

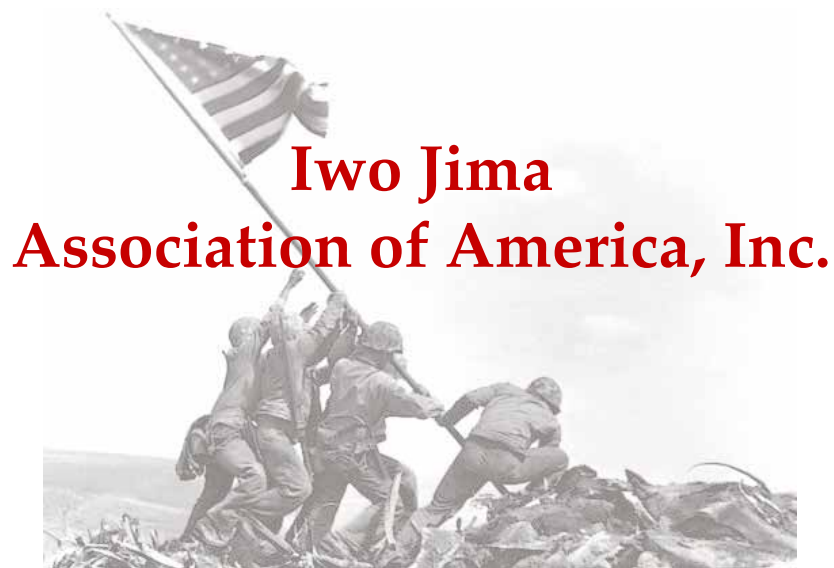
66th Anniversary Iwo Jima Reunion of Honor

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On the cover: Top left, Billy Griggs (G/2/21); top right, Young Marine Erin DeVivies and Gordon Mommsen (D/2/26). Bottom left: Jim Collis, USN, and Bob Warner (HQ/2/21); Lucille Katavich, MHT staff nurse; and Becky Guichard of Continental Airlines.

66th Anniversary

Iwo Jima Reunion of Honor

‘Improvise, Adapt and Overcome’ in True Marine Corps Tradition

The best-laid plans don't always end as you hope. No question about that. Military planners initially estimated the Marines could take Iwo Jima in 72 hours with light casualties. It took 36 days with heavy casualties, the first time in the war the Marine Corps suffered more casualties than the enemy.

And the 66th anniversary of the Iwo Jima campaign for the annual Reunion of Honor was supposed to go off without a hitch. Each year since 1995, MHT (www.miltours.com) has coordinated a tour to Guam and Iwo Jima for those — especially veterans of the iconic battle — who want to visit or revisit the place that was so pivotal to the war effort and so costly to achieve victory.

Then the earthquake hit Japan, causing a tsunami to wreak havoc and spread fast-moving water, fear and tragedy eastward across the Pacific, and the tour's March 16 day-trip to the tiny volcanic island — where 5,821 Americans died and another 17,000 were wounded — had to be cancelled. Both the Japanese and U.S. military support involved in the visit were redirected to the relief effort. Of course, those on the tour understood.

“I'm disappointed,” said traveler Erin DeVivies, a 17-year-old high school student and Young Marine Detachment Sgt.Maj. from Quantico, Va. “But I'm more disappointed for the Iwo Jima veterans who may never get back on the island again.”

The Japanese Embassy soon got word to Military Historical Tours President and CEO Warren Wiedhahn that the Reunion of Honor would take place next year, and the U.S. Marine Corps confirmed its continued support, especially since so many veterans and their families had to miss out this year.

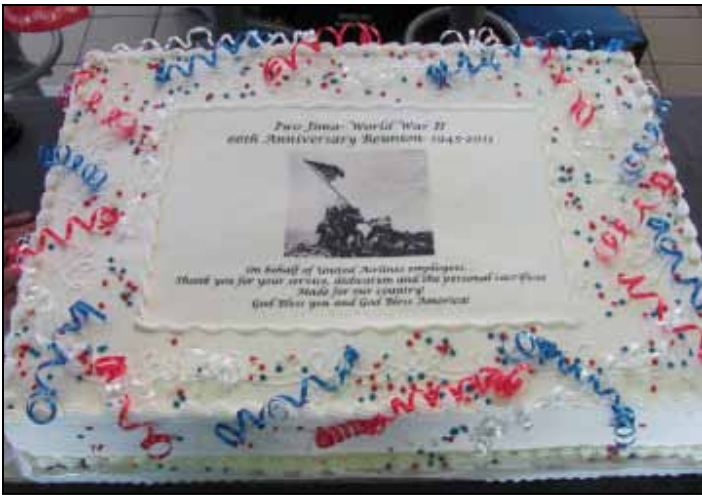
In response, the Iwo Jima Association of America has started a drive, supported by the Marine Corps League, to pay — or at least subsidize — the return trip for those aging veterans who were unable to return to Iwo Jima this year because of the disaster. Several of the men said they would plan to return in 2012 “with or without” a subsidy.

Such a small, barren stretch of volcanic rock has great meaning for all visitors. But for the veterans who were there so many years ago, they want to revisit where they were, where they fought and where their buddies died: Nishi Ridge, Hills 362-A, B and C, Hill 382 (Turkey Knob and the Amphitheater, an extension of the hill, and the whole complex known as the Meat Grinder), the Gorge, the Quarry, Cushman's Pocket and a hundred other barren areas with no names, only memories of death and destruction.

The opportunity to set foot on such hallowed ground, to stand in honor and gratitude, is what brings many of the rest of us to Iwo Jima. In the true tradition of the Marine Corps, this year's group improvised, adapted and overcame the horrific tragedy that befell the Japanese people by shifting gears and having a great experience on Guam and Saipan.

Next year's trip to Iwo Jima promises to be special, and I hope to see you all again. Until then, may the photos in this booklet remind you of how we all overcame.

— Ray Elliott
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Sendoff at LAX

Traditional cake served for the last six years with coffee and juice prior to the group leaving for Guam. Marines from the Riverside I & I staff post colors prior to the Transportation Safety Administration singers entertaining the group with a number of patriotic songs, while a KABC-TV reporter interviews a veteran.



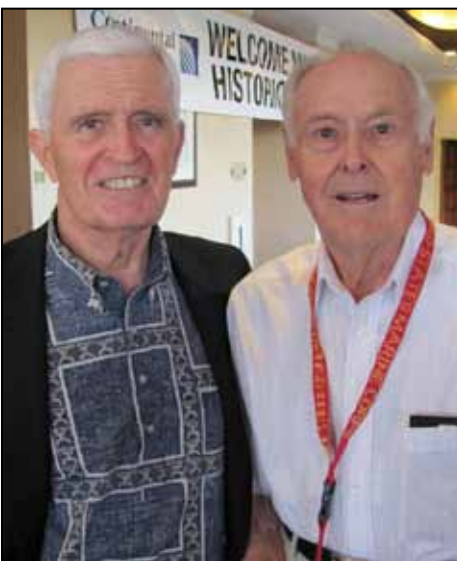


The LAX Fire Department honors the Iwo Jima veterans with a traditional firehose salute as the plane prepares for departure. Military Historical Tours President and CEO Warren Wiedhahn addresses the group, and various supporters greet and pose with the Iwo Jima veterans.



Welcome to Guam

After the long flight, including a stop at the Honolulu Airport before flying on to Guam, the group is welcomed at the Outrigger Hotel and beautiful beachfront in the heart of Guam's Tumon Bay resort district by young school and community native Chamorro dancers. In addition to welcoming the Iwo Jima veterans and the Military Historical Tour group to Guam, the dances are designed to give Chamorros of today a sense of pride in their heritage. The boys and girls compete to be chosen to perform in the group. Behind the dancers, registration and welcome tables are set up to give weary travelers their quarters for the next few days. President of the Iwo Jima Association of America, LtGen Hank Stackpole pauses for a photograph with Iwo veteran Billy Griggs.



Often called the best Pacific battlefield tour guide, Don Farrell (lower right), who has lived in the Mariana Islands since the 1970s, leads the tour group through the first day of the Guam Cultural Tour and the Spanish sites. Warren Wiedhahn and Hank Stackpole confer at Fort Santga Agueda about the cancellation of the visit to Iwo Jima. Mike Blum, Executive Director of the Marine Corps League, and Vic Voltaggio, Commandant of the Marine Corps League, pause for a photo with Bob Spehar, USNR, at Senator Angel Leon Guerrero Santos Latte Memorial Park.





Luncheon with the Captain

Guide Don Farrell led the group up to the home of the commander Naval Forces Marianas for a look down on the Asan Beach from Flag Circle and the Asan Overlook. The stunning view from the hill overlooking the bay occupied the group for several minutes before Farrell briefed the group about the Guam landing by the Marines in World War II.

Then Capt. Richard K. Wood II, USN, welcomed his guests and spoke about the mission of the Navy in the

Pacific, which is to support the forces of the U.S. Pacific Fleet — those soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen who are based in the Pacific — their commands, which are serviced and supplied by the Naval Base, and the families. Several of the enlisted sailors stationed at Flag Circle were on hand for the visit.

Gen Stackpole later presented Betsy Wood with a floral arrangement in gratitude for the warm hospitality.

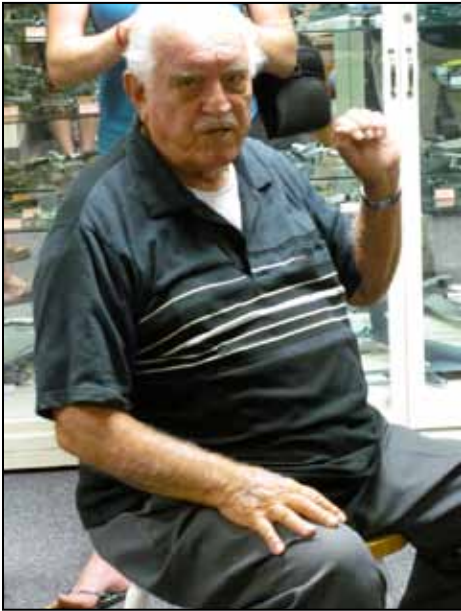




After the briefing, the captain and his wife invited the group over to their home a few yards away for a buffet luncheon. The home, where they live with their three children, offered the same spectacular view as that of Flag Circle. Before departing the overlook, Ollie Cromwell and his son, Warren, look out across the area with part of the beach as the background.

Visit to Andersen A.F.B.

The first stop at Andersen Air Force Base and the North Island Tour was a treat with LtCol Chuck Manes, USAF, (Ret.), a crusty retiree who flew many missions on the B-52 during Vietnam. He regaled the group at the site of the B-52, then joined everyone for lunch while BrigGen John W. Doucette, Commander, 36th Wing and Base Commanding Officer, spoke about the mission of the base: "To fly, fight and win ... in air, space and cyberspace." Afterward, two veterans and family members posed outside the Andersen Wives Club Boutique, where they went to purchase local crafts and other items.





Japanese General Obata's Last Headquarters

The jungle at the site of Japanese LtGen Hideynshi Obata's last stand prior to committing suicide before the Marines arrived. For Third Marine Division veterans Ollie Cromwell, 9th Marines; Billy Griggs, 21st Marines; and Bob Warner, 21st Marines, the jungles surrounding the area were familiar. Artifacts found at the site are housed in a building up on level ground. The artifacts were once left unattended until visitors started to take them.





A memorial was established to commemorate the many fallen Japanese soldiers whose bones were scattered across the area of South Pacific Memorial Park. The Peace Memorial is a result of a collaboration between a local monsignor and a Japanese member of the House of Councillors after he had made a visit to Guam.



昭和16年から20年にかけてくり広げられた太平洋戦争において、太平洋に散在する美しい島々で、50万余にのぼる日本人が戦没されました。この他にアメリカ人をはじめ、平和に生活していた現地の人びとも、多くの犠牲者を出し難い血を流しました。

ここ又水山ヶ藪、今あなたが立っているこの場所も、昭和19年11月11日未明、グアム島を守護していた日本軍が、米軍と激しく戦った後、小畑軍司令官以下多くの将兵が玉砕した悲しい思い出のある地です。

昭和40年、南太平洋戦没者慰霊団（団長・榎本光教参議院議員）が、ミクロネシアおよびグアム島の戦没者を慰霊訪問した際、榎本団長は、当地のオスカー・エル・カルボ神父と初めての出逢いをしました。その折、カルボ神父は、繰々戦争の悲惨さを語り、「戦後20年、今なおジャングルや岩かげに、散らされたままの姿で苦む多くの日本人の白骨が散乱し、放棄されているのは誠に悔しい。なんとか早くこれらを収集して、墓ろに回向して葬ってあげたいと思っておりました。二人が力を合せてやりましょう……」と提案しました。

熱情あふれる言葉に感動した榎本団長は、「それぞれの祖国に忠誠心を持って戦死したすべての御霊を厚く慰めると共に、日米両国の友好と世界平和に願いをこめたシンボルとなる記念塔をお互いの協力によって建てましょう……」と、賛意を表明し、二人は堅い握手をしました。

その後、幾多の困難がありました。両者の熱い友情と協力に支えられ、昭和45年5月ついにこの塔が完成しました。塔の高さは50尺あって地下は納骨堂になっております。デザインは慰霊と平和の願いを兼ねた意匠を凝らしました。

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われわれは、この平和慰霊公苑の建設によって、日米両国の戦没者の霊位が永遠のやすらぎを得、両国民の友情の絆が一層深まることを願っております。

財団法人
南太平洋戦没者慰霊協会
日本国東京都港区北浜1-1-3

In the Pacific War waged from 1941 to 1945, more than 500,000 Japanese lost their lives during combat on the beautiful islands scattered throughout the Pacific Ocean. In addition, many Americans as well as local people who had lived a peaceful life in this region fell victims to or wounded in the fierce battles during these disastrous years.

This place at the foot of Mt. Malagi, where you are standing, was also the site of sorrowful reminiscences. Namely, many Japanese soldiers on the garrison duty on Guam Island fought fiercely with U.S. Forces here and, in the dawn of Aug. 11, 1944, most of them including the commander, Gen. Obata, died a tragic death together.

When the South Pacific Memorial Association Mission (mission leader: Mitsunori Ueki, a member of the House of Councillors) visited Micronesia and Guam to console the souls of the war victims in 1965, Mr. Ueki met Monsignor Oscar L. Calvo here for the first time. At that time, Monsignor Calvo spoke of the misery of the war in detail and said: "It is a mournful fact that, after 20 years since the end of the war, we can still find bones of many dead Japanese scattered and left in the jungle or behind the rocks..... in the very places where these people fell, I have been hoping to collect these bones and console the souls of the dead in formal funerals as soon as possible." He then proposed to Mr. Ueki that they both should cooperate in such an undertaking.

Deeply moved by such earnest words, Mr. Ueki voiced his wholehearted agreement and proposed: "Let us collaborate in building a memorial tower which will heartily console the souls of all the people who perished while dedicating their loyalty to their respective countries, and at the same time symbolize the wishes for friendship between Japan and the U.S. and also for world peace." They then shook their hands firmly.

After some time, the tower was finally completed in May 1970 supported by the sincere friendship and cooperation of the two persons. The tower is 50 feet high and has an ossuary in its basement. Its design is in the shape of palms pressed together in prayer, indicating the wishes for consolation of the souls of the dead and for peace as well.

The construction cost as well as its maintenance expenses have been exclusively covered by invaluable donations offered by many people throughout Japan.

We earnestly hope that the construction of this Peace Memorial Park will bring about eternal peace to the souls of the war victims of both Japan and the U.S., and further strengthen the ties of friendship between the two countries.

South Pacific Memorial Association Inc.,
10-3, Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Symposium

The group had a full day of educational and historical perspective by the staff of the Guam government, Marine Corps Col. Robert D. Loynd, OIC Marine Forces Pacific (Fwd) Guam & CNMI, and a panel of Iwo Jima veterans. At the end of the panel discussion, Bob Warner, Gordon Mommsen, Bill Griggs and Wilbur McGlynn were joined by Ollie Cromwell, Dewey Dobson and Bill Worf for a photo, the rest of the audience following suit. Shayne Jarosz of the Iwo Jima Association of America addresses the group to invite the veterans to sign the framed Col Charles Waterhouse artwork, which was going to be raffled off. Gen Hank Stackpole makes a point while Col. Loynd, who had been speaking about the Marine Corps mission, looks on.





Banquet

Three Iwo veterans from the Greatest Generation Foundation gathered for the banquet in the hotel lobby.

Sgts Justin Dues and Brian Price join GySgt Douglas E. Gray (in civilian clothing). Senior Enlisted Advisor Marine Forces Pacific (Fwd) Guam & CNMI, Young Marine SgtMaj Casey Scott, Mitzi Campanelli (of United Airlines) and Bonnie Arnold-Haynes (widow of Iwo Jima veteran the late MajGen Fred Haynes) were among the guests.

During the banquet, Iwo veterans were each presented with a medal.





Saipan

A group of travelers was able to go for a quick day-trip to Saipan. Rusting tanks and guns are very evident reminders of the war there more than 65 years ago.







From the Second and Fourth Marine Division beaches to Mt. Tapochau to Death Valley, the whirlwind trip circled the island and ended up at Suicide Cliff, where the site of scores of suicides are now lined with memorials to the dead. At the end of the day, the group returned to Guam and the hotel for group photos.



War Dog Memorial

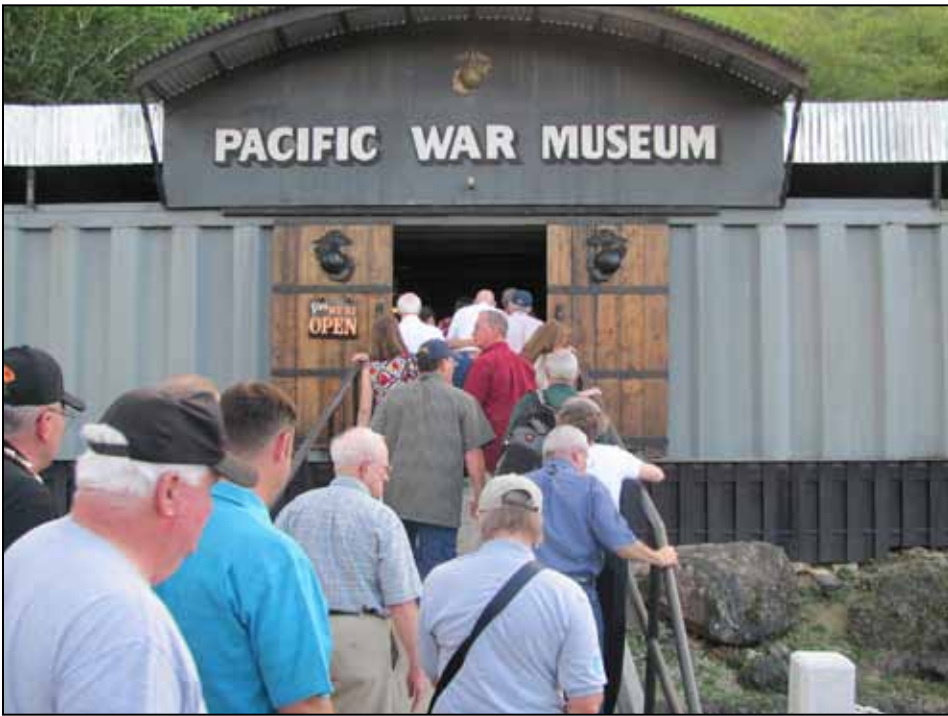
The War Dog Memorial Park is a tribute to the dogs that played an integral part in the war effort throughout the Pacific.



Jeff's Pirate Cove

On the east side of the island, Jeff's Pirate Cove provided a great lunch and welcome respite for the group.





Farewell Celebration

It is a tradition on the last night of the tour to celebrate at the late John Gerber's Ranch and the Pacific War Museum. The Fiesta Dinner was hosted by the Third Marine Division Association. In keeping with John's wishes, the Gerber family will continue to host the event.





