

# STRIKING SIXTH

## 1st Provisional Marine Brigade Newsletter



Vol. 40, No. 3

[www.sixthmarinedivision.com](http://www.sixthmarinedivision.com)

Fall 2015



## Columbus Discovers — and Welcomes — Sixth Marine Division Association

Thanks to the hard work and planning of hosts Barb and Harry McKnight (pictured above), our veterans got plenty of press — both print and TV — during the reunion in August. On a bus tour of the city, our group was welcomed to the German Village by the Columbus Police and Fire Pipes and Drums. Then inside the Meeting Haus, we were met by Ohio Senator Jim Hughes and Rick Isbell, the City of Columbus Veteran's Coordinator, who presented proclamations of appreciation from the Ohio Sen-

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Neal McCallum, Pauline Roberts, Gregg Woodhouse, Bob McGowan, Pfuong Riles, Carroll McGowan, Lisa Benedetti, Alio Benedetti, Paul Licurs, Brian Licurs, Jim McAfee, Sam Petriello, George McAfee, Tiffany Woodhouse, Dave Mears, Louise Lutts, Kenneth Wells, Natalie Wells, Connie Houseweart, Dave Hilner, Sharon Woodhouse, Harry McKnight, Mary Vargo, Don Honis, Dan Banke, Tom McKnight, Barb McKnight, Mary Walker, Joe Petriello, Heidi Calhoun, Adam Calhoun at the Veterans Plaza, Ohio State Capitol

## Reunion 2015 ~ Columbus



Missing Man Table  
at the dinner banquet



Columbus Police and Fire  
Pipes and Drums



"To All Who Served  
From 6th Marine Division"



Harry McKnight, Don Honis



Dan Banke, Paul Justice



Jim McAfee,  
Dan Accrocco,  
Oscar Soifer



Auction highlight: In the back, Connie Houseweart hugs Adam Calhoun after he gives her the quilt he won in the auction, as everyone looks on. Congrats Connie! Thanks Adam and Heidi! And thanks Janet Russell for making and donating the beautiful quilt!

heading back  
to the bus  
after presenting  
the wreath at the  
Veterans Plaza,  
Ohio State Capitol



Striking Sixth



## Columbus Discovers Sixth Marine Division Association

*(continued from the front page)*

ate and City of Columbus. The press was there taking interviews and shooting video for the local paper and TV stations. Stars were born! The tour also included lunch at Barcelona in the German Village, a stop at Ohio State's football stadium, and a drive through some of Columbus' interesting and scenic neighborhoods.

We got more press later in the week during a wreath-laying ceremony at Veterans Plaza at the Ohio State Capitol. The Plaza

highlights the sacrifices of veterans with a wall of letters written by service members during war time — very poignant. Tours of Motts Military Museum and the Air Force Museum rounded out the week's field trips — they got rave reviews.

The Memorial Service on the final day was, as always, moving. Later at the dinner banquet, we listened to an excellent presentation by guest speakers Bill and Bobbi Richards from Honor

Flight. They talked about flying veterans to Washington DC to see the memorials that honor their service to the nation. This was followed by a wonderful choral program by the South Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. What a talented group! I think everyone enjoyed the WWII era and patriotic music.

As always, sitting and chatting with old friends and making new ones was the best part of a fun-filled week.



Don Honis, Sam Petriello, Neal McCallum, Alio Benedetti, Harry Bertram, Paul Judd, Harry Sandlaufer, Andrea Tibbets (special guest and widow of Enola Gay pilot Paul Tibbets), Harry McKnight, Oscar Soifer, Dave Mears, George McAfee



### 6Mar Div Marines Pictured at Top

top row: George McAfee, Kenneth Wells, Paul Judd, Sam Petriello, Harry Sandlaufer, Dave Mears  
bottom row: Harry McKnight, Oscar Soifer, Paul Justice, Harry Bertram, Neal McCallum, Alio Benedetti, Don Honis





**SIXTH MARINE DIVISION  
ASSOCIATION  
2014-2015  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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15th Marines	Ozzie Aasland
22nd Marines	Vacant
29th Marines	Neil McCallum
6th Motor Trans Battalion	Vacant
6th Medical Battalion	David Titus
6th Engineering	Burr Allen
6th Tank Battalion	Sal Mistretta
6th Pioneer Battalion	Marvin Gromley
6th Headquarters Battalion	Vacant
6th Recon Company	Joe Singleton
6th JASCO	Vacant
1st Amphibs	George Tremblay

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## The Striking Sixth Newsletter

This newsletter is an official publication of the Sixth Marine Division Association and is published for members of the Association.

**The subscription rate is \$10 per calendar year.** Membership applications, dues, donations, address changes, deaths notices, and record changes should be mailed with an application (see page 25) to:

Florence R. Dornan  
704 Cooper Court  
Arlington, TX 76011

### **Please make checks payable to:**

Sixth Marine Division Assn., Inc.

For more information, please contact Flo at:

(817) 275-1552 or  
sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter Subscription Dues for 2016 are due December 31, 2015. Remember — you must pay for the newsletter each year, even if you are a Lifetime Member.

**Letters to the editor, materials for publication, suggestions, and feedback** can be sent to:

Carroll McGowan, chm1423@aol.com, 1423 Pueblo Drive, Pittsburgh, PA, 15228, (412) 341-9219

## Belated Happy 90th Birthday to Harry Grover!

When she realized that the day of the reunion banquet (August 22) was also her father's 90th birthday, the wheels started turning for Harry Grover's daughter, Sally Slomka. She and her co-conspirator, Barb McKnight, planned a big surprise for Harry. Sally and her husband were going to attend the banquet with Harry. After dinner, Barb was going to announce that it was Harry's birthday and ask him to stand. As everyone sang "Happy Birthday," Harry's grandchildren and other family members were going to wheel in a big birthday cake, just like they do at the Marine Corps Ball.

Sadly, one of Harry's friends had a heart attack, and Harry missed the reunion so he could be with his friend. We missed you, Harry! And we hope you found time to celebrate your 90th in style.

## Many Thanks to Those Listed Below Who Made Donations!

### DIRECTORY

William Reeves

### GENERAL FUND

William V. Bock  
William Reeves  
Ted Rush  
N. Robertson

### LIFE CARD

Steve Denny\*  
Kelly Kilcoyne

### MEMORIAL MARKER FUND

William Reeves

### NEWSLETTER FUND

John Zapf  
Pamela Bloustine\*

\*Over and above

Please let us know — and forgive us — if we missed anyone who made a donation at the Reunion. We believe some auction donations may not have been recorded.

### REUNION

Dolores Bertram  
Pam Bloustine  
Dave Edmonson  
Jerry Glick  
Connie Houseweart  
Karen Kelly  
Pat Lewis  
Tim Lister  
Carroll McGowan  
Bill McKnight  
Vicki Mercer  
Jim Monbeck  
Kevin Murray  
Patricia Payne  
Robert Pringle  
Pauline Roberts  
Tracy Rose  
Janet Russell  
Andrea Tibbets  
Mary Vargo  
Joan Willauer  
Rick Willauer  
Matt Wojnar  
Donatos Pizza  
Kroger  
Sgt Grit Marine Specialties  
Waffle House

### REUNION DISPLAYS

Dan Accrocco  
(Dan, the son of Joseph Accrocco of the 6th Engineers, shared a great display of WWII items.)

Mike Lea  
(Mike is the nephew of our beloved past president, Tom Terpinas. He brought a display Tom's mementos.)

Carl Long  
(Carl has no relatives in the Sixth, but he heard about the reunion and asked the McKnights if he could bring his collection of WWII items. He also took photos of the group at the "Letters Home" War Memorial at the Ohio State House.)

## Looking for a Great Christmas Gift Idea?

*Rise of the Valiant*, Bob Zimmerman's award-winning DVD about the Sixth Marine Division in the battle of Okinawa, would make a great gift for anyone interested in WWII.



### Where To Buy *Rise of the Valiant*

To see a trailer or to purchase the DVD:  
<http://www.parasol.com/artists/bob-zimmerman/rise-valiant/>

You can also purchase it on Amazon:  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00PWJ3UT2/>

The cost is \$15. A portion of each sale will be donated to the Semper Fi Fund.

## Does Anyone Remember Ted Redditt?

My name is Steve Carter, and my dad was in the Sixth on Okinawa. I am hoping to make contact with someone that might have known him. He passed away in 1987. His name was Theodore (Ted) Redditt from Christmas, Florida. I know he had a good friend who was a code talker named Howard Yellowman. My dad talked little about the war but if he did it was usually something about Howard and him. My mom and dad made a trip to New Mexico a few years before he passed in hopes of finding Howard. They found his family, only to learn Howard had been murdered after his return from the war. My dad stayed in contact with his family until his death, and my mom remains in contact with them. I am hoping someone that served with my dad will remember him. Thanks for your help.

Steve Carter  
[stevedistrict1@yahoo.com](mailto:stevedistrict1@yahoo.com)



## Alden and Eunice Fruin

Dear Flo,

It is with sadness that I notify you of the passing of my Mother, Eunice Fruin, on July 21, 2013. I am the proud daughter of my hero, Cpl. Alden Fruin (1914-1996), and Eunice (1918-2013), his kind and loving wife of 51 years, now in heaven with Jesus. My Mom is sadly missed by my husband and me and our two sons and their families. My Mom lovingly made crosses and cro-

cheted warm hats for many years prior to going blind. I gave them to our brave troops and veterans as a thank you for their brave service.

My Dad was with F-2-22 on Okinawa. He received his Purple Heart on June 9, 1945 with shrapnel to the head and neck (that he took to his grave at age 82). My Dad didn't give his life, but he did give his future for our great country.

He was age 27-31 while serving in the USMC against Japan in the Pacific. He told my Mom that he felt so bad for the 17 and 18 year-old Marines that were just beginning their lives. He felt he had lived a long life compared to them.

In 1958-59, my Father was fighting the war all over again, but this time at home. I was a child then, and with my father in and out of the VA Hospital, Mom had to sell his 35-cattle dairy herd at auction. When I was in high school, Dad was picking apples an hour and a half from home. I talked him into buying calves and raising them into beef cattle so he could stay home. We had them all named! Mom worked at the hospital in dietary. As the years went on, my Mom and I kept my Dad at home on the farm where he was born in 1914 and that he so bravely fought to come home to from the Pacific in 1941-45.

As Dad got older and became crippled by rheumatoid arthritis, he proudly kept his Purple Heart, his Marine hat, and his Sixth Marine Division book beside him. Dad had underlined the names of

the Marines who gave their lives on Okinawa.

In 2003, after searching for Marines that served with my father, James H. Powers invited us to a reunion. What a blessing to be there and meet those brave Marines who knew and fought alongside my Father. I wish Dad could have been there.

I wish to thank Chaplain Harry and Barb McKnight for helping us to meet up with some of the WWII heroes in the cafeteria of the Air Force Museum on August 20, 2015. I wish to thank the six heroes of the Sixth Marine Division, including Harry and the sons and daughters that we met, for their kindness to my husband and me. Also for their service to this great country. They fought so valiantly seventy years ago on Okinawa. When I saw them, I cried knowing these were the brave Marines that my Dad was so worried about all those years ago. And they, now in their 90s, were doing alright. My father would have been very pleased to see them.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the end of WWII, Dad told my Mom, "If I were in better health and younger, I would do it all over again!" It's true: "Once a Marine, Always a Marine!"

Semper Fidelis and May God Bless and Protect America,  
 Susan Fruin Brovont

p.s. I am enclosing my dues and renewal subscription to the newsletter. Thank you so much! God Bless You and a BIG Thank You to our Troops and our Veterans.



## Thanks to Flo!

Dear Florence,

I forgot to send my renewal payment for the newsletter. I misplaced the magazine, but it finally surfaced. I ordered the new DVD on Okinawa. Being a corpsman, I was in the 29<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at various times during the landing and completion of the operation. Thanks for the good and dedicated work you do. It is appreciated.

Norm Robertson  
186 Montana Drive  
Danville, CA 94526-1614



## Okinawa Memories

Dear Florence,

I am not able to come to reunions, but I have gone to many in the past. I am 92 years old and not too mobile. The summer issue of the newsletter has brought back to me very sad memories of my time in Okinawa. I am sending my dues for the newsletter.

Truly yours,  
Salvatore (Sneezy) Mistretta  
210 Washington St #7  
Peabody, MA 01960

## More Thanks to Flo!

Dear Flo,

Thank you for remembering me in sending the Striking Sixth. It sure was good to see your picture so as to be more connected. You have been very supportive in the job of Membership Manager. Enclosed is a donation for the newsletter. I would love to read them all. Keep them coming. Company G of the 22<sup>nd</sup> 2 Bn. are all but gone. I served in 1942-45. Thanks again Flo. Sorry that Gloria and I will be missing the Reunion.

Semper Fi,  
John and Gloria Zapf  
2302 SW Whitemarsh Way  
Palm City, FL 34990

p.s. Enclosed is a donation for the newsletter.



## Still Kicking!

Ms. Dornan!

Hi. I'm a Sixth Marine Division member for years. I served in North China (Tsingtao) with the 15<sup>th</sup> Marines, Love Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion until the Sixth Marine Division was retired (whenever).

I was sent to Tsingtao, China and joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division at the French Arsenal, joining the 11<sup>th</sup> Marines, H&S Bn.

The reason I am writing you is I haven't received any Striking Sixth newsletters since the Spring 2014 issue. Since I've paid my subscription to 2020, I'm wondering if you think I'm deceased. I received a phone call some time ago from someone; I don't remember who it was, but that someone claimed I had met my maker. So, please inform me if you are still printing.

Semper Fi,  
Ted Mazurski  
6418 W 88<sup>th</sup> Street  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Note from the Membership Manager: My mistake! I am happy to say Ted has not been reported as deceased and I mailed him all the newsletters he was missing. Thank you, Ted, for your note.



## Update on Colors

You may recall from the Winter 2013 Striking Sixth, that the original colors of the 6MarDiv are housed and cared for at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Museum (MCRDM) in San Diego. (Reminder: you have to ask the staff to see them as they are no longer on display.)

Most agree that the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC) would be a better home for the colors, but it did not exist when the Association donated the flag to the MCRDM.

Bob McGowan has been in touch with both museums. The MCRDM has agreed to ship the flag to the NMMC, which has agreed to take it, although they

cannot guarantee it will be put on display. However, since the museum is planning a large expansion, this presumably makes future display of the colors more likely.

For now, the colors will stay in San Diego, but eventually they will be shipped to the NMMC. Look for more information in the Spring Striking Sixth.

## Book Tells Story of CPL Eddie Couchon

In 1945, CPL Edward J. Couchon Jr. USMC (22nd Mar-1-C) won the Silver Star and was killed in action on Okinawa. By 2014, barely anyone in his hometown remembered who he was or what he did.



Eddie Couchon  
in 1941

Fortunately, there are people who believe it's important to keep the memory of Eddie alive. In 2014 Dave Pelletier, a relative of CPL Couchon, organized a ceremony to present Eddie's medals to surviving family

members. Several members of the Sixth Marine Division were among the 350 people who attended that event. (*See the Fall 2014 Striking Sixth for more information.*)

A new book available on Amazon — *Looking for Eddie: A Story of Duty and Sacrifice in the Pacific War* — tells the story of Eddie's life and heroism on Okinawa. Written by the son of one of Eddie's closest friends — Norm Schroeder, a Marine who served from 1965-69 (including two tours in Vietnam) — the book also tells the story of Norm's search to learn more about Eddie. This includes tracking down and interviewing Charlie Company veterans, Andy Sinatra and Bob Mitchell, who knew Eddie.

*Looking for Eddie* is a well-researched and well-written book and a story worth telling. Sixth Division members and friends, as well as WWII history buffs, will find it an interesting read.

*{continued on next page}*

## Ladies Auxiliary Report



Harry and I were pleased with the hotel and their staff before and during the reunion. Everyone we worked with

seemed more like a good friend — who wanted to help wherever he/she could — than a hired employee. It is always amazing the little things that go on behind the scene that make an event run smoothly.

I thought this year's Ladies Luncheon was great. There were 10 wives or widows present plus 14 daughters, daughters-in-law and granddaughters, and of course our special friends Pam Bloustine and Karen Kelly. The food we or-

dered was so plentiful that most of us asked for a box to take what we couldn't finish back to our rooms. For dessert we had huge yummy cookies; I think there were enough for each of us to have two. We had our meeting, which I will go into more in the next newsletter. Then we each took turns sharing some insights of "Our Marine." We know they were all in the Pacific in WWII, but we learned some interesting things about what these special men accomplished after the war. At the reunions we see one dimension of these men, but it is always interesting to learn about other facets of a person's life.

Semper Fi,  
Barbara McKnight  
Ladies Auxiliary President

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## From the Editor



What a wonderful reunion in Columbus! Special thanks to Harry and Barb for all their hard work.

Our veterans were recognized by local government officials and got great press, including segments on the local news shows. It's so nice to see that other people remember and appreciate the sacrifices made by our WWII veterans, especially the Sixth Marine Division.

Our guys sure were popular. Everywhere they went, people wanted to get their picture

taken with them. I'm sure they got tired of saying "cheese," but they were unfailingly gracious and cooperative. No surprise. Speaking of photos, you'll find quite a few in this issue. Many thanks to the photographers: Tim Lister (friend of Harry and Barb), Dave Hilner, Patty Payne, Pfuong Riles, Sharon Woodhouse, and Tiffany Woodhouse.

I hope to see many of you in Norman, Oklahoma for the 2016 reunion. Thanks to Pam Bloustine and Joan Willauer for taking this on. It should be another great time.

~ Carroll McGowan



## Message from the President



Another reunion has come and gone. I would like to thank Harry and Barb McKnight for their gracious hospitality while in Columbus. All the activities that were planned (and not planned; the surprise luncheon while on our bus trip of the city), went off without a hitch. What a good time was had by all. I was in awe at all of the respectful recognition that our Vets received. This reunion for me will be truly one that I will not forget. And next year we will be in Norman, OK. I am looking forward to seeing you all there. Until we meet again, here is hoping everyone has a blessed and healthy year.

Connie Houseweart

---

## Eddie Couchon (cont.)

*(continued from prior page)*

Author Norm Schroeder has offered to send a free copy of *Looking for Eddie* to any veteran who served with the 1st Battalion, 22nd Marines. Please contact him at:

[schroeder207@yahoo.com](mailto:schroeder207@yahoo.com).

All others can purchase the paperback on Amazon.



*Looking for Eddie, a new book about CPL Edward J. Couchon*

## Chaplain's Report



It seems that we see the persecution of Christians and Jews increasing in our society and ignored by our government. It will increase so be prepared. Keep in mind the word of the Lord, "If ye keep the commandments ye will prosper in the land. If ye keep not the commandments, ye have no promise." So my advice remains the same: Keep the commandments. Read your scriptures. Say your prayers. Ask God for direction in your prayers. Don't do or say dumb things. Be grateful for the small things that help you daily. And as best you can, help others who need it.

Now for some fun stuff... John Wells and I had just been given several boxes of K-rations, and I complained about extra dinners. They featured Corned Pork loaf. I just could not get that stuff down. The rest was OK, but not that. We watched while a tank with a flame thrower was clearing out the Nip-occupied caves at the edge of a Cain field. They had two choices: run out and get cut down by our Marines or stay in and suffocate. It was about 200 yards in front of us, and the tank finally pulled out of the area. John said, "Hey Mac, look at this." Two little Okinawa kids

came out of the Cain field with their hands up. A boy and a girl about 5 or 6, they were surrendering to us. We motioned for them to turn around to see if they were hiding explosives (it was common for the Nips to use children that way.) We motioned to them to come into our foxhole and out of danger. They were skinny as rails with dirty faces and ragged clothes. John said, "Mac, let's clean them up, and when it calms down, we'll send them back to a safer area." I took out my handkerchief and using water from my canteen cleaned up the face of the girl. She looked at the water, and I could tell she wanted a drink. John did the same with the boy. Then I beamed to John, "Do you think they might like some corned Pork Loaf?" "Give it a try," John said. Wow, did they; they probably had not eaten in days. Near dusk we sent them back to safety with four boxes of dinner K-rations. Then I ate the breakfast K: chopped ham and egg whites. We both smiled as they looked back at us. We waived.

Your friendly Chaplain,  
Harry McKnight





Star Auctioneer  
Sharon Woodhouse



Heidi Calhoun, Don Honis,  
Adam Calhoun



Mary Abbott, Helen Simmons



Don Honis

## Reunion Attendees

Mary Abbott  
Helen Simmons

Dan Accrocco

Dan Banke

Alio Benedetti  
Anita Benedetti  
Melinda Benedetti  
Lisa Benedetti  
Paul Licurs, Jr.  
Brian Licurs

Harry & Dolores Bertram

Pam Bloustine

Donna Breitinger  
Betsy Queen  
Patti Snyder

Sue Brovont

Don Honis  
Heidi & Adam Calhoun

Connie Houseweart  
Dave Hilner

Paul & Shirley Judd

Paul Justice

Karen Kelly

Elena Terpinas Lea  
Mike Lea  
Shirley Hughes  
Rachael Lea Piembert  
Alex Piembert

Christine Leeper

Malcolm Lear  
Shirley L. Lear  
Andrew Lear  
Shirley K. Lear  
Thomas Lear  
Keith Lear  
Gretchen Lear Bechmann  
Mark Bechmann  
William Robinson

Tim & Donna Lister

Carl & Jen Long

George McAfee  
Jim McAfee

Neil McCallum  
Phoung Riles

Bob & Carroll McGowan  
Sean McGowan

Harry & Barb McKnight

Tim McKnight  
Tom McKnight  
Karen McKnight  
Elizabeth McKnight  
Bryant McKnight  
Bill McKnight  
Mary Vargo

David Mears  
Louise Lutts

Jim Monbeck

Kevin Murray

Patricia Payne

Sam Petriello  
Joe Petriello

Carolyn Risher

Pauline Roberts

Janet Russell

Harry Sandlaufer  
Robin & Terry Ewert

Kathleen Schadt

Oscar & Claire Soifer

Mary Walker

Kenneth & Natalie Wells

Joan Willauer

Sharon & Gregg Woodhouse  
Tiffany Woodhouse  
Natalie Ritchey



Dan Banke (above left) and Carl Long (above right) attended their first 6MarDiv reunion this year. They were thrilled to have the opportunity to meet the 6MarDiv veterans.

Dan is a Captain in the Marine Corps and became interested in the Sixth Marine Division when he was stationed in Okinawa. After walking the ground where the 6MarDiv Marines fought, and reading extensively about the Division, he was anxious to meet some of the veterans.

Carl, who lives in Columbus, is a WWII enthusiast with an extensive collection of memorabilia. When he discovered from the 6MarDiv website that the reunion was being held in Columbus this year, he was not going to let this opportunity pass.

Look for more about Dan and Carl and their interest in the Sixth Marine Division in the Spring issue of the Striking Sixth.



Tiffany Woodhouse shows Harry Sandlaufer an auction item. Perhaps pondering bids are Sam Petriello, Kenneth Wells, Joe Petriello, Dolores Bertram, Janet Russell, Shirley Judd, Pauline Roberts, and many others.

# Hospitality Room Fun



above: Natalie & Kenneth Wells  
top: Barb McKnight and Harry & Dolores Bertram

Auction Workers Extraordinaire  
Natalie Ritchey and Tiffany Woodhouse



above: Pfuong Riles, Jim Monbeck  
top: Janet Russell, Sharon Woodhouse



Shirley Judd, Pfuong Riles



Patty Snyder, Betsy Queen, Donna Breitinger



Harry Sandlaufer, Patty Payne, Dan Banke



Sharon Woodhouse, Connie Houseweart



above: Sharon Woodhouse, Patty Payne, Tiffany Woodhouse, Connie Houseweart  
right: Kathy Schadt, Mary Walker, Shirley Judd, Janet Russell, Dolores Bertram



Carroll McGowan, Sharon Woodhouse, Connie Houseweart, Tiffany Woodhouse



# Field Trips

right: Paul Judd, Harry McKnight, Susan Fruin Brovont, Harry Bertram, Kenneth Wells, Patty Payne, Dave Mears at the Motts Military Museum

below and far right: Columbus Police and Fire Pipes and Drums in German Village



## Airforce Museum and Motts Military Museum



right:  
Ohio State  
University  
football stadium



above:  
Harry Bertram,  
Dolores Bertram,  
Janet Russell,  
Lisa Benedetti,  
Alio Benedetti,  
Neal McCallum  
at the Air Force  
Museum.



above: Paul Judd, Neal McCallum, Kenneth Wells, Bill McKnight, Sam Petriello, Dave Mears, Ohio State Senator Jim Hughes (presenting certificate of commendation from the Ohio Senate), Harry Bertram, Harry McKnight, George McAfee, Police Cmdr. Robert Strausbaugh, Alio Benedetti with tour guide Jerry Glick looking on from the podium at the German Village Meeting Haus



# Bus Tour of Columbus

right: Paul Judd,  
George McAfee,  
Harry Bertram,  
Alio Benedetti,  
Kenneth Wells,  
Sam Petriello,  
Neal McCallum,  
Bill McKnight,  
Harry McKnight  
outside the German  
Village Meeting Haus



Enjoying lunch at Barcelona in the  
German Village

far left above: Harry McKnight, Sam  
Petriello, Neal McCallum

far left below: Dave Mears, Louise  
Lutts, Harry & Dolores Bertram,  
Janet Russell, Shirley & Paul Judd

left: Harry McKnight, Barb  
McKnight, tour  
guide Jerry Glick



left:  
Sean McGowan,  
Bob McGowan,  
George McAfee,  
Jim McAfee



above: Bill McKnight, Harry McKnight, Paul Judd, George McAfee, Sam Petriello, Dave Mears,  
Kenneth Wells, Alio Benedetti, Harry Bertram, Neal McCallum



Pfuong Riles, Neal McCallum



Dave Mears, Bill McKnight, Harry McKnight, Kenneth Wells, Harry Bertram, George McAfee

*Dear Susie,  
This is it, Baby. I'm coming home!  
Jim*



Bill McKnight, Tom McKnight, Harry McKnight



Joe Petriello, Sam Petriello



Sharon Woodhouse, Dave Hilner, Tiffany Woodhouse, Connie Houseweart

*Dear Mom,  
It seems so strange that I haven't heard anything from any of you since the middle of December, five months ago. We hear that food parcels can no longer be sent - too bad if true. It would be hard going if it weren't for the weekly Red Cross parcel. I know I'm a father by now but don't know whether I have a son or a daughter.  
Your son,  
Laurence  
POW*



left: Joan Willauer, Shirley Judd

right: Police Cmdr. Robert Strausbaugh gives Pauline Roberts a get out of jail free card



Oscar & Claire Soifer, Natalie & Kenneth Wells, Dolores & Harry Bertram



## Veterans Plaza Ohio State Capitol



Paul Judd, Oscar Soifer, Neal McCallum, Don Honis, Alio Benedetti, Sam Petriello



George McAfee, Jim McAfee, Bob McGowan



Sharon Woodhouse, Dan Banke, Gregg Woodhouse



Tiffany Woodhouse, Dave Mears, Louise Lutts

Dear Eileen,

I was appointed squad leader position today, which means my hard work is being noticed. Everything I learn here will help me later in life.

1. Never assume anything. 2. No matter how bad you don't want to do something, see it through and make the best of it. 3. Home is where you make it. 4. Make things happen for yourself. Take charge of your life. 5. Don't take little things in life for granted. 6. If you really love someone, they're always with you no matter where you are. 7. Teamwork. 8. Friends are invaluable. 9. Trust in yourself and your first instinct. 10. Don't lose touch with your Creator.

Love,  
Dave  
KIA



Sam Petriello, Adam Calhoun



Bob McGowan, Mary Walker



Dave Mears, Don Honis



Janet Russell





## Memorial Service



Lisa, Alio, Melinda and Anita Benedetti, Connie Houseweart



Donna Breitingner, Patti Snyder, Pauline Roberts, Connie Houseweart



Chaplain Harry McKnight, Bell Ringer Don Honis



foxhole buddies Neal McCallum and Paul Justice



front: Don Honis, Harry Bertram, Paul Judd, Harry Sandlaufer, Alio Benedetti, Sam Petriello  
back: Paul Justice, Neal McCallum, Dave Mears, Oscar Soifer, George McAfee, Harry McKnight



Mary Walker, Shirley Judd, Pfuong Riles



Pauline Roberts, Janet Russell



front: Claire & Oscar Soifer  
back: Mary Vargo, Bill McKnight



front: Patty Payne, Donna Breitingner; Janet Russell, Pauline Roberts, Anita Benedetti, Melinda Benedetti, Lisa Benedetti  
back: Christine Leeper, Patti Snyder, Alio Benedetti, Paul Licurs, Brian Licurs





above: guest speakers Bobbi & Bill Richards, Andrea Tibbets and guest, Harry & Barb McKnight, Oscar & Claire Soifer

below: Tim McKnight, Bill McKnight, Mary Vargo, Sam Petriello, Joe Petriello, Carroll & Bob McGowan, Tom McKnight



## Dinner Banquet

Professor Julius Kelp AKA Tim McKnight



left: Dave Mears, Louise Lutts, Mary Abbott, Helen Simmons, Patti Snyder, Dave Hilner, Connie Houseweart

below: Shirley & Paul Judd, Harry Sandlaufer, Robin & Terry Ewert, Harry

& Dolores Bertram, Janet Russell



above: Neal McCallum, Pam Bloustine, Pauline Roberts, Mary Walker, Kathy Schadt, Karen Kelly, Joan Willauer, Pfuong Riles



above: Carolyn Risher, Elena Terpinas Lea, Mike Lea, Shirley Hughes, Rachael Lea Piembert, Alex Piembert



above: Jim Monbeck, Dan Accrocco, George McAfee, Jim McAfee, Karen McKnight, Elizabeth McKnight, Bryant McKnight, Dan Banke



above: Brian Licurs, Paul Licurs, Alio Benedetti, Anita Benedetti, Matthew Benedetti, Lisa Benedetti, Diane De-Camillo, Melinda Benedetti, Mark Benedetti



below: reunion hosts with some of their family members—Barb, Tom, Tim, Karen, Bryant, Elizabeth and Harry McKnight

# My Time as a Marine — Saipan

SECOND OF A SERIES BY WATSON CRUMBIE (29th MAR-1-C)

We had heard that the invasion of Europe began June 6, 1944 while still at sea, but it meant little to us as we were occupied with D-Day in the Pacific in eight days. I remember the numb feeling I had the night before and how difficult it was to sleep knowing what tomorrow would bring. Or more appropriately, NOT knowing what tomorrow would bring. Around 4:00 a.m., while waiting for daylight and our first glimpse of the island, I watched a Jap plane go down in flames off our port bow. I wondered how many and which of us would be killed in the next few hours and if I would be one of them. I had breakfast with Billy Trimmer; it was to be our last hot breakfast for many weeks. We listened over the ship's speaker system as the first waves began landing at 0800, but all we could understand was that they were receiving intense artillery fire and some had landed on the wrong beach. We were in Corps reserve, on alert and ready to go where we would be needed.

## Hitting the Beach

About noon, the 8th Marine Regiment requested us. We climbed down the cargo nets over the side of the ship in full battle gear then into Higgins boats, which was a challenge with the boats being tossed about, rising and falling with each wave. We had to time our jump from the net into the Higgins boat while it was on the rise; otherwise you had a long way to fall. We headed for the "line of departure" that was about 2,000 yards from the shore, where we climbed out of the Higgins boats into armored amphibious tractors for the landing. Our

driver said that he was bracketed by artillery shells on his last run. Several tractors had been hit. The early amphibious tractors did not have a ramp at the rear, and we had to climb over the sides. I was the first out on my side, and there on the beach were several dead Marines. Ants were already in their nose and mouths. A hand was rising and falling with each wave as if to say "goodbye," a scene difficult to forget.

I pressed the safety off on my carbine, but on the early model carbines, the safety and magazine release were push buttons side by side. I had released my ammunition clip into the sand and was ready to do battle with an empty rifle with the safety on! I ran back and found the clip. We crossed an airstrip parallel with the beach into a grove of trees and dug foxholes.

## Contact with the Enemy

During the night I heard a noise from our rear. It was a Jap soldier who had been so well concealed on the beach that he escaped detection. He was trying to get through to his lines. He stopped at the foot of my foxhole, and while a flare attached to a small parachute hung in the sky casting eerie shadows, he stared down at me. Although we could not see each other's eyes, I stared back at him. I would have to roll over on my back, swing my rifle around, push the safety "off" (hopefully the right button this time), and shoot him before he shot me. The odds were not good. As the flare died he started to run, but was shot by a Marine from a nearby foxhole. I do not



Marines take cover on Saipan

think my foxhole buddy, James Thompson, ever forgave me for allowing a Jap to stand over our foxhole while he slept.

We received intense artillery fire most of the night, and I learned what it was like to be scared — really scared — and totally helpless. I could only lie there and pray to God as I had never prayed before. I was "in the valley of the shadow of death." Dawn meant that I had only survived my first night of combat.

We had suffered 32 casualties in our company. I saw a Marine with the top of his head missing; the name on the back of his jacket was "Trimmer." It was Billy, with whom I had breakfast yesterday morning aboard ship.

## Finding Amelia Earhart?!

We found a safe, and since I was a demolitionist, I was asked to blow it open. I was not an experienced bank robber, and I used too much explosive. The entire door blew off and everything inside became confetti except for a pistol. Years later a TV show, "Unsolved Mysteries," claimed we found evidence pertaining to Amelia Earhart in the safe. It even named my unit. (In 1937 Amelia Earhart and her navigator Frederick Noonan attempted a flight around the world using only a compass. Their destination was Howland Island, some 1500 miles south of Saipan. They dis-

*(continued on next page)*

# My Time as a Marine

*(continued from the previous page)*

appeared somewhere in the Pacific, and one rumor was that they had strayed off course and landed on Saipan where they were shot as spies.)

## Pay Back

The second day we were ordered to attack across Lake Susupe, a chest-deep swamp. The Japanese had machine guns on platforms that caused about 80 casualties in A Company, but the swamp was so thick they could not see us and we only received sporadic fire. Joe Iafrate, a short Marine, got stuck in the muck (muddy bottom). Two tall Marines, Earl Lingerfelt and Lyle Struss, each grabbed a shoulder and lifted him out. At a reunion 50 years later, Joe said, "I guess I owe my life to you two guys." Jack replied, "Hell Joe, I couldn't leave you there; you owed me five dollars! By the way, Joe did you ever pay me those five dollars?" So we tried to figure the interest on five dollars for 50 years.

## Engaging the Enemy

A Jap was directing artillery fire upon us from a smokestack at the sugar mill that had been riddled with shrapnel, and no one suspected he was there. Two men were killed in the shelling and several wounded. My foxhole buddy received a nasty gash across the calf of his leg from shrapnel. I put sulfa powder (that we carried in our first aid kits) on his leg and bandaged it. The Jap in the smokestack was discovered when a Marine who had cut wires leading to the top, found them repaired the next day.

We continued the attack. I went up a small hill, rather than

around it as everyone else did, and I found myself alone. Looking down I could see three Japs in a trench. I fired several shots at them from my carbine, which was not too accurate at that range. I managed to kill one while the others got away. When I came down, I was told a sniper had just killed a Marine where I was about to sit. I felt a sense of guilt, wondering if the sniper was one of the two Japs I had failed to kill.

The second night we were called back to the airfield where we dug in on both sides of the runway, as an air invasion was expected. We learned the next morning that our fighters had shot down all of the planes. However, one landed on the runway the next day, apparently thinking it was still held by the Japanese. How he got there without being shot down, or where he came from, we never found out.



Marine stands over bodies of dead Japanese on Saipan

During our attack on the third morning, we were to make contact with the 4th Marine Division on our right flank. We saw what we believed were Marines from the 4th Division in a palm grove and began waving, which brought a hail of bullets. I managed to stop a tank on the road below and behind us by daring it to run me

over. That is when I learned there was a telephone in the rear (used to talk to the tank commander). I directed the tanks to where we needed them, and after a few rounds from the tanks' 75mm guns, all was quiet. We dug in for the night on the forward slope of a small hill.

The next morning we found three Jap artillery pieces at the base of the reverse slope. During the night, four Jap officers using their Samurai swords had surprised three Marines in their foxhole. Sgt Jamros was beheaded, and Joe Wall and Lieutenant Nollau were badly cut up before the Japs were killed by other Marines.

## Mt. Tapochau

The 1st Battalion 29th Marines was assigned the task of capturing Mt. Tapochau, the highest point on the island at 1550 feet. We attacked several hundred yards up the mountain without much opposition. That night my foxhole position was to be between two large boulders, which was a very safe-looking place, but our captain decided that "safe place" should be the company command post, and we had to move to the outside of the boulders. About midnight we began receiving artillery fire from our rear. The Japs had managed to slip back and were using one of the artillery pieces at the base of the hill we had just left. We thought it was our own artillery firing short rounds, so we sent up green flares to indicate friendly troops. This made a perfect target for the Japs. One round landed directly between the two large boulders killing our Captain, Lieutenant, Platoon Sergeant, Corpsman, and Radioman. Hot

*(continued on next page)*

# My Time as a Marine

*(continued from the previous page)*

spent shrapnel landed on my back. Our platoon took 39 casualties. The next morning as we were resuming the attack up the mountain, Army tanks fired on us with machine guns, causing even more casualties. Our Marine General relieved the Army General of command, as the Army was not attacking fast enough to protect our right flank. Sgt. John Orsock led a patrol through enemy territory to contact the Army and bring them up to protect our exposed flank.

In our fight up the mountain, we received a lot of mortar and machine gun fire. I remember a mortar shell exploding behind us and then one in front of us when someone said, "The next one will be right here...run!" We did, and it was! We gained fame and respect in a remarkable feat when we scaled the mountain at night without losing a man. But when the Japs discovered we were there, they wanted us off. They counterattacked twice, but we held! We counted about 40 dead Japs after they withdrew.

That night, a Jap plane strafed and bombed us. I remember Sanyi saying it was one of our planes because he could see its lights. Those "lights" turned out to be muzzle flashes from its machine guns before the bullets began hitting around us. The bombs missed us, but they were close enough that we could hear them coming, and that was unnerving enough. From the peak of the mountain the next morning we raised the Stars and Stripes for all to see! Everyone, including Japs, knew the mountain belonged to the Marines, as Ma-

rines always stand on the skyline.

## Souvenir Hunting

On the down side of the mountain we came upon a field hospital with numerous dead Japs and mutilated bodies. Maggots were eating away at exposed wounds. The stench was nauseating. That night we dug in on both sides of a valley and killed about twenty Japs who came down the trail. Jack Lingerfelt remembers Ben Balay searching a dead Jap the next morning for souvenirs – but he was not dead!



Marines march through Garapan

We were relieved after 21 days of continuous combat and sent to garrison duty, first at Garapan, the capital city which now lay in rubble, and then to guard Tanapag harbor where we fought off several attempts by the Japs to reach the four submarines tied up alongside a submarine tender. We collected rifles, bayonets, helmets and other souvenirs, and then we caught a boat to the submarine tender anchored in the harbor where we traded souvenirs to sailors for candy, cigarettes, and a gallon of dehydrated apples. We had lived on "C" rations for the last six weeks, and we envied the sailors who had a ship store where they could buy these things. Not to mention they were served hot meals every day and had nice bunks to sleep in every night.

## Feeling Revenge

The Japanese admiral who led the carrier task force in the attack on Pearl Harbor was Admiral Chūichi Nagumo. He was now in command of the Japanese Central Pacific Fleet based in Saipan. On the night of July 6, 1944, Admiral Nagumo died by his own hand. I remember a feeling of revenge for Pearl Harbor.

I did not witness the estimated 5,000 Japanese civilians who committed suicide by jumping off the cliffs at the north end of the island. They had been told we would torture, rape, and kill them. Whole families jumped together. Approximately 30,000 Japanese soldiers died on Saipan. A few prisoners were taken, but they were mostly Okinawa laborers. It was discovered that some Japs who had survived the battle were hiding in the daytime and coming down at night to forage for food, so we were ordered to set a trap. It was around midnight and pitch black when we heard footsteps. Four of us fired several rounds in the direction of the footsteps, and one Jap was killed just a few feet away. The rest scattered and took their wounded and dead with them. Some Japs stayed isolated for many years on several islands. When they finally surrendered, in some cases years later, some were not aware that the war was over.

Saipan was 1500 miles from Japan and well within the range of the B-29 bombers. Our planes could now take off from Saipan, bomb Tokyo, and return in one day. We watched for disabled B-29 bombers returning from bombing raids. If one was spotted, we alerted the airfield. We reported

*(continued on next page)*



# My Time as a Marine

*(continued from the previous page)*

one fighter plane with a bomb dangling from his wing that had failed to release on a bombing mission. The airfield alerted him, and he managed to jar it loose over the ocean.

After the battle, almost everyone had Dengue fever caused from a sting by a white mosquito. Most had fevers of 105 degrees; it lasted about a week and was much like the flu. Our Corpsman could only give us APC tablets and wait for us to sweat it out. APC (aspirin, phenacetin, caffeine) tablets were the “cure all” for everything that ailed anyone.

Before we left Saipan, we visited the wounded in the division field hospital and went to the 2nd Marine Division cemetery to look for a familiar name on a cross.

## Joining the Sixth Division

In August 1945, the 29<sup>th</sup> Marines sailed from Saipan for Guadalcanal aboard the USS *Polaris*. With the arrival of the 1st battalion 29th Marine Regiment in Guadalcanal, the formation of the 6th Marine Division was complete. The division consisted of the 4th Marine Regiment that was formed from the original Raider Battalions, the 22nd Marine Regiment, and 15th Marine Artillery Regiment. The 1st and 2nd battalions of the 29th Marines had already arrived from the United States where they had been formed.

## Back to Guadalcanal

We trained on Guadalcanal for our next invasion. In 1942 Japan had been advancing rapidly across Asia and bombing Australia. To stop the Japanese advance toward Australia, U.S. Marines



Marine lifts nearly dead infant from cave on Saipan

invaded Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in August 1942. It was a bitter six month battle during which the issue was in doubt several times. Great naval battles were fought there. The largest number of ships ever sunk was between Guadalcanal and Savo Island; it is known as “Iron Bottom Sound.” Five brothers were killed on one U.S. ship when it was sunk there. The invention of radar helped immensely in defeating the superior Japanese navy. There was a Japanese ship so desperate to land reinforcements that it beached. It was still there along with a Japanese two man submarine and several Japanese landing craft, all relics of war.

Guadalcanal was mostly jungle, and the temperature was well over 100 degrees every day. Many of the Japanese who were not killed in battle ended up living on the other side of the island, which is separated by a mountain ridge. Isolated, they were still there years after the war ended.

I remember being on a training exercise to conserve water. Most had consumed our two canteens of water when we came upon two wild boars in a mud hole. We were so thirsty we chased them out to fill our canteens with the nasty muddy water. Thirty min-

utes later we came upon a fast flowing clear river.

We received yellow Atabrine tablets to swallow each morning to prevent us from getting malaria, which is spread by mosquito. Atabrine caused our skin to turn yellow, so you could tell who was not taking his Atabrine, which was a court martial offence. Since malaria is spread by mosquito, we had mosquito nets over our cots. One night part of my blanket fell to the deck (yes, it gets cool at night even in the jungle), and one of the large land crabs whose claws spread probably eight inches or more had crawled up the blanket into my cot. I guess it just wanted to keep warm as it did not bother me and I did not discover it until morning. Land crabs were very common on Guadalcanal.



Saipan Land Crab

We seldom received our beer ration. When we did, it was always hot so we tried to make what is called “Raisin Jack” by bringing our fruit from the mess hall each day and then saving it in a five gallon can. When full, we buried it to allow it to ferment. The problem was we did not have enough patience and dug it up too soon. Those who drank it ended up in sick bay.

Then there were the poker games. We were paid twice a month; I received \$15.00 the first of the month and \$10.00 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, which I usually lost in poker games that I am not sure were always honest. It was not much money for putting your life on the line, but it was not the money that we were fighting for.

*Next issue: Okinawa*

## Detective Work Leads to Special Presentation for Fred Johnson

In January 2015, Charles MacNulty, a hospice volunteer and ex-US Army medic, e-mailed Connie Houseweart with a request. He was working with Fred Johnson, a 91-year old Marine and resident of Walnut Creek, CA, who participated in the invasion of Okinawa. Charles was hoping to find information about the unit Fred served with on Okinawa. Connie forwarded the e-mail to our Public Relations Officer, Jim Monbeck.

The information that Charles provided was a bit sketchy – it included something about a dragon on Fred’s patch – but it was enough for Jim to figure out Fred had served with an artillery unit of the 111 Amphibious Corps. He even found the actual dragon patch and sent it to Charles. With this, Charles had a plaque made for Fred. He even found a Marine – Sgt. Kenneth Rick from the recruiting depot in Pleasant Hills, CA – to present it to Fred. (Note: Sgt. Rick has a Silver Star and Purple Heart from two tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq.) Fred’s daughter, Janet Moore, reports it was a wonderful day for her father; he was very surprised and honored with the presentation. Sadly, Fred passed away on April 20, 2015. Nice work, Jim, Charles, and Sgt. Rick!



6MarDiv veteran, Fred Johnson (seated) with Marine Sgt. Kenneth Rick (in uniform) and members of Fred’s family

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## 2016—2017 Sixth Marine Division Scholarships

Applications for the 2016—2017 school year will be taken from January 1 through March 1, 2016. Grandchildren are welcome to create accounts on the website at [www.mcsf.org](http://www.mcsf.org). They will then receive an e-mail when the next application season begins. Marines will need to provide a copy of their DD214 and proof of their membership in the Sixth Marine Division Association to their grandchild to confirm their eligibility. The application process is entirely the responsibility of the grandchild.

If you have any questions, please contact Bob McGowan at (412) 341-9219 or [chmcg11@aol.com](mailto:chmcg11@aol.com).

## 2015—2016 Scholarship Recipients

Recipient	School	Marine Grandparent
Corey J. Aday	Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Private First Class Richard Anderson USMC
Kimberly Bianco	James Madison University	Corporal Angelo Bianco USMC
Nicholas Bianco	VA Commonwealth University	Corporal Angelo Bianco USMC
Nicholas Dagrosa	George Mason University	Private First Class Harry Heath USMC
Hayley Feightner	University of Dayton	Private First Class Douglas Gordon USMC
Melissa Maskal	Pennsylvania State University	Corporal Wilbur Maskal USMC
Timothy McKnight	Ohio State University	Private First Class Harry McKnight USMC
Eric Roberts	Lock Haven University of PA	Staff Sergeant Richard Roberts USMC
John F. Siebert	Texas A&M University	Lt. Colonel Kenneth Siebert USMC (Ret.)
Kevin Slocum	Boston College	Corporal Thomas Santero USMC



# TAPS

All of us in the Sixth Marine Division Association extend our sympathy to the family and friends of those listed below. May they rest in peace.

Baller, Dominick	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-2-D	01/04/2015
Baller, Thomas	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-3-G	07/07/2007
Bryington, Jack C.	6 <sup>th</sup> Engineer Bn	Unknown
Cavallaro, Salvatore	1 <sup>st</sup> Military Police	Unknown
Fruin, Alden	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar-2-F	04/24/1996
Fruin, Eunice H.	Widow of Alden Fruin	07/21/2013
Henry, Harold M.	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-1-C	08/01/2015
Hilbun, Herbert A.	6 <sup>th</sup> Marine Div	10/04/2015
Holt, William	6 <sup>th</sup> Marine Div	Unknown
Johnson, Fred	6 <sup>th</sup> Marine Div	04/20/2015
Lee, Sr. John (Jack)	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar-2-H	08/12/2015
Sokoloskie, Edward E.	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-2-F	09/30/2015
Louie Stringham	Wife of Charlie Stringham	10/31/2015
Terry, Howard	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-2-F	07/15/2015
Tucker, Ralph	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-3-I	04/29/2015
Turner, Jr., Eric	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-3-G	07/26/2015
Turpin, Kenneth	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar-1-C	Unknown
Jacob M. Vandivier	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar-Wpns Co	10/24/2015

## Reporting Deaths

Deaths should be reported as soon as you can to:

**Flo Dornan**  
**Membership Manager**  
**817-275-1552**  
**sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net**

**AND**

**Harry McKnight**  
**Chaplain**  
**614-866-3456**  
**harrym1677@aol.com**

## Ralph E. Tucker

Ralph E. Tucker, 89, of Cambridge, Ohio died on April 29, 2015. After graduating from high school, Ralph served in the Sixth Marine Division from 1944-46, participating in the battle for Okinawa and the occupation of China. After the war, Ralph married his high school sweetheart, Margaret Wodich, and earned a degree in accounting. He worked as a CPA for more than sixty years, since 1983 with his son in Tucker and Tucker CPAs. During his career, he was dedicated to the development of Guernsey Memorial Hospital, setting up its first accounting system. He was a charter member of the hospital's Centurion Club, served on the board of the Central National Bank, and was a member of the Cambridge City Board of Education. Ralph is survived by his wife, a daughter, a son, and two granddaughters.

## Herbert A. Hilbun

Herbert A. Hilbun, 92, of Memphis, TN died on October 4, 2015. An outstanding athlete, Herb was selected to the All-Memphis high school team in 1940 and 1941. In 1992, he was inducted into the Memphis Amateur Sports Hall of Fame. He was also an avid golfer. A member of the Sixth Marine Division, he was involved in several island campaigns in the Pacific. Herb was a member of Cross Roads United Methodist Church where he served on the church board. He also worked with the Boy Scouts and served in many leadership positions. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Bettye Jane, two sons, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

# Message from the Membership Manager



The 2015 Reunion is over and from what I understand it was once again a wonderful and memorable reunion. And what a surprise to be able to leave the reunion knowing the plans already for the 2016 Reunion in Norman, OK. I am looking forward to being able to attend next year's reunion and enjoy the activities and old friends – some of which have become friends from telephone conversations.

I feel as though I am constantly repeating myself but if it results in action, it is worthwhile. Whenever you learn of a buddy's passing, please notify Chaplain McKnight and me. By doing so, Chaplain McKnight can send the condolences of the Association to the family, and I can update the Association's roster and remove the name from an active status. One of the best reasons is so our veteran will be remembered at the next reunion at the Memorial Service.

One other necessary reminder is that we are coming closer to the end of 2015, which means if you haven't paid for the 2016 newsletter, this could be your last *Striking Sixth*! To know your status, turn this newsletter over to the back and check your label and look at the information just above your name. Shown there is your membership identification number, unit or membership status, expiration of dues and lastly expiration of your subscription to the *Striking Sixth* in that order. It would also be a good time to check your dues status if you aren't a Life Member.

I wish you all Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas.

Respectfully submitted,  
Flo Dornan  
Membership Manager  
817-275-1552  
[sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net)

## MEMBERSHIP STATUS @ October 29, 2015

Regular Members	1,165
Associate Members	585
Lineal Descendants	142
Honorary Members	8
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP (dues paid for 2015-2020)	1,900

## NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS @ October 29, 2015

Paid for 2015	117
Paid for 2016-2024	146
Honorary Members	8

## New Members

DENNY, Hudson Hugh ID #6220  
Associate LD Life Member  
Great Grandson of Harry G. Gann  
(22<sup>nd</sup> Mar-1-G)  
P.O. Box 465  
Graham, TX 76450  
[steve@wlarcompoany.com](mailto:steve@wlarcompoany.com)

PETRIELLO, Joseph, ID #6222  
Associate LD Life Member  
Grandson of Sam Petriello (15<sup>th</sup> Mar-4-L)  
3103 Markle Road  
Norristown, PA 19403

REEVES, William B., ID #6221  
Regular Annual Member (29<sup>th</sup> Mar-3-G)  
Betty A. (Spouse)  
102 Yale Road  
Voorhees, NJ 08043  
856-767-2716

## Reminder—Newsletter Subscriptions for 2016 Are Due December 31

Don't forget to send your \$10 annual subscription dues to Flo if you want to continue to receive the newsletter in 2016. Even if you are a life member of the Association, you still need to pay for the newsletter each year.

Annual association dues (also \$10) are also due December 31 if you are not a life member.

Please use the form on the facing page and mail to Flo at the address on the form.



# Membership Application / Change of Address Form

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Battalion \_\_\_\_\_ Regiment \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If this is a change of address, enter your 4 digit ID#, which is on the left, right above your name, on the mailing label \_\_\_\_\_

Old Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

If you are applying for membership as an Associate Member, provide name of relative who served with the Sixth Marine Division:

Relative's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

His unit within the Division, if known \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues (\$10 per year).....Check if Member \_\_\_\_\_ or Associate Member \_\_\_\_\_.....Amount due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Life Membership (\$75).....Check if Member \_\_\_\_\_ or Associate Member \_\_\_\_\_.....Amount due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Newsletter Subscriptions

Subscription to the Striking Sixth Newsletter of the Sixth Marine Division (\$10 per year).....Amount due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues and subscriptions to the newsletter are based on a calendar year

Additional copies of the newsletter are \$3.50

## Donations

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**Mail to: Florence R. Dornan, Membership Manager, 704 Cooper Court, Arlington, TX 76011**

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Pete Stinson, Regional Director, Operation Homefront PA/DE/NJ & Northeast, with Sam Petriello

## Sam Petriello Honored on USS New Jersey

Now serving as a museum on the Camden, NJ waterfront, the USS New Jersey once shelled targets on Okinawa during WWII. On September 11, 2015, the battleship was the site of a “Faces of Valor” event honoring military veterans. Operation Homefront, a national non-profit that provides emergency and financial assistance to veterans, presented an Air Force veteran with a mortgage-free home during the event. The charity also introduced and recognized our own Sam Petriello for his service during WWII, earning him a standing ovation from the crowd.

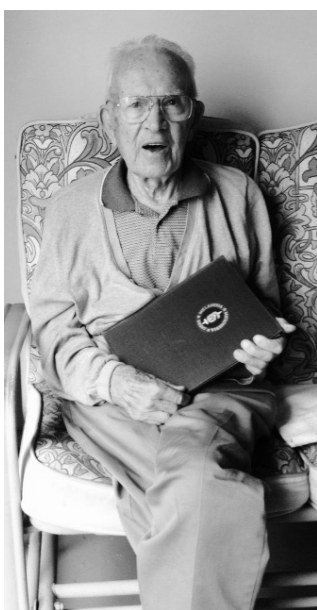
## Watson Crumbie Recognized by Texas House of Representatives

In recognition of his service in the Marine Corps during WWII and the Korean War, the Texas House of Representatives honored Watson Crumbie with a proclamation and made him a honorary member of the House. Watson’s reaction was typical of 6MarDiv vets:

*I must somehow convince you and my friends that I am not a hero. I am a survivor. What I did was nothing different than what any Marine did under the same circumstances, and there were thousands.*

*I am one of a very few known to be still living, after seventy years, from the units I served with in WW II and the Korean War. We are the survivors. We came home; the Heroes did not.*

## Percy Thomas Whitney Turns 97!



Pictured to the left is Percy Thomas Whitney, shortly before his 97th birthday in October. He is holding the Sixth Marine Division book sent to him by Jim Monbeck. Obviously, he looks fantastic, and his daughter, Cheryl, reports that she has to jog to keep up with him. Currently living in New Hampshire, this proud Marine was in "A" Battery, 1st Battalion, 15th Marine Regiment.



Dave Hilner, Bob McGowan, and Marty Gromley

## Mini-Reunion in Brookville

Marty Gromley planned to attend the 6MarDiv reunion in Columbus this year, but health problems caused him to cancel at the last minute. Marty has made a lot of friends over the years, and his absence was felt by many. Fellow Pennsylvania residents Connie Houseweart, Dave Hilner, and Carroll and Bob McGowan missed seeing Marty so much they decided to visit him in Brookville the following weekend. After meeting Marty in his apartment and going out for lunch, they drove out to the country to see the cabin Marty built many years ago. Beautiful cabin and beautiful country! Perhaps we could talk Marty into hosting the reunion at his cabin in 2017!



**2016 Annual Reunion**  
**Embassy Suites ~ Norman, Oklahoma**  
**August 22-28, 2016**

### Special Discounted Room Rates

Single—\$89, Double—\$109, Triple—\$119, Quad—\$129 (plus tax)

### Hotel Amenities

- Free Parking
  - Free made-to-order breakfast buffet daily
  - Happy hour with free drinks and snacks daily
  - Full service restaurant and bar
  - Starbucks coffee shop
  - Shops and restaurants in close proximity to hotel
- Note: All events, excluding optional tours, will be at the Embassy Suites.

### Location

- 12 miles south of Oklahoma City
- 15 miles from the Will Rogers Airport (transportation from the airport to the hotel will be provided)

### Norman Area Activities

- Sgt Grit Marine Specialties Store
- Sam Noble Museum of Nature and Science
- National Weather Center
- Riverwind Casino (transportation is provided by the Casino)
- Winery Tours

### Oklahoma City Area Activities

- Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum (Murrah Federal Building bombing)
- Bricktown
- Oklahoma History Center
- 45th Infantry Museum
- OKC Dodgers Baseball (schedule not yet available)



**2016 Reunion Co-Chairs**  
**Pam Bloustine & Joan Willauer**

These two know how to throw a party!  
Many of you will remember the last reunion they hosted — Oklahoma City in 2008. It got rave reviews for being well-organized and tons of fun. Expect another great one in 2016!

**Look for more details**  
**in the next Striking Sixth**

# **Sixth Marine Division Association**

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## **Striking Sixth Newsletter**

**Fall 2015**

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**Oklahoma...where the wind comes sweeping down the plains  
and where the Sixth Marine Division Association  
will hold its 2016 Reunion!**

**Embassy Suites ~ Norman, Oklahoma  
August 22-28, 2016**

See page 27 (inside back cover) for more information.