

# FORTITUDINE

BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME XXXI, NUMBER 4

2005



## Iwo Jima *The 60th Anniversary*

IWO JIMA REMEMBERED... TENACITY AGAINST TURBULENCE... THE RECON BOYS  
RECORDING IWO JIMA'S HISTORY... THE ART OF JOHN McDERMOTT... MARINE NIGHT FIGHTERS  
FIELD HISTORIANS IN FALLUJAH... FORGOTTEN IWO JIMA INTERVIEWS... 1945 CHRONOLOGY

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PCN 10401220100

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# FORTITUDINE

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

Historical Bulletin Vol. XXXI, No.4

2005

*"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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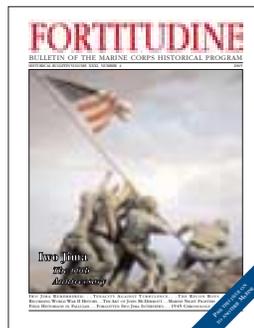
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**ABOUT THE COVER**



*Cover Illustration: Iwo Jima, painted by Sgt Tom Lovell, who helped produce a series of paintings of Marine Corps historic events with Sgt John Clymer. The Cover painting is a copy of the famous Joe Rosenthal AP photo of Marines raising the flag on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima. Lovell 80-2-3*

This quarterly 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.

## Iwo Jima Remembered



*Col. John W. Ripley, USMC (Ret)*

In this issue we highlight and acknowledge the anniversary of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, the war-ending battles of World War II. All Marine divisions of the Pacific war, to include the new 6th Division, would fight in these battles that would later become hallmarks of battlefield tenacity and the warrior ethos ingrained in the American public's view of its Marines.

The Iwo Jima 60th reunion took place here in Washington, D.C., with the wreath laying at the War Memorial Saturday, 19 February; D-Day plus 60 years. Blessed with beautiful weather, a large number of veterans and fami-

lies attended, as well as an impressive number of dignitaries who came to honor these Marines. Several weeks later, many of these same veterans and families, plus more that were not at the reunion, would meet again; this time on Iwo Jima. Never without emotion, such meetings of old campaigners are hard to describe, and when families are along the passion and deep feelings wrap around you so tightly that everyone becomes part of the experience. The return to Iwo Jima would never have been possible without very active participation by the Marine Corps, for Iwo remains a

very barren, remote location without vehicles, roads, water or the most basic accommodations for what would be considered tourists. All of this must be pre-staged there and Marines from III Marine Expeditionary Force does it splendidly, and certainly not without effort. The veterans see this and understand it perfectly. They and their families state over and over, "You Marines make me so proud," "Thank God for the Marines," and one veteran to his children and grandchildren (11 in all), "Now you can see why I have spent my entire life as a proud Marine." Few observers could maintain their composure in this deeply moving atmosphere, nor could they ignore seeing a very old, very proud veteran being helped to his knees then placing his hand on a piece of beach that at one time meant life to him, and death to his comrades.

The commemoration for Okinawa will take place as you read this with formal ceremonies in June, all of which will be heavily supported by our Marines there. A watershed battle for many reasons, Okinawa must also be remembered as perhaps the greatest tri-service battle of the war with Army and Army Air Force, Navy and the Marine Corps equally involved in the fighting and dying. With the island battle getting much of the attention, even today few can appreciate the tremendous cost paid by the Fleet supporting the fighting ashore while conducting a desperate battle at sea against the enemy's Kamikaze blitz. Then a second punch came by way of a typhoon, which caused another desperate loss of shipping.

For such sacrifices, our Marine veterans, and all Americans fighting with them, shall always be remembered. These battles, and the great Marines of that era, are forever honored in our memory. □1775□



Photo: DOD USMC 112720

*"Old Glory" whips against the sky atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima as cheering Marines raise their voices and weapons in the historic moment. Joe Rosenthal (left) is photographed while taking a photo after the second flag raising.*

# World War II 60th Anniversary Commemoration Activities

by Col Jeffrey J. Douglass, USMCR  
Director of Operations  
WWII Commemoration Committee

Spring 1945 arrived with the United States still deeply engaged in its struggle against the Axis powers in two major theaters. In Europe, the Allies were rapidly approaching victory after a long and costly campaign that was launched in June 1944, at Normandy. In the Pacific, the desperate, bloody island battles were won at great expense as the Allies marched toward mainland Japan.

As American forces in the Pacific gained momentum in the summer of 1944, the U.S. Army Air Corps began devastating aerial attacks on the Japanese mainland with its new, long-range B-29 bombers. The Japanese, desperate to stem these attacks, established fighter interceptor bases at three airfields on Iwo Jima, 650 miles from Tokyo. From there, they could attack and slow the armadas of American bombers, possibly even stopping the attacks, as the B-29 bombers were beyond the range of American fighter escort aircraft. The capture of Iwo Jima became a critical objective, as it would largely remove the Japanese fighter interceptor threat and allow American fighter aircraft to launch protective escort missions for the B-29s from the same captured Iwo Jima airfields. It also would provide air



Photo: Courtesy *Leatherneck Magazine*

*The Initial wave landing on the beach of the Japanese island, Iwo Jima, where one of World War II's bloodiest battles took place. The volcanic mountain, Mount Suribachi, is seen in the background.*

bases to serve as a sanctuary for crippled B-29 bombers returning from Japan.

The decision to capture Iwo Jima was a sobering calculation, as the island would prove difficult at best, impossible at worst. The U.S. Navy fleet sailed from Hawaii with 880 ships to Iwo Jima carrying 110,000 Marines and supplies, the largest battle flotilla

of ships in the Pacific to date. On 19 February 1945, after the conclusion of the longest sustained aerial offensive of the war by American air forces, the Marines went ashore. Waiting for them, deeply entrenched in the caves and relatively untouched by the air bombardment, were approximately 21,000 Japanese defenders of the island. This battle for Iwo Jima would be recorded as a decisive event in World War II history and a remarkable saga of courage and tenacity.

In 36 days of fighting on Iwo Jima, American forces suffered 25,851 casualties. Of these, 6,825 American boys, or one in three, were killed. More U.S. Marines earned the Medal of Honor on Iwo Jima than in any other battle in U.S. history. Virtually all of the Japanese defenders perished. The mission was accomplished, and the gallant actions and sacrifices by thousands of Marines paid dividends even before the island was declared secure, when the first injured B-29 bombers began emergency landings. In the aftermath of this battle, Iwo



Photo: Charles D. Melson

*Mount Suribachi as seen today from approximately the same angle as shown in the photograph above.*

Jima became a vital bomber base, providing an emergency landing site for 2,400 bombers and 27,000 crewmen.

As American forces stabilized Iwo Jima and recuperated from the battle, the United States set the next objective, the capture of Okinawa, in its advance toward what was considered brutally inevitable: the invasion of mainland Japan. The island of Okinawa, strategically located some 400 miles south of Japan, represented the next and last obstacle to the main island of Japan. It was believed the Allied victory in Okinawa would sever Japan's sea lines of communication as well as its access to vital sources of raw materials in the south. Once captured by the Allies, Okinawa presented itself as a valuable staging area and supply depot for support of the mainland Japan campaign. This was important, considering the logistical stockpile of men, material and equipment that would be needed to support a massive assault on Japan.

Allied forces knew the battle for Okinawa would be a devastating struggle and assembled the largest amphibious invasion armada of the Pacific campaign. Admiral Raymond A. Spruance's Fifth Fleet was to include more than 40 aircraft carriers, 18 battleships, 200 destroyers and hundreds of assorted support ships. Some 1,300 U.S. ships surrounded the island. Of those, 365 were amphibious ships. More than 182,000 troops would make up the assault, planned for 1 April 1945, Easter Sunday.

Two Marine and two Army divisions, 60,000 troops in all, landed with little opposition. However, there would be no mistake the Japanese would fight desperately to maintain their ownership of Okinawa. And true to the estimates, Okinawa would show itself as the costliest battle of the Pacific War. Allied Forces lost 34 ships and craft of all types, and 368 ships and craft were damaged. The fleet had lost 763 aircraft. More than 12,000 Americans were killed in the battle (nearly 5,000 Navy dead and almost 8,000 Marine and Army dead) and 36,000 were wounded. Japanese human losses were enormous: 107,539 soldiers killed and 23,764 sealed in caves or

buried by the Japanese themselves; 10,755 were captured or surrendered. The Japanese lost 7,830 aircraft and 16 combat ships.

Ultimately, veterans of Iwo Jima and Okinawa were relieved to discover they would not be ordered to launch the final assault against the Japanese homeland. Within a few months, the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki compelled the Japanese leadership to surrender, and the epic struggle that started four years earlier was concluded.

Now, 60 years later, Americans have little recollection of the experience of World War II. Approximately 3 million of the 17 million World War II veterans who served are still alive. Two generations and several armed conflicts have come to pass, and today's school children learn little about the war. Aware of this, a commemoration project for the 60th anniversary of World War II was launched.

The Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Committee was formed by direction of the Assistant Secretary of Defense. Designating the Secretary of the Army as executive agent, the direction provided that three main objectives be met: to commemorate World War II events, ideas, alliances and programs; to honor those who served; and to acquaint or re-acquaint all Americans on the significance of World War II as the seminal event of the 20th century.

The committee has supported com-



Photo: Charles D. Melson

*A Japanese memorial on the island's north side decorated with flowers, Saki and other items in memory of those who lost their lives during the battle for Iwo Jima.*

memoration events in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. In the Atlantic, actions at Normandy (D-Day), Arnhem-Nijmegen-Eindhoven (Market Garden) and Belgium-Luxembourg (Battle of the Bulge) were honored. In the Pacific, the U.S. Pacific Command, the Department of State and the World War II Committee worked together in commemorating Guam, Peleliu, Palau and the liberation of the Philippines (Battle of Leyte Gulf).

The battle for Iwo Jima, a place that once again fortified the legacy of the Marine Corps, was remembered both in Washington, D.C., and on the island itself. Combat veterans of Iwo Jima gathered in union on 18 through 20 February in the nation's capital and conducted several events, including the solemn placing of a wreath at the Iwo Jima Memorial. On 12 March, the Commandant of the Marine Corps was, along with approximately 50 World War II veterans and many guests, on the island of Iwo Jima to honor the selfless sacrifice of those who fought there 60 years earlier.

In the Pacific, the Okinawa campaign will be remembered during the week of 13 through 20 June, with main events taking place on Okinawa on 17 and 18 June. Marine Corps Base, Camp Butler, and III Marine Expeditionary Force will host events on Okinawa.

The Department of Defense World War II Committee has on the schedule several regional events to be held in the United States. Tampa, Florida (19 February), San Antonio, Texas (3 April), San Diego, California (29 May), Boston, Massachusetts (18 June), Chicago, Illinois (23 July) and Vancouver, Washington (28 August), are regional sites. On 8 May, Victory Europe will be remembered in Washington, D.C. End of the War in the Pacific will be remembered on 2 September in Washington, D.C., and in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Further information about the numerous events is available online at [www.60wwii.mil](http://www.60wwii.mil) and by calling the World War II Commemoration Committee at (703) 696-0120.

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## Tenacity Against Turbulence

*by Col Joe Long, USMCR (Ret)  
Marine Corps Heritage Center  
Project Manager*

Turbulence is a fact of life for any endeavor, especially in the Corps. Whether bobbing in the water in a tracked landing vehicle awaiting the command to land the force, enduring rough seas, or providing aid to victims of a tidal wave, Marines have a strong history of coping with and overcoming stormy waters. The Marine Corps Heritage Center project is another case in point.

First, the departure of Colonel Jon T. Hoffman from his position as Deputy Director of the History and Museums Division leaves a significant void in the Heritage Center project, particularly as it relates to his role overseeing the design and fabrication of the museum's exhibits. His tremendous ability and guidance to his team are already missed. In his absence, a number of folks have stepped forward to assume additional duties, as one would expect of this organization of Marines, and I am pleased to report the project continues on schedule.

Second, with the award of the \$10 million exhibit fabrication contract to Design and Production, Inc., of Lorton, Virginia, the huge task of accurately telling the Marine Corps story gets underway. Our demographic study indicates some 70 percent of the visitors to the National Museum of the Marine Corps will have no connection with the Corps. We want them to learn our story through historically accurate sights, sounds and experiences. We want the other 30 percent to say, "Wow! They really got it right!"

And third, the restoration and preparation of artifacts for display continues along strict deadlines and exacting requirements. A CH-46 helicopter must be cut in half so the back can be included in the Khe Sanh immersion experience. A second F4-U Corsair aircraft has been deemed structurally sound and must now be prepared to hang high enough in the Central Gallery to be seen from out-

side. Hanging points for all the aircraft must be located and hardware manufactured. Heavy tracked vehicles must be scheduled for movement into the appropriate spaces on large floor supports to avoid cracking the decks.

As for the construction of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, the Central Gallery is now fully encircled and the outside wall that forms the exhibit space is almost complete. Radial walls have been raised and the utilities are being brought to the mechanical room. Both elevator pits have been constructed and supporting steel work is in place.

All sections of the 240-foot central mast, which represents the second flagstaff raised on Mount Suribachi, have been joined and a temporary tower has been erected to hold everything in place until the permanent supports are attached. The mast has been hoisted into place, making it easily visible to travelers on Interstate 95. In keeping with the ancient tradition of placing a coin under the mast of a

new ship for good luck, a much publicized ceremony was held at the site on 7 March during which General Michael Hagee, Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant General Ron Christmas, president of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, Mr. Bud Baker, co-chairman of the Marine Corps Heritage Center fund-raising campaign, and Brigadier General Jerry McKay, chief operating officer of the Foundation, placed coins at the location where the mast is attached to the deck in the Central Gallery.

The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation continues with the design of Semper Fidelis Memorial Park, a series of winding trails through the woods that will eventually lead to a small chapel on a hilltop. Interspersed along the trails will be memorials to units or Marine actions.

Weather has put construction a little behind schedule, but opening day for the new museum is still scheduled for 10 November 2006.

□1775□



Photo: Jacobs Facilities, Inc.

*The National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia, is progressing, with the towering steel framework of the main gallery's spire now in place and visible from Interstate 95. The museum is slated to open its doors to the public in November 2006.*

## 2003 Annual Chronology (Part I)

by Kara R. Newcomer  
Reference Historian

The “Current Chronology of the Marine Corps” serves as a valuable source of information on significant events and dates in contemporary Marine Corps history. The following excerpts highlight entries from the first half of the 2003 Chronology including the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**4 January** - An undisclosed number of Marines from the I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) deployed from Camp Pendleton, California, for the Persian Gulf region as part of the Defense Department’s plan to bolster forces in the area for a possible war with Iraq. The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) was among those deployed.

**11 January** - A contingent of nearly 300 Marine reservists headed to Djibouti in support of Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa. The task force was meant to disrupt and defeat terrorism in and around the Horn of Africa and had been steadily beefing up its ranks since its activation in late October 2002.



Photo: DoD 200332812958

*A landing craft from the USS Nassau (LHA 4) carries M1-A1 tanks and Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) ashore in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

**12 January** - Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld signed two major deployment orders to send 62,000 more U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf. The buildup in the area reached almost 150,000 following the addition of the troops. The U.S. Naval ships, *Bataan*, *Ashland*, *Portland*, *Kearsarge*, *Saipan*, *Gunston Hall* and *Ponce*, used to transport Marines from

II MEF to the theater, left their homeport of Norfolk, Virginia, within days of the order. Marines also unloaded equipment from Marine prepositioning force ships in a Kuwaiti port on 17 January 2003 in support of the arriving forces.

**13 January** - General James L. Jones relinquished duties as the 32d

### 1945 Chronology Highlights

by Kara R. Newcomer  
Reference Historian

**19 February** - Assault troops of V Amphibious Corps (4th and 5th Marine Division with 3d Marine Division in reserve) began landing on Iwo Jima, Bonin Islands.

**23 February** - A combat patrol from 28th Marines raises the American flag on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima.

**16 March** - Iwo Jima was declared secured.

**1 April** - Tenth Army, including XXIV Corps and III Amphibious Corps (1st and 6th Marine Divisions with the 2d Marine Division in reserve) and Tactical Air Force, Tenth Army (primarily 2d Marine Aircraft Wing) landed in assault on Okinawa.

**12 April** - President Franklin D. Roosevelt died at Warm Springs, Georgia. Vice President Harry S. Truman was sworn in as President.

**21 June** - Okinawa was declared secured.

**30 June** - The active duty strength of the Marine Corps was 474,680 (37,067 officers and 437,613 enlisted).

**5 July** - The Philippines campaign, in which Marine air and artillery units participated, was declared ended.

**10 August** - Fleet Landing Force (4th Marines and the Marines and sailors of Task Force 31) was authorized for the occupation of the Yokosuka area of Japan.

**14 August** - President Harry S. Truman announced that a cease-fire with Japan was in effect and the war had ended.

**30 August** - 4th Marines, as part of Fleet Landing Force, landed at Yokosuka Naval Base on Tokyo Bay.

**2 September** - The formal signing of surrender terms took place on board the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

Commandant of the Marine Corps to General Michael W. Hagee during a ceremony at the U.S. Naval Academy. General Jones was the first commandant in 40 years not to retire from the position and became the first Marine to assume duties as the head of U.S. European Command on 16 January 2003. He was named Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, the following day.

**14 February** - Colonel Douglas P. Yurovich became the first Marine to be named commander of a carrier air group when he took command of Naval Air Station Lemoore-based Carrier Air Wing 9, a position usually held by Navy captains. Colonel Yurovich was selected from a pool of other candidates and his selection was an example of changes being wrought as the Navy/Marine Corps Tactical Air Integration plan began to unfold.

**16 February** - Nearly 7,000 Marines from the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) hit the shores of Kuwait, boosting the Corps' strength in that country to more than 40,000 troops. The Marines left Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in mid-January as the Marine contingent of Amphibious Task Force East and joined up with I MEF already in place in Kuwait in anticipation of hostilities with Iraq.

**March** - For the first time since the

Korean War, U.S. Marines were assigned to serve under the command of their British counterparts. Tactical control of 15th MEU was given to the British Royal Marine's 3d Commando Brigade in a goodwill gesture to replace troops from the unit that were still engaged in operations in Afghanistan at the time of the Iraqi troop buildup. The Royal Marines, however, remained under I MEF, which was in charge of overall Marine operations in the region.

**8 March** - General Wallace M. Greene, 23d Commandant of the Marine Corps, died in Alexandria, Virginia, at the age of 95. General Greene graduated from the Naval Academy in 1930 and served in many locales during his 37 years of service, including tours in China, England and the South Pacific during World War II. He served as Commandant during the buildup of U.S. troops in Vietnam until his retirement 31 December 1967. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on 3 April 2003.

**12 March** - President George W. Bush signed an executive order establishing two new awards for actions in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The GWOT Expeditionary Medal and the GWOT Service Medal were created to recognize sacrifices and contributions military members have made

in the war on terrorism since 11 September 2001.

**17 March** - In an address to the nation, President Bush sent Saddam Hussein a clear message: "The Iraqi regime has used diplomacy as a ploy to gain time and advantage. All the decades of deceit and cruelty have now reached an end. Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours. Their refusal to do so will result in military conflict, commenced at a time of our choosing."

**20 March** - With the lapse of the 48-hour deadline, Operation Iraqi Freedom began with the launching of approximately 40 Tomahawk cruise missiles at 0534. The missiles, which were launched from six U.S. Navy ships, were aimed at three designated military targets around Baghdad in an attempt to kill or maim Hussein. U.S. Air Force F117 stealth fighters were also involved in the opening strike.

**20-21 March** - Marines of I MEF crossed the Kuwait border into southern Iraq in the first push to Baghdad. A firefight between American and Iraqi ground forces occurred when a patrol of light armored vehicles from the 1st Marine Division encountered two Iraqi armored personnel carriers. The Marines destroyed the enemy and moved forward quickly, capturing key facilities in Rumeila, Iraq's southern oil fields. Marines saved all but nine of nearly 500 oil wells from sabotage before continuing toward the Iraqi capital.

**23 March** - 2d MEB's Task Force Tarawa lost 18 Marines in the bloodiest day of the war as the task force pushed into the city of An Nasiriyah to secure it and key bridges over the Euphrates River, thus creating a second route into Baghdad. A wrong turn led one company of Marines directly into a two-mile stretch of roadway in a residential area known as "Ambush Alley," which was filled with uniformed Iraqi army troops. A second trip through Ambush Alley trying to evacuate casualties from the early firefight resulted in the loss of nearly half of all the Marines that were killed that day.

**28 March** - The 24th MEU (Special



Photo: DoD 200345102952

*Marines destroyed this T-55 tank north of the An Nu'maniyah bridge along Highway 27 on their march toward Baghdad, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom.*



Photo: DoD 200341072548

*Marines from Company E, Battalion Landing Team, 2d Battalion., 2d Marines, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) secure the Ba'ath Party Headquarters in the town of Qalatsukar.*

Operations Capable) came ashore in Kuwait to reinforce I MEF operations in the southern city of An Nasiriyah. The MEU consisted of Battalion Landing Team, 2d Battalion, 2d Marines; Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263; and Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 24.

**1 April** - Marines launched a diversionary attack near An Nasiriyah to assist in the rescue of Army prisoner of war Private First Class Jessica Lynch by U.S. Special Forces from the hospital she had been held at since her capture 10 days earlier. The bodies of several soldiers killed in the same firefight were also recovered from the grounds of the hospital.

**2 April** - Elements of the 1st Marine Division crossed the Tigris River 80 miles southeast of Baghdad and destroyed the Baghdad Division of the Iraqi Republican Guard around Kut.

**3 April** - Marine Harrier jets participated in a major attack on a Taliban camp north of Spin Boldak, Afghanistan.

**5 April** - U.S. Forces entered Baghdad. Marines expanded northward on the eastern edge of the city to secure major roads leading out of the capital.

**9 April** - Iraqi resistance in Baghdad collapsed and U.S. Forces occupied the remainder of the capital city. Marines assisted Iraqi civilians in toppling a large statue of Saddam Hussein in downtown Firdaus Square.

**13 April** - Marines of Task Force Tripoli took control of Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown and the last significant city held by the regime. In Samarra, 75 miles north of Baghdad, a group of Marines that had been sent to keep traffic from interfering with tanks headed to battle in Tikrit were led to the remaining seven American prisoners of war held by Iraqi forces. An Iraqi policeman led the Marines to a building where they found the U.S. soldiers under guard.

**14 April** - A Pentagon spokesman announced that, although some fighting continued in Iraq, major military operations in the country had ended.

**15 April** - Elements of 26th MEU (SOC) began to flow into northern Iraq to take control of Mosul, a large city liberated days earlier by Kurdish forces.

**22 April** - Following more than eight months deployed in Iraq, the 24th MEU (SOC) began moving back toward its ships. It was the first Marine unit to depart Iraq.

**1 May** - President George W. Bush declared victory in Iraq after making a historic landing on the aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln* as it cruised off the coast near San Diego, California. The president arrived as the co-pilot of a S-3B Viking jet.

**1 May** - The Department of the Navy withdrew from its training site in Vieques, Puerto Rico. The Marine Corps and the Navy used the site for bombing and landing exercises for decades after the U.S. acquired approximately two-thirds of Vieques in the 1940s. Protesters made using the site difficult in the previous few years in a bid to reclaim the land.

**3 May** - Marine forces left Iceland after being present for more than six decades. Marines were the first

American military forces to arrive on the northern European island when the first contingent landed 7 July 1941 as part of the 1st Provisional Brigade sent to protect Iceland from becoming embroiled in World War II. The 51 members of the Marine Corps security force were used as the core group to set up the 3d Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) Company in Norfolk, Virginia.

**June** - Marines again engaged in battle over Guadalcanal's airfield. A proposal to rename Henderson Field, named after Marine Major Lofton Henderson, prompted a U.S. Marine Raider Association-led petition drive to block such a change. In the end, despite assurances from the Solomon Islands Prime Minister that no change would occur, the government of the islands determined a name change was in their country's best interest. They offered a compromise by announcing the airport's new name as Honiara International Airport-Henderson Field on 11 September 2003.

**13 June** - Marines returning home from the war in Iraq on the USS *Kearsarge* were diverted to Liberia to aid in the potential evacuation of U.S. citizens as civil unrest escalated. A FAST company followed, with Marines from the 26th MEU eventually replacing them in the war-ravaged country in mid-August. A peace agreement between factions allowed the Marines to leave Liberia by 1 October 2003.

**20 June** - The Marine Corps introduced its contribution to the U.S. Special Operations Command with the activation of an elite 86-member unit known as Marine Corps Detachment One. The commando unit, housed at the Camp Del Mar Boat Basin, consisted of a headquarters, reconnaissance, intelligence and fire support elements.

**26 June** - Sergeant Major John L. Estrada assumed the post of highest enlisted Marine, relieving Sergeant Major Alfred L. McMichael to become the 15th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. Sergeant Major McMichael was the first Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps not to retire after holding the distinguished position. His next assignment was sergeant major, U.S. European Command. □1775□

## Recording Iwo Jima's History

by Charles R. Smith  
History Writing Head

There would be many who would pay tribute to the heroism of the Marines who captured Iwo Jima, but none put it better than Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas: "By their victory, the Third, Fourth and Fifth Marine Divisions and other units of the Fifth Amphibious Corps have made an accounting to their country which only history will be able to value fully. Among the Americans who served on Iwo Island, uncommon valor was a common virtue."

The uncommon valor of the Marines on Iwo Jima more than 60 years ago would indeed be recorded for history to judge.

In the fall of 1942, the Assistant Commandant, Major General Harry Schmidt, directed Colonel Clyde H. Metcalf, the officer in charge of the Historical Section and editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, as well as secretary and treasurer of the Marine Corps Association, "to select a suitable civilian to be given a commission in the Marine Corps Reserve" to be the assistant editor of the *Gazette*. But since the position was not full time, Colonel Metcalf believed it "desirable that the person chosen ... should be one who also has some qualifications in historical research and writing." Of the four applicants available, Clifford Phelps Morehouse, a field artillery second lieutenant in the Army Reserve, was the only one who had the necessary qualifications.

A member of the notable Milwaukee, Wisconsin, publishing family, Morehouse, a graduate of Harvard University, was vice president of Morehouse-Gorham Company, a religious publishing house, managing editor of *The Living Church*, the independent Episcopal Church weekly, and editor of the *Episcopalian*. He had, as Colonel Metcalf noted, "considerable experience and training in writing of historical nature, some of which has been published, and he recommended



Morehouse be commissioned as a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve and attached to the Historical Section of the Adjutant and Inspector Department at Headquarters Marine Corps. As an additional duty, he would serve as the *Gazette's* assistant editor.

After nearly two years on the job, then Captain Morehouse was ordered in August 1944 to the Pacific as a combat historian. He was to visit each division and each aircraft wing for the purpose of "checking unit records with Headquarters' files, and recording any records not now on file in the Historical Division," and "observe one or more combat operations for first-hand observation and impressions to enable him to comprehensively prepare monographs and other historical writings upon his return to the United States." Initially attached to Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, he was temporarily detailed to III Amphibious Corps for Operation Stalemate, the seizure of Peleliu, and then to V Amphibious Corps for Operation Detachment, the capture of Iwo Jima.

"I am attached to the G-3 section," he wrote to Colonel John Potts, the officer in charge of the Historical

Division, two weeks after the 19 February landing on Iwo Jima. "This gives me a good opportunity to keep track of the campaign as it progresses, with access to all reports, operation orders, etc. In addition my principal assignment is writing the combat narrative for the Corps' operational report and war diary. This takes about half my time; the rest I spend visiting the various division, regimental and battalion [command posts] and personally observing operations. Consequently, I think I shall be fairly well posted on the Iwo Jima campaign and will be able to do a monograph on it whenever you are ready for me to do so."

With the campaign completed, Captain Morehouse returned to Washington. In May, after 30 days leave, he began work on the Iwo Jima campaign monograph, which he finished in October. For convenience, the history was divided into two parts; the first tells the story of the operation chronologically and the second deals with other matters supplementary to the account, such as supporting arms, Army Air Force and Navy actions, and casualties.

The monograph, which appeared in print in early 1946, became the first of many official publications on the campaign and the famous Mount Suribachi flag raisings. Following in the footsteps of Captain Morehouse were: Lieutenant Colonel Whitman S. Bartley, who wrote *Iwo Jima: Amphibious Epic*; Bernard C. Nalty, *The Battle for Iwo Jima* and *History of the Iwo Jima Flag Raising*, which were later combined and expanded by Danny J. Crawford; George Garand and Truman R. Strobridge, *Western Pacific Operations*, volume four in *The History of U.S. Marine Operations in World War II*; and Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, *Closing In: Marines in the Seizure of Iwo Jima*.

Captain Morehouse returned to his civilian position after the war but remained in the Reserves, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1957. □1775□

## Volunteer Supports Iwo Jima Immersion

by Alfred V. Houde, Jr.  
Acting Curator of Ordnance

On 19 February 1945, 68 tracked, armored amphibious landing vehicles, known as LVT(A)4s, led the charge onto the southeastern beaches at Iwo Jima. Company D, 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion, landed adjacent to Mount Suribachi on Red Beach 1. Its mission was to provide fire support on the landing beaches and subsequent inland operations. However, once the LVT(A)s emerged from the water and headed inland, they were confronted with a 15-foot terrace that blocked their field of fire. A handful of LVT(A)4s were able to move inland, but many returned to sea and fired on targets while afloat. In support of operations across the remainder of Sulphur Island, the LVT(A)s operated in a similar fashion, both on the ground and from the sea.

The LVT(A)4 was a direct descendant of the first "Alligator," an amphibious rescue vehicle designed by Donald Reobling in the 1930s for use in the Florida Everglades. Production of the Food Machinery Corporation (FMC) LVT(A)4 began in 1944 and provided a solution to the Marine Corps' requirement for increased firepower. The LVT(A)4 supplanted the earlier LVT(A)1, an amalgamation of the FMC chassis from the LVT(2) and the enclosed turret and 37mm gun from the M3 Stuart tank. The LVT(A)4 was equipped with a 75mm M3 howitzer in an open turret, a .50-caliber M2 Browning machine gun and two .30-caliber M1919A4 Browning machine guns.

The LVT(A)4 first saw action in the Marianas campaign during the invasions of Guam, Tinian and Saipan. After Okinawa, the armored amphibian was modified and designated the LVT(A)5. The improved vehicle was fitted with a gyro-stabilized gun, an enclosed turret with vision ports, and a modified bow for greater buoyancy. The LVT(A)5 was used effectively as a fire support platform throughout the Korean War and was the last in a long



Photo: David Vickers

*Major David A. Vickers, USMC (Ret), a former tank officer turned volunteer for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, at home building tracked landing vehicle for the Iwo Jima immersion exhibit.*

family line of the FMC-built "Water Buffalos."

A goal of the immersion exhibits in the National Museum of the Marine Corps is to give the visitor a real sense of the battlefield. In the Iwo Jima exhibit, the visitor moves through a briefing room, into a landing craft or "Higgins boat," and ultimately onto the beach. "On the beach," various artifacts, photographs and the historical narrative describe one of many famous battles Marines fought. Included in the display is the volunteer-built LVT(A)4, nicknamed "Corps," which landed on Iwo Jima as part of the first wave.

Major David A. Vickers, USMC (Ret), volunteered to build a new sample of the LVT(A)4 when he discovered an out-dated sample in the museum's collection. This was the result of his volunteer review of a number of scale models selected for the new museum. He retired from active duty in 2004 as a tank officer. Throughout his career, Major Vickers served in more than 14 primary billets within the 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Track Vehicle Battalion, and the 8th Tank Battalion. During an

overseas tour in the 1980s, Major Vickers began modeling. Over the past 20 years, the hobby evolved into a lifelong passion. Gaining more interest and experience, he competed at various model shows around the United States and won numerous awards. His works have been featured in more than 15 hobby publications. Focusing exclusively on armor and military figures, Major Vickers spends hours carefully detailing and painting each item with extraordinary historical accuracy.

Working to provide as much realistic detail as possible on a 1:35th scale plastic model, the LVT(A)4 will be painted accurately, using the three-color camouflage scheme of brown, green and light tan. Major Vickers faces a number of challenges that involve replicating or "scratch building" parts that are not available on the market and are unique to the vehicle.

Volunteers are an integral part of the Marine Corps' museum program and actively participate in a variety of projects. □1775□

## The Art of John R. McDermott

by Gordon H. Heim  
Assistant Art Curator

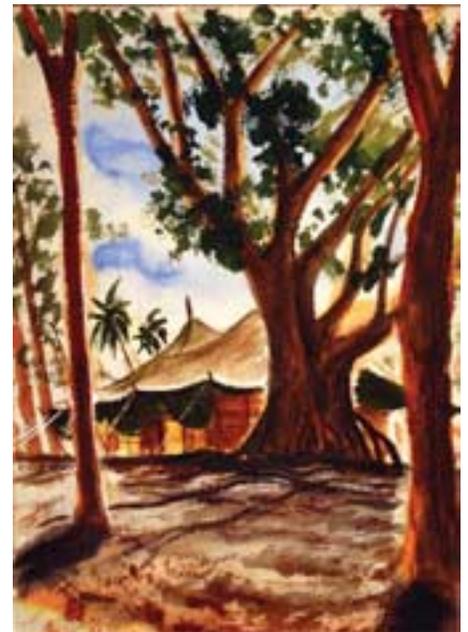
When the campaign for Okinawa began in 1945, few would have predicted this would be the last battle of the war. The average Marine believed he would be involved in the invasion of the home islands of Japan. But in a few months, the atomic bomb would be dropped to usher in a new age. The daily struggles for survival that were common to all Marines would eventually become lost in this new age.

John McDermott joined the Marine Corps just after the start of World War II. Through a number of campaigns, including Guam, he had risen to the rank of sergeant. He was a combat artist assigned to the map-making section. His prewar experience with Walt Disney Studios, where he worked as an animator on Mickey Mouse films, would serve him well as he encoun-

tered the foreign and sought out the familiar.

"In the Marines, as a combat artist, I traveled with the troops and for three years got all the drawing opportunity anyone could want," McDermott once said. "My work changed enormously during this time and I'm sure it was due to constant drawing, every single day, from life, just putting down what I saw around me. In a few instances it was a dangerous kind of scholarship."

His depictions of the everyday events of the average Marine demonstrate the immediacy of his vision. With a few brush strokes and seemingly simple shapes, a deep appreciation for their plight is revealed. Sergeant McDermott was always right there with the Marines on the ground, pen and pad in hand, "just putting it all down." Looking at these works, one is immediately transported back



McDermott 72-1-21

*Base Camp surrounded by Eucalyptus trees on Guam.*

*Poncho-clad and rubber-booted Marines enroute to chow in a tent camp messhall. The combination pan and plate messing equipment has been in use for more than 60 years.*

McDermott 72-23-65



*"Fire Fight on Okinawa," part of a series of illustrations for a story published in Leatherneck Magazine.*

McDermott





McDermott 72-23-64

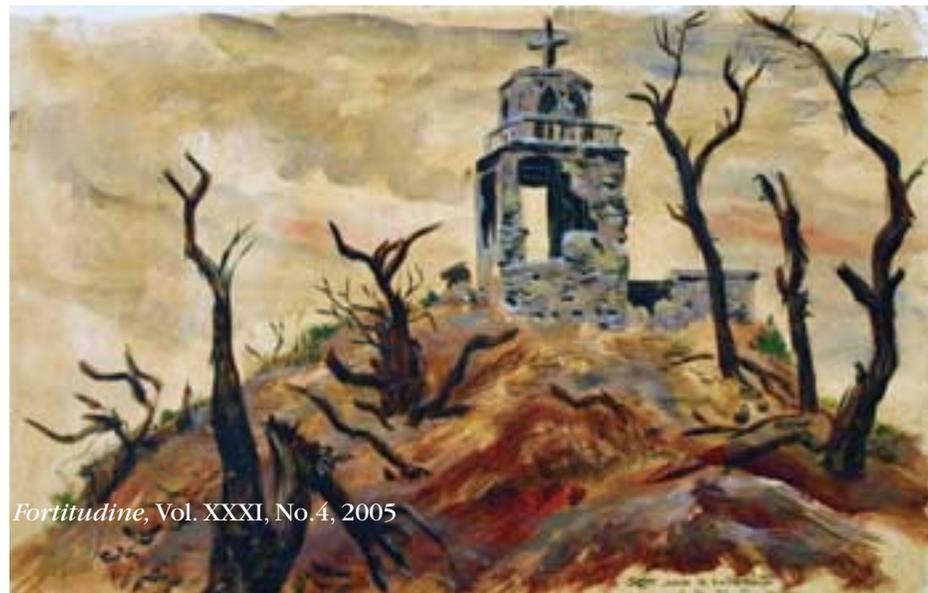
*On a Pacific island Marines are spectators at a deadly sport when a Japanese aircraft is caught by vectoring searchlights and pursued by anti-aircraft fire.*

in time to see Marines dodging bullets, smelling the jungle, eating rotten chow and experiencing the weariness of combat firsthand.

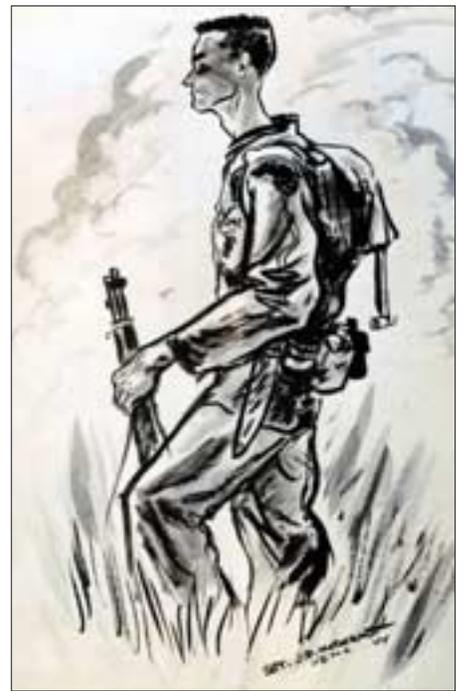
As he observed: "There are artists who are sure they know upwards of 90 percent of what there is to know

*The gutted shell of a chapel in Okinawa sits in a field of destroyed trees.*

McDermott 72-1-23



*Fortitudine*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, 2005



*Self portrait on Okinawa.* McDermott



McDermott 72-6-16

*This sketch is entitled, "Buddy is Wounded."*

about painting, but that must remain their problem. To me, that vision in your mind is always just beyond you."

McDermott's style is somewhat reminiscent of Bill Maudlin. Like Maudlin, McDermott's caricatures are not heroic images. However, they more accurately illustrate the unwashed commitment of the World War II servicemen.

□1775□

## Forgotten Iwo Jima Combat Interviews

by Fred H. Allison, Ph.D., Oral Historian  
and Stephen J. Huebscher, Intern

Have you ever wondered what the battle of Gettysburg sounded like? What about Iwo Jima? What would Marines say if you could interview them during the battle for Iwo Jima?

Of all the battles Marines fought in the Pacific, Iwo Jima garnered the most oral history interviews. This is no surprise. It is, after all, an iconic Marine Corps battle and one that permanently fixed the Marine Corps in the public eye and stimulates tremendous interest both inside and outside the Corps. Marines want to be identified with that battle. Of course, all of the interviews with Iwo Jima veterans in the Oral History Collection were done long after the shooting was over.

What would we give to have interviews of Marines at Iwo Jima while the fighting was in progress or shortly after, such as those we have of Marines in Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan? Incredibly, we have an opportunity to acquire the sounds of Iwo Jima and hear interviews with Marines on Iwo Jima in February, March and April 1945. This window of opportunity has opened to attain copies of the Library of Congress' magnificent collection of World War II Marine Corps combat recordings.

The Library of Congress has some 1,000 interviews of Marines in the Pacific in World War II; a high percentage of these were done at Iwo Jima. These interviews were the result of a collaborative agreement between the Library of Congress and the Marine Corps. The Library provided the recording gear (the interviews were done on huge recorders using film or wire as a recording medium), Marine combat correspondents did the interviews (and suffered a few casualties while doing them), and the recordings went to the Library of Congress (see *Fortitudine*, Vol XXX,



Photo: USMC Historical Center

*Sgt Cyril J. O'Brien, a combat correspondent with 3d Marine Division, interviews a machine gun section chief near Chonito Ridge in Guam on 22 July 1944. Sgt O'Brien also served as combat correspondent on Iwo Jima.*

No. 4). They have been there ever since.

Outgoing Deputy Director of the History Division, Colonel Jon T. Hoffman, directed the Oral History unit to inquire into attaining copies of the recordings. Our inquiries have finally met with some success through discussions with Library of Congress personnel who have tentatively agreed to allow the Marine Corps to digitize and make copies of the recordings for our collection. The original recordings are currently being kept on reel-to-reel tapes at the Library.

The descriptions of the recordings are tantalizing. For example:

**21 February 1945** – 3d Marine Division jeep ambulance drivers interviewed during heavy fighting.

**26 February 1945** - Lieutenant Walter

Russell, 24th Marines, gives an excellent account of the fighting.

**8 March 1945** - Navy corpsman Lemoyne C. Webber, with the 14th Marines, describes in graphic detail how he takes care of men who are hit.

**28 March 1945** - Navy corpsman Ralph Gillespie, with the 28th Marines, eyewitness to the first flag going up on Mount Suribachi, also speaks of how he got hit during the 14th day of the campaign.

In addition to the Iwo Jima recordings, this collection has interviews from most of the Pacific campaigns. Some of the recordings are quite rare and unique. For instance, there is a recording of a pilot actually in the process of conducting a dive-bombing mission, a recording of the radio communication between two tank drivers during the battle for Guam, and a recording of two Marines who escaped a Japanese prisoner of war camp recounting their ghastly experiences on the Bataan Death March and their time spent in the camp.

The value of these recordings for historical documentation cannot be determined until they are actually listened to. Nevertheless, the circumstances under which the recordings were made makes this collection one of the most unusual and unique military oral history collections in existence. They would certainly qualify as some of the oldest oral histories around. They also fall within the main mission of today's oral history program, which is to collect operational interviews of Marines in real-world operations. Iwo Jima, Saipan and Guam are about as real world as it gets.

Although we have not closed the deal, there is a strong possibility we can attain the recordings we want to copy. □1775□

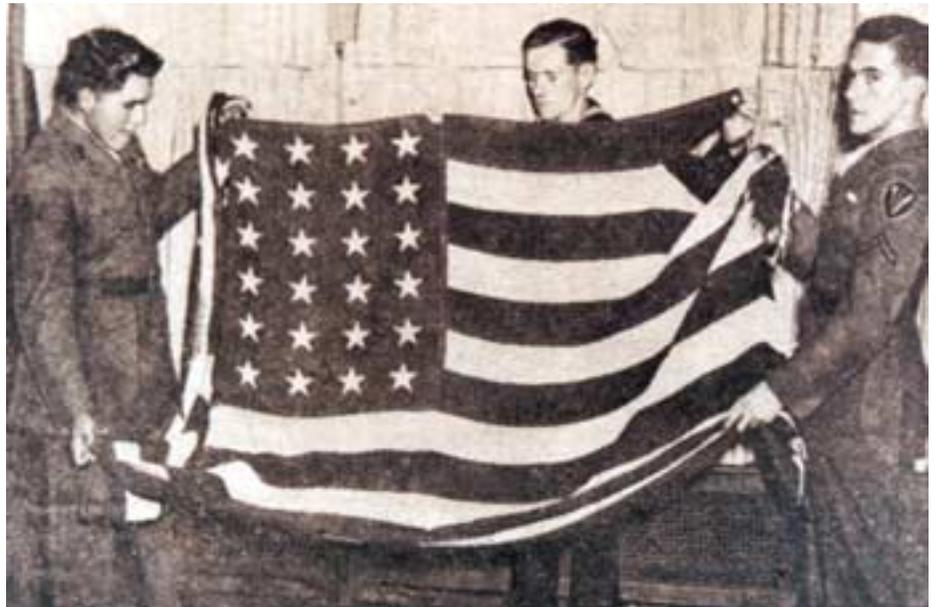
## A Flag's Journey

by Neil B. Abelsma  
Uniforms Curator

In October 1943, a 48 star national flag, U.S. Ensign No. 7, was made at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, California. Little did the worker who made the flag know they were doing more than just helping with the war effort, this person was making what would become one of the most famous flags in U.S. history. The raising of this flag would result in one of the most recognizable photographs, with resounding symbolism for a nation and pride for the United States Marine Corps.

By the fall of 1944, the flag had been neatly folded in a duffel bag along with some signal flags at a salvage depot at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Communications Officer Lieutenant (JG) Alan S. Wood, USNR, took the flag for his tank landing ship, LST 779. In January 1945, the LST and the flag were headed for Iwo Jima. During the voyage, the flag flew several times on Sundays from the ship's gaff, since it was the largest flag the LST had.

D-Day for the assault on Iwo Jima was 19 February. By the 23d, the highest point on the island, Mount Suribachi, was taken and a flag was placed on it. When Lieutenant Colonel Chandler W. Johnson saw the first flag on the summit, he realized it was too small to be seen easily and that it was also now historically significant. He feared it would be appropriated by a souvenir hunter and lost to history. Second Lieutenant A. Theodore Tuttle went searching for a larger flag and obtained one from the nearest landing ship on the beach, LST 779, which also happened to be the first LST to beach at Iwo Jima. When Tuttle returned with the flag, Lieutenant Colonel Johnson sent his runner, Private First Class Rene A. Gagnon, up the slope with a supply of radio batteries and the new flag. The flag was given to Sergeant Michael Strank and delivered to First Lieutenant Harold G. Schrier, who decided the new flag



*Ira H. Hayes, John H. Bradley, USN, and Rene A. Gagnon in Washington, D.C., holding the original flag they helped raise on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima, 23 February 1945.*

should be raised as the original was lowered. Sergeant Strank and several other Marines fastened the larger flag to a pipe and tried to set the pipe in the rugged ground. Seeing the four men having trouble, two onlookers rushed to assist in setting the staff. As the flag was being raised, Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal took a picture of the event.

The second flag was lowered more than three weeks later, on 14 March, as military occupation was established on the island. A new flag was raised during a ceremony at V Amphibious Corps Landing Force's command post. The Rosenthal photograph created a major stir. President Franklin D. Roosevelt recalled the remaining service men involved in the second flag raising to participate in a war bond drive.

The flag reappeared on 9 May when it was raised at the U.S. Capitol by three members of the original party, Gagnon, Hospitalman Second Class John H. Bradley, USN, and Private First Class Ira Hayes. This

event marked the beginning of an eight-week, 33-city War Bond tour for three of the flag raisers, later just two, an escort and the flag. It would be raised again in New York City, Chicago, Boston and numerous other cities on the tour. The flag would be taken in and out of its case and if not raised on a pole, then held for all to see. On 4 July the tour ended where it began, in Washington, D.C.

By 18 July the flag had a permanent home at the Marine Corps Museum, Little Hall, in Quantico, Virginia.

The flag's traveling days were not over, however, for its presence would be asked for at many events. The first recorded request was in July of the following year. Then in the summer of 1949, the flag and the three survivors were re-united for the production of the movie, "The Sands of Iwo Jima."

Upon completion of the new National Museum of the Marine Corps, the flag will be permanently displayed under ideal conditions and will be in a facility accessible to all. □1775□

## Records of Iwo Jima and Okinawa

by Frederick J. Graboske  
Archives Head

The official paper records of World War II were transferred from the Marine Corps Historical Center to the National Archives several years ago. By instructions from the Secretary of the Navy, the Marine Corps retains its official operational records for 30 years, or until such time as our historians have completed the official histories (sometimes up to 50 years). At some point, the maps that had been included with those records were removed and stored separately. At the time this action was done, no record was made of what had been removed. As a consequence, it no longer is possible to match the maps with the records from which they were withdrawn. The National Archives has appraised the collection as permanent, so it will ultimately be transferred to that agency.

We have 14 maps in the collection for Iwo Jima, all of which were generated by our military forces. For Okinawa, a much larger island, we have 261 maps in the collection, most of which were captured from the Japanese. Several years ago, a delegation from the Okinawa Prefectural Archive visited us and expressed interest in obtaining copies if ever they were digitized.

The oral history collection holds 149 items related to Iwo Jima. The recordings include comments by Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith; Joe Rosenthal, who took the famous photograph of the second flag-raising; Corporal Charles W. Lindberg, one of the Marines who raised the first flag on Mount Suribachi; and the

Commandant, General Lemuel W. Shepherd, on the occasion of the dedication of the monument. Most of the interviews are with officers, especially generals. For Okinawa, we have 95 items in the collection. The most prominent interviewees are Lieutenant Generals Oliver P. Smith and Robert P.



*"Air and Gunnery Target Map" used for the battle of Iwo Jima.*

Keller. Except for General H. M. Smith and Corporal Lindberg, all of the interviews noted have been transcribed.

Our electronic records management software, TRIM, made it possible to compile the above figures. With more than 13,000 interviews in our collection, it would not have been feasible

to read through all the data sheets. However, with the hard work of my staff in doing data entry into TRIM, the search took only a few minutes. Many of the interviews have no data sheets. My volunteer, Colonel Alfred J. Croft, has listened to 1,157 of these interviews and prepared data sheets on them. It is thanks to his dedication and skill that we know anything about these interviews. (Keep up the good work, Al, only 1,000 to go!)

For those on the Navy-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI), you will be getting TRIM sometime in the next two years. The Archives Section here has had it for the past four years, as have our colleagues at the Gray Research Center and the Naval Historical Center. The enterprise-wide rollout began on 1 February with the Navy Inspector General's office. This is happening under the aegis of the Department of the Navy's records manager, Charley Barth, and for the Marine Corps, of its records manager, Paula Bedford. Ultimately there will be approximately 70 datasets within the Department. All 400,000 shore-based users will be able to access these datasets, including ours. As you are cut over to NMCI and are able to access TRIM, you will be able to search the terms Okinawa and Iwo Jima, just as I did. In addition to maps and oral histories, you

will see listings of all the Marine Corps records of these operations, along with their current location—the National Archives. If funding becomes available, we may be able to digitize these records and put them into TRIM for all to use.

□1775□

## Marine Night Fighters

by James T. D'Angina  
Assistant Aviation Curator

The Marine Corps recognized the need for night-fighter squadrons during World War II as Japanese nuisance air raids affected the morale and combat efficiency of troops on the ground. The Marine Corps' night-fighter doctrine began nearly from scratch at the beginning of the war, and by the time air battles were taking place over Okinawa, Marine night-fighter squadrons were fully operational.

The first Marine Corps night-fighter squadron to be activated was Marine Night-Fighter Squadron 531 (VMF(N)-531), at Cherry Point, North Carolina, in 1942. Commanded by Major Frank H. Schwable, 531 started to receive aircraft in the form of the North American SNJ and the Brewster SB2-A4 Buccaneer. These aircraft were used as trainers while suitable night-fighter platforms were being considered. The Navy had a number of Lockheed PV-1 Venturas available at the time, and ultimately VMF(N)-531 took what was on hand despite numerous aircraft inequities for night fighter operations.

The Marine Corps decided to send some night-fighter crews to England to gain experience with the Royal Air Force. In country, Marine pilots, radar operators and controllers observed and took part in RAF night-fighter missions against the German Luftwaffe. Flying MK IF Bristol Beaufighters with RAF Night-Fighter Squadron 256, the Marines honed their skills.

Back at Cherry Point, VMF(N)-531 was split into two squadrons in 1943. VMF(N)-531 would operate PV-1 Ventura twin-engine fighters while the newly-formed second squadron, VMF(N)-532, would operate single-engine Vought F4U-2 Corsairs.

The Lockheed PV-1 Ventura was the first Marine night-fighter aircraft to see combat. With their skill and knowledge of night-fighter tactics, the pilots of VMF(N)-531 prevailed over the air-



Photo: DoD

*Little Nance, an F6F-5(N) Hellcat shown here on Ie Shima, belonged to VMF(N)-533. Although discouraged by the Marine Corps, many Marine aircraft had elaborate nose art.*

craft's many drawbacks and destroyed 12 Japanese aircraft, proving that Marine night-fighter operations were viable.

VMF(N)-532 was not as fortunate during its combat debut. The Vought F4U-2 Corsair turned out to be a relatively poor night-fighter and was credited with only one kill.

Marine night-fighter operations received an enormous boost with the introduction of the Grumman F6F-5(N) Hellcat. This variant was designed with a wing-mounted AN/APS-6 radar. The instrument panel was painted flat black and backlit using a red light to aid the pilot's night vision. The F6F-5(N) could also be operated from aircraft carriers at night. Early versions of the Hellcat fighter had six Browning .50-caliber machine guns; a later version of the F6F-5(N) replaced two of these with 20mm cannons. The added firepower gave pilots a better chance of downing an enemy aircraft during the brief period the night-fighters had to engage their target before it would slip away in the darkness.

The Marine night-fighter program came into its own during the battle for Okinawa. During Operation Iceberg, Navy and Marine F6F(N) Hellcats owned the night sky. Night-fighters were operated from both ships and land bases on Okinawa. Three Marine night-fighter squadrons saw action on Okinawa: VMF(N)-542, based at Yontan airfield; VMF(N)-543, based at Kadena; and VMF(N)-533 based at Ie Shima. In addition, a small detachment of night-fighters operated with VMF-511 from the USS *Block Island* (CVE 21).

In all, 71 Japanese aircraft were intercepted and destroyed by the Marine night-fighter squadrons.

During the action over Okinawa, Captain Robert Baird distinguished himself among Marine night-fighter pilots by earning two unique distinctions in Marine Corps aviation history. Captain Baird became the sole Marine Corps night-fighter ace and the only Marine F6F Hellcat ace during World War II.

□1775□

## Field Historians in Fallujah

by LtCol Nathan S. Lowrey, USMCR, Field Historian  
and Capt Stephen J. Winslow, USMCR, Field Historian

During the battle for Fallujah, Iraq, we were fortunate to have three of our field historians on hand to document the fight. Lieutenant Colonel John R. Way was with 1st Marine Division, Captain Stephen J. Winslow was with Regimental Combat Team One (RCT-1), and Chief Warrant Officer 3 William E. Hutson was with RCT-7.

We recently welcomed Chief Warrant Officer 3 Hutson home after his productive deployment to Iraq. He has begun the process of cataloging the information he preserved (102 interviews, 286 photos and 4,266 documents).

In addition to collecting documents, photos and oral history interviews that will help tell the Marines' story, these historians also recorded personal observations in professional field journals. The journals provide a means to preserve important information that may not fit into other categories, as well as providing a context for understanding events the historians ob-



Photo: Capt Stephen J. Winslow

*This photo shows what Marines in the battle-torn areas of Fallujah, Iraq, used as a company command post. U.S. Marines and Army soldiers, together with trained Iraqi forces, assaulted the city from several directions to reclaim the insurgent stronghold in November.*

served. The unique perspective provided by their comments is illustrated in the following excerpt from Captain Winslow's journal. He penned the

entry late on 21 November, while at the command post for Company K, 5th Marines, along phase lines George and Beth.

### *Captain Stephen J. Winslow Journal Entry, 21 November 2004*

The sheer number of rooms these Marines must clear is unbelievable; there are 17,458 individual structures in the city. Multiply that by about five rooms per house, and you get the picture of the work ahead. A Marine from [I Marine Expeditionary Force] will literally go in every room, every hallway, go through every closet, in every facility to seek weapons and enemy lodging. This may well go down as the largest room clearing effort in history—no space in the eastern city, from the city center, to the dresser-drawer, will go un-searched.

The Marines of RCT-1 move from house to house, room to room, not knowing which door hides an explosive or machine gun behind it. As has often occurred, the Marines

charge though only to find automatic fire taking out the first Marine in the stack. They approach this with the resolute mindset of professionals; pushing forward, day after day, continuing this dirty, tedious, dangerous manual labor that is only infrequently accompanied by their gunfire.

It was a long search for the right [command post] today; fields of fire, existing fortifications and resupply issues all figured into the decision. As the company initially moved into the city, in the Jolan District, they occupied small, dark, ghetto-like buildings, and as they moved out and about, they increasingly found more spacious and opulent quarters, residing now in a bright new mansion on [phase line] George. The amount of ammo, chow and water is

staggering—every day is a new resupply and movement. The company gunnery sergeant, Keith Brockman, moves the entire [command post] and all its gear from point to point, often times every night. Starting at dark, the movement begins as he and his Marines move out with 7-tons to shift the gear from one position to another. The [commanding officer] and first sergeant bed down at 2300, and by the time they awake at 0500 (on the rare occasions when they've managed to sleep the entire night), the gunny has brought forward stoves, sleeping cots, water and chow. The ammo is neatly stacked outside and a hot pot of coffee is boiling on the gas heater. The gunny and his staff worked until 0330 to make this happen. □1775□

## Major General Michael P. Ryan Passes

by Robert V. Aquilina  
Reference Assistant Head

### *MajGen Michael P. Ryan*

Major General Michael P. Ryan, USMC (Ret) died 9 January 2005 in Northridge, California, at the age of 88. A native of Osage City, Kansas, he attended high school in Atchison and Kansas City, Kansas. He attended Rockhurst College in Missouri and later attended George Washington University, majoring in Political Science. General Ryan enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1933, and was called to extended active duty in November 1940 with the 15th Reserve Battalion of Galveston, Texas, and commissioned a Marine second lieutenant. As a major during World War II, he served initially with the 6th Marines in Iceland. Later assigned to the 2d Marine Division, Major Ryan participated in combat operations on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan and Tinian. He was awarded the Navy Cross for conspicuous heroism on Tawara from 20 to 24 November 1943, where he organized his company and two other companies into a composite infantry battalion during the bitter fighting on Betio. He also received the British Distinguished Cross for his service at Tarawa. Following the war, he served at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia; at Headquarters, Marine Corps; and with the U.S. Naval Mission in Venezuela. During the Korean War, he served as a battalion commander with the 7th Marines. Following his return from Korea, he served in a wide variety of assignments, including tours of duty at Fleet Marine Force, Pacific; Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island; and at Headquarters, Marine Corps, in Washington. He was promoted to brigadier general in January 1966, and from April to December 1966, Brigadier General Ryan served as Commanding General,



9th Marine Amphibious Brigade/Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Seventh Fleet. He later served as Assistant Division Commander, 3d Marine Division, and for his service in this capacity, was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V." In January 1973, General Ryan was assigned as Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force. In January 1974, he assumed duty as Director, Marine Corps Reserve Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, and served in this capacity until his retirement on 1 July 1977. General Ryan was instrumental during this last duty assignment in helping to establish and promote the Marine Corps Marathon, which drew more than 1,100 contestants in its inaugural year.

### *MajGen Francis W. Vaught*

Major General Francis W. Vaught, USMC (Ret), died 14 January 2005 at Sun City, Florida, at the age of 83. Born in Perdue Hill, Alabama, he graduated from high school in Uriaah, Alabama, and later received a B.A. degree from George Washington University. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in March 1942, and was commissioned a second lieutenant on 12 April 1944. During World War II, he served as the Logistics Officer with the 1st Battalion, 28th Marines, 5th Marine Division, in Hawaii and Japan from September 1944 to January 1946. Following World War II, he was integrated into the regular Marine Corps and served in the supply field at a number of Marine Corps duty stations. He was promoted to colonel in September 1967, and in April 1968, was assigned as Commanding Officer, Force Logistics Support Group A, First Force Service Regiment in the Republic of Vietnam. He later served in Vietnam as Assistant Chief of Staff,



G-3, Force Logistics Command.

He returned to the United States in 1969. In August 1971, he was advanced to the rank of brigadier general and assigned as Commanding General, Marine Corps Supply Center, Albany, Georgia. He became the Director of Plans, Programs and Management for Installations and Logistics and Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations and Logistics at Headquarters, Marine Corps, following his promotion to major general on 11 June 1974. General Vaught retired from the Marine Corps on 1 September 1975.

### *MajGen Mitchell J. Waters*

Major General Mitchell J. Waters, USMCR (Ret), died 27 January 2005, at the age of 69. The native of Evanston, Illinois, received his B.A. degree from Colgate University, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps on 7 June 1957. After attaining the rank of first lieutenant, he joined the Organized Marine Corps Reserve and served in various capacities over the next several years in Chicago and Rockford, Illinois. He was promoted to captain in July 1962. He was promoted to major five years later and served a two-year tour of duty as Commanding Officer, Company G, 2d Battalion, 24th Marines, and as S-3, 2d Battalion, 24th Marines, in Chicago. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in October 1973, and assumed command of the 2d Battalion, 24th Marines, in February 1978. The performance of the battalion in the NATO exercise Bold Guard in northern Germany in September 1978 earned him the Meritorious Service Medal, and he was promoted to colonel in August 1979. He served four years as a member of the Secretary of the Navy's Marine Corps Reserve Advisory Board during



the 1980s, and later became the chairman of the advisory board. He was the national president of the Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association, and later served as chairman of that group's Foundation Board of Directors. He was promoted to the rank of brigadier general on 3 May 1986, and assumed his initial mobilization assignment as Director, Marine Corps Reserve Support Center, Overland Park, Kansas. In 1987 he became Assistant Division Commander, 4th Marine Division, and Commanding General, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade. He was promoted to the rank of major general effective 1 July 1990, and assigned as Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic. On 1 September 1993, General Waters was transferred to the Inactive Status List.



**BGen Joseph Stewart**  
 Brigadier General Joseph Stewart, USMC (Ret), died 27 December 2004 at St. Petersburg, Florida, at the age of 89. Born in Newton, Alabama, he graduated in May 1937 with a Bachelor of Science degree from Auburn University, and was commissioned a Marine second lieutenant two

months later, in July 1937. During World War II, he served with the 10th Marines on American Samoa, and later served on the staff of the Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet, during the Aleutian Campaign. He participated in combat at Kwajalein and Eniwetok in January and February 1944. Later, following his promotion to lieutenant colonel, he took part in the Saipan-Tinian and Iwo Jima campaigns, and was awarded the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal, both with Combat "V." He also participated in the occupation of Japan, before returning to the United States in December 1945. During the Korean War, he took part in both the defense of the Pusan Perimeter and in the assault and seizure of Inchon. He also took part in the Chosin Reservoir campaign as executive officer of the 5th Marines, and for his service during the campaign, was awarded the Silver Star Medal. He was also awarded his second Legion of Merit, along with his second Bronze Star Medal, as well as an Air Medal for his Korean War service. Following his return from Korea in 1951, he served in a variety of duty assignments in the United States. In May 1961, he became Deputy Director of the Marine Corps Educational Center, and was promoted to the rank

of brigadier general one year later, in August 1962. As a general officer, he served as Commanding General, Force Troops, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, and Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Twentynine Palms, California. In April 1964, he was designated Director of the Marine Corps Reserve and served in this capacity at Headquarters, Marine Corps, until his retirement on 1 November 1965.

**Maj Richard J. Gannon, II**

Major Richard J. Gannon, II, USMC, was killed in action 18 April 2004 while serving with the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 31-year-old Allentown, Pennsylvania, native was killed, along with four of his fellow Marines, while they were assisting a wounded Marine during a battle in Al Anbar Province. A Memorial Scholarship Fund has been set up for his four children at: Richard J. Gannon, II Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Sally Gannon, 3104-B Upshur, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277.



□1775□

*Historical Quiz*

**Marines in Iwo Jima and Okinawa, 1945**

*by Lena M. Kaljot  
 Reference Historian*

1. How many Medals of Honor were awarded to Marines for actions on Iwo Jima? On Okinawa?
2. Who was Commandant of the Marine Corps at the time of the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns?
3. The youngest Marine ever to receive the Medal of Honor was awarded his medal for heroism on Iwo Jima. Who was this Marine?
4. D-Day for the assault upon Iwo Jima was set for what date?
5. Which Marine divisions took part in the battle for Iwo Jima?
6. "The raising of that flag on Suribachi means a Marine Corps for the next 500 years." Who said this famous quote?
7. This operation began with the landing on Okinawa, Ryuky Islands, Japan, on 1 April 1945.
8. Which Marine general replaced Army Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner as commander of the Tenth Army on Okinawa, when Buckner was killed while observing the 8th Marines attack?
9. Name the two future Commandants of the Marine Corps who participated in combat operations during the Okinawa campaign.
10. This Marine earned the Medal of Honor for heroism on Okinawa while serving as a corporal. He returned to Okinawa 40 years later as a major general to command all Marine Corps bases on the island. Who was he?

*(Answers on page 23)*

## The Recon Boys

by Charles D. Melson  
Chief Historian

The World War II battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa displayed a Marine Corps capability essential for the successful Central Pacific drive. Highlighted were the benefits of a dedicated force-level amphibious reconnaissance unit. This was with the fabled Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, Fleet Marine Force Pacific, under the command of Major James L. Jones. Formed in January 1943 as a 98-man company, successes in the Gilbert, Marshall and Mariana islands saw its expansion to a 303-man battalion in April 1944. It was this latter unit that was deployed for the 1945 campaigns.

Colonel Bruce F. Meyers details the story of amphibious reconnaissance by Marines in his recent *Swift, Silent, and Deadly: Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance in the Pacific, 1942-1945* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004). Colonel Meyers, himself a noted force recon pioneer, documents the sometimes unsteady development of ground and amphibious reconnaissance forces by the Marines in World War II in this unique contribution to doctrinal history. This started with temporary arrangements in the South Pacific that benefited from the presence of raider and parachute battalions until the formation of a special purpose organization to conduct needed pre-landing patrols of amphibious objectives and for post-landing missions behind the line. The need for first-hand patrolling had long been recognized, but early doctrine felt this could be accomplished by task-organized patrols from conventional units. Hard experience proved that while temporary organization could be used, only specialized units engaged in full-time patrolling could guarantee success in the demanding Pacific Theater.

The proof was seen when one company was deployed to support the Iwo Jima landing, along with its fellow U.S. Navy Underwater Demolition

Teams (UDTs), which were formed at the same time as the amphibious reconnaissance unit, with observers drawn from the division reconnaissance companies of the 3d, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions. Advance force deployments for Operation Detachment brought all of these units together before D-Day to confirm what air, submarine and communications intelligence had gathered about the enemy and the objective. Company B, Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, under Captain Russell E. Corey, provided Marines for a 22-man provisional amphibious reconnaissance unit that arrived in the Iwo Jima area on 17 February 1945 with the advance force. Operating from four assault transport destroyers, Marines and UDT 12, 13, 14 and 15 conducted the beach reconnaissance for the landing. Starting with mine clearing at 0700, these pre-day activities continued offshore until 1800 that night under a covering naval gunfire bombardment and direct support from accompanying infantry landing craft. One unforeseen result was that the Japanese defenders assumed this

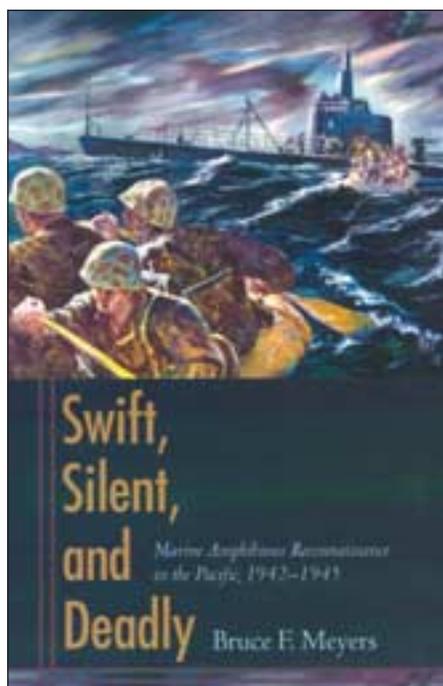
was a main landing and open fired with previously unknown coastal guns, exposing them to surface and aerial attack. Company B moved ashore soon after D-Day and was subsequently employed to scout and occupy offshore rocks and islets being used by the Japanese as machine gun and fire control positions.

After the Iwo Jima campaign, Okinawa would next occupy Major Jones' full attention. Operation Iceberg brought a mixed American landing force ashore on Japan's doorstep with major supporting air and naval forces. Beginning on 25 March, reconnaissance patrols from Captain Merwyn H. Silverthorn's Company A were used to seize adjacent islands to be used as artillery positions for the 1 April assault. After the initial invasion, the reconnaissance battalion was used to make rapid flanking landings using assault transports and rubber boats to move the front lines forward by getting behind the Japanese. Companies A and B accomplished this by switching from coast to coast as needed, often in support of the Tenth Army commander rather than the Marine amphibious corps.

Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal wrote the amphibious reconnaissance battalion rendered unique service in executing secret reconnaissance missions on enemy-held islands.

For carrying out these tasks with courage and determination they were awarded a Navy Unit Commendation. Despite proven success and material contributions toward winning the war, the amphibious reconnaissance battalion was reduced to a company cadre-level status at war's end.

The full details of both Iwo Jima and Okinawa are discussed in Meyers book and this review only highlights some of what can be found in his useful text. □1775□



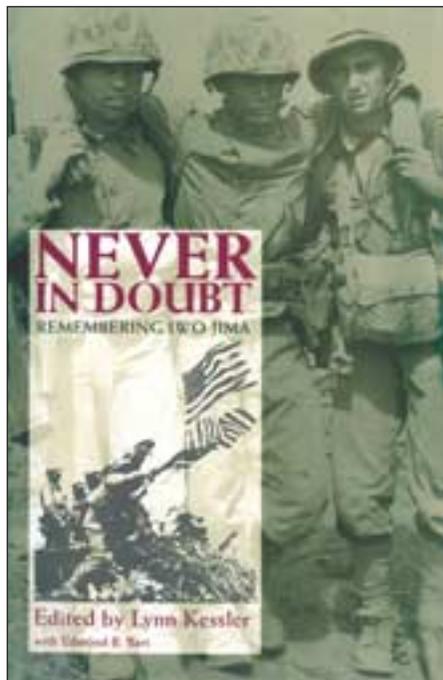
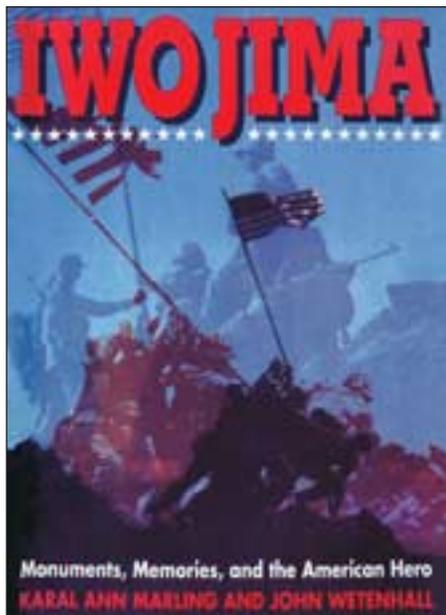
## Remembering Iwo Jima

by Evelyn A. Englander  
Historical Center Librarian

This is a selection of commercially published books about Iwo Jima and Okinawa in World War II. Most of these books are available through brick-and-mortar or online bookstores or through your local library and its interlibrary loan program.

*Never in Doubt: Remembering Iwo Jima.* Lynn Kessler, editor, with Edmond B. Bart. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999. 288pp. The book is a compilation of interviews, oral histories and remembrances from 45 Iwo Jima veterans. These narratives were grouped into 20 combat arms related chapters such as Rifleman, Machine Gunners, Mortar Men, the Last of the Flag Raisers and Chaplains. From this the reader is able to see how each Marine experienced combat on Iwo Jima and to note the matter-of-fact way they related their experiences. The editors compiled the book to honor the sacrifice of the 6,821 Marines, sailors, soldiers and airmen lost on Iwo Jima. The book includes photographs, maps, unit designations and “slang.”

*Iwo Jima: Monuments, Memories, and the American Hero.* Karal Ann Marling and John Wetenhall. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University

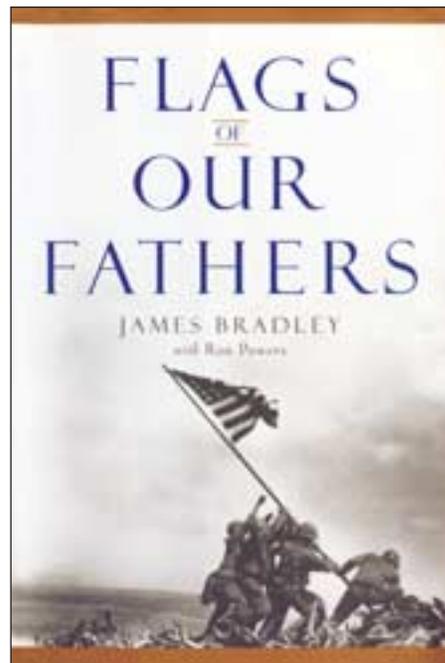


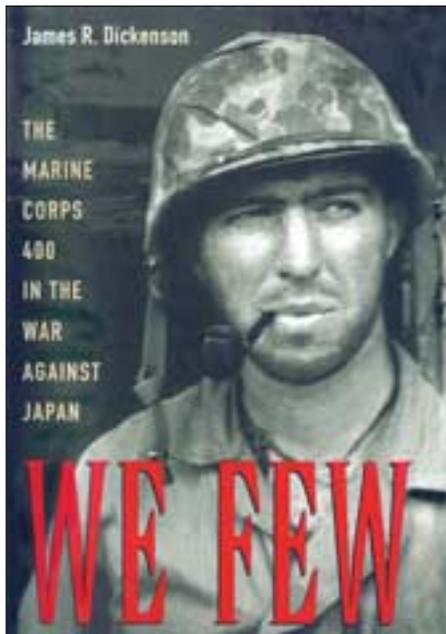
Press, 1991. 310 pp. This book tells the story of Joe Rosenthal's photograph of the famous raising of the flag, how the photo was taken and what it came to symbolize for the nation. It also describes the photograph as it appeared over the next 40 years in bond drive posters, stamps, movies and most notably the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington Cemetery. In writing their book, the authors used interviews with survivors, archival sources and documentary photographs. They concluded with a chapter about a group of Iwo Jima veterans who returned to the island in 1985 to meet with Japanese survivors of the battle.

*Flags of Our Fathers.* James Bradley with Ron Powers. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 2000. 376 pp. This book was written by the son of John “Doc” Bradley, one of the flag raisers in the famous Joe Rosenthal photograph. James Bradley describes the lives and the legacy of the men raising the flag: “Doc” Bradley, Mike Strank, Harlon Block, Franklin Sousley, Ira Hayes, and Rene Gagnon. After John Bradley's death at age 70, his family

discovered long closed boxes of letters and photos relating to his wartime experiences, including his experiences on Iwo Jima. James Bradley used these family documents to retrace the lives of his father and the men of his company. The book includes both official and personal photographs.

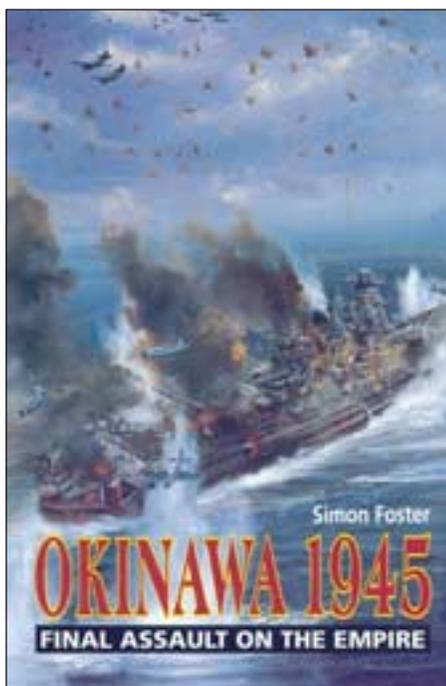
*We Few; the Marine Corps 400 in the War Against Japan.* James R. Dickenson. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001. 232 pp. A history of the special officer candidate school held at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in 1944. This class was created to augment the regular officer candidate course training being held at Quantico, Virginia. The 400 candidates assigned to this class had enlisted in the V-12 officer procurement program and were called to active duty from colleges across the country. These 400 Marines were destined to fight in some of the bloodiest campaigns of World War II and then to fight again in Korea. The author focused on 10 men from all six Marine Corps Divisions and tells their stories from induction, through training and combat to their lives after the war. The special officer candidate school curriculum focused





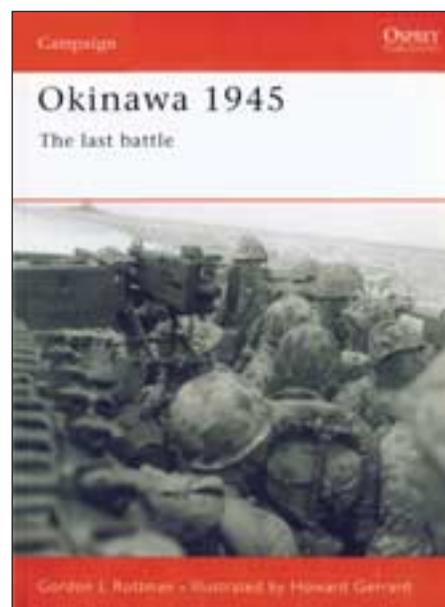
on infantry tactics and weapons with nearly 90 percent of the class serving as platoon leaders on Okinawa and Iwo Jima. The book has chapters focusing on each of these campaigns and includes photographs and a bibliography.

*Okinawa 1945; Final Assault on the Empire.* Simon Foster. New York, NY: Arms and Armour, 1994. 184 pp. This book was written 10 years ago to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the campaign on Okinawa. The author carefully describes the drama and the savagery of this final amphibious assault of World War II, the bitter fight



for the Okinawa archipelago and the accompanying naval battle fought over an immense area of the Pacific. It was also at Okinawa that the allied naval force faced a new formidable Japanese weapon born out of desperation—the kamikaze. A weapon of great psychological effect, the kamikaze took a terrible toll in ships and men. Together with the British Pacific Fleet, American Task Force 58 launched the invasion, codenamed Iceberg, on 1 April. This was followed by 81 days of continuous fighting. Okinawa lies only 325 miles from the Japanese mainland and would have made a superb staging ground for B-29 bombers. By the end of the campaign for the island in June, Allied casualties were close to 50,000 men, with 22 ships sunk, more than 250 ships damaged and more than 500 aircraft lost.

*Okinawa 1945; The Last Battle.* Gordon Rottman. Oxford, United Kingdom: Osprey Publishing, 2002. 96 pp. This is a title in the Osprey campaign series detailing the command strategies, tactics and battle experiences of the opposing forces in each of the featured campaign. The book describes the struggle for Okinawa; the last major campaign in the Pacific where U.S. Marines and Army units battled determined Japanese defenders. It includes a chronology, the opposing plans, the opposing commanders and forces and the order of battle. The book includes photographs



and maps, some of them three-dimensional. The author also has written *U.S. Marine Corps in World War II: Order of Battle* and *World War II Pacific Island Guide* and *Geo-Military Study*. □1775□

## Marine Corps Museum Closing

The Marine Corps Historical Center's Museum, located on the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., closed its doors permanently on 15 April 2005. The closure will allow time for artifacts and exhibits to be packed and moved to the new National Museum of the Marine Corps, currently under construction in Quantico, Virginia. Historical researchers will continue to be welcome at the Historical Center. However, the Center's resources will become limited as preparations accelerate for the move to new facilities in Quantico later this year. Researchers are encouraged to inquire about resource availability prior to visiting.

## Answers to the Historical Quiz

### Marines in Iwo Jima and Okinawa, 1945

(Questions on page 20)

1. Iwo Jima – 22, Okinawa – 10
2. General Alexander A. Vandegrift (1 January 1944 to 31 December 1947)
3. Private First Class Jacklyn Lucas, age 17
4. 19 February 1945
5. The 3d Marine Division (3d, 9th, 21st and 12th Marines), 4th Marine Division (23d, 24th and 14th Marines), and 5th Marine Division (26th, 27th, 28th and 13th Marines)
6. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal to Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith as Marines raised the colors on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima, 23 February 1945
7. Operation Iceberg
8. Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, who became the first Marine general officer to command a field army
9. Then-Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. (20th CMC), and then-Lieutenant Colonel Leonard F. Chapman, Jr. (24th CMC)
10. Major General James L. Day

