,897, of whom 186,342 were U.S. Marines.

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