

STRIKING

SIXTH

1st Provisional Marine Brigade Newsletter



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Summer 2016

Division Colors Destined for the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico

Symbols are important. They stand for something. In the case of the Sixth Marine Division, there is no more important symbol than the division flag. The one that flew over division headquarters and the division cemetery in Okinawa. The one that was carried by the color guard alongside the U.S. flag in the streets of China and at the Japanese surrender ceremony in Tsingtao. The one that was retired when the division was disbanded.

Thanks to the efforts of the late Jack Hoag (6th Jasco), the flag was restored, framed and donated to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Museum (MCRDM) in San Diego many years ago. The colors are no long on display there, but if you ask the staff, they will let you see them. (Look for the door marked Museum Staff on the first floor.)

We are grateful to the MCRDM for caring for the colors all this time. However, the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC), which did not exist when the colors were donated to the MCRDM, is the natural home for the flag. We are happy to report that the NMMC has agreed to accept and conserve the colors and consider them for display once the expansion of the museum is complete in 2018. In addition, they have agreed to pay for the shipping and conservation work. Until 2018, the colors will remain in safekeeping in the San Diego museum.

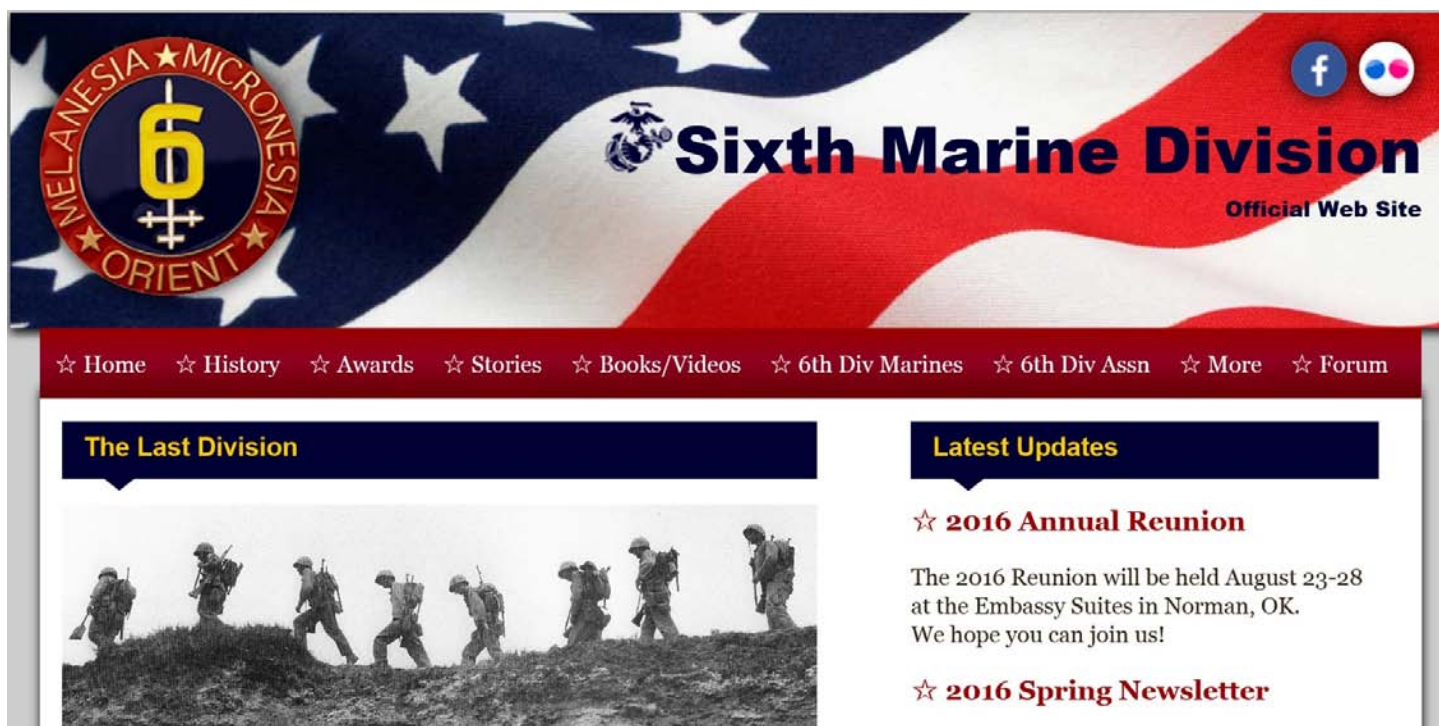


Micha Crumbie, grandson of Watson Crumbie (29th Mar-1-C) stands beside the division colors at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Museum in San Diego

Don't forget to make your hotel reservations and send in your registration form for our reunion in Oklahoma, Aug. 23-28. The deadline is July 25. Please see pages 12-17 for more information.

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Expanded Website Is Up and Running — Take a Look!

It's taken a while, and it's not finished yet, but the new and improved Sixth Marine Division website is up and ready for visitors. We hope you'll stop by.

We know the day is coming — hopefully not soon — when there are no Sixth Division Marines around to tell their story. We want to make sure the memory of what they accomplished and sacrificed lives on after they are gone. This is a story that needs to be told — and remembered — and the web is the place to do it.

With that goal in mind, we have expanded the material on the site:

History and Awards — We have a long way to go, but we plan to tell the whole story of the Sixth: from the battles they fought to the awards they won, from Guadalcanal to China.

Stories — Many of the Sixth Division Marines have written about their experiences, and we need to preserve these stories. You'll find them here, along with stories by others. We only have a few so far, but we plan to add many, many more.

Books and Videos — We'll show you some great books and videos on the Sixth, the Marines, and World War II. (We have many more to add.)

Sixth Division Marines — Here you'll find a list of the Marines we believe are still alive. And we'll update Taps regularly.

Sixth Division Association — Look here for information about reunions, copies of the current and past newsletters, how to join the Association, etc.

More — Lots more stuff including recent news about the Division, information about the Marine Corps, links to other sites, etc.

Forum — This was a popular feature of the old site. We intend to bring it back soon, so you'll have a place to ask questions and correspond with others who are interested in the Division.

We are grateful to the pioneers who got the website off the ground many years ago, especially the late **Jack Dornan** (4th Mar-2-F), **Bill Pierce** (29th Mar-Weapons) and **Lucy Young** (daughter-in-law of the late James L. Young Jr., 22nd Mar-3-K).

We also thank **Joe Singleton** (29th & 6th Mar-2-F) who is directing the website expansion. Without his vision, this project would be nowhere.

Please send suggestions and material for the website to Joe, Connie Houseweart, and Carroll McGowan (see contact info on the website).

www.sixthmarinedivision.com



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| 6th Medical Battalion | Vacant |
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| 6th Pioneer Battalion | Marvin Gromley |
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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, death notices, and record changes should be mailed with an application (see page 25) to:

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Please make checks payable to:

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For more information, please contact Flo at:

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sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net

**There's still time to sign up for a fun-filled
reunion in Norman, Oklahoma —
the deadline is July 25.**

Look for all the details on pages 12-17.

Hope you can make it!

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

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Elegy in Okinawa

by Doug Struck, *Washington Post*, 20 July 2000

Editor's note: I just came across this story which ran 16 years ago. It features Neal McCallum (29th Mar-2-F) and is just as interesting now as it was then.

Yoshinaka Yamamoto crouched in the island underbrush and trained his binoculars on the incoming ships. The 23-year-old lieutenant, already battle-hardened and twice wounded in China, knew the suffering promised by the huge Allied armada poised to attack Okinawa on that April dawn 55 years ago.

The artillery barrage and bombers already had left much of the 454-square-mile Japanese island blackened and smoldering. Still, Yamamoto was confident that in bayonet-to-bayonet combat, the Japanese might prevail. What he saw through his binoculars rocked him.

"For the first time in my life, I saw ships coming out of ships. They would get to shallow water, and start to move on their own," he said of the American amphibious landing craft. "I had never thought of that idea. I was stunned. I said, my god, what kind of enemy do we face?"

Tomorrow, when Bill Clinton is scheduled to visit the solemn peace memorial on Okinawa commemorating a battle that helped end World War II, he will be the first U.S. president to visit a war memorial in Japan. He will walk among shoulder-high granite slabs inscribed with the names of the people — on both sides — who lost their lives in the fearful Battle of Okinawa.

The slabs list 14,006 American fatalities, 82 other Allied personnel, and 75,219 Japanese soldiers. But the complete horror of the battle is often suggested by the legends of mass suicides and of kamikaze bombers attacking our fleet. The number of Okinawans, most of them civilians, who died: 148,289.

For most of the world, Clinton's visit is just another ceremony marking just another bloody page in the history books. But for those who lived through that battle, the ceremony at the Oki-

nawa Memorial Peace Park will bring back personal memories of a time so horrendous as to defy memory. And, they say, the world would do well to heed those lessons.

The young Lt. Yamamoto noticed something else as he watched the American soldiers stream ashore. They were eating as they attacked. Through his binoculars he clearly saw their jaws moving up and down.

"We didn't know about chewing gum."

The nervous, gum-chewing Americans moved ashore with surprising ease. It was their last respite. Outgunned, the Japanese army planned a trap to lure the attackers inland and ambush from the sides. They carried out the plan, but at fearsome cost. The American artillery was so dense, it shredded the countryside and filled the air with flying metal, making movement during daylight impossible.

"The bombs were like rain," Yamamoto recalled. As he led a nighttime expedition to reinforce a Japanese artillery unit, they were caught by the merciless dawn and its escort of explosives.

"The shells came in and the men simply vanished. The land, and the trees, and the men simply disappeared, as though they were extinguished," he said. Of 800 in the relief force, 350 sur-



Marines land on Okinawa, April 1, 1945

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Elegy in Okinawa

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vived; of the 51 men in Yamamoto's unit, 43 were killed that day.

"We were told if anyone was wounded in the stomach, there was no hope. They would die. I remember a soldier who was wounded in the stomach, and another soldier wanted to bring him back. The wounded man blew himself up with a grenade, but the guy who tried to rescue him was killed as well."

Death was often not left to chance, but to perceived honor. In late April, Yamamoto was among troops fighting a grudging retreat by the Sixth Marines. He watched one of his soldiers strap 20 pounds of explosives on his back and throw himself under the tracks of an attacking tank.

The Japanese dug themselves into caves and foxholes. But there was little safety; one shell peppered Yamamoto in his hole, leaving him wounded in 15 places, his left hand a bloodied pulp. He tied his arm with a tourniquet. He had a grim choice: If the wound did not claim him, gangrene could set in within a day.

"I knew I would die. So at 6 p.m., I got out of the hole. I took my sword and cut off my arm. There was an old pine tree there, and I put my left arm on the tree and cut it with my right. I had banded it so tight, I felt nothing. I remember the date—April 29, the Emperor's birthday."

He made his way south, eventually to a network of caves for the

wounded. But as the situation worsened, the wounded men were given cyanide or told to use their grenades on themselves. Instead, a nurse put Yamamoto on her back and fled. Of those 3,000 wounded soldiers, only two survived, he said.

Yamamoto found a group of other soldiers and retreated to a cave on the southern cliffs. It was June 28. Finally, too weak to go on, the soldiers surrendered. They emerged with white flags from the cave on Aug. 29, 1945 — two weeks after Japan's surrender had officially ended



6th Division Marines blast caves on Okinawa

the war.

He was married, had a son, and now has three grandchildren. Five years ago, after careers in textiles and education, he decided to attend the opening of the Peace Memorial, where he met some American soldiers.

"There was a big, macho American guy there, who asked me to step outside. I thought he might hit me. But his right hand was artificial. He said, 'Touch my left leg.' It was artificial, too. He said, 'Maybe it was you who did it.' We both started to cry."

Neal McCallum didn't have to go. He was only 17 in 1944, and his four older brothers were serving in the war. One was killed. But McCallum volunteered for the Marines 10 days after his birthday. He was trained as a mortarman.

On Easter Sunday 1945, when McCallum was 18 years and 20 days old, they landed on Okinawa at Green Beach, scared and ready. "You didn't expect to get killed. You expected the other guy to get killed," he said.

The surprisingly easy landing soon turned nightmarish as the troops moved inland and were caught in cross-fire. One night, as McCallum huddled 15 feet from a bloated corpse, pinned down by artillery, "I remember thinking that there had to be a better way to settle disputes than this."

Outside Naha, he and the troops worked to lay final claim to a blood-soaked hill called Sugarloaf—a

place taken and lost nearly a dozen times by each side. Sugarloaf was an intimate battle, one of men throwing grenades at other men a few yards away.

"At nighttime, we would strap a box of grenades on our back, and haul them up the hill" to the men dug in at the front.

"I remember seeing Marines stacked three deep, wrapped in ponchos, their blood dried, legs contorted. It was really demoralizing," he said. "At the end, we were fighting for the United

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Elegy in Okinawa

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States, sure, but we were really fighting for each other. We were fighting just to stay alive, and we would do anything to stay alive."

On June 19, their 49th day on Okinawan soil, the Marines took Sugarloaf Hill for the last time. McCallum was among them. Victorious, they waited for another regiment to arrive. When the reinforcements came, McCallum turned to leave, and a Japanese shell exploded nearby, sending steel whistling through his right calf.

"A corpsman put morphine into me, so I was feeling pretty good. I remember I was just worried about all my souvenirs. But the corpsman ran everybody else off and I never got them back." McCallum was airlifted to Guam — his first airplane ride — and then Hawaii, San Francisco and finally Portsmouth, Va., to recuperate. The pain is with him still.

Chiyo Kamieda was 16 when bombs destroyed her school and the airport where she and the other schoolgirls were digging anti-aircraft emplacements in the 100-degree weather. An officer ordered her to a cave to help care for wounded soldiers.

"When I first arrived at the entrance of the cave, there was the awful smell of urine, and blood

and rotting flesh. I vomited, but I became accustomed to the smell."

"When the wounded first came in," she said, "they had the strength to drink. But they would gradually lose strength even to sip water."

"At first I was thinking, when will the Japanese military come to rescue us? . . . I think it was June when I heard the officers talking for the first time about who would take care of their families after they were dead.

"I was told if we were captured



Okinawa Peace Memorial Park

we would be cruelly treated by the Americans, and I firmly believed that. I begged for a grenade and they finally gave me one. I put it in my medical kit. I wanted to die when the time came. It was an honor to die for your country. Everyone said, never be a prisoner. Everyone thought that way."

As the end neared, an officer told her to leave the cave and join her parents. One night, the American troops were less than 100 yards away, setting fire to houses. Kamieda said, "I cannot go further. This is the place to

die. I opened my medical kit to find my grenade, but it wasn't there. My mother said, your father took it away. I shouted at him, but all he would say is that life is a treasure. By throwing out my grenade, he saved my life."

But not his own. On the morning of June 20, Kamieda and her father edged out of a shallow cave to look for water. Kamieda heard a single gunshot and saw her father fall. She looked up and saw the rifleman as he ran away. He was Japanese.

"I would like to believe that he did this shooting by mistake," she reflects.

Her inner conflict is shared by many Okinawans. Although their island had been part of Japan since 1879, the locals were suspect in the eyes of some Japanese soldiers. A

half-century later, the bitter feeling of treachery lingers.

"Now it was only me and my mother," Kamieda said. They hid in a large grave vault with several wounded soldiers. At nightfall, gunfire was all around, and they heard Americans speaking Japanese ordering them to surrender. Finally, someone threw a bomb into the vault.

Amazingly, she awoke hugging her mother, both alive. Around her, the soldiers had died. The two women stumbled from the

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Charles J. Gambill, Jr. 4th Bn, 15th Marines

Greetings!

I am the grandson of Charles J. Gambill, Jr., LtCol, USMCR (Ret) who died in 2011 at the age of 90. When my sister, cousins, and I were kids, we learned my grandfather was a Marine. As we got older, we learned he was part of the 6th Marine Division in Okinawa. That's about all we knew. According to my Dad, my grandfather never spoke of his time in the war when he was a child.

Always curious about his time in the Marine Corps, in particular when he was in Okinawa, I got

on the internet and found the 6th Marine Division website. There I found an article about PFC Harold Gonsalves, one of six Medal of Honor recipients from the 6th Marine Division.

The description of how PFC Gonsalves earned the MOH was similar to an event my grandfather mentioned at my oldest cousin's graduation from Parris Island in 1996. My grandfather pointed to a WWII Marine MOH recipient's picture and stated something like, "it's about time they recognized this." He gave the impression he had direct knowledge of the event.

The article says PFC Gonsalves was with an officer in charge

and one other Marine when he earned the MOH. All three were in the 4th Battalion, 15th Marines. My grandfather was in 4th Battalion, 15th Marines, and I am wondering if he might have been that officer.

If anyone has any information about this incident or anything else regarding my grandfather's service in the Marine Corps, I would appreciate hearing from him/her.

Thank you,
Mike Gambill
mmg3201@gmail.com
P.O. Box 1134
DeLand, FL 32721
(804) 370-6026

Elegy in Okinawa

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grave into the bright sunlight, to what they were sure would be their death.

"I crawled to the feet of a huge American. He had no shirt on. He had a full beard, and was sunburned all over. It was exactly the image of the red devil we Japanese had feared. But he turned out to be a gentle red devil.

"He offered me his canteen. I was so thirsty, but I thought it was poison," she said. "I said, in English: 'No, thank you.' But he understood my thoughts. He drank from it first, and then I willingly drank, and so did my mother."

Kamieda, now 71, taught in a

Tokyo high school after the war. Often she would be asked to talk about her experiences, and those of her classmates, many of whom leaped from cliffs to their deaths at the battle's end, not far from the Peace Memorial and the site of President Clinton's speech. Of 300 in her school, 98 survived.

"I usually avoided talking about it," she said. "But in 1995, I started working with some Okinawan and Japanese high school students who gathered for peace. I looked in their faces and had to tell the truth."

"Every day my leg has ached," McCallum said. "I can live with it, though. I can accept it. It was a small price to pay to survive." Now 73, he went on to serve as a U.S. Customs agent for 20 years in Florida. He sailed solo across the Atlantic, and four more

times with a crewmate. He worked in the Soviet Union for a few years.

He goes to the annual reunion of the Sixth Division Marines, but until this month he had never returned to Okinawa.

"Okinawa has always been a kind of dark corner in my mind. I never really wanted to go," he said as he stopped in Tokyo en route to Okinawa. "I'm not expecting much. I'm going to go to Sugarloaf. I know there are buildings and development there. I'll probably spend 30 minutes there, and that will clear my mind.

"But 55 years later, I'm still saying the same thing I did there," he said. "We need a better way to settle things."

Kenneth L. Webb

Dear Ms. McGowan,

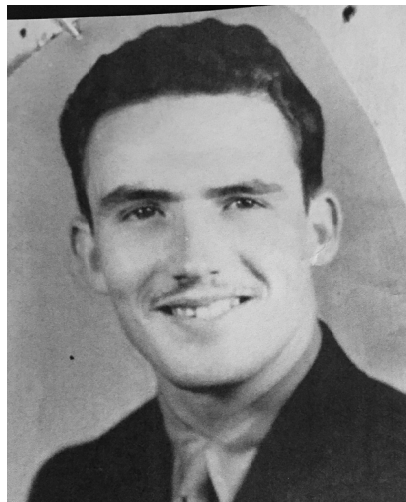
My great uncle was Pharmacist Mate 2nd Class Kenneth Leon Webb, who was a corpsman for 2d Bn 22nd Marines. I would like to hear from anyone who might have served with him. He was with Fox Company 2/22 when they went ashore at Guam and on Okinawa. He was killed at Sugar Loaf Hill on the night of 14 May 1945 and was awarded the Silver Star posthumously. I have obtained documents on his service from family and the National Archives, but I would love to know if anybody remembers him or has any stories about him. It would mean a lot to me and my family. I have enclosed a picture of him.

Thank you,
Rachel Smith
rlfs@ymail.com
2371 Mt. Vinson Road
Stantonville, TN 38379



Roger A. Berard

My late grandfather was in the 6th Marine Division. His name is Roger Armand Berard, and he was from New York, NY. I am sending a photo of him and his buddies that I believe was taken in Okinawa. My grandfather is the one kneeling in front. Right after the photo was taken, everyone but my grandfather was killed. (There were originally seven guys in the photo, but some of them were cut off.) My



Kenneth Webb (22nd Mar-2-F)

grandfather was bayoneted in the back of the neck and shot in the head. Amazingly he survived and was the only one of his buddies to make it home. God bless them all.

My grandfather never talked with his family about his time in Guadalcanal and Okinawa. Not even to his friends at the American legion. I remember as a kid the police having to tie him to a chair to calm him. He hated tick-



Roger Berard, front, with some buddies before they were killed

ing clocks, crying babies, and fireworks. No one in my family knows much of anything except what my grandfather said while he was drinking.

I'm proud of him, and I want to pass that on to my daughter. She is graduating in May and wants join the Marines. If anyone has any information about him, please contact me.

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Roger Berard, top and far right above

Striking Sixth

MAIL CALL



On Top of Sugar Loaf

Flo Dornan, thank you very much for sending me back issues of the newsletter. You do a great job; it's appreciated.

The article about Harry Bertram "They'd Just Fight Until You Killed Them" and "My Time as a Marine" by Watson Crumbie (29th Mar-1-C) and Harry McKnight "Remembers" are all excellent. However, I was in Dog Co 2nd Bn 1 Plt, and we were on top of the Loaf and dug in between dead bodies. The smell was just terrible. We were relieved by the 4th Marines. Only those who were there would understand!! Just wanted to let you know that the 29th took the Hill and the 29th holds it still.

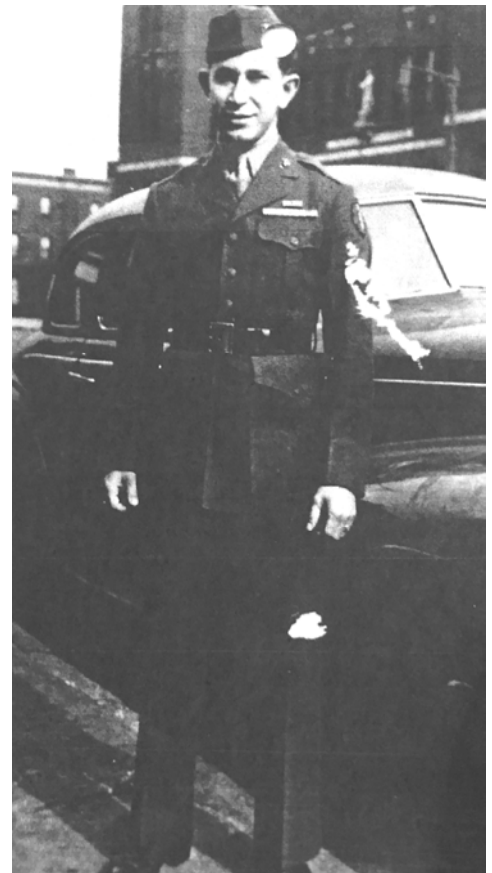
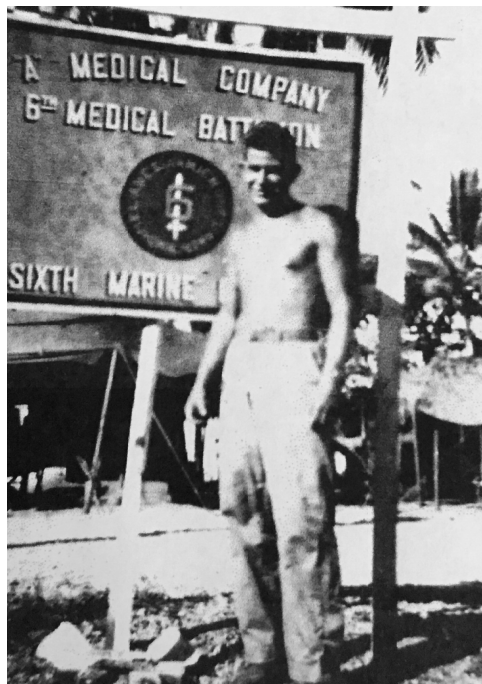
Respectfully,
Monte Shawver
305 Lakeshore Drive
Battle Creek, MI 49015

Special Thanks to Gerry Milillo (4th Mar-2-F)

Editor's note:

Gerry Milillo has sent me numerous photos and materials about his service during World War II. I thought I'd share a few of his wonderful photos.

Thanks, Gerry!



Gerry Milillo
above: in uniform
left & below: on Guadalcanal, 1944
below left: seated at table second
from right on Yokosuka Naval Base,
1945



Moms and Dads — Is This What You Want for Your Daughters?

BILL STEED REACTS TO THE CONCEPT OF WOMEN IN COMBAT

Editor's note: Bill Steed has 40 years in the Marine Corps Infantry. He and his wife, Jean (also a Marine), are members of the Sixth Marine Division Association. Jean's father was a member of the Sixth.

From the Marine Corps Times:

In a January 1, 2016 memo to Marine Commandant Gen. Robert Neller, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus requested a "detailed plan" on how the service will fully integrate its boot camp and Officer Candidate School. The plan was due January 15 with implementation to begin by April 1, the memo states.

"The Department of the Navy's implementation plan must include gender integration of Marine Corps enlisted recruit training and Officer Candidate School," Mabus wrote. "In this submission, identify where, if anywhere, this training is already integrated, where it is separate, and specific steps that you will take to fully integrate these trainings."

In a second memo from Mabus to Neller on the same day, the SecNav directed the Marine Corps to conduct a full review of its military occupational specialty titles in an effort to ensure that they are gender neutral.

Some members of the military don't have the slightest clue about combat. This includes many of the General Officers.

Congress has the constitutional responsibility to set the rules and regulations governing the armed forces (Article I, Section 8). Unfortunately, Congress is as cowardly as the Joint Chiefs.

NOBODY has any clue what they are getting themselves into if they've never been in combat PERIOD. Anyone who claims "they know what they're getting themselves into" is a complete and total moron.

The one portion of society – and more importantly, of the military – that knows most intimately what is required to be successful in combat is the Infantryman. We're not talking about driving to combat. We're not talking about manning a turret in an MRAP. We're not talking about being an outer cordon or convoy security. We're talking about the Infantryman. Moving over extreme distances, with extreme weight, over extreme terrain, under extreme circumstances.

Let me be clear about three facts: First, all battles and all wars are won, in the end, by the infantryman. Second, the infantryman always bears the brunt; his casualties are heavier and he suffers greater extremes of discomfort and fatigue than the other [combat] arms. Third, the art of the infantryman is less stereotyped, and far harder to

acquire in modern war, than that of any other arm, up close and personal.

We're talking sustainability here. Staying power. Not just from combat, but simply from moving TO combat. Living in and out of combat outposts (Fighting Holes) or patrol bases. Doing daily foot patrols over some of the most rugged terrain on earth. Walking dozens of miles a day with a limited supply channel and **zero hygiene**. Carrying 70 pounds of gear for a two-day patrol. Carrying up to – or even more than – 90 pounds of gear for extended patrols on an average of four hours of sleep a day, for weeks or months on end.

The military hands out condoms as if they were candy, but accidents happen. In the 1990s, Navy Captain Martha Whitehead testified before a military commission that women were three times more likely to be "non-deployable" than men, and that 47% of the time it was because they were pregnant.

In addition to the risks inherent in combat, troops experience many environmental hazards. For example, Vietnam is a tropical country with high temperatures, high humidity and a monsoon climate. Many troops were constantly wet or damp, unable to get dry for days. Opportunities for bathing did not exist, and skin hygiene was poor. Under those conditions, bacterial and fungal infections of the feet were a major cause of temporary

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Moms and Dads

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disability. Skin disease was a leading cause of outpatient visits and hospitalization. Throughout the war, disease accounted for 70.6% of all medical admissions, with the remaining divided between battle casualties (15.6%) and non-battle injuries (13.8%).

Zouris, Wade, and Magno (2008) reported that nearly 16% of all disease and non-battle injury diagnoses for military women in Operation Iraqi Freedom were genitourinary (GU) related. These numbers do not include military women who either self-treated or did not seek any form of treatment. A recent study about gynecological health care in Iraq found that urinary symptoms were reported in nearly half (189/372) of the military women surveyed (Nielson et al., 2009). Another study concerning GU symptoms during deployment found that of 841 military women surveyed, 18.4% reported having UTIs, and 87% (n = 732) reported experiencing GU symptoms (such as itching, discharge, or foul smell) at least once during their deployment. Due to these symptoms, 48% noticed inferior work performance, and 24% lost time from work (Lowe & Ryan-Wenger, 2000). **Remember these women are not in the infantry.**

Let me make myself absolutely clear about combat. It's not equal. It's not rational. It's not fair. It can't be reasoned with. It's a bitch. It will find ways to kill you. If you are weak for even a second it will kill you. It's about killing. It's about destruction. It's about barbarism and brutality. Anyone who thinks there should be "fair" in combat is an idiot and has never REALLY been in combat. Anyone who thinks it's nice and clean, where Marines die quickly and then quietly go into death is dangerously naive. It's horrible. Marines scream above the sound of machine gun fire. Men cry openly over the loss of their buddies. Body parts of human beings, both friend and foe, litter the battlefield. Cordite, burning flesh, and feces stings in your nostrils. It's not pretty. It's not glorious. It's not anything other than a tragedy. Infantrymen know this. We know what the price is. To overcome these obstacles, we have to be crystal clear on our objectives, abilities, strengths, AND weaknesses. There can be no illusions of grandeur. We cannot be lulled into complacency. One second of weakness, one instance of failing to **attack on time** can have severe ramifications for those involved.

Moms and Dads, is this what you want for your Daughters????

New Members

BELFIGLIO, Ralph, ID #6229
Grandson of Ralph Cortellessa
(6th Marine Division)
Associate LD Annual Member
49 Mott Avenue
New London, CT 06320
(917) 750-5348
rbelfiglio@mac.com

CARUSO, George, ID #6226
Regular Annual Member
(29th Mar-2-D)
5 Briarwood Road
Florham Park, NJ 07932
(973) 377-8772
Nudnick369@aol.com

LARSON, Craig, ID #6184
Associate Annual to Life
Member

SCHROEDER, Malcom,
ID #6224
Son of Marvin F. Schroeder
(6th JASCO)
Associate LD Life Member
217 Target Lane
Hubert, NC 28539
(760) 819-2936
buckstahoota@yahoo.com

SCHROEDER, Milton, ID #6225
Son of Marvin F. Schroeder
(6th JASCO)
Associate LD Life Member
P.O. Box 10281
Albuquerque, NM 87184-0281
(505) 898-4894
miltschr@prodigy.net

Joan and Pam are Ready to Welcome You to Oklahoma!

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION 2016 REUNION ~ AUGUST 23-28 ~ EMBASSY SUITES, NORMAN, OK

We've had some pretty great reunions over the years, and one of the best was Oklahoma in 2008. Joan Willauer and Pam Bloustine (pictured right) were the brains behind it, and they are back at work planning the 2016 reunion. We hope you'll be there!

Joan and Pam tell us the response so far has been terrific. If you haven't done it yet, **please send in your registration form ASAP**. It will make their planning so much easier.

The complete schedule is on page 14, and all the details are in the Spring 2016 *Striking Sixth* (available on the website if you can't find your copy). But here are the highlights:

TUESDAY

- Welcome Reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres and music

WEDNESDAY

- Field trip to the 45th Infantry Museum and the Murrah Federal Building Bombing Museum and Memorial with a buffet lunch

THURSDAY

- Field trip to the Sam Noble History Museum and National Weather Center with a catered lunch
- Buffet dinner with entertainment



FRIDAY

- Ladies Luncheon and Meeting
- Presentation by Staff Sergeant Jason Foust (this is NEW — see below)
- General Meeting & Auction

SATURDAY

- Memorial Service
- Group and family photos
- Grand Banquet

EVERY DAY AT THE EMBASSY SUITES

- Free breakfast for each hotel guest
- Our own Hospitality Room
- Complimentary happy hour

All activities except field trips are at the Embassy Suites

See Sixth Marine Division Uniform Collection at the Reunion!

You may remember reading about SSgt Jason Foust in the Spring 2016 *Striking Sixth* (pp. 10-11). He's the Marine with the passion for preserving material reminders of the Sixth Marine Division. SSgt Foust's uncle, Wiley Foust (22nd Mar-2-G), was KIA on Guam. Learning about his uncle sparked his interest in the Sixth.

SSgt Foust now owns an extensive collection of the Division's uniforms, which he loves to share with

Marines and others groups. Who better to share them with than Sixth Division Marines and their families and friends? We are thrilled to report that SSgt Foust will bring his uniforms to the reunion!



Reunion Reminders

IF YOU ARE GOING...

1. Make your hotel reservations — call (866) 577-1273 and mention Group Code SMD to get our special rates.
2. Send in your reservation form — it's on pages 15-16.
3. Make your transportation arrangements.
4. Contact our hosts if you have questions:

Pam Bloustine

e-mail: pamokwm@aol.com

cell: (405) 226-5688 (texts okay)

Joan Willauer

joanw.ok2@sbcglobal.net

home: (405) 292-3184

cell: (405) 833-4140

THE DEADLINE IS JULY 25

for hotel reservations and registration form.

But please send your form to Joan ASAP to help with planning.



Additional Thoughts...

- If you want to be picked up at the airport, remember to call Pam if your flight is delayed. We suggest putting her number in your cell phone right now: (405) 226-5688
- If you still have your badge from the last reunion, please bring it with you.
- Please refrain from wearing colognes and perfumes at the reunion, as we have a number of guests with allergies.
- Send in your registration form today! It will make life easier for Pam and Joan.

Everything You Need to Know About the Embassy Suites



- Address: 2501 Conference Drive, Norman 73069
- Phone: (866) 577-1273
- Website: norman.embassysuites.com
- Room rates: Single \$89, Double \$109, Triple \$119, Quad \$129, plus 13.75% tax
- All rooms are suites: small living room with full-size pullout sofa; separate bedroom with one king or two queen beds; and kitchenette with small refrigerator, coffee maker and microwave
- Group Code: SMD (required to get special rates)
- Reservation cut-off date: July 25 (after this date, rooms can be reserved by availability only)
- Special rates apply 3 days prior to and 3 days after the reunion
- Accessibility: There are just a small number of wheelchair accessible rooms, so if you need one, reserve early.
- Check in time: 3 pm; check out time: 12 noon
- Free parking
- Free WIFI
- Free made-to-order breakfast buffet daily
- Daily happy hour with free drinks and snacks
- Fitness room and indoor pool

Sixth Marine Division Association 2016 Reunion

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday, August 23

Cost per person

| | | |
|-----------------|--|-------------|
| 6-9 am | Free Breakfast at Hotel for each hotel guest | |
| 10 am-10 pm | Registration (in Hospitality Room) | |
| 10 am-10 pm | 6 th Hospitality Room (open all day) | |
| 5:30 pm-7:30 pm | Hotel Complimentary Happy Hour | |
| 6 pm-10 pm | "Welcome to Oklahoma" Meet & Greet - Hospitality Room heavy hors d'oeuvres, music & socializing | FREE |

Wednesday, August 24

| | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 6-9 am | Free Breakfast at Hotel for each hotel guest | |
| 10 am-5 pm | Registration (in Hospitality Room) | |
| 10 am-10 pm | 6 th Hospitality Room (open all day) | |
| 9:30 am-4 pm | Tours of 45th Infantry Museum & Murrah Federal Building Bombing Museum & Memorial; includes full buffet lunch at Lincoln Park Golf & Country Club between sites and bus transportation | \$35.00 |
| 5:30 pm-7:30 pm | Hotel Complimentary Happy Hour | |
| 7:30 pm-9 pm | Executive Board Meeting, Hotel | |

Thursday, August 25

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------|
| 6-9 am | Free Breakfast at Hotel for each hotel guest | |
| 10 am-3 pm | Registration (in Hospitality Room) | |
| 10 am-10 pm | 6 th Hospitality Room (open all day) | |
| 9:30 am-4 pm | Tours of Sam Noble History Museum & National Weather Center & NOAA; includes catered lunch served in the Atrium at NOAA and bus transportation | \$20.00 |
| 5:30 pm-7:30 pm | Hotel Complimentary Happy Hour | |
| 6:30 pm | "Breaking Bread Together" Buffet Dinner at Hotel Entertainment by Darci Farmer & Gary Owen | \$25.00 |

Friday, August 26

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------|
| 6-9 am | Free Breakfast at Hotel for each hotel guest | |
| 10 am-10 pm | 6 th Hospitality Room (open all day) | |
| 9 am-4 pm | Visit to Sgt Grit's Marine Specialties (in groups - prescheduled sign-up times) | FREE |
| 12 pm-2 pm | Ladies' Luncheon & Meeting | \$20.00 |
| 5:30 pm-7:30 pm | Hotel Complimentary Happy Hour | |
| 7 pm-10 pm | General Meeting & Auction in Hospitality Room | |

Saturday, August 27

| | | |
|--------------|--|----------------|
| 6-9 am | Free Breakfast at Hotel for each hotel guest | |
| 10 am | Memorial Service (at Hotel) Group and Family Photos following the Memorial Service | |
| 5:30-6:30 pm | Reception/Social Hour (Cash Bar) | |
| 6:30 pm | GRAND BANQUET — Dinner, Guest Speaker, Installation of Officers & Great Entertainment | \$45.00 |

Sixth Marine Division Association 2016 Reunion

REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Please Return This Form by July 25!

Name _____ Spouse/Guest Name _____

If Lineal Descendant, of Whom _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____ Cell phone (____) _____ Email _____

Company _____ Battalion _____ Regiment _____

Check all that apply to you:

_____ Attending my 1st Reunion _____ Use Cane or Walker

_____ Use Motorized Wheelchair _____ Wheelchair Bound

_____ Special Needs: (please specify) _____

_____ Special Dietary Needs: (please specify) _____

_____ Will be willing to help out _____ Will bring auction item

YOUR TRAVEL PLANS (for our information)

Note: Fly into Will Rogers Airport, Oklahoma City (OKC) for Norman*

Will be arriving in Norman/OKC by _____ on _____
(Mode of Transportation) (Arrival Date)

If traveling by air, please provide your carrier, flight # and arrival time & date:

Do you want us to pick you up? _____ Or have you made other arrangements? _____

Your cell phone number while traveling? (____) _____

Please call Pam at 405-226-5688 if your flight is delayed.

***Note:** We will pick you up at the airport unless you get a rental car or make other arrangements. The hotel does NOT have an airport shuttle. However, the hotel WILL provide transportation back to the airport on Sunday, August 28 for our group. You must sign up for this at the hotel.

REUNION REGISTRATION FORM, Page 2

Tuesday, August 23

10 am-10 pm **Registration — in Hospitality Room**
 6th Division Veteran: \$25 (spouse free) \$ _____
 6th Division Assn Members & Guests: # attending _____ x \$25 = \$ _____

6 pm-10 pm **“Welcome to Oklahoma” Meet & Greet — in Hospitality Room** — heavy hors d’oeuvres, music and socializing (no charge) # _____ (for planning purposes)

Wednesday, August 24

9:30 am-4 pm **Tour of 45th Infantry Museum and Oklahoma City National Museum and Memorial** — includes full buffet lunch at Lincoln Park Golf & Country Club and bus transportation # _____ x \$35 = \$ _____

Thursday, August 25

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------------------------|
| 9:30 am-4 pm | Tour of Sam Noble History Museum and National Weather Center (NOAA) — includes catered lunch served in the Atrium at NOAA and bus transportation | #_____ x \$20 = \$_____ |
| 6:30 pm | “Breaking Bread Together” Buffet Dinner at Hotel Entertainment by Darci Farmer & Gary Owen | #_____ x \$25 = \$_____ |

Friday, August 26

| | | |
|------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 9 am-4 pm | Visit to Sgt Grit's Marine Specialties (in groups - prescheduled sign-up times) | #_____ (for planning purposes) |
| 12 pm-2 pm | Ladies' Luncheon & Meeting | #_____ x \$20 = \$_____ |
| 7 pm-10 pm | General Meeting & Auction — Hospitality Room | #_____ (for planning purposes) |

Saturday, August 27

| | | |
|--------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 10 am | Memorial Service — at Hotel | #_____ (for planning purposes) |
| 5:30-6:30 pm | Reception/Social Hour (Cash Bar) | |
| 6:30 pm | GRAND BANQUET Dinner, Guest Speaker, Installation of Officers & Entertainment | |
| | Please indicate # and choice: | |
| | Beef | #_____ x \$45 = \$_____ |
| | Chicken | #_____ x \$45 = \$_____ |
| | Vegetarian | #_____ x \$45 = \$_____ |

TOTAL ALL EVENTS: \$_____

Make check payable to: 6th Marine Division Assn. 2016 Reunion

Please complete both pages of this form and mail by July 25 along with your check to:

Joan Willauer
5901 S. Floyd Cox Drive,
Norman, OK 73026-0432

Home Phone (405) 292-3184

Cell Phone (405) 833-4140

There's Something for Everyone in Oklahoma City!

In the last *Striking Sixth* we told you about some of the attractions in the Oklahoma City area. Since then, more attractions have opened in an area that was already a top-rated family destination! Below we highlight those, and along with more of Pam and Joan's favorites.

For Outdoor Thrills – RIVERSPORT Rapids, a brand new \$45 million world class whitewater rafting and kayaking center, just opened at RIVERSPORT Adventure Park. One of only three manmade whitewater venues in the nation, it has the highest volume pumped whitewater channel in the world! The 11-acre center, which also features kayaking and tubing, is located in the Oklahoma City's Boathouse District.



RIVERSPORT Adventure Park also features adventure courses, zip lines, climbing walls, pump tracks, extreme jumping, and stand up paddle boarding. If you're already adventurous, this is perfect! If not, maybe it's time to step out of your comfort zone!!! RIVERSPORT Adventure is about 20 minutes from our hotel in Norman.

<http://boathousedistrict.org/whitewater/whitewater-virtual-tour/>

For Indoor Fun – Norman's Hey Day, an upscale entertainment center, recently added one of the metro area's best bowling alleys – with 24 lanes on two stories! The upper floor has eight cherry wood lanes in a semi-private bowling lounge with big screen TVs. You'll also find Revolutions, a full bar for the 21 and over set. On special evenings, glow-in-the-dark bowling makes getting a strike even more exciting!

Under the same roof you can enjoy two-level laser tag, an arcade with a wide variety of interactive video games including Laser Maze, and a great indoor ropes course located above the arcade. (It's not too scary – you'll be wearing a harness!)

<http://www.heydayfun.com/>

For Those Who Like Unique Museums – One of the newest additions to the area's extensive museum scene, the Museum of Osteology is America's first skeleton museum. The evolution of the museum's collection began when at the age of seven, Jay Villemarette found a skull in the woods. Apparently it was love at first sight! He was certainly inspired, and now you can see skulls and skeletons from all over the world under one roof.

<http://www.museumofosteology.org/>

For Art Lovers – The Oklahoma City Museum of Art, located in the heart of the downtown Arts District, has a permanent collection of European and American art, as well as a comprehensive collection of glass sculpture by Dale Chihuly. Also on site is the Noble Theater, which screens independent, foreign and classic films, as well as a great Museum Café with cuisine as innovative as the museum. For a more laid back art experience, peruse a variety of art galleries and restaurants in the acclaimed Paseo Arts District.

<http://www.okcmoa.com/> www.thepaseo.com/

For Those Who Like Excitement – You'll find plenty of opportunities to test your luck or increase your heart rate! Whether it's thoroughbred racing or casino gaming, Remington Park in Oklahoma City (rated #3 by the Horseplayers Association of North America) provides a great environment for both. If you prefer to stay closer to the hotel for your excitement, Riverwind Casino will provide transportation to and from the Embassy Suites. Slightly further afield, Thunderbird Casino is the spot locals claim is their "lucky" place.

<http://www.remingtonpark.com/>

<http://www.riverwind.com/>

<http://playthunderbird.com/>



My Time as a Marine — The End of the War

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

The book, “American Caesar” by William Manchester (a biography about General Douglas MacArthur) is dedicated to the 29th Marines:

To the 29th Marines:

**3,512 landed on Okinawa
April 1, 1945.**

**2,821 fell in 82 days, the
highest price ever paid by a
U.S. Marine Corps Regiment
in a single battle.**

Out of the original 3,512 Marines of the 29th Regiment that landed on Okinawa, 691 survived 82 days of front line combat. I was one of them. I do not know the casualty rate for replacements; many were killed or wounded before we even knew their names.

Hell and Misery

During the 82-day battle for Okinawa, we wore the same clothes, the same underwear, and the same socks we had on when we landed. We could not shower or shave. We did not have toothpaste, only a toothbrush and a spoon that we licked clean. We lived on rations the entire time, not one hot meal during the three months it took us to take Okinawa. We heated instant coffee in our canteen cups.

Combat is hell beyond belief: life is indescribably miserable. We lived at night in shallow graves called foxholes. We fought in the rain, the mud, the cold, and the heat while trying to live for tomorrow. We slept in two-hour

shifts every night because the Japanese fought their best at night. Death is real, every minute of every hour, day and night. Chances are good you will be killed or wounded. There were times when death would have been preferable to living. I was prepared to die, having made my peace with God. I prayed a lot, as did others. I got to know God. We did not use profanity as portrayed in most movies; we wanted to be in God's good grace in case we were killed.

No Guilt

I have no remorse for killing Japanese soldiers. Hate ran so deep that it gave me great satisfaction to do so. Japanese officers are taught to decapitate a person's head with one stroke of their samurai sword.

Over 95,000 Japanese lost their lives on Okinawa, as well as an estimated 75,000 to 100,000 civilians. The U.S. suffered some 50,000 casualties with more than 12,500 killed.

I served as an “Infantry Assault Demolitionist.” In the 21-day battle for Saipan, few opportunities presented the need, but in the 82-day battle for Okinawa, there were many opportunities. Life expectancy of a demolitionist is short. How I survived I do not know.

I was part of a fire team; I would have to get close enough to toss a twenty-pound satchel of explosives inside a cave or pillbox. We would always be under covering fire of our BAR (Browning automatic rifle) man. Other times our flame thrower would try to get close enough to burn it, and then I would toss the explosive



6th Division Marines blasting caves on Okinawa

charge. I had fifteen seconds from the time I armed the fuse until the satchel charge exploded. On caves that were hard to access, I would use a missile launcher known as a “Bazooka” to fire a missile into the cave. There is no way of knowing how many Japanese soldiers or civilians were in the caves I sealed close. I have no remorse or even any feeling of guilt. I learned to hate the Japs, and it was a feeling of satisfaction.

Thanks and Promises

I have considerable combat time because the only time I was not

(continued on next page)

My Time as a Marine

(continued from previous page)

in the lines was the 36 hours I was hospitalized. I escaped death or being wounded many times. Was it by the Grace of God that I lived, while others were killed? I give thanks to God every day and remember those who did not survive. I made promises to God that I still keep and honor.

The people of these United States do not realize the blessing of living in such a great country!

As soon as the battle was over, we boarded the USS McCracken for Guam where we were to train for the invasion of Japan in February 1946. The 6th Division, along with the 1st and 2nd Marine Divisions, was to land at Tokyo Bay.

It was paradise to have showers, hot food, and especially a bunk to sleep on. How thankful we were to have such simple things of life and to be here to enjoy them. I had earned my second battle star and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Japanese Surrender

The fly boys from Tinian were taking bets the war would be over in two weeks. The atomic bomb on Tinian was not so secret! Still it was a bet that anyone would be glad to lose. One evening I was sitting on a coconut log watching an outdoor movie, when it was announced that a single

bomb had destroyed an entire city in Japan. It was hard to believe, and the next few days were like science fiction trying to believe that such a weapon existed.

Japan surrendered 14 August 1945 after a second atomic bomb was dropped on the country. After taps that day, we learned that Japan would accept unconditional surrender. The band played the Marine Hymn, and we marched in the company street, cheering wildly. The war was over! We would be going home!

Or rather we thought we would be going home! Instead we were sent to North China to accept the surrender of the Japanese forces. We sailed aboard the USS Brookings (APA 140), stopping en route at Saipan. As I looked for the last time at the big mountain we had captured months earlier, my thoughts went to the names of those we had buried in the Division cemetery. I bid a last farewell as we sailed away.

It was strange sailing on a ship with so many lights on at night. I remember wondering if every Japanese submarine commander knew the war was over.

China

We were to land at Chefoo in northern China, but the Chinese Communist, who was now fighting a civil war with the Chinese Nationalist, denied us permission to land there. Instead we landed at Tsingtao, China on 28 September 1945. I had suffered from bronchitis all my life, and the Corpsman gave me a pill that he told me was opium. I have never had another attack of bronchitis since!

After a brief stay in Tsingtao, we boarded the USS Rockbridge for Chinwangtao, China near the Great Wall. I did not get to see the wall, as the Nationalist and Communist were still fighting, and we were in the middle. A few Marines who attempted to see the Great Wall were captured by the Communists and held until a

diplomatic release was obtained.

We were housed in a former tuberculosis hospital with Japs in one wing and Marines in another. Occasionally we would pass in a hallway; it was tough confronting the very Japanese who had committed so many atrocities in the war.



Japanese representatives on board the USS Missouri preparing to surrender, 9 September 1945

(continued on next page)

My Time as a Marine

(continued from previous page)

When we met, they would stand aside and bow as we passed. I usually offered a few choice words, and I think they understood the intent — my words were not complementary.

In a formal surrender ceremony before the entire 6th Marine Division, the Japanese officers laid down their swords and the soldiers laid down their rifles. They were then sent home to Japan. There is a photo of the ceremony in the 6th Marine Division history book.

In China, we could ride in a rickshaw for ten cents and buy English liquor for twenty-five cents. Inflation was so high, the exchange rate was three thousand yen to one U.S. dollar. But China was still primitive, and there was not much to do while on liberty. I was especially homesick that Christmas in 1945. The war had been over for five months. The Japanese forces in China had returned to Japan. But they wanted us to stay and support the Nationalist against the Communist.

Sentimental Journey

Finally, in February 1946 after twenty-six months overseas, I learned that I was going home! The reality set in when they played the song "Sentimental Journey" over the speaker system. I still get goose bumps when I hear that song.

We turned our weapons over to the Nationalists and boarded a train for Taku, China where we boarded the former luxury liner SS Manhattan — renamed the USS Wakefield — bound for San Diego. It was a thirty-thousand-ton ship with three thousand Marines aboard. During a storm we took a 45 degree list, the largest list the ship had ever taken. (This was before stabilizers that cruise ships have today to prevent such listing.)



USS Wakefield, the ship that brought Watson Crumbie back to the U.S.

Back Home

After about two weeks at sea we arrived at San Diego where we received the largest "Welcome Home" of any troopship from the Pacific. Sailors in white uniforms were lining the decks of ships. Fireboats were sounding their siren and spraying water, and cute girls in a boat were circling the ship. Dockside there was a Marine band playing the Marine Hymn, and some family members waiting. I came down

the gangplank and kissed the ground, I was so happy to be back on U.S. soil, which I didn't know if I would ever see again.

Seventy-two hours later I was a civilian. I boarded a train for Dallas, and when I arrived at Union Station I took a street car home, still wearing my wrinkled green uniform and toting a sea bag. It seemed strange that no one spoke or seemed to care that I had been to war. Dallas looked like the same peaceful place, as

if there had never been a war. Most service men had already returned to civilian life, and it was probably not unusual to see servicemen returning home.

I surprised my Mother and she cried. She said she prayed every day for my safe return. My girlfriend had married, my friends had married, and it was lonely for a while adjusting to civilian life.

Next issue: Korea

From the Historian's Corner

THE IWO JIMA FLAG RAISING

Some Sixth Division Marines have a bit of angst when it comes to Iwo Jima and the famous flag-raising. They feel the timing and furor over the picture overshadowed the end of the war, making what happened on Okinawa under-appreciated and under-recognized. They find the National Museum of the Marine Corps a bit frustrating because once again Okinawa has been eclipsed by the iconic picture. They feel that G Company's flag raising on both ends of Okinawa in the last battle of the Pacific should receive equal tribute. They are right. However, to all Marines post-WWII, the picture has been a rallying point. And the picture has other lessons to teach about history.



Sixth Division Marines raise the flag on Okinawa

The flag raising on Mount Suribachi will forever be wrapped in lore, renown and controversy. The men involved would probably find that amusing, since at the time they were worried about a Japanese soldier popping up and killing them. Mount Suribachi, rising above Iwo Jima, was important to

take as much for psychological reasons as anything else. A forty-man team was assigned the job and entrusted with a small, 54 x 28 inch flag. They were told *if* they got to the top to “put it up.” As they climbed, many watched.



One of the first controversies regarding the flag raising was who took “the picture.” Along with those forty men, hauling a cumbersome camera was Staff Sergeant Louis Lowery, a photographer for *Leatherneck*. When they reached the top, the lieutenant and the sergeants started looking for something to fly the flag on. Lowery began documenting the event, often suggesting poses for the men to take. At 10:20 a.m., the men lifted a 20-foot water pipe in a pose suggested by Lowery, and the entire island erupted. Ships horns blared while men cheered and celebrated. On the highest point of Iwo Jima, a small American flag flew. It was the first foreign flag to wave over Japanese soil. It was a moment of hope and celebration. Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, watching from the beach below with General Holland Smith, quipped to the general, “Holland, the raising of that flag on Suribachi means a Marine Corps for the next 500 years.” Those words would become part of Marine Corps lore.

The men on the rim were thinking other things; they knew they were sitting ducks. As expected, the Japanese soon appeared. One lobbed a grenade in Lowery's direction, breaking his camera, but not damaging the film. He started down the hill to find another camera, passing three other photographers on their way up. One of them was Associated Press photographer, Joe Rosenthal. Lowery's pictures were the first pictures taken on Suribachi, but they did not include the famous one...Lowery's pictures would be lost to history for a while.

(continued on next page)

The Iwo Jima Flag Raising

(continued from prior page)

A little later that day, a larger flag was sent up the volcano to replace the smaller one. In the whipping wind, with men struggling to get the new flag upright, Joe Rosenthal took his famous picture. That flag flew over the island for three weeks. By the time the tattered, wind-beaten flag was taken down, its image had caused a furor like few others. News from the Pacific had been grim, and this picture was a sign of hope and progress. Hal Buell, a retired AP executive news photo editor, had long discussions with Rosenthal about the flag-raising picture, and in 2006 he authored a book about the famous image. Buell wrote, "It's hard to understand the photo's power in 1945 to Americans who were weary of the war and horrified by the incredible number of deaths of servicemen, especially in locations in Asia most had never heard of. People were just tired of the war, and all of a sudden out of nowhere came this picture that encapsulated everything. It showed that victory was ultimately possible." The picture was used to sell war bonds, to enlist men, and to encourage wartime production.

The Marine Corps has always known how to sell themselves. The picture, as Forrestal predicted, was a gift that continues giving today. It is one of the most recognized images in the world, a visual representation of what Marines do. The men in the picture were soon sought after. Those who survived the black sands of hell that was Iwo Jima were brought home and sent on war bond tours. Their stories have often been told – in movies, numerous articles, and history books. One of the most recent was *Flags of Our Fathers*, a book by James Bradley and a movie directed by Clint Eastwood.

Controversy surrounding the iconic image continues. In 1947, the Marines identified the Iwo Jima flag-raisers as John Bradley, Rene Gagnon, Ira Hayes, Harlon Block, Michael Strank and Franklin Sousley. All were Marines except Bradley, who was a Navy corpsman. Sixty-seven years later, two amateur historians – Eric Krelle of Omaha, Nebraska and Stephen Foley of Wexford, Ireland –

began raising doubts about the identity of one of the men in the picture. After examining the famous photo along with other pictures taken that day, they concluded that the man identified as Bradley was actually Harold H. Schultz, a private first class from Detroit who died in 1995. In a November 2014 article in the *Omaha World-Herald*, Krelle was quoted, "People can hold onto what they have always known in the past. But to me, the photos are the truth."

Discrepancies identified by Krelle and Foley include:

- The flag raiser wore uncuffed pants in the famous photo, but other pictures shot that day show Bradley in tightly cuffed pants.
- The flag raiser is wearing a cloth cap beneath his helmet, but Bradley is not.
- The flag raiser is wearing a cartridge belt with ammunition pouches, and a pair of wire cutters hangs off the belt. As a Navy corpsman, Bradley would typically be armed with a side-arm, not an M-1 rifle, and he'd have no need for wire cutters. Other photos that day show him wearing what appears to be a pistol belt with no ammo pouches.

So a new historical controversy has come to the surface. Does it matter?

(continued on next page)



the more famous flag raising on Iwo Jima

The Iwo Jima Flag Raising

(continued from previous page)

After reviewing the work of the two amateur historians, James Bradley said he has concluded his father was not involved in the second flag-raising. "I focused on it and realized that it's true; my father raised the first flag, not the second flag on Iwo Jima," said Bradley. But he noted that his father was present for the second flag-raising. He was later injured and received the Navy Cross for his heroism. "He did his duty," said his son. "The point is that the book is called *Flags of Our Fathers* plural. I didn't write a book *Flags of My Father*. I wrote it about all the heroes of Iwo Jima."

War and memory is an interesting topic. It is believed that what we remember is implanted the most strongly in the first twenty-four hours after an event. As well, horrific, deadly events are imprinted in a different way than everyday memories. It makes sense that an event as terrifying as war would be imprinted forever. Recalls one man in Studs Terkel's book *The Good War*, "I was in combat for six weeks, forty-two days. I remember every incident of the forty-two days..." Yet, one also hears about the "fog of war." A fighter's war is the few feet around him; that is *his war*. What is going on in the larger context is often blurred, especially after the fact. So could someone be

"reminded of an event" and accept that reality? Perhaps that is what happened to John Bradley. His son James told the *Associated Press*, "My father raised a flag on Iwo Jima. The Marines told him way after the fact, 'Here's a picture of you raising the flag.' He had a memory of him raising a flag, and the two events came together."

Should we leave icons alone, or does more history give us a clearer picture? Shultz or Bradley, does it matter to our nation, to the Marine Corps? I'm sure it does to their families. Could the Marine Corps have wanted to make sure that the picture properly represented the men serving and found a corpsman who had been there? Perhaps. Could a corpsman carry something other than a sidearm? Anyone who had been in battle knows that rules go out the window as soon as the shooting commences. Rosenthal, Lowery, Bradley...they are all dead. So we shall never know. Is James Bradley's book discredited? No. The book tells a universal story for countless Marines and soldiers, and there are things to learn from such a book. History is always changing; it is not static or precise. New items are found, something is looked at with fresh eyes or without bias, and new conclusions are drawn. This is the ultimate lesson regarding the famous flag raising photograph.

~ Laura Lacey

From the Editor



As I write this, it is a few weeks past Memorial Day and a couple of weeks before the 4th of July. Both were favorite holidays for me as a child. Memorial Day meant picnics and the beginning of summer — with the last day of school just around the corner!

The 4th of July meant more picnics and fireworks. I was truly grateful to live in a free country and fully understood the meaning of Independence Day. Not so with Memorial Day. I'm sorry to say I thought very little about what it really meant. Fortunately, I know better now and try not to forget the sacrifice that so many made for our coun-

try. I know all who served in the Sixth Marine Division can never forget.

Pam and Joan are working hard on the reunion and report that the response has been great so far. If you are going — and I hope you are — please send in your registration form as soon as possible to help them with their planning. Definitely by July 25, because that's the deadline for sending in the form and ensuring a room is available at the hotel.

I wish everyone a happy Independence Day! And hope to see you in Oklahoma!

~ Carroll McGowan

Chaplain's Report



Not much new, just watching the tornados near the hotel. All Christians should review Matthew 24 and make plans accordingly.

Keep the Faith,
Chaplain McKnight.

Message from the President



My how time flies! It won't be long until we will be in each other's company again for an awesome reunion in Norman, Oklahoma. It looks like Joan

Willauer and Pam Bloustine have a wonderful time planned for us. I so look forward to renewing my acquaintances, meeting new ones and spending time with dear friends and family of the Sixth.

If you haven't visited the web site lately www.sixthmarinedivision.com, please do. Our very own Carroll McGowan, with the help from Joe Singleton, has gone through great trials and tribulations to "pep" it up a bit. They have given it new life!

See you in August!!

~ Connie Houseweart

Message from the Membership Mgr.



Thanks to all who called to check with me on the status of their subscription to the *Striking Sixth* when they were

not sure for how long they were paid. I would rather check for them than to have someone not receive their newsletter when it is so important to them.

Thanks to those who quickly sent their subscription fee when they received the reminder in the newsletter. If you are in doubt of your membership dues expiration, you can also check your label for that information.

After advising everyone of the update to the Sixth Marine Division Association website, I

received an interesting request from a member wanting contact information for living Marines who served in a particular unit so he could put them in contact with his grandfather on his 90th birthday. Be sure to check out our website — in today's world a well maintained website that gives the history of our Sixth Marine Division can help us attract new members, which is important. Maintaining the website is a necessary cost, and donations to the Website Fund are encouraged. There is a line for this under Donations on the Membership Application/Change of Address Form for your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,
Flo Dornan
(817) 275-1552
sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net

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| Associate Members | 627 |
| Lineal Descendants | 139 |
| Honorary Members | 8 |
| TOTAL MEMBERSHIP | 1,893 |
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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.

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| ANDERSON, Charles J. | 29 th Mar-1-A | 11/28/2013 |
| BOWER, Clyde | 29 th Mar-3-G | 04/04/2016 |
| BUCHTER, Norris D. | 29 th Mar-H&S | 03/16/2016 |
| BURNS, Karl H. | 6 th Marine Division | 05/07/2016 |
| GALIOTO, Anthony | 6 th Marine Division | 02/16/2016 |
| HANSON, Orville P. | 6 th Marine Division | 04/25/1989 |
| HULSEY, Wilbur | 22 nd Mar-1-B | 02/28/2015 |
| IRELAND, James H. | 15 th Mar-H&S | Unknown |
| JOSEPH, Samuel | 6 th Marine Division | 06/02/2014 |
| JUSTICE, Paul E. | 29 th Mar-2-F | 03/19/2016 |
| LIVERS, David | 6 th Motor Transport Bn | 02/09/2016 |
| MURRELL, Gordon R. | 4 th Marines | 03/20/2016 |
| RODRIGUEZ, Joseph | 15 th Mar-1-H&S | Unknown |
| STAATSBURG, Joseph | 22 nd Mar-2-G | 06/01/2016 |
| SENTIPAL, Andrew L. | 6 th Motor Transport Bn | 03/31/2016 |
| THOMAS, Earl H. | 6 th Motor Transport Bn | 08/10/2008 |
| THOMAS, Jesse | 22 nd Mar-2-G | 06/06/2016 |
| WARD, Sam | 29 th Marines | 05/23/2016 |
| WATERS, Everett B. | 4 th Mar-2-G | 05/00/2010 |

American Dead

(continued from page 27)

tary uniform and to bear the ultimate sacrifice one can make for one's country. If you are a student, you will look with fresh eyes at the few among your classmates in the ROTC, learning, along with their regular studies, how to become officers in America's armed forces.

And you will reflect deeply on our nation's role in the world. Whatever our flaws as a people have been in the past and still are today, you will realize, standing there among the thousands of gravestones, that in the sweep of history, ours is a grand nation of which you can and should be proud.

Reporting Deaths

Deaths should be reported ASAP to:

Flo Dornan, Membership Manager
(817) 275-1552
sxthmardiv@sbcglobal.net

AND

Harry McKnight, Chaplain
(614) 866-3456
harrym1677@aol.com

The American Dead in Foreign Fields

THE CEMETERIES FOR AMERICANS WHO FELL IN BATTLE OFFER PROFOUND LESSONS

by Uwe E. Reinhardt, from the *Wall Street Journal*, 25 May 2016

If you have not ever done so, I urge you to program into your next trip abroad a visit to an American military cemetery. There are quite a few in Europe, and some in Asia. You can find a list online.

These cemeteries are settings of an awesome serenity and beauty, immaculately kept by the American Battle Monuments Commission. As Americans, we must thank the architects who designed these settings and the workers who over the decades and to this day have kept them in their immaculate condition.

My wife, born in China and reared in Taiwan, and I, born in Germany and a longtime U.S. citizen, first visited the World War II cemeteries when our American-born children were young. We would tell them: Here rest some of the warriors who sacrificed their lives so that your parents and people in many parts of the world would be free from tyranny and could pursue their dreams in freedom. We made it clear to our children that this was not just a grown-up talk—that it was real and part of their proud heritage.

The lesson must have stuck. Last year our eldest child, now a fully grown man, urged me to come along to visit the battlegrounds in Germany, near the Belgian border, where U.S. troops fought so bravely and where so many of them—too many—met their early

death.

This time we visited the large American cemetery near the Belgian town of Henri-Chapelle, about 20 miles west of the German city of Aachen. There rest the warriors who fell in the brutal, four-month-long battle of the Hürtgen Forest, followed by the



Battle of the Bulge and the eventual push of American forces all the way to the Rhine River.

You can walk along the gravel paths of these cemeteries, and among the thousands of markers—crosses and Stars of David—beneath which the warriors rest. Pick a marker at random and adopt the soldier whose name is chiseled into that marker. Make him your father, or brother, or

cousin, or a friend. Imagine him alive, and how you might have hugged him as he shipped out to the distant front.

However brutal his death may have been, you will draw solace from knowing that he rests here, in this serene setting, alongside his buddies who shared his fate.

You may even imagine that somehow, don't ask how, the fallen soldier may know that you are visiting him, to pay your respects.

You may not be able to suppress some tears; I never can. Perhaps in my case it is because I have taught American college freshman for so many years that I can vividly imagine the warriors alive, playing boisterously when they were not fighting or resting, dreaming of some sweetheart they left behind, and imagining what they might do with their lives when the war finally ended and they could go home again. Perhaps it is also because they met their untimely death because of the murderous deeds my birth country

had inflicted upon the world at that time. It deepens my sorrow.

But whatever emotions you may bring to a visit there and take away from it, I promise that you will not soon forget it.

You will come away with renewed and strengthened respect for those of your fellow Americans willing to wear the nation's mili-

(continued on page 26)

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Summer 2016

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The American Dead in Foreign Fields

“Here rest some of the warriors who sacrificed their lives so that people in many parts of the world would be free from tyranny and could pursue their dreams in freedom.”

See article on page 27

Pictured left — the Aisne-Marne Military Cemetery, Belleau Wood, France