



Spearhead NEWS

"Uncommon Valor was a Common Virtue"

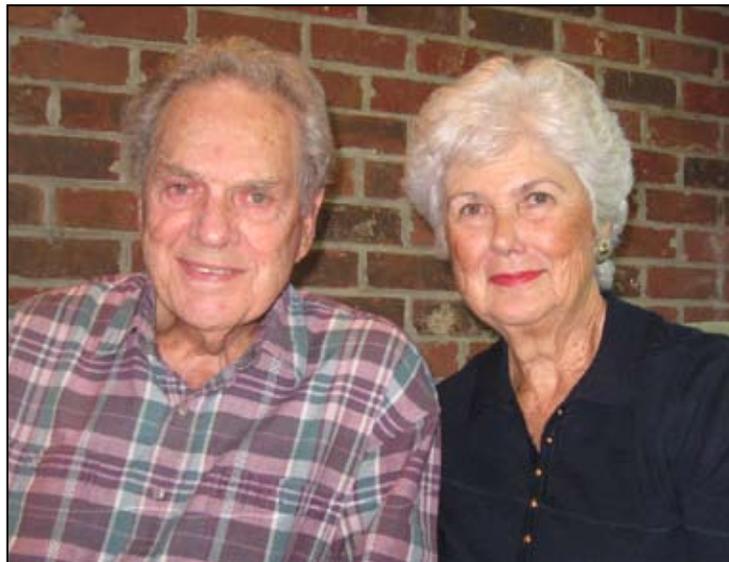
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of the 5TH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

**66TH ANNUAL REUNION - VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
SEPTEMBER 10 - 13, 2015
HOLIDAY INN VIRGINIA BEACH-NORFOLK**

Ozment to chair reunion for 70th anniversary

By Monroe Ozment

I was born in Rome, Ga., on Dec. 24, 1925. I was working in a drug store as a soda jerk on Dec. 7, 1941, when a friend came by to tell me that the Japs had bombed Pearl Harbor. Like most young men at that time, I was eager to join the military, but the age requirement of 17 with parents' permission was a factor to overcome.



Monroe and Leilani Ozment

After graduating from Rome High School in June 1942 at age 16, it was mid-1943 before I could convince my parents to approve my joining the Marine Corps. On my first attempt to join, I failed the eye test. The recruiting sergeant was very helpful and said to me, "Son, go home and eat lots of carrots, get plenty of sleep and don't read much. Come back, and I'm sure you can pass the test." I followed the sergeant's instructions and passed the eye test, although I am not

certain that I did pass.

On Sept. 22, 1943, nine other recruits and I boarded a train in Atlanta for the long trip across country. On arrival, we reported to Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego for boot camp.

After completing boot camp, I was sent to telephone school where, among other things, I learned to climb poles. At the time, I didn't think it was very wise to be climbing telephone poles

while in combat. After telephone school, I joined the Fifth Marine Division and was assigned to the 2nd Bn, 28th Marines in Camp Pendleton and moved with that unit to Camp Tarawa in Hawaii.

Telephone wiremen operated as a three-man team assigned to each line company. My team was assigned to and trained with Easy Co, 2nd Bn, 28th Marines. The

Continued on page 6



RAY ELLIOTT
 Secretary
 Fifth Marine Division Assn.

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THE SPEARHEAD NEWS

*Published two times annually in the interest
 of the 5th Marine Division Association*

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Ray Elliott
 2609 N. High Cross Rd., Urbana, IL 61802
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In This Issue:

Financial Statement	2
New Members	2
The Editor's Desk	3
Letters	4
Final Muster	7
Houston commemoration	7
Secretary's Update	8
65 years of sharing, remembering	10
President's Report	12
Latino memorial	14
Corpsmen then and now	16
Wall of Honor	16
Dog Co. remembers Iwo Jima	17
70th commemoration at Camp Pendleton	18
Book Review: "A Tomb Called Iwo Jima"	19

**FMDA
 FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Current balance as of 10/31/14: \$45,093.15

**Balance transfer to WachoviaFMDA
 Acct from Warren Musch on 11/28/14:
 \$38,442.32**

**Balance of unspent 65th reunion
 funds on 11/27/14:
 \$ 6,600.83**

Dues collected: \$ 50.00

**Total funds in FMDA Acct on
 10/31/14:
 \$45,093.15**

A complete financial statement will be provided
 in the next issue of *The Spearhead News*.

**– John Butler
 President**

**NEW MEMBERS:
 WELCOME ABOARD!**

Annual Members

- BELL, Gene E. - 3RD MAR DIV - Banning, CA
- CONA, William G. – Palm Harbor, FL
- JENKINS JR., William J. – Collettsville, NC
- TRAINOR, Steve – Rock Island, IL
- RIDDLE, Debbie – Tomball, TX

Life Members

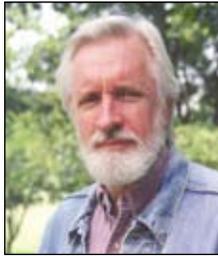
- ELLIOTT, Liz – Arlington, VA
- HARVEY, T. Fred – C-1-26 – Kosciusko, MS
- LEPPERT, Laura – Dallas, TX

Memorial Members

- BARNETT, Florie – Vallejo, CA
- CORRELL, Mary – Oblong, IL
- CURRAN, Virginia – Chesterfield, MO
- DUNIVAN, June – Longview, WA
- LYNN, Helen O. – Richmond, VA
- TATUM, Evelyn – Stockton, CA

THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Ray Elliott



Col Gerald 'Gerry' Russell 1917 - 2014

Gerry Russell was one of those men you'd follow wherever he led. And hundreds of Marines did follow him from the time he entered the Marine Corps in 1940 from Boston College (where he'd starred on the track team and was the first alternate on the 1940 U.S. Olympic Team in the 800 meters) through the jungles of Guadalcanal, the black sands of Iwo Jima, wounded in both campaigns, the lowlands and mountainous terrain of Korea, where he was again wounded, and at other duty stations around the world.

On Iwo Jima, he was first executive officer with the 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines, then battalion commander after Maj John Antonelli was wounded and sent back to a hospital on Guam. During the Korean War, Gerry commanded another battalion and served as adviser for a South Korean brigade. Throughout the rest of the 1950s and up until he retired in 1968, he held positions of leadership at Quantico, Va., Camp Lejeune, N.C., and the European Command in Paris. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Gerry served as commander of the U.S. Ground Level Defense Forces at Guantanamo Bay.

He retired on a Friday and went to work the following Monday at Penn State University, where he spent nearly 20 years before retiring again in 1987. During those years, Gerry served as assistant to the provost, assistant to the president, assistant secretary for the Penn State Board of Trustees, assistant to the dean of health and physical education, and as assistant and associate dean. After retirement, he volunteered and continued working Penn State track meets and sponsored or created a foundation to hold special athletic meets for children with disabilities.

I met the colonel in 2005 with other Iwo Jima veterans when I made the first trip with Military Historical Tours to Iwo Jima for the 60th anniversary of the battle. There I walked along Green Beach with John Britton, where he'd landed with the 28th Marines. He had been graduated from the high school and the university

where I'd taught in Urbana-Champaign, Ill. I met Jack Lucas, the youngest Medal of Honor recipient ever for what he did six days after his 17th birthday. And that's where I met John Butler, current FMDA president and his brother Clint, both Marine veterans whose father, LtCol John Butler, 1st Battalion, 27th Marines commander, was killed in action on Iwo Jima when they were kids. The list goes on – there were three planes of vets and others to attend the ceremony on Iwo Jima.

Walking among these Iwo Jima veterans was sobering, thinking about what they had endured on this island to help secure our way of life.

After the trip to Iwo Jima and Guam, I went back to Honolulu for a post-tour with a much smaller group. Gerry was in that group. Jack Lucas was there, too; Dale Quillen, a Nashville attorney who had been a dog handler in the Third Marine Division on Iwo Jima was there; Frank Wright, a Navy Cross recipient with the 28th Regiment, and his wife were there with others of us who were spending a few extra days to visit and pay tribute to the battle sites and memorials from the Japanese attack on Dec. 7, 1941, and the sacrifices of those who defended the island.

We visited the sunken USS Arizona, a trickle of oil still floating to the water's surface from below where the remains of sailors and Marines were entombed in the bowels of the ship after the attack. We visited the USS Missouri across the way, on which the Japanese had formally surrendered in Toyko Bay and World War II came to an end. And we stood in formation for a ceremony of remembrance at the Punch Bowl Cemetery. At the Marine Corps War Memorial at the entrance of Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, the colonel spoke at the ceremony, recounting the battle for Iwo Jima and remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

After five days around the island, we all headed home. Before we went to the airport, he told me he was soon going to be in Chicago for four days being interviewed by the Pritzker Military Library and invited me to dinner. So I drove up to meet with him and talked about his interviews. (See <http://www.pritzkermilitary.org/explore/library/online-catalog/view/oclc/191733191>.) It's a fascinating record of his service and that of the U.S. Marine Corps.

As we talked more Marine Corps legend and lore, I asked him if he would write a blurb for my soon-to-be-published novella, "Iwo Blasted Again," and handed him a copy of the manuscript.

Continued on page 9

BrigGen Coffman sends thanks after FMDA's 66th reunion



19 September, 2014

Mr. Butler,

I want to personally thank you for the wonderful time I had at the 5th Marine Division Association 65th Reunion in Tampa, Florida. I could not have been more proud to represent the Commandant of the Marine Corps at an event as well orchestrated and executed as this event was. Most importantly, I wanted to thank you for being such a gracious and generous host. Your warm and personal attention made all attending feel welcome. I especially valued and appreciated listening and sharing memories and stories with enthusiasm and pride with the members of the association.

This event served as a valuable opportunity for Marines of all generations to strengthen the shared beliefs and the warm and long-standing professional ties held by our Marines throughout the world. I am excited to hear that the 66th Reunion will take place in Virginia Beach, VA next year and I am certain that the local Marine units will proudly support your event.

If you are ever in the Norfolk area I welcome you to visit my MARFORCOM Headquarters and look forward to seeing you again. Best wishes for continued success to you and your staff.

Semper Fidelis,

DAVID W. COFFMAN
Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South

Mr. John Butler
President, 5th Marine Division Association
11871 Raintree Drive
Temple Terrace, FL 33617

Seeking information about Pfc Edgar O. Anthony

While researching Pfc Edgar O. Anthony of Wyckoff, N.J., I came across (the article about him and others in the Fall/Winter 2011 *Spearhead News*). It was an interesting article. I am writing a book about all of the men from Wyckoff and Midland Park, N.J., who are listed on the memorials in each town. This is my second book of this kind.

Here is a link about my first book: <http://www.northjersey.com/community-news/book-shares-stories-of-veterans-1.1037576>

In reading your editorial, there were several men listed who know Edgar Anthony. I am hoping you could put me in touch with them to get personal information about Anthony. When I write a story about a man, I like to get as much personal information and details as possible. It is this information that makes the man and the story come to life. If you are able to contact the men

who knew Anthony, please tell them I am a Marine, as well. Thank you very much.

– Paul Chepurko
pchepurko@optonline.net

Years later, friends discovered long-ago connection on Iwo

One of my parents' friends for years was in the Air Force. They knew that they were both in the war, but didn't talk about it much, even though they would get together at least every couple of weeks.

One night, Dad's friend said, "So you were in the Marines – where about?"

Dad told him that he was at Iwo.

His friend said to him, "Do you remember the first plane to land there after you guys took it over?"

Dad said he did and that the plane was in bad shape and they didn't think it was going to make it to the air strip. His friend told him that it was really hard keeping that plane up long enough to make it, and he wasn't sure he was going to make it, either. The plane had been hit and was going down when he was told Iwo was taken over and to land there. He said he would have died that day if it wasn't for Iwo being taken over.

It is amazing how small the world really can be. God bless all the soldiers, then and now, for all their sacrifices. And God bless all their families, for all their pain, suffering and worries over their loved ones. Thank you for your service, too. May God bless the USA.

– Kathy Conner
kmconnerkmc@netscape.net

Editor's Note: Conner's father, William P. Brennan Jr., served with the 13th Marine Artillery on Iwo Jima and worked with fellow Iwo vet Don Pero at Rochester Gas & Electric Corp.

Proud daughter wants to stay connected to FMDA

I am the proud daughter of U.S. Marine Joseph A. Scutaro (I-3-26), who served on Iwo Jima during WWII. This is to notify you of my father's passing on Dec. 27, 2012. He was one of the greatest men I knew, in the Greatest Generation.

His accomplishments were incredible, especially considering his lack of education. He retired as an inspector in the New York City Transit Police, but more important, is the love and respect he received from everyone in and outside of the job because of the love and respect he treated everyone with in his life, no matter if they were the president of the U.S. or the stock person in the local deli.

He was honorable and exemplified the Marine Corps values until his last day. He was almost 88 when he passed, but he could remember every detail since landing on Iwo on his 19th birthday, including first and last names of the men he served with. I've been reading his *Spearhead News* issues since he's passed and would like to continue the association with the 5th Marine Division. Please let me know how I can join as an associate.

Thank you for the dedication you have to the veterans of Iwo. I truly believe that generation is the best we'll see.

– Lori Doyle
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Son pays tribute to dad's passing

I regret to inform you that we have lost another Iwo Jima survivor – a Marine ... true to the Corps.

On Jan. 23, 2013, Joseph J. Martin (I-3-28) passed away in his sleep. He was 90 years old, April 26, 1922 - Jan. 23, 2013.

He was on Iwo for the entire campaign. His unit (28th) landed on the beach at the foot of Mt. Suribachi, took Suribachi and then continued to fight along the northwest side of the island before departing from Kitano Point.

Although wounded by shrapnel and suffering from combat fatigue (for which he was awarded two purple hearts), my father always felt very fortunate to have been one of only four men from his platoon to leave Iwo Jima under his own power, i.e. able to walk off from Kitano Point.

There was no doubt that the training he received at Camp Pendleton and Camp Tarawa, combined with the fact that he shot expert, were major factors in his survival, but my dad often said in honest humility that luck was the biggest factor. "How else can you explain why the guy right next to me, with often more training and combat experience, was dead and I wasn't?"

The Marine Corps was the only constant in his life; it remained a core part of his identity throughout his life. I know the saying, "Once a Marine, always a Marine" is a motto of the Corps and is sometimes perceived as a cliché outside the Corps, but as a son of a Marine – an Iwo Jima Marine – I can attest that the older my father became, the more he returned to the Corps.

In his later years, he attended several of the 5th Marine reunions, which he thoroughly enjoyed. When flying back from a reunion, attending a civic event or seeing a recent movie about Iwo Jima, he was often embarrassed by the attention he received because of his association with the battle of Iwo Jima. However, he never shied away from answering people's questions or sharing a story, always pointing out that he was lucky and that the real heroes are the ones that didn't come home.

Now he has come full circle and is with all of the Marine Corps brethren that have gone before him. All of them are at peace ... a heavenly peace. For God knows, all of them have already served their time in hell ... a hell called Iwo Jima.

Semper Fi, Dad.

– Chris Martin
martincr@frontier.com

Another story of 5 brothers' WWII service

We recently read the Winter 2013-2014 *Spearhead News* that featured a story about A.J. Shelley, an Iwo Marine and his six brothers who served in WWII. What a heart-warming story!

Our family from Liberty, N.Y., had five brothers serve in WWII, as well:

- Ben Gerow, retired career Army, spent time throughout Europe and at the Nuremburg Trails as Provost Marshall;
- William Gerow was stationed throughout his service at Smyrna Army Air Field in Tennessee as a pilot trainer;
- Robert Gerow served with the Army Timberwolves in Europe and the Battle of the Bulge and received the Bronze Star;
- Irving Gerow served in the Army as an engineer in China, Burma and India; and

Continued on page 6

OZMENT

Continued from page 1

team landed with Easy Co. on D-Day in the sixth wave on Iwo Jima's Green Beach, just next to Mt. Suribachi.

My time on Iwo was cut short, as I was wounded after being on the island for only about 30 minutes. I was evacuated late in the evening on D-plus-1 and was in hospitals on Saipan and Honolulu until I rejoined my unit after it returned to Camp Tarawa on Hawaii from Iwo Jima.

I served in the Occupation of Japan from Sept. 22, 1945, to March 16, 1946, after which I returned to the U.S. where I was discharged on April 13, 1946.

After returning home, I graduated from the University of Georgia with a B.A. degree and a major in accounting. I spent 37 years with Sears Roebuck & Co. as a controller and retired in 1987.

After two years of retirement, I went with a company that had several unique products they were trying to get the military to buy. The products were a multi-purpose shelter, sleeping bag and poncho. I was successful in obtaining contracts with the Marine Corps and Army.

My wife, Leilani, was born in Hawaii about 15 miles from our Camp Tarawa, and we met years later in Virginia while we both were working for Sears. She attended San Francisco State College. She is a beekeeper, a master gardener, an active member of a garden club, an avid tennis player, a volunteer at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research Center and enjoys our two grandchildren who live locally.

We are excited to have the Fifth Marine Division Association come to Virginia Beach, Va.; and, because there is so much to do here, we hope you will plan on extending your stay. The hotel will honor the reduced room rates for three days prior to, and following, the reunion dates. Some of the sites in which you might be interested include the USS Wisconsin and Nauticus (Hampton Roads Naval Museum), MacArthur Memorial, Spirit of Norfolk (harbor and Naval Station cruise), Virginia Aquarium, Jamestown Festival Park, Yorktown Victory Center and Colonial Williamsburg.

I have scheduled an outing to the largest privately owned museum of WWI and WWII workable airplanes. You may enjoy looking at the website for this museum at www.MilitaryAviationMuseum.org.

I have been a member of FMDA since 1994 and have attended Association reunions since. I have previously served, and continue to serve, as the Associa-

tion's Sgt at Arms. I am also a member of the Iwo Jima Association of America (IJAA), and frequently attend its annual symposium in Washington, D.C., every February.

I am proud to serve as your chairman for the 66th Reunion, and Leilani and I will do the very best to make this reunion a special event for all who attend.

LETTERS

Continued from page 5

- Henry L. Gerow, the 16th of 16 children of Ben and Angeline Gerow, served in the Fifth Marine Division, "C" Company Engineers, on Iwo Jima – where he received the Purple Heart – and in Nagasaki, Japan.

All five sons returned from the war and went on to marry, raise families and pursue their business careers. Ben and Irving died several years ago; Robert and William died during this past year. Henry, 90, still lives with his wife, Louise, in Winter Park, Fla.

In October 2009, the then-three surviving sons: Robert, Williams and Henry (Ben and Irving posthumously) were honored by their family at the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C., for their service. All five brothers are charter members of the memorial. The family and guests of honor then visited the gravesites of other family members (one of them was Ben Gerow) in Arlington Cemetery. They were escorted throughout the day by Leesburg, Va., VFW Bob Kemner, Adjunct, and VFW members.

– Nancy Gerow Morgan
Winter Park, FL

Newsletter by email is preferable

I just returned from a week at FLETC Charleston, and wanted to respond to your request about receiving *The Spearhead* via USPS, link to website or via email. I like receiving the newsletter via email and would also be happy viewing it by a link to the web. It seems more cost effective to receive it this way. I am sure some prefer to receive it by mail, and have no issue with that.

Thank you for giving me a chance to sound off. I also wanted to thank you for your kind words in this issue. Please let me know if I can assist in any way. I want to be a productive member of this organization.

– Mark Atchley
atch105@sbcglobal.net



FINAL MUSTER

("Roll Call of the Reef")



ARDIS, Cleveland E. C-1-26 2012	KREBS, Alcuin H. E-2-26 11/13/2013
BARNETT, Dennis E. H-2-26 (Vietnam) 6/21/2013	LEMAN, Craig B. H-3-26 7/13/2014
BEACH, Johnnie M. M-4-13 7/22/2014	LYNN, Carl P, C-1-27 6/4/2014
BERKEY, Willard 5TH SERV 1992	MARENGO, Paul F-2-26 7/3/2012
BOATRIGHT, Jesse E. E-2-28 12/13/2012	MARENNA, Vincent 5TH ENGR 11/5/2012
BROWN, John L. 5TH MED 11/5/2012	MARTIN, Joseph J. I-3-28 1/23/2013
BUNDY, Harvey F-2-26 10/27/2013	MAYBERRY, Donald J. D-2-27 4/9/2013
CULROSS, Eldon E-2-26 1/3/2014	McLAUGHLIN JR., Howard N. 5TH ENGR 10/31/2012
CURLEY, John S. "Jack" 11TH AMPH 10/30/2003	MELVIN, Robert E. HQ-1-26 4/1/2013
CURRAN, William "Bill" K-4-13 8/21/2014	MORELAND, Lester E. 26TH MAR 6/30/2014
De LADURANTAYE, Robert "Bob" F-2-13 2/27/2013	NAUGHTON, James B. H-3-28 12/31/2013
DUNCAN, Melvin C. E-2-28 6/17/2014	PAGAC, Joseph C. H-3-26 11/8/2012
DUNIVAN, Henry S. 5TH TANK 6/3/2014	ROE, Arthur D. E-2-27 10/26/2014
FABRICATORE, Alex 5TH JASCO 4/24/2014	ROSALES, Charles F-2-26 3/8/2014
FINNEY, Lloyd A. L-4-13 4/20/2011	RUSSELL, COL Gerald HQ-1-27 2/24/2014
GALLO, S. Peter D-2-28 5/14/2014	SCUTARO, Joseph A. I-3-26 12/27/2012
GARRISON, B.G. 5TH PION 1/3/2013	SHAY, Eugene HQ-1-27 8/22/2014
GENTRY, Elvin 5TH JASCO 2/2013	SMALLEY, Robert D. H&S-4-13 6/20/2012
GIETZEN, Charles H. D-2-13 Unknown	SMITH, William J. C-1-28 4/12/2012
GOTT, E.L. "Bud" A-1-28 6/26/2011	SPONABLE, Robert B-5TH MED-27 10/24/2010
GRIFFITH, James H. 5TH ENGR 6/3/2013	TATUM, Charles W. "Chuck" B-1-27 6/22/2014
HARWARD, Theron 27TH MAR 10/5/2014	THAMES, Jesse E. A-1-26 11/17/2013
HENDRICKS, James H. 5TH JASCO 6/15/2012	WELLS, Greeley 2-28 9/22/2014
HORA, Joseph E. HS-13 4/17/2013	YOWELL, William A. H-3-13 8/28/2014
KINSEY JR., David B. G-3-13 6/3/2014	



Send Final Muster notices (including name, unit and date of death) by email to talespress@talespress.com, by USPS to Association Secretary Ray Elliott, 2609 N. High Cross Rd., Urbana, IL 61802, or by calling 217-384-5820.

Iwo vets invited to join in Houston commemoration

The Marine Corps Coordinating Council of the greater Houston-Galveston area will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of the landing on Iwo Jima. The celebration will take place on the Battleship USS Texas on Feb. 22, 2015. Plans are to honor all living veterans of the battle. A memorial service will be held to remember both those who gave their all during the battle and those who returned but have since passed away. All Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, Army and Marines who participated

in the battle and operations in support of the invasion are included. For more information or to register, please contact Steve Waldner at (281) 992-4419 or email Wes.Waldner@gmail.com.

The battleship *Texas* is also a veteran of the battle, firing in support of the landing and combat operations ashore. The *Texas* is handicap-accessible, and there will be volunteers to assist those who need assistance boarding and moving about the ship.

Association updates from the secretary

As you've heard, read or experienced first-hand in Tampa, the 65th annual reunion was a rousing success. Hats off to President John Butler and all those who helped by volunteering or contributing. John is staying on as president; Kathy Painton as vice president; Warren Musch is stepping down as treasurer and Doug Meny is serving in that position; Bruce Hammond, son of Ivan Hammond, succeeds his father on the board of trustees; and Bonnie Arnold-Haynes, widow of the late MajGen Fred Haynes, succeeds Warren Musch.

Breaking with tradition that a new president hosts the reunion the following year, Monroe Ozment (HQ-2-28) is hosting the 66th annual association reunion in 2015—the 70th anniversary of the Iwo Jima Campaign—Sept. 10-13 in Virginia Beach, Va.

Kathy Painton is still working on the possibility of a 5th Marine Division Museum on the Big Island of Hawai'i to keep the memory of the division alive where it trained for Iwo Jima and returned to prepare for the Invasion of Japan.

For the latter initiative, members of the division and family members are asked to identify items that

could reside in the museum when it gets established. For some time, I have been collecting past issues of *The Spearhead News* for the archives and a possible compilation of the best of the newsletter for publication in a book. So far, I have copies back into the 1960s, but hope to get copies back to the beginning of the association in 1949.

Anyone having back issues to contribute, please send them to me at 2609 N. High Cross Rd., Urbana, IL 61802-9643. And please let Kathy Painton or me know about any material you think might be good for the museum.

On another issue, the members have voted to have only two issues of *Spearhead* published each year. To further save on publication costs, it has been suggested that the newsletter be sent by email. I already do that for some members, and collected more requests at the reunion. Doing so will reduce the number of printed copies substantially and decrease printing and postage expenses, as well.

To receive an electronic version of *Spearhead News* in full color by email, instead of a printed black-and-white copy in your mailbox, please do the following:

1. Email the request to talespress@talespress.com.
2. Please be sure to include: 1) your name; 2) email address; 3) mailing address; and 4) phone number. This will help match your request to your record in the FMDA database.

(Note: With this option, you will receive email reminders about your membership renewal and updates about Association news periodically. Members will continue to receive one issue after their membership has expired, and families will continue to receive one issue after a member has passed away and the name is listed in Final Muster.)

Those who wish to continue receiving the printed copy do not need to take any action. *Spearhead News* issues published since I started editing the newsletter in Spring 2008 are archived at www.talespress.com.

Contributions to the Fifth Marine Division Association for continued operation may be sent to John Butler, President, FMDA, 11871 Raintree Dr., Temple Terrace, FL 33617, or email butler813@verizon.net.

Contributions and inquiries about the museum may be sent to Kathleen Painton, Secretary, Camp Tarawa Foundation, P.O. Box 385551, Waikoloa, HI 96738, or email kathypainton@hotmail.com.

– Ray Elliott, Secretary

5TH MAR DIV MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

FMDA life member and Korean War veteran Stan Blake has an online eBay store called "SEMPERFIENTERPRISES" that includes several 5th Marine Division/Iwo Jima Survivor Polo/golf shirts for sale in a variety of colors and sizes. There are also other USMC-related items available.

Here are the eBay ID numbers for the shirts:

281324250856
271471772364
271472774234
281324254923
271472777910
281324257494

No tax, no charge for packing or handling. Please inquire. Payments by cash, check or money order made payable to Stan Blake.

STAN BLAKE, "THE SHIP'S STORE"
P.O. BOX 689, BEAR, DE 19701-0689
EMAIL: SEMPFIEN@AOL.COM
PHONE: 302-737-3868

THE EDITOR'S DESK

Continued from page 3

He said he would and said, "You seem to like the Marine Corps pretty well. Why didn't you stay in?"

"They wouldn't let me have long hair and a beard," I said, half-seriously.

"You like that?" Gerry asked and laughed lightly.

For the blurb, he graciously wrote that I "had produced a unique portrayal of two vital aspects of what many combat veterans experience in their lifetime. He presents a vivid, very accurate, graphically true depiction of the horrors the individual encounters and endures in battle. For the remainder of their lives, most veterans extend great effort to blot out the memories of their gruesome war experiences. To some degree, they succeed. But, inevitably, it seems that in their later years, the long-dormant, suppressed memories return with surprising, haunting clarity."

His perspective of the years following combat rings true for many veterans.

I saw the colonel several other times at Combat Veterans of Iwo Jima (later the Iwo Jima Association of America) symposia and banquets, stopped by to see him once in College Station, Pa., and talked with him on the

phone now and then. He was a wealth of information, kind, considerate and always carried himself with the dignity and respect befitting a man of his stature.

When he was about recovered from a broken pelvis last year and was taking calls, I heard from somebody looking for the oldest living Iwo Jima veteran. So I called Gerry to see how things were going and to ask him if he might know who that would be. It was the last day of April, right before his May 1 birthday.

He laughed when I asked him and said, "I don't know. I'll be 97 tomorrow. If I live until tomorrow, I may be the oldest."

When he died on Feb. 24, 2014, he may not have been the oldest, but he was one of the two last living battalion commanders from the battle for Iwo Jima. The other one, Maj Sheldon Scales from the 26th Marines, died a couple of months later. Gerry was laid to rest in Arlington Cemetery on July 16 with full military honors.

"It was a magnificent send-off," his daughter Maurleen said.

No doubt it was. Col Gerald Russell was a Marine, through-and-through, and a man of honor who led by example – one we would all do well to emulate.

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**WHILE
SUPPLIES
LAST!**



Members of the Fifth Marine Division Association attend the 65th reunion last September in Tampa, Fla. A total of 24 Iwo vets made the trip to honor the memory of those who died and to pass on the stories of valor and survival to new generations (Shiree Annette Photography)

65 years of sharing, remembering

By Morey Butler

Did I type 65th reunion? Folks, that's a lot of years. Can you imagine what all those get-togethers have meant to the Marines that fate had blessed so long ago. Sharing their Iwo experiences helped dull the pangs of survivor guilt and tempered the horrors they endured. Banding together to honor the memory and sacrifice of their brothers has been a steady drumbeat for a long, long time.

Many have gone on to their final reward and are on eternal guard duty, but almost miraculously, there are a few good Iwo Marines still able to answer muster. Twenty-four, including a code talker, became the heart and soul of this reunion.

Some entered the hotel lobby entirely on their own power with a solid and purposeful stride. Some needed the support of a cane or a rollater. In each and every case there was either a wife, son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, or just a caring friend there to help

when necessary. From my perspective, the younger folks were hard-pressed to keep pace with these tough old Marines, especially after the Iwo vets had visited the wine and beer trough in the hospitality room. It was rumored (known to a dead true fact) that a Marine of distinct Irish ancestry went AWOL from the Florida Aquarium and led a fire team-sized element to a watering hole named after owls where they serve cold beer and chicken wings. When questioned about this, he just smiled.

Joining the Iwo Marines, and their entourages, were family members of Marines who didn't come home from Iwo. Coming to quick memory is the story of an 11-year-old girl who intercepts the telegram that reports the death of her brother. She and her daughter, a retired medical doctor, are in attendance. The daughter of a Marine, killed on the beachhead, when she was just an infant, attended her first reunion, the 61st in Biloxi, Miss. She has been to every reunion since then and has

morphed from an attendee to a leadership role that will help perpetuate the honor and sacrifice of Iwo Jima. The individual who organized the reunion is also a family member of a fallen Iwo Marine.

Stepping up to the plate and planning and executing one of these events is one heck of a chore. I felt more than sorry for the man with the bat in his hand. I had a piece of what it's like with the 61st reunion and glad it wasn't me again. By matter of circumstance, I couldn't distance myself far enough away from this individual to feel totally safe from responsibility and sometimes the criticism that follows these events. To be honest I thought my big brother, although his athleticism has waned something awful in recent years, might be able to get a pretty solid hit and do these old Iwo Marines proud. Doggone if he didn't hit a home run and knock it out of the park.

He really did, but just like Iwo, it was a team effort. It started with his better half and continued with the personable and professional touch of everyone involved from the hotel staff to the sites visited. I was particularly moved observing the mutual respect between the Iwo vets and the young Marines of the Fourth Amphib Bn. Iwo Marines hold the high ground in the history of fighting Jarheads. To the young Marine it was wow, wow and wow. To the old Marine, it was the thought that these young kids really, really know their stuff and

are so highly motivated. The old Marines left with a good warm fuzzy in their chests, and the young Marines went back to work with renewed sense of pride in their Marine Corps.

Each site visited had its special appeal and most accommodating hosts. Who will ever forget the vivacious and bubbly personality of our Hard Rock Casino host? Her smile could melt an iron nugget and helped lessen the pain of losing a few dollars. That free lunch more than compensated for what the machines stole and without doubt was one of the best buffet spreads found anywhere.

The trip to the Armed Forces Museum was particularly noteworthy for several reasons. It is a private museum organized and funded by one heck of a patriotic individual and former Marine. The artifacts are comparable to any military museum anywhere. They are professionally and accurately displayed and done in such a manner that one feels almost incorporated into the event depicted. I am a member of the Armed Forces Museum located in New Orleans and have been there numerous times. I prefer the one in Tampa. When we arrived to begin our tour, we were met by 20 or so members of the local Marine Corps League. I was thoroughly impressed with the greeting given to our Iwo Marines, a

Continued on page 14



Local Marine Corps League members salute arriving reunion attendees at the Armed Forces History Museum. (Kathy Weed Photo)



Iwo veteran and former FMDA treasurer and trustee Warren Musch (HQ-3-28) of Jacksonville, Ill., signs a book about Iwo Jima for a reunion attendee.

(Shiree Annette Photography)

President's post-reunion report

By John Butler

I have to admit the 65th reunion was much work, but thanks to so many who pitched in, it was the success I had hoped for. I have a long list of folks and organizations to thank.

Foremost is my wife, Kath, who edited the Reunion Journal and kept me focused on the many tasks prior to the event. Then, there are those from our Association who worked so hard from the moment they arrived to make sure everything was going well at the event registration desk, the hospitality room, and with the hotel airport shuttle service. Kathy Painton, and my brother, Morey, rolled up their sleeves and made sure the train was running from the moment they arrived. Ray Elliott stepped up to the plate and went to the airport when it was discovered that there was some confusion with the hotel shuttle pick-up locations for arriving attendees.

Hiccups happen, but they are usually resolved by hands-on attention, which we had in spades. Others stepped up also during the event. I can never forget the help Rita Christiansen gave me in sorting out the meal selection counts I needed to give the hotel staff for our final banquet.

Other great support came from the Tampa Bay community, most importantly the Fourth Amphib Battalion, which provided our Color Guard and the excellent update on its mission and equipment used in today's wars.

We were given a warm welcome by the Florida Aquarium and the American Victory ship. The Florida Aquarium also added a boat ride in Tampa Bay to see wild dolphins. We did not see dolphins, but we did have a great boat ride and tour of Tampa's busy port.

Then there was the fabulous time we had at Seminole Hard Rock Café Casino. The gratis bus ride and the comped buffet meal at the Fresh Harvest Café, along with the gifts and welcome we received were hard to top anywhere.

Then there was the really great reception and visit to the Armed Forces History Museum. While I had made preliminary arrangements for this activity, Doug Meny sealed the deal with John Piazza, the museum director. We also had support from Bill Cona with the Tampa Bay Marine Corps League. The visit to the museum was a winner by every measure.

Finally, immense thanks to the folks from Valls, the

steamship agency that I do some part-time work for. If you enjoyed the hospitality room, these were the folks who made it happen. Jay and his sister, Chrissy Periano; and their ship supply contractor, Brian Goss, kept us well stocked with beverages and food throughout. Who can forget their olive oil – whose sales, along with the sale of leftover Jarhead wine, were donated to the reunion fund.

They also contributed four half-page ads to our reunion journal. Their contribution to the reunion was immeasurable.

Finally, we had a great turnout of 112 for the banquet and a superb speech from MajGen Jarvis Lynch, USMC (Ret.). The commandant's representative, Brig-Gen David Coffman, delivered a spot-on message and then took time to visit with all of us at the hospitality room after the banquet.

And let's not forget that we once again saw our Division's colors and streamers. They will forever be with us whenever our Colors are presented or posted.

On the Monday following the reunion, I stopped by the hotel to thank the staff, including the waitresses in the hotel restaurant. All the staff, to a person, told me the Fifth Marine Division Association was the best and nicest group of folks they ever hosted. That capped my already-euphoric feeling about the reunion's outcome.

Now, on to the future

The Fifth Marine Division Association will have a new look and a new direction in 2015 and beyond. Primarily, the legacy families, including myself, are assuming leadership roles with the goal of maintaining the Association as long as possible and establishing in perpetuity the division's legacy in Marine Corps and national history.

Indeed, the "Bar on the Beach" monument dedicated in 2011 at the Marine Corps Heritage Center was a major step in this direction. This monument dedicated to the 5th Marine Division with Gen Rockey's inscribed words will be there forever.

Kathy Painton, our vice president who lives on the big island, has taken on the task of establishing a 5th Marine Division museum in an old Quonset hut slop chute that is still standing on Parker Ranch property. This project, or something similar that contributes to our legacy in perpetuity, should be funded.



ABOVE: MajGen Jarvis Lynch, USMC (Ret.), gave the keynote address at the Fifth Marine Division Association banquet on Saturday night and emphasized that “the Fifth Marine Division at Iwo has gone down in history as a marvelous example for those who follow.”



RIGHT: Marine veteran Don Basilone, fourth from right and brother of Marine icon John Basilone, was a guest of honor at the banquet. Here he is pictured with the commandant’s representative, BrigGen David Coffman, and his aide, Capt George Steinfels, and members of the Marine Color Guard.

(Shiree Annette Photography)

To preserve our funds for these types of projects, we are going to shorten the reunion dates to a more affordable and manageable event. The old way of appointing a new president annually who produces a five-day reunion is no longer possible. For 2015, we are appointing Monroe Ozment, since he volunteered, as the reunion chairman for a reunion in Virginia Beach, Va., where he lives.

Monroe will be assisted by his wife, Leilani, and Armed Forces Reunions for much of the work and heavy-lifting required. The reunion will run from Thursday through Saturday, and will include one excellent excursion day, a memorial service, a banquet, adequate time for a board and general meeting, and a closing banquet. A well-stocked hospitality room will be available throughout the reunion. Monroe has the dates and tentative reunion schedule available:

10-13 September 2015

Thurs., Sept. 10: Arrival and check-in; hospitality room opens at noon

Fri., Sept. 11: Tour to Aviation Museum

Sat., Sept. 12: Memorial Service; Board and General Meeting; Banquet

Sun., Sept. 13: Farewell and check-out

Notes: 1) Armed Forces Reunion will handle registra-

tions; 2) the hospitality room will open at noon Sept. 10 and close at 2400 Sept. 12; 3) attendees wishing to extend their visit can stay at the hotel up to three days on each side of the reunion dates at the reunion hotel price of \$99 per night, plus taxes; and 4) the hotel provides complimentary continental breakfast and shuttle service from airport.

We are also going to cut down the number of *Spearheads* to two issues a year. The Association is blessed to have Ray Elliott as our editor and secretary. The cost to produce the *Spearhead* has continued to rise and needs to be reduced, as does the pressure on Ray.

The Board of Trustees will see new and younger faces and a new set of bylaws needs to be drafted, reviewed and approved. The Ladies Auxiliary funds raised at the reunions will now go into the general fund. Auxiliary members voted to do this at the Tampa reunion, and Penny Pauletto passed all the earnings into the general fund.

Warren Musch will transfer the Association’s funds now held in his hometown bank to the 5th Marine Division Association account with Wells Fargo Bank. This is an account I established with Wells Fargo to fund the reunion and pay the local bills. I am pleased to report I managed to wind up with a surplus. Doug Meny, our

Continued on page 14

REUNION RECAP

Continued from page 11

hand salute by all League members, and held until the last man entered the facility.

R&R has always been an important aspect of military operations, and so it was at this reunion. The hospitality room was the comfort den, offering outstanding respite from the day's activities. Those with a thirst for grape squeezings or barley and hops went without want. Some of the other mundane liquids, like carbonated drinks and water, were also available. Sandwiches and pizza were readily consumed throughout the evening hours. These amenities laid the foundation for truly memorable and pleasurable relationships to be renewed or begun anew. Camaraderie ran rampant and was very healthy.

The crowning event to the reunion – the banquet – was truly the cherry on the banana float. It came off with same aplomb as everything else, damn near perfect. The master of ceremonies kept activities on schedule, and the guest speakers were brief and precise in their messages. We were informed that combat on Iwo remains the yardstick by which all Marines measure themselves when the going gets tough. That is one hell of a tribute to these great Marines of long ago. Their grit will forever be the standard of Marines today, tomorrow and in the future. Carl DeHaven, one of those tough old Marines, played the Marine Corps Hymn on his harmonica; and as we sang, my thoughts went to the Iwo vets who wanted to be here, but for health reasons couldn't make it.

Semper Fi.



Iwo veteran Carl DeHaven (5THMT) of League City, Texas, looks through a history of the Fifth Marine Division in World War II. During the banquet Saturday night, he played the *Marine Corps Hymn* on the harmonica for guests.

(Photo by Shiree Annette Photography)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Continued from page 13

newly appointed and elected treasurer who lives in the Tampa Bay area, will manage the fund. Doug, who is a corporate finance officer, will also endeavor to have the Association's 501(c)4 status changed to 501(c)3, which allows donors to deduct contributions made to the Association. This will enhance the Association's capacity to raise funds.

No one likes change, but change we must in order to face the realities of a dwindling and aging Iwo Jima veteran base, which has sustained this organization for so many years.

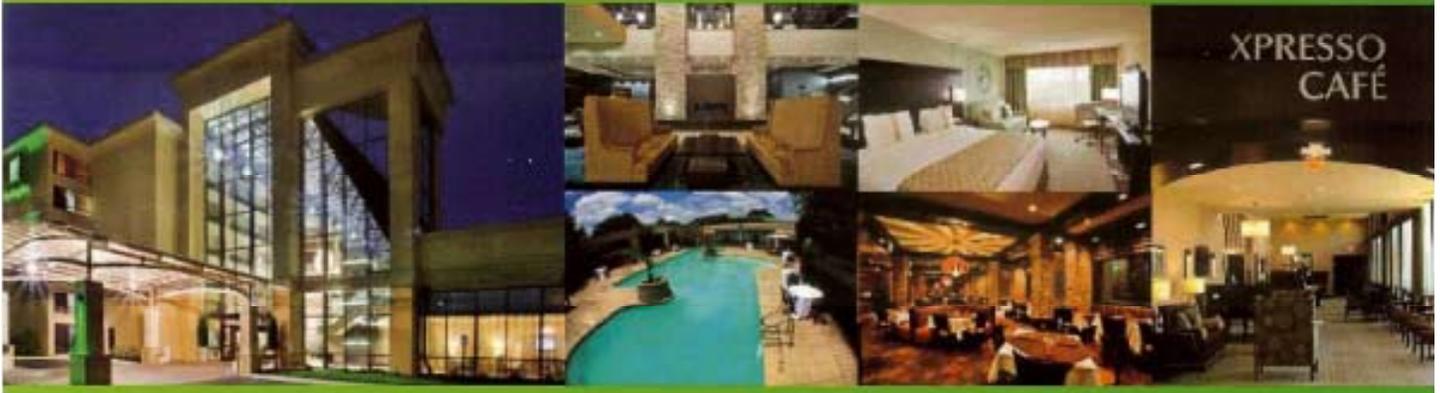
We can do it, and we will.

Additional memorial planned for 40 Latino MOH recipients

Ruth Lansford, widow of the late William "Bill" Lansford, a Latino Marine who served with B-2-27 on Iwo Jima, says she and others still hope to add this memorial (at right), along with the memorial wall honoring all Medal of Honor recipients, dedicated in 2009, to pay tribute to the award's 40 Latino recipients, the largest single ethnic group in proportion to the number who served. For more information about the memorial, email lansford.ruth@gmail.com.

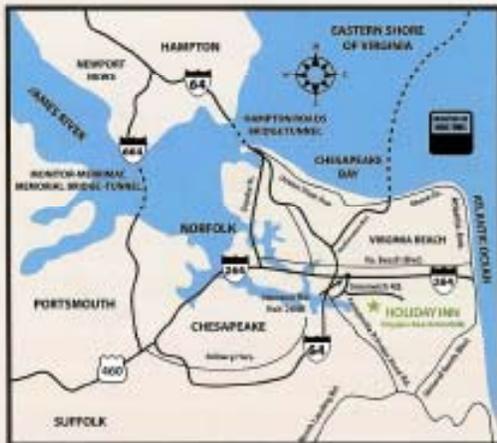


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- Complimentary newspapers delivered to IHG Rewards Members

Dining & Entertainment

- Ashley's Bistro features American cuisine with enticing fare, which is sure to satisfy your every craving for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Ashley's Lounge encourages relaxation, conversation and a pleasant start to every evening
- Xpresso Café - say "Good Morning" to the aroma of our specialty coffees, homemade pastries and bagels. The Café features unique group or intimate seating with flat screen TVs and complimentary internet connection
- Blu Bar in the hotel lobby, with its contemporary atmosphere, serves libations and delectable menu items that are sure to enhance a relaxing evening
- In-Room Dining - Enjoy our specialties delivered to the comfort and privacy of your guest room or suite



Corpsmen – then and now

My dad, Fio Lopardo, was the second company commander of H-3-28 on Iwo Jima. I only saw him cry twice. The first time was when we were watching a documentary on the battle that pictured the 5th Division cemetery. The other time was when he was telling me about the courage of the corpsmen on Iwo, whom he called “The Bravest of the Brave.”

Dad recounted late in the battle, a corpsman crawled out from their foxholes under fire to aid a wounded Marine: “Just as he got to him and started to pull him back, he got hit. He got up again, and pulled the Marine closer to us, but got hit again. The third time he got up, he was killed. I wrote him up for the Medal of Honor, but they *only* gave him a Silver Star. I guess by that point in the battle it was just too common.”

A few weeks earlier, another corpsman in the same company, Jack “Arkie” Williams, was killed and awarded the Medal of Honor for doing the same thing.

Several years ago, I attended a dinner celebrating the Marine Corps birthday. John Lyttle, also a member of H-3-28, stood up to give a toast and share his story. He told of being hit by a sniper in Bloody Gorge, and a corpsman darted out under fire, dodging from rock to rock, eventually reaching him and keeping him alive. John wasn’t able to talk long. He got choked up and had to sit down.

Recently, I met “Kalin,” a 27-year-old corpsman who has served three tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. Kalin’s eyes lit up with I asked him if he’d like to meet Leo Tuck, an Iwo Jima corpsman. Leo landed on Red Beach in the early waves on Feb. 19 and made it through the

entire battle with the 27th Marines. Kalin said, “Oh yes. That would really mean a lot to me. They are our heroes.”

We met for dinner, and Kalin gave Leo a corpsman challenge coin. Leo gave Kalin a vial of sand from Iwo. I just sat and listened as an older brother and younger brother talked about their common bond. The both said they went through combat, “for their buddies.” Both then and now, the Marines call them “Doc” and they never bought their own drinks.

They talked about medical equipment they carried into battle, and what they could, and could not do, to treat wounds. Kalin said, “I wish you had in your bag what I carry now. It could have saved so many more Marines.” Leo talked about the little bottles of brandy the corpsmen carried on Iwo, “But they didn’t last very long. The whole battle was a fog of endless casualties, one after the other.” Kalin talked about staying awake continuously for three days with a small squad of Marines on an isolated mountain top in Afghanistan, fighting to keep alive a Marine who lost both legs to a land mine. “I kept telling him to stay with me, not to give up. Never give up. And he made it. We still keep in touch today.”

Leo doesn’t move as fast now as he did on Iwo, and Kalin gently, almost reverently, escorted him back to his car. They both said it meant a lot to meet each other, and talk about the old and the new. Some things have not changed in 70 years, and I understand why strong men sometimes cry.

– Steve Lopardo
son of 1stLt Fiorenzo Lopardo, H-3-28

Wall of Honor

The Eugene A. Obregon Medal of Honor Memorial Monument, named for a Korean War Marine MOH recipient and initiated by the late William “Bill” Lansford (B-2-27), sits at the corner of Los Angeles and Alameda Streets in Los Angeles and contains the names of all recipients through 2009 since the award’s creation by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862.



Dog Company remembers Iwo Jima

Cpl Giles Weber wrote the poem below on a convoy back to Hawaii on March 27, 1945. This is from a collection of excerpts compiled by Cheryl Mach in honor of her father, Cpl Edd Mach, and his fellow Marines who fought on Iwo Jima as members of Dog Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Regiment, 5th Marine Division.

"IN MEMORIAM"

AWED AND REVERED WE GAZE BACK TO IWO,
WITH PROFOUND VENERATION FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND,
BUDDIES WE LONG HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO KNOW,
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES TO HELP SAVE MANKIND.

LET US ALL HERE STOP AND OFFER A PRAYER,
WE KNOW THEIR DEATHS WERE NOT IN VAIN,
NO DANGER OR PERIL DID THEY BEWARE,
LOOK AT THE SAND, COVERED WITH STAIN.

THE STAIN OF BLOOD, THE WHITE WOODEN CROSSES,
THEY NEVER QUESTIONED THE VALUE OF IWO,
THEIR RESTING GROUNDS ENUMERATE OUR LOSSES,
THE LURID REVELATION OF WOE.

PROGRESS OF A YARD COST THE LIFE OF A MARINE,
HIS COMRADES CONTINUED TO ADVANCE,
ARTILLARY, MACHINE GUNS, MORTARS WERE SEEN,
THE ENEMY WAS TAKING NO CHANCE.

DEFEAT WAS INEVITABLE, VICTORY WAS NEAR,
THE JAPANESE FORTRESS WOULD BE SEIZED,
FROM HELL'S ACRE INTO GOD'S ACRE MANY DISAPPEAR,
HEROICALLY THEY DIED, THE ALMIGHTY WAS PLEASED.

BLOOD AND SAND — OH! HOW CAN WE FORGET,
WE'LL REMEMBER THEM ETERNALLY BY PRAYER
MT. SURIBACHI — THE DESCENDING SUN SILHOUETTES,
WITH TEARFUL EYES, TOWARDS HEAVEN WE STARE

G. H. Weber
MARCH 27 '45
11 9

SAVE THE DATE

March 4-8, 2015



70th Commemoration of the Battle on Iwo Jima Camp Pendleton, CA

Veterans of the 3rd, 4th, 5th Marine Division and Support Units of Navy, Coast Guard and Army, their families and friends and the public are cordially invited. This reunion continues to be the largest gathering of Iwo Jima veterans in the country.

In honor of the 70th anniversary, special events will be held at MCRD and Camp Pendleton.

Memorial Service and Banquet will be held Saturday night.

For more details, visit www.iwojimareunion.com

****Downloadable registration forms will be available online in November****

(Invited guest speaker is Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Commandant of the Marine Corps.)

To receive a registration packet by mail, contact Gail Chatfield at gchatsan@gmail.com or (858) 205-2600

King's new book a page-turner

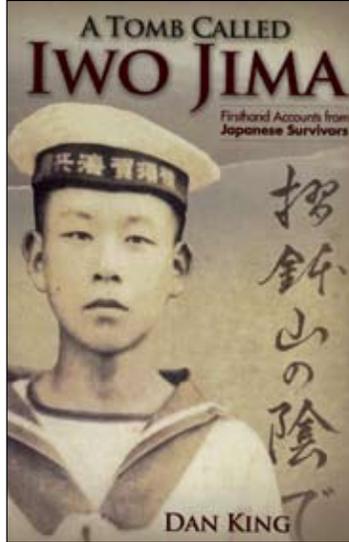
Dan King has created a page turner with "A Tomb Called Iwo Jima." I read the entire book in one sitting.

What can better ensure the accuracy and authenticity of a Japanese account of Iwo Jima than first-person interviews with veterans of the battle? Dan is fluent in Japanese by virtue of education and employment (Toyota Japan). Thus, he could conduct the interviews personally and in depth, while avoiding the potential errors introduced by an interpreter.

What emerges is a poignant account of combat for what it is – a raw, life-or-death, anything-goes, 24/7 struggle with self-preservation first and foremost in the minds of the participants. Although Adm Nimitz was referring to the U.S. veterans of the battle when he made his famous post-battle observation, his words could have applied equally to the Japanese defenders: "Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue."

I am a Marine Corps officer who, just prior to re-

tirement, spent a week on Iwo Jima as the guest of the Japan Self Defense Forces. Talk about irony! Having visited many of the locations described by the veterans in their interviews and having experienced the extreme heat and claustrophobia of the tunnels and caves along with the sulfur stench, I can imagine the hell the Japanese defenders experienced when adding the cacophony of Naval gunfire, tanks, artillery, bazookas, mortars, machine guns, small arms fire, hand grenades, and the ultimate terror weapon – flame-throwers.



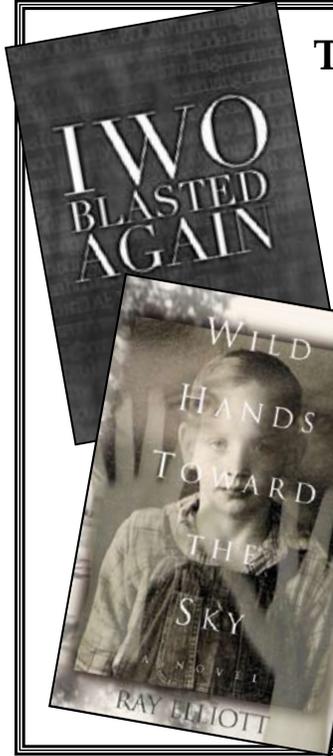
Dan's interviewees describe it all, including the sleep deprivation, starvation and thirst, which added to the instant lethal opportunities. His book is an essential complement to the accounts that have been written from the Marines' perspective.

The movie, "Letters from Iwo Jima," was a good start. But if you want "the rest of the story" in its purest form,

"A Tomb Called Iwo Jima" is a must-buy.

- LtCol Gary Meyers, USMC (Ret.)

*Also by the author: "The Last Zero Fighter," firsthand accounts from Japanese WWII pilots, available on Amazon.com and Kindle. Signed copies of either book are available directly from the author for \$30 (includes \$5 for priority mail, tracking and insurance).
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