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# 68th Anniversary Iwo Jima Reunion of Honor

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*Edited by Ray Elliott, Communications Director, Iwo Jima Association of America*



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On the cover: Visitors to the memorial atop Mt. Suribachi leave behind mementos in honor and remembrance of those who fought and sacrificed on Iwo Jima. Photos by Cindy Good.

Additional photos courtesy of Gene Bell, Bill Connor, Dan King, Laura Leppert, Anne Swenson and Rudy Rodriguez.

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**Reunion and Symposium - 13 - 16 February 2014  
Arlington and Quantico, Virginia**

**Reunion of Honor - 14 - 21 March 2014  
Guam and Iwo Jima**

Fellow Iwo Jima Veterans, Families and Friends:

This pictorial of our March 2013 "Reunion of Honor" on Guam and Iwo Jima is intended to help you reflect on what a wonderful "Once in a Lifetime" experience it was for us. We sincerely appreciate those of you who sent us pictures and only regret that we could not use all of them. Rather, we attempted to select a "cross section" of the tour, from our Los Angeles departure city, to Guam and eventually to the Black Sands of Iwo Jima.

We thank Ray Elliott the IJAA Communications Director, for assembling the booklet. We hope that you will share it with your friends and strongly encourage them to join us next year.

IJAA has prepaid the printing and postage, and we hope that you will help us defray the cost by sending us a "fully tax-deductible" contribution with the enclosed membership renewal application. (We have new IJAA Membership Cards that you will receive in the return mail!) Residual funds will be used for those veterans unable to afford this military historical trek across the Pacific.

Please check our website and plan to join us for the IJAA Reunion and Symposium in February or the Reunion of Honor on Iwo Jima in March. If you are so inclined, like many of us, you can do both! I personally have attended both commemorations since the 50th Anniversary in 1995.

Warm, sincere regards and ... Semper Fidelis,



Lawrence F. Snowden  
LtGen USMC (Ret)  
Chairman Emeritus

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# Departure from Los Angeles



Once again, the Military Historical Tour's annual "Reunion of Honor" trip to Iwo Jima departs from Los Angeles International Airport with the Riverside I & I Marine Corps Color Guard posting the colors for the ceremonial sendoff. The color guard has performed this service to honor the Iwo Jima veterans making the trek back to the battleground where they fought 68 years ago. The traditional cake with the flag-raising image of the photo taken by Joe Rosenthal on Feb. 23, 1945, is served with coffee and juice. While waiting to board the flight for the first leg to Honolulu, the Los Angeles International Air Transportation Safety Administration Choir serenades and entertains the group with patriotic songs.







MHT President and CEO Warren Wiedhahn



LtGen Larry Snowden, USMC (Ret.)



Bill Griggs, Becky Guichard and Cindy Good





# Welcome to Guam



*Hafa Adai* (pronounced HALF a-DAY) is “Hello” in Chamorro, the native language of Guam and the islands of the Northern Marianas. It’s a welcome greeting after the long flight from Los Angeles, a brief stop in Honolulu, then on to Guam where the travelers check into the Outrigger Hotel on the beachfront at the Tumon Bay resort district.

Guam is the largest and southern-most of the islands that form a part of the Mariana Islands. Its motto is: “Where America’s Day Begins.”





# Nimitz Hill



Nimitz Hill is the home of the United States Navy Commander Naval Forces Marianas, located in Asan on the southern half of Guam. It overlooks Agana Bay on its western edge.

The mission of the Navy in the Pacific is to support the forces of the U.S. Pacific Fleet – the soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen who are based in the Pacific; their commands, which are serviced and supplied by the Naval Base; and their families.



At top, Rear Adm. Tilghman D. Payne welcomes the group, including those at top right. At middle right: Billy Jackson, Mitzi Campanelli, Hal Johnson and Bonnie Arnold-Haynes. Below right: Suzanne Payne (at far right) greets guests and provides warm hospitality.



# Nimitz Hill



AT top left: Melinda Yantch and her brother, William Montgomery. Middle left: Capt John Heckman and John Farritor. Bottom left: Carl DeHaven and Anne Swenson.

At top right: LtGen Larry Snowden with Suzanne Payne and Rear Adm. Tilghman Payne. Bottom right: Ben Bellefeuille, Col Scott Loch, and William Montgomery.



# War in the Pacific National Historical Park



Museum exhibits are featured in the T. Stell Newman Visitor Center at the War in the Pacific National Historical Park. These exhibits are interactive and feature the latest technology, gripping personal stories and museum artifacts. In addition to the exhibits, the visitor center theater plays a 10-minute movie, "The Battle for Guam." The center is located just outside the main gate of the Naval Base Guam.

Pictured below are, from left: Storme DiGiovanni, Ian Search, Giovanni Mattucci, Corin McKee and McCall Behringer.





## Jeff's Pirate Cove

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

At top left: Warren Wiedhahn, Jeff Pleadwell and Larry Snowden.

Bottom left: Mitzi Campanelli, Anne Swenson, Florence Curnutt, Harry Curnutt, LtGen Norm Smith, USMC (Ret.) and his son, Bret Smith.

At top right: Carl DeHaven, Bob Borka, Billy Griggs, John Farritor and Vivian Price-Butler.

Bottom right: Peggy Pauletto, Dan King, Ben Bellefeuille and Kathy Painton.



# War Dog Memorial

At the War Dog Memorial on Guam, a Doberman Pinscher represents hundreds of heroic war dogs that served in the Marine Corps during World War II.

Although most were Dobermans, German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers and even a Collie also served during the war as sentries, messengers and scouts.



June Wiley, Bob Borka and Kathy Painton



John "Top" Farritor



From left: John Farritor, Carl DeHaven, Billy Griggs, Ben Bellefeuille and William Montgomery



# Iwo Jima Symposium & Banquet



A number of veterans talk about their war experiences during the Iwo Jima Symposium at the Outrigger Hotel.

Pictured immediately below are Gene Bell, Larry Snowden, William Montgomery, Don Graves and Billy Griggs.

Several Young Marines were on hand to interact with the veterans and to learn from them.





Immediately below, Hal Johnson and Francis Reynolds participate on stage.

At right are Dan King and Fiske Hanley II.

At bottom, one of the tables at the banquet features, from left, Tim Kline, Jamie Stovell, Rex Turben, Dr. Jamie Kapner and Erik Kapner.



# Iwo Jima



Flight details for Iwo Jima are displayed at the airport before the morning departure. At left, Tom Campanelli deplanes upon arrival on the island. Today Iwo Jima is a naval air base for the Japan Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces. It is off limits to tourists, aside from the “Reunion of Honor” memorial services once a year. When visitors deboarded, a group of active-duty Marines from Okinawa were on hand to assist them in getting around the island. At bottom, are Carl DeHaven (foreground) and Billy Griggs (far right).



Opposite, Mount Suribachi looms in the background from the landing beaches. Wreckage can still be seen in the waters off shore. At bottom left are David and Gene Bell posing by a Japanese gun at the foot of Mount Suribachi. At top right: Gilbert Lopez. Right middle: Kathy Painton is pictured with a woman whose father was among the more than 20,000 Japanese troops who died on Iwo Jima. Bottom right: Ben Bellefeuille.











At left is a view of the landing beaches from Mount Suribachi. Below that, a group gathers at the U.S. monument that marks the point of the famous flag-raising: Billy Griggs, Hal Johnson, Francis Reynolds, Ben Bellefeuille, Fiske Hanley, Bonnie Arnold-Haynes, a Marine (unknown), LtGen Larry Snowden, Don Graves, William Montgomery, Gene Bell, Bill Schott and Carl DeHaven.

Below is a view of the U.S. monument that commemorates the Feb. 23, 1945, flag raising during the battle of Iwo Jima, as well as a Japanese memorial on Suribachi.

At bottom, also standing before the monument are, from left, LtGen Hank Stackpole, William Montgomery, Don Graves and LtGen Norm Smith.

Undoubtedly the most visited place on the island, Mount Suribachi today is the setting for many photos with outstretched American flags, Marine re-enlistments and a place to leave dog tags and other mementos as symbols of honor and remembrance.



## Reunion of Honor

LtGens Norm Smith, Larry Snowden and Hank Stackpole participate in the wreath-laying ceremony during the 2013 Reunion of Honor to honor the U.S. troops who fought and died on Iwo Jima in 1945. The occasion is a joint pilgrimage by both Americans and Japanese to the remote island 650 miles southeast of Tokyo. The stone monument was first placed there in 1985 for the 40th anniversary of the battle. The plaque features one side in English, facing the beaches where the Americans landed, and the other side in Japanese, facing inland.







Veterans, current Marines and other dignitaries all pay homage to the sacrifices of so many. It was a hard-fought, 36-day battle for the key real estate in island-hopping campaign in the Pacific during World War II. Once secured, the island served as a landing safeguard for the B-29 Superfortresses to provide fighter escort support on their missions to the Japanese mainland.





# Asan Beach



Travelers explore Asan Beach on Guam, with Adelup Point in Hagatna in the distance. It features a complex that houses the governor's office and the Latte of Freedom, a monument in the shape of a latte stone, which was a structure used by ancient Chamorros to support houses and meeting halls.



Charles Ferguson



Ben Bellefeuille







From left: Storme DiGiovanni, Carl DeHaven and Nery Heenan



From left: Lucille Katavich-Wegner, Carl DeHaven, Anne Swenson and Mitzi Campanelli



From left: Norm Smith, Mike Blum, Kathy Painton, Jim Tuohy, Anne Swenson and Bret Smith







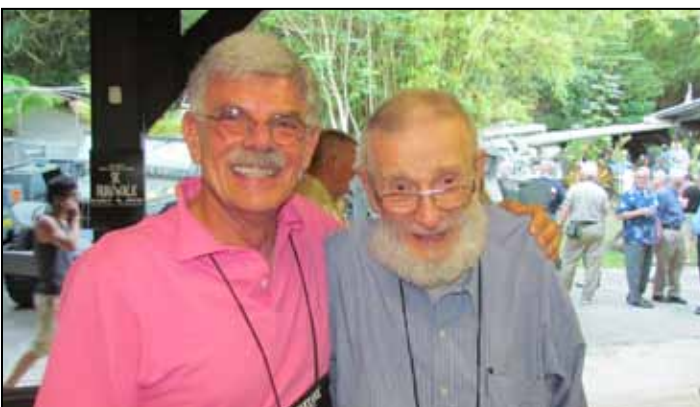
# Farewell Reception at Pacific War Museum

Traditionally, on Guam for the last night of the tour, everybody gathers for a Fiesta Dinner and Farewell at the Pacific War Museum in Maina, which was built by the late John Gerber, a Marine Vietnam veteran and advocate for veterans. He spent years amassing a collec-

tion of military artifacts from World War II through Vietnam. Gerber, who died in 2010, is also remembered for his effort that changed the name of Guam's main road from Marine Drive to Marine Corps Drive.

The dinner is hosted by the Third Marine Division Association. In addition to great food and entertainment, there is dancing and one more opportunity for lots of photos with new-found friends. Multiple generations of ten make the trek together to share in this memorable trip by Military Historical Tours.

At bottom left: Tom Capanelli and Charles Ferguson







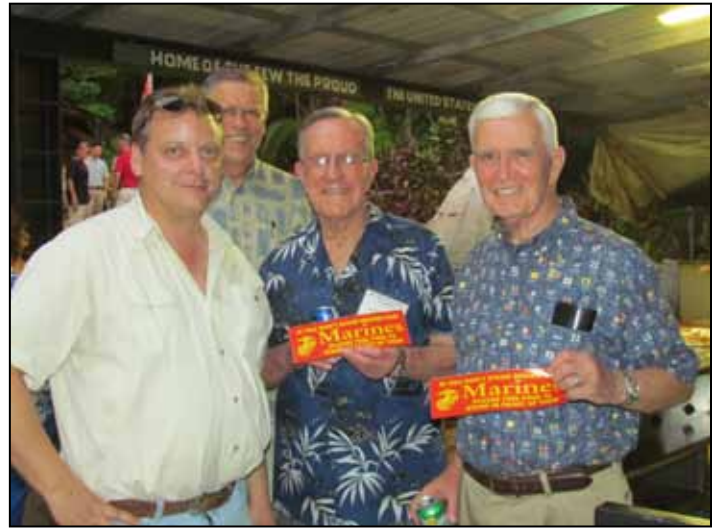
McCall Behringer, John Powell, Mitzi Campanelli and Claire Borja



Clockwise from left: Anne Swenson, Lucille Katavich-Wegner, Mitzi Campanelli and John "Top" Farritor



Robert Borka, Jane Wiley and Vivian Price-Butler



Ron Ward, Warren Wiedhahn and Hank Stackpole



Mike Kessler and Mike Blum



Ben Bellefeuille and Kathy Painton





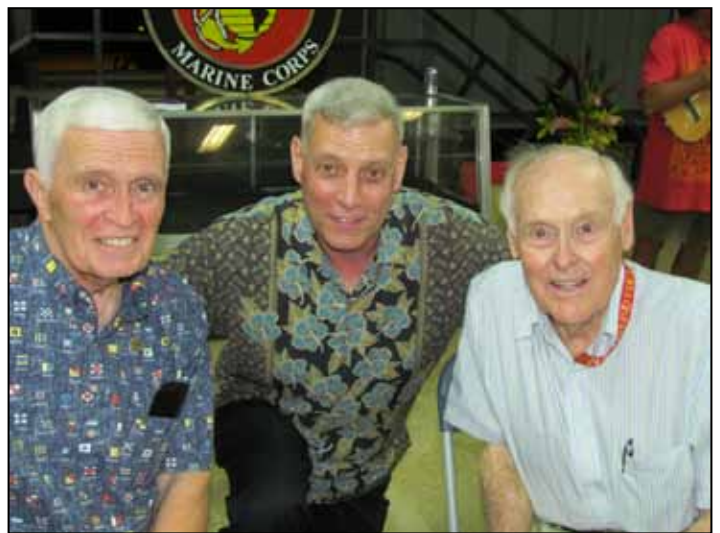
John Wharton with Flo and Harry Curnutt



Ron Ward, Tom Campanelli and a local guest



Barbara Alberti, James Oelke-Farley and Anne Swenson



LtGen Hank Stackpole, Gen John "Jay" Paxton Jr., assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, and Iwo Jima veteran Billy Griggs



Hal Johnson, Cindy Good and Billy Jackson

### **Seeking past Reunion of Honor memories and photos**

The Iwo Jima Association of America is documenting the history of the Reunion of Honor ceremonies on Iwo Jima since the first was held in 1985. Everyone is encouraged to share personal remembrances and/or photos from any of the past events (but especially from 1985). Please send to IJAA Communications Director Ray Elliott, 2609 N. High Cross Rd., Urbana, IL 61802, or email [rayelliott23@att.net](mailto:rayelliott23@att.net).

# Iwo Jima, 1945

“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 serving on Iwo island, uncommon valor was a common virtue.”

– Adm Chester W. Nimitz





# REUNION OF HONOR

ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA, AMERICAN AND JAPANESE VETERANS MET AGAIN ON THESE SAME SANDS, THIS TIME IN PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP.

WE COMMEMORATE OUR COMRADES LIVING AND DEAD, WHO FOUGHT HERE WITH BRAVERY AND HONOR, AND WE PRAY TOGETHER THAT OUR SACRIFICES ON IWO JIMA WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED AND NEVER BE REPEATED.

FEBRUARY 19, 1985

3RD, 4TH, 5TH DIVISION  
ASSOCIATIONS: USMC  
AND  
THE ASSOCIATION OF IWO JIMA



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## Hats off to you.

Reed Smith proudly salutes the Marines, Navy Corpsman, Sea Bees, Army, and Army Air Corps and supports the Iwo Jima Association of America.

Reed Smith is committed not only to employing veterans, but to giving back to them as well. Reed Smith participates in many pro bono programs that aid and assist veterans, including The National Veterans Legal Services Program and assistance with Veterans Administration disability claim appeals.



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