

Coming September 13: *The Mosquito Bowl!*

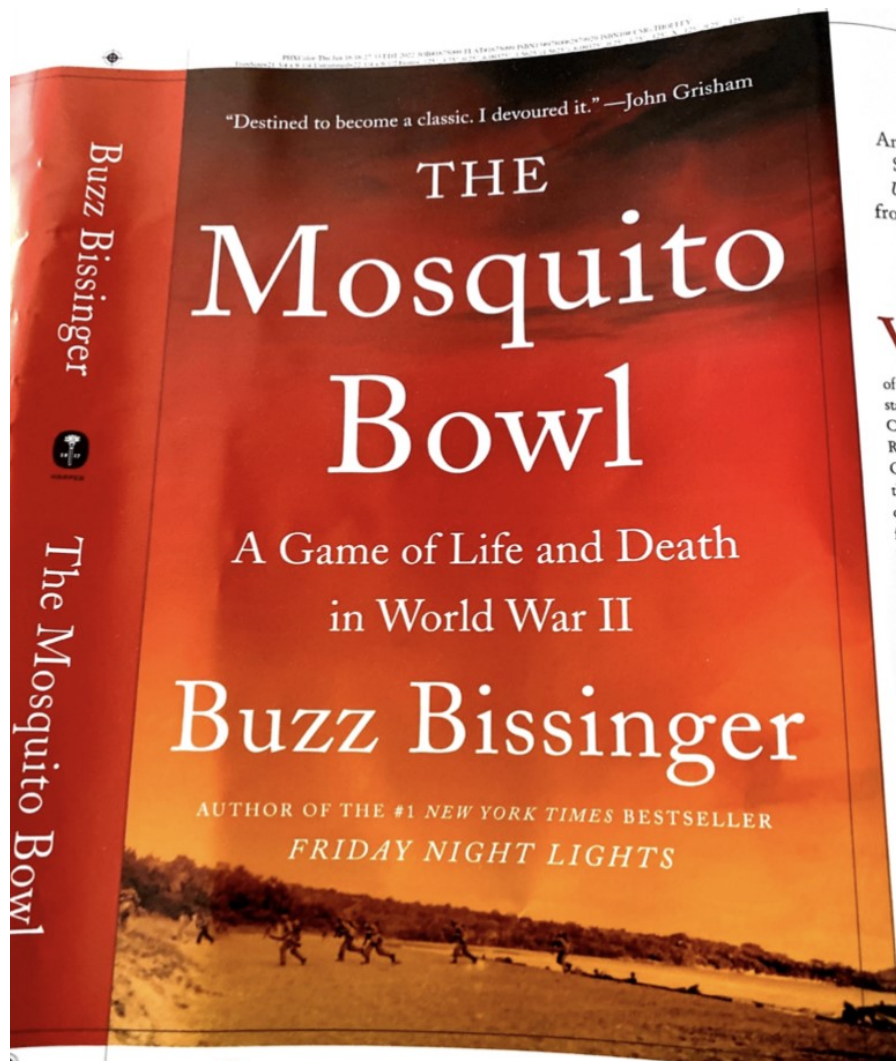
RIVETING NEW BOOK ABOUT A FOOTBALL GAME, A BATTLE, AND A NATION

Fought on Guadalcanal on Christmas Eve 1944, the Mosquito Bowl featured men of the 4th and 29th Regiments of the Sixth Marine Division battling for bragging rights on a field scattered with coral and gravel. What started out as touch football turned into a bloody brawl with neither team able to break through

the other's defenses. Both teams had a impressive roster of college football greats, 15 of whom would perish the following spring.

Buzz tells the heartbreaking and inspiring tale of the men who played in this epic football game and went on to fight a far more consequential battle on the island of Okinawa. It is an unforgettable portrait of brave young men and the

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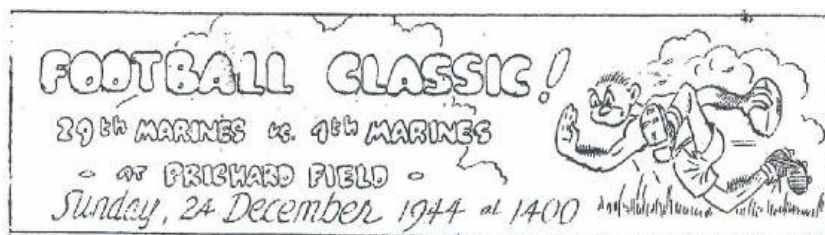
Coming September 13: *The Mosquito Bowl*!

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country that shaped them in the years leading up to World War II.

For Buzz the book is a way to thank his father, Gerry (4th Mar-1-C), and the rest of the men of the Sixth Marine Division who fought with honor in one of the bloodiest battles of World War II in order to preserve our freedom. He hopes the book will bring the Battle of Okinawa the recognition it deserves and that someday the exhibit on the Battle of Okinawa at the National Museum of the Marine Corps will be twice as big as the exhibit on Iwo Jima!

***The Mosquito Bowl* can be pre-ordered on Amazon or Barnes and Noble today.**



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 1330 - 1400 - Music by Regimental Bands.
- 1400 - Reception of Major General Lemuel C. SHEPHERD, USMC, Commanding General, Sixth Marine Division. Honors by 29th Marines Band.
- 1405 - Colonel Victor F. BLEASDALE, USMC, Commanding, 29th Marines, and Colonel Alan SHAPLEY, USMC, Commanding, 4th Marines, meet in center of gridiron and exchange greetings.
- 1415 - Kick-off.
- Half - (1) Music and ceremony by 4th Marines Band.
(2) General SHEPHERD changes to opposite side of field.
(3) Music and ceremony by 29th Marines Band and 29th Marines Drum and Bugle Corps.
- End of Game - Band music.

above: original Mosquito Bowl program

Buzz Bissinger Dedicates *The Mosquito Bowl* to Neal McCallum



above: Neal McCallum (29th Mar-2-F) with Pulitzer Prize winning author Buzz Bissinger in November 2019

right: dedication page from *The Mosquito Bowl*

In his dedication, Buzz calls Neal McCallum “my great friend.” We feel confident saying no author ever had a better — or more intelligent — friend than Neal.

Neal is a lifelong student of history, and as best we can tell, there is no time in history that he can’t discuss and analyze in depth. How he remembers what he does at age 95 is one of the great mysteries of life. It was a tremendous asset for Buzz as he researched *The Mosquito Bowl*. It was critically important to him that he get all the details right.

Neal spent hours in person and over the phone patiently answering Buzz’s questions about the game, the battle, and the times. He also reviewed early drafts of the book. For this crucial and much appreciated service, Buzz dedicated *The Mosquito Bowl* to Neal.

To Neal McCallum—
Veteran of the 6th Marine Division and Okinawa. Sailor. Scholar.
Student of history. First responder to my endless questions. Best
of all my great friend.

Bart Purcell Remembers His Father: “Don’t Drip Blood on the Rug.”

My dad died on January 3, 1983. He was 73. At his wake, a family friend handed me four envelopes, each containing a letter written by my dad when he was in the military. The fourth and final letter [see page 4] was written from Okinawa on June 30, 1945, about a week after United States forces secured the island.

Because I was born 11 years after World War II ended, all I knew about my dad’s military service was that he was a Marine, he was a riflery instructor at Parris Island, and he fought on Okinawa. Most of this I learned from others, because my dad never spoke of Okinawa. Not that the subject was forbidden; he would answer any question I asked, but he did not elaborate. His answers were short and to the point. My 10-year-old self might ask, “Dad, did you ever kill any of them?” And he’d say something like, “Hard to know. I was too busy trying to stay alive.”



Robert Purcell at Parris Island

My dad was three years old when the Titanic sank in 1912. When he enlisted in the Marines in 1944, he was already 35 years old. He was in a difficult marriage, he had three young children, and he worked for an insurance company in New York City. The lens through which my father viewed the horrors of war was not that of a vulnerable young man eager to make his mark on the world, but that of a man already toughened by life’s difficulties.

A few years after the war, my dad got divorced. He met my mother and they married in 1952. I was born in 1956.

My cousin Beth (daughter of my dad’s brother Howard, also a Marine on Okinawa) encapsulated what it was like to grow up as a Purcell. Complaining was not allowed, whining was not tolerated and – most importantly – “Don’t drip blood on the rug.” Perfect. There was a lot of love thrown in there to be sure, but it’s a fair take on things.

My dad was my moral compass. He was a man of utmost integrity. In retrospect, honesty was the driving force in his life. A college professor of mine, at the end of the last class he would ever teach, wanted to share his philosophy on how a life should be lived. He said “I live my life so that when I get up in the morning and look in the mirror, my disgust is purely aesthetic.” Although my father would never put it that eloquently, this was his philosophy too.

When I was a child and in some moral quandary, my dad would explain which was the right path and which was the wrong one and why. When I became a teenager, if I approached him similarly, he would say, “You already know the answer. You’re asking me so that I will give you ‘permission’ to do the wrong thing.” And, of course, he was right. You only get one shot at integrity.



Robert Purcell and son Bart in 1964

In many ways my dad was born a Marine. He was right out of central casting. He was always fastidious, polite, reserved, and both physically and – most importantly – mentally tough.

I’d watch him shine his many pairs of dress shoes every two weeks or so. “You can be wearing a \$1,000 suit and if your shoes aren’t shined, you look like hell.” He took military showers (water on, water off, soap on, rinse off), and he always dressed sharply. Whether these were the vestiges of a Marine’s life or simply his way was not really something I thought about then.

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Bart Purcell Remembers His Father

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It was probably a bit of both. According to friends who had known him from childhood, it was absolutely consistent with his personality.

My dad never once laid his hands on me but I do remember his eyes. If he told me to do something, it was not a suggestion. It was not a signal that we were about to enter into negotiations. "Make sure the lawn is

cut before you go to baseball practice" could not be pleaded down to cutting the lawn after practice. If I started to debate, I'd get the look. It wasn't like he was angry. He was calm. Maybe a bit too calm. But his eyes said that in no way was there going to be a compromise.

My dad was the best man I have ever known. For members of the Sixth Marine Division Associa-

tion, it might be simpler to just say that my dad was the quintessential Marine. He had unquestionable and uncompromising integrity. He was physically and mentally tough. He was honorable and respectful. He was courageous and loyal. He was patriotic to a fault and was never shy about expressing his love of this country. Once a Marine, always a Marine.

35-Year-Old Robert Purcell Writes to Family Friends from Okinawa



Okinawa
June 30, 1945

Dear Mil, Geo and The Bosses,

Things have been so mixed up I don't recall whether I wrote to you since being here or not; if I have please pardon the repetition of news. I received your letter while here and it was a real treat. From all accounts you are being kept very busy, as I can well understand. However, Geo you do have assistance with your outside chores although at times it may result in more work for yourself. By this time the weather is decidedly favorable for outdoor activities and I imagine you and your family take full advantage of it.

I arrived here in the middle of May and from my address you may know as much about my activities as I can tell you. I joined the 29th Reg. doing line duty

and I must say it was truly front line duty all the way. We had some torrid times and there are scenes and events that I'll never forget. Most of the boys in my platoon are youngsters 18, 19 and 20 so that when they call me "Old Man," "Pop," etc, they actually mean it. I want to tell you here and now that I do feel like an old man these days and very decrepit indeed many days prior to this date.

Our platoon started with a complement of 38 men and finished with a total of six. The casualty rate was around 130%. Words seem so inadequate in describing the situation here and I don't believe anyone can realize what it was like without being a witness or participant.

It's indescribable the lengths the Japs went to in fortifying the island. As you probably know, the island is a series of mountains and to add to it a goodly number of hills were manmade. Each and every mound of dirt was a series of caves and the larger hills were so lined with caves that they resembled our three storied structures. They'd have a shaft in the middle going to the top with tunnels leading out in every direction all connecting and going entirely thru the hill. The upright shafts, of course, had ladders while many of the caves had railroad ties for artillery, etc. The openings of some caves had steel doors or they would be located further back in the cave.

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35-Year-Old Robert Purcell Writes to Family Friends

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The Nips would pop up in one cave, fire (mortar, artillery, rifle and machine gun fire), disappear and come out at another opening. I must say if you hear anyone state that the Japs can't shoot, tell him he doesn't know what he's talking about.

Geo, they can by all means and their snipers are deadly. Their equipment is excellent and plentiful.

I feel very lucky to be alive and most fortunate indeed not to have been wounded. I've been pinned down many times by sniper and automatic rifle fire and mortar fire with many around me being killed and wounded, and I must say it's been wicked.

We started our campaign just outside the city of Naha and for 16 days it rained, sometimes night and day. We were wet most of the time, our feet all the time. At nights we'd sit in our foxholes with mud and water well above our ankles. We had two-man foxholes because someone had to keep awake. The Japs would try to infiltrate at night and grenades were thrown aplenty.

There are a couple of good army Reg. here, but all in all the Army certainly fouled up this operation. After completing our objective, we were recalled twice to assist the Army and while on line with them they pulled many a boner. The 27th Reg., a NY State Guard outfit, made a terrible reputation for themselves – they were absolutely lousy (pardon my expression).

To add to our discomfort, we've been plagued with flies, mosquitos and fleas in ever increasing numbers. I never in all my life saw so many flies; they cover a man's back so you can't see anything but an ever-moving mass of black. The weather now is torrid, the sun being a scorcher.

The odors here of course have been awful because of the dead and the living quarters of the people. You can smell a Nip even when he's alive which was a help at night. The stench in the city of Naha was terrific.

There is one thing I must hand these people which is a constant cause of wonder to me, that is the pain they endure without a whimper. I've seen them as young as 5 years of age and old people with gaping wounds in all parts of their body walking along, receive treatment and continue to walk along without a whimper from them.



Robert Purcell after the war, 1945

As you probably know, Howard [Robert's brother] is here also and although I wasn't able to locate him, he did drop in on me the other day. He was a sorry but most welcome sight to me. He was covered in dust from head to foot, needed a shave, etc. We had a snap shot taken which I hope turns out OK. He accompanied us on a patrol, the limit of our activities since the island was secured the 21st of June, but did not uncover any Japs much to his disgust. We usually get half a dozen or more. He was beating his gums about not seeing any action and being in so much longer than me where I get it all.

We are now standing by till we ship out to our base in Guam, incidentally that's where I had been before coming here. I'll certainly be glad to get away from here but I'm afraid it won't be until the middle of July.

What's the news on the outside? I have no idea how the war is progressing or other world events. In fact, I haven't received any mail in over three weeks so haven't any home news either.

Must close now but will write again when time and conditions permit. The very best to you folks and those at "49." I think of you all the time but my time is limited. Give any news to the rest of the family please. Take care of the little fellas and give them a squeeze for me.

As ever, love
Bob

PFC R.A. Purcell 948974, USMC
3rd Bn, Co. H, 1st Plt.
29th Reg., 6th Div. c/o FPO, San Fran. Calif.

Harvey Anderson Talks About Okinawa

by Edie Schmierbach, Mankato Free Press, April 3, 2021

World War II vet Harvey Anderson rehearsed Thursday morning plans to turn down offers of free alcohol later in the day when he met with friends and family at his favorite watering hole. They commemorated the 76th anniversary of the Battle of Okinawa.

"Harvey, you better not take a drink" was the 95-year-old Eagle Lake man's advice to himself.

Anderson was a 19-year-old Marine when he was sent to fight against the Imperial Japanese Army in the initial invasion on the island of Okinawa, about 400 miles from the mainland of Japan. The April 1, 1945, attack was the largest of the U.S. Army and Marine forces' amphibious assaults in the Pacific Theater.

"It started on Easter morning, April Fool's Day, but I didn't land until the afternoon," Anderson said.

Thursday evening's gathering was at American Legion Post 617. Vietnam War veteran Kevin McGuire serves on a board that distributes the post proceeds from charitable gambling. He said veterans who socialize at the club are from a mixture of ages, most are between age 45 and 50.

"I see Harvey almost every day. He comes in for two brandies, then goes home," McGuire said.

The two men discuss what can be done to ensure the future for American Legion and Veterans of Foreign War posts. Anderson rarely tells his war stories.

"It's up to the World War II vets. If they want to talk, then they can. If they don't, they don't need to," McGuire said.



Harvey Anderson (6th Medical Bn-E), center, with his friends and fellow World War II veterans, Sid Spangenberg and Wally Stelter

Before the pandemic hit, Anderson regularly met for coffee with two other World War II vets, Wally Stelter, 96, of Mankato, and Sid Spangenberg, 100, of North Mankato, at hilltop Hy-Vee. The trio became acquainted after their military service.

"Wally and I still get together at my house on Wednesdays," Anderson said.

Their conversations aren't focused on battles or their heroics, but war experiences do come up

occasionally.

"We hit on them every now and again. We don't elaborate."

Anderson said he tends to heavily edit the contents of his stories when describing Marine experiences to people who never served.

"I tell the humorous stories."

Like the one about the vet who'd been shot several times; his doctors refused to remove the metal from his body.

"He has a heck of a time getting through airport security."

For decades, Anderson's family members heard none of his war jokes and very few details of what he'd gone through after he enlisted in the Marines at age 17.

"I tell them more now than I ever would have before. But how do you explain a war where 110 percent of the people in it got shot? One guy from Mankato got shot six different times."

After what Anderson described as an easy landing, he moved inland with a convoy of trucks. They'd traveled about 10 miles when a sniper began firing. The vehicles pulled off to the side of the road and those aboard scrambled to hide in nearby

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Harvey Anderson

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woods to wait for the all-clear signal.

As the convoy began to roll again, a serviceman, who'd opted to hide under one of the big military trucks, was crushed under its wheels.

"We didn't know he was there until after it happened."

Anderson said he began to open up a bit to his wife, Loraine, when they visited a military memorial in Hawaii, The Punchbowl. He also untightened his lips at a reunion in New York where he talked to men he'd served with during the war.

When Anderson returned home from the trip, he decided to pass his stories down to his sons and daughters.

"It was 35 to 40 years later (after the war) that I told my children anything. I have grandchildren and great-grandchildren now. There would be nothing to tell them if you weren't there."

By 2018, Anderson was comfortable answering his grandchildren's questions about World War II. He even agreed to a pre-Veterans Day interview by a local radio station and a presentation to a class of third graders in Eagle Lake.

"About three years I was asked to give a little speech at the school. I brought along a knapsack to show them.

"All the kids took their shoes off, then sat around me on the floor. The more I talked the closer they would come to me. I put the knapsack on some of them."

Anderson had asked the children what they wanted to know about the war. He said most of their queries were the silly kinds kids typically ask.

Nothing like the one, many years earlier, from one of Anderson's grandsons. Eric had come straight to the point.

"Out of the blue, he said 'Grandpa, did you ever kill any Japs?'"

Anderson, who at the time was one of only two military veter-

ans in the family, said he paused before answering the young child's question that included a derogatory war nickname for his then-military enemy.

"No, but I had to wound some people," was his response.

Eric is now an adult and an officer in the Marines.

On Thursday, his grandfather showed off a photo of Eric in uniform at a military academy graduation. Then-Vice President Joe Biden is pictured shaking his hand.

Harvey Anderson doesn't hold back his pride in his family's military service. He's also made clear his feelings about a lack of local news coverage in 2020 on the 75th anniversary of the April 1, 1945, attack he'd witnessed.

Maj. Anderson expressed an opinion similar to his grandfather's in an email: "Anyone can open a book and read about the facts of Okinawa, but the storytelling opportunity to read/hear the thoughts and opinions by someone who was at the ground experiencing all those things must not be lost."

Laura Lacey & Neal McCallum Bring Okinawa to Life on You Tube

Recently, the Veteran's Breakfast Club (VBC) hosted an interesting Zoom program with our historian, Laura Lacey, and Sixth Division Marine, Neal McCallum, about the battle of Okinawa. Other guests included Henry Sledge, son of *With the Old Breed* author, Eugene Sledge.

You can watch the interview on You Tube. You'll find the link on

the Battle of Okinawa page under History on our website:

www.sixthmarinedivision.com/21Okinawa.html



top row:
Shaun Hall
(VBC), Glenn
Flickinger (VBC),
Neal McCallum
(29th Mar-2-F)

bottom row:
Henry Sledge,
Jack Morrow
(WWII Veteran),
Laura Lacey
(6MD Historian)

Chaplain's Report



I have been thinking of the personal histories of those of us Marines still around and blessed enough to keep having birthdays. I have been thinking of things I wish I had asked my parents and grandparents when they were around. I have been remembering stories of my younger days and trying to tape them or write them down so my great grandchildren and great great grandchildren to come can know a little about my life. I am suggesting you do the same.

Don't just tell them your story, but tape it or write it down. Or have someone write it down as you talk. Taping these stories also leaves them your voice, which will be another treasure after we are "guarding the Gates of Heaven." My suggestion goes for the children and grandchildren of the Sixth Division Ma-

rines too. Share your stories with your children and grandchildren.

Did you ever wonder how your grandparents or great grandparents met or what their wedding was like? Did they go on a honeymoon? Where and how did they travel? What was their childhood home like? How far did they go in school and what was their favorite subject? Make a list of the questions you wish you could ask them. Then answer those questions about your life.

I know one senior citizen who taped her stories and gave each of her children a copy as a Christmas gift. What a beautiful, thoughtful and inexpensive gift. I was told it was the very best Christmas gift they had ever received. I would have loved to receive this from my parents and grandparents.

Your Friendly Chaplain,
Harry McKnight

Editor's Note



I love history, reading, and the Sixth Marine Division, so you can imagine how excited I am to read *The Mosquito Bowl*. My enthusiasm was really stoked when I heard the publisher is comparing the book to *Unbroken* and *The Boys in the Boat*, two of my all-time favorite books. (*Friday Night Lights*, Buzz's most famous book, is high on my list too.)

I just love sweeping stories with interesting characters that evoke a critical period in history. What could be more engrossing than the years leading up to World War II when the Greatest Generation grew up?

You will probably not be surprised to learn I have pre-ordered the Kindle edition so I can start reading it the day it comes out. I can't wait!

Cheers,
Carroll

Message from the President



As I sit here wondering what I am going to say, it gives me time to reflect on things. Time... where has it gone? When younger, I couldn't wait for time to fly by. I couldn't wait to be 18 — old enough to leave home, old enough to vote. And now here I am, older and maybe a tad wiser, wishing I could in some respects go back the other way.

People...many many people... have come and gone, as I am sure many of you can relate. Some are more special than others, which brings me to my topic — you, my friends and family of the Sixth Marine Division. Each of you has touched my heart in a special way that no others have or probably ever will. You have allowed me to keep the legacy of my father and the Sixth Marine Division from ever being forgotten. I still have a "dad" with all the friends I have made from the original Sixth Marine Division. And I have multiple brothers and sisters who share the same legacy. I find it truly awesome that this special group of people has come together to honor our greatest generation.

I truly will miss our yearly get togethers. The planning and execution were challenging at times, but well worth it in the end. Who knows...maybe there will be an unplanned get together in the future.

Stay safe and stay healthy. Until we meet again,
Connie

General Shepherd and His Lady

Dear Carroll,

I am sending along some family papers and stories that I felt would tie in to the lovely article about Granddaddy in the last newsletter. ["The General I Knew" by Jack Hoag.] One of the documents is a letter from my dad to the Association after Granddaddy's death. [See page 10.] Daddy enclosed my sister's essay about Granddaddy, which I've also enclosed. [This beautiful essay can be found on our website under Stories.] Then, I found a letter that Granddaddy wrote to Mrs. Adele Mante, replying to her letter which was accompanied by a crucifix. I thought this also might touch some hearts. [See page 10.]

I so enjoyed the article by Jack Hoag. People don't seem to understand that although there is certainly grief associated with the death of a loved one, what offers the greatest comfort is hearing good stories about them.

There is a little detail in Mr. Hoag's article about my grandmother's death that could be tweaked. Granny actually died at home, in her bed, with my grandfather sleeping in the adjoining bedroom. My dad wrote that one of the saddest sights was arriving to see his father, "this general, who had faced artillery fire and led men in battle," sitting next to Granny, holding her hand, just looking so sad

and heartbroken. I'm not quoting it correctly, and I don't have the letter Daddy wrote to me right here in front of me, but that is the gist. And yes, Granddaddy, the chivalrous Southern gentleman, did consider Granny as "his lady."

My grandfather did indeed inspire sincere loyalty. As my mom and dad said, one of the most moving scenes at Granddaddy's funeral in Arlington was the group of 6th Division Marines who filed past his grave and laid flowers on his grave.

Absolutely my grandfather was in the right place at the right time, and in the right profession. He was a man of his generation and geography (growing up in the "Jim Crow" South). He was human, with all of the quirks, complications and prejudices that go with that reality. I am proud of how Granddaddy adapted and changed as the world around him changed. A poignant example: In his 80s, dressed carefully in suit and tie, Granddaddy visited a young neighbor boy of around 8-10 years, who was his regular walking companion. He gracefully, and with unvarnished respect, apologized for what I gather, was a "politically incorrect" comment that bothered the young lad. The youngster had politely told Granddaddy about it, hence Granddaddy's in-person, formal apology the next day. The regular walks resumed.

Finally, you have my sincere thanks for all the hard work you and the Association devote to keeping the Striking Sixth's exploits and men in our consciousness and our hearts.

Sincerely yours,
Sallie Garrett Shepherd



Ross Hood Displays Auction Win and Reunion Mementos

At the 50th Reunion in September 2021, Ross Hood bid on and won a framed photo of the Sixth Marine Division Cemetery on Okinawa taken in 1945.

Ross hung the photograph in his home beside a shadow box holding the Memorial Service program and a rose. He was presented with the rose since he is a descendant of a Marine whose name was read at the service, his grandfather, Warren W. Hood (29th Mar-3-I).

We thank Ross for sending us the photo below.



Ross Hood's photo and shadowbox

Letter from General Shepherd's Son to the Association

Thanks to Sallie Shepherd for sharing this letter with us.

861 J Avenue
Coronado, CA 92118
August 26, 1990

Mr. Raymond J. Schlinder
President 6th Marine
Division Association
Hyatt Regency Milwaukee
333 West Kilbourn Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Dear Ray:

My brother, Lemuel III, informed me yesterday the association was meeting in Milwaukee. We both decided to write and request that you express to the association our sincere appreciation for their demonstration of respect and admiration of our father, both here in California and at the ceremonies in Arlington. We were overwhelmed by the members large attendance on both occasions. It was difficult for me to believe that so many men would turn out after 45 years to wish their commander farewell. However, I believe that I can understand it better now after hearing General Krulak, the Division's operations officer, explain that each morning during the Okinawa campaign, Dad would inquire where the "Hot Spot" had been the pre-

ceding night. Upon learning its location, he would set out on foot to walk and crawl to the front to see for himself what the situation was and how his men were making out. Over the years, I had had the pleasure of meeting a number of the men from the California contingent who would visit Dad on those special days such as his birthday and the birthday of the Corps. My father always looked forward to those visits and I am sure that he was smiling down on "his boys" from the Big Barracks in the sky when each of you laid a flower on his coffin at Arlington. I must say that that was the most touching thing that I have ever seen in my 62 years. God bless and keep you all.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a copy of an essay that my daughter, Virginia Shepherd, wrote between Dad's death and the day of the Arlington funeral. [Find it on www.sixthmarine-division.com under Stories.] I think that it expresses better than anything I could say, how much we too will miss the General that you followed in combat and we followed all of our lives.

Yours very truly,
Wilson E.D. Shepherd

Letter Written by General Shepherd on Okinawa

Thanks to Sallie Shepherd for sharing this letter with us.

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD.

3 May, 1945

Mrs. Adele A. Mante
3256 Riverdale Avenue
Bronx, 63, New York

My dear Mrs. Mante:

Your very lovely letter of April 10 enclosing the specially blessed crucifix arrived today. It was most kind and thoughtful of you to send me this sacred emblem which brings with it a long chain of prayers of-

fered by you and your priest. As I wrote you previously, I am a firm believer in the power of prayer. I feel confident that the prayers offered by you and the many mothers whose sons are engaged in this conflict, as well as our own, have enabled this division to attain its present successes with a minimum cost of life. From the time when I was informed that our landing on Okinawa would be on Easter morn, I had a feeling of confidence that Our Lord would look with favor on our operation. Such was the case. Although the beaches over which we were to land had been organized for defense, when we came ashore on Easter Day we found that the

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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.

Burd, Cecil C.	22nd Mar-3-HQ	05/11/22
Campione, Joseph L.	4th Mar-1-A	07/04/00
Ford, William I.	29th Mar-2-H&S	unknown
Hawthorne, Robert Calvin (Cal)	6th Marine Division	03/03/22
Hiott, Joseph M.	4th Mar-1-B	08/09/21
Kenworthy, Francis (Frank) Joseph	6th Marine Division	05/27/05
Kuzmanovich, George M.	9th Amphib-C	07/03/14
Sexton, William	4th Mar-3-L	05/28/22
Vail, Maurice (Mo)	29th Mar-3-I	05/31/22
Willauer, Joan	wife of Edward Willauer	05/21/22
Williams, Quinon	29th Mar-3-C	03/26/13

Reporting Deaths

**Please report deaths
as soon as possible to:**

Patty Payne
Membership Chair
(410) 978-2979
pjpayne1984@verizon.net

AND

Harry McKnight
Chaplain
(614) 866-3456
barbandht6321@aol.com

Letter Written by General Shepherd on Okinawa

(continued from the prior page)

Japanese, for some unaccountable reason, had withdrawn inland, thus permitting us to land without casualties. During the past month the Sixth Division has conquered the central and northern parts of Okinawa. The enemy resistance encountered has only been moderate, and we have suffered a comparatively few casualties. You may, therefore, feel that your prayers have been answered. I sincerely hope that our casualties do not materially increase during the remainder of the campaign.

I am pleased to inform you that your son, Andrew, is well and doing fine work. He has a splendid commanding officer in Lieutenant Colonel Hochmuth, I am sure will do all in his power to take good care of your boy. Of course, only God can protect him in battle, but I earnestly hope through your prayers he will be spared. Although I can make no promises, I have every reason to believe that Andrew may return to the States before the summer is over.

In closing, I wish again to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your prayers for my guidance and strength in this campaign. You may rest assured that I devote my entire thought and energies to the care and protection of the fine boys whom I am privileged to command. I pray nightly that God in His infinite mercy may guide me properly in the decisions I must make and for the protection of the officers and men under my command. May He bless our cause and bring us a speedy victory.

With many thanks again for your beautiful crucifix which will give me strength and faith in the future, I remain

Sincerely yours,
LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, Jr.
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division

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) 303-2906

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION
50th and Final Annual Meeting Minutes
Holiday Inn Fredericksburg Conference Center, Fredericksburg, Virginia
Friday, September 17, 2021

President Connie Houseweart called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She appointed Bob McGowan as Sergeant at Arms. She announced members of the Band of Brothers USMC Motorcycle Club were in attendance to honor the 6th Marine veterans.

Roll Call:

Secretary Benedetti took the roll call:

Officers:

President – Connie Houseweart	Present
Secretary – Lisa Benedetti	Present
Treasurer – Sharon Woodhouse	Present
Chaplain – Harry McKnight	Present
Editor – Carroll McGowan	Present
Judge Advocate – Bob McGowan	Present
Membership Chairman – Patty Payne	Absent and excused
Public Relations – Jim Monbeck	Present
Service Officer – Jim White	Absent and excused

Unit Directors:

4 th Marines – George Scott	Absent and excused
15 th Marines	Vacant
22 nd Marines – D.C. Rigby	Present
29 th Marines – Neal McCallum	Present
6 th Motor Transportation Battalion	Vacant
6 th Medical Battalion	Vacant
6 th Engineering Battalion	Vacant
6 th Tank Battalion	Vacant
6 th Pioneer Battalion	Vacant
6 th Headquarters Battalion	Vacant
6 th Recon Co.	Vacant
6 th JASCO – George McAfee	Absent and excused
1 st Amphibs	Vacant

Secretary Benedetti declared a quorum was in attendance (at least 30 members).

President Houseweart stated that the Meeting Notice was published in the 2021 spring and summer issues of the Striking Sixth. A copy was available.

Judge Advocate Bob McGowan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chaplain Harry McKnight gave the invocation.

Approval of Minutes of August 30, 2019:

Watson Crumbie, seconded by Jim Rigby, moved to approve the minutes of the August 30, 2019 Annual Meeting as published in the 2020 spring issue of the Striking Sixth. All in favor, motion carried.

REPORT OF OFFICERS:

President Connie Houseweart:

Connie stated how wonderful it was to be able to have the 50th and final reunion after having to cancel it in 2020 due to the Coronavirus 19 pandemic. It was great to see everyone, although bittersweet that it is the final reunion.

Connie read an email sent to Sharon Woodhouse from a Marine stationed at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, John A. Ferguson, MGySgt. III MEF, III MIG, 7th Communication Battalion. He spoke of learning about the battle of Okinawa and the big part played by the 6th Marine Division in taking the island. He stated that everything looks very different than it did in 1945 and it is

hard to pinpoint specific locations. He sent a photo of the top of Sugar Loaf Hill with the Tomori Lion in 1945 and one taken in August 2021. The lion looks the same only the vegetation in the area has changed. He was very interested to find the 6th Marine Division Association website and Facebook page and would like to correspond with any veterans who could speak about the battle of Okinawa. He congratulated the Marines of the 6th Marine Division on their 50th reunion and wished a sincere appreciation for their service and success.

Secretary Lisa Benedetti:

The minutes will be certified and filed now they have been approved.

Treasurer Sharon Woodhouse:

The Treasurer's report covered the period of August 20, 2019 to September 10, 2021. Beginning balance of \$23,307.18, revenues of \$13,123.17, expenses of \$19,480.87, with an ending balance of \$16,949.48 (report attached).

Chaplain Harry McKnight: No report.

Editor Carroll McGowan:

Carroll thanked our printer, Lakes Marketing and Print, for donating the colored pages of the newsletters. The Association had decided to eliminate those to save money in order to continue publishing for a few years. The printer said this was his way of thanking all the veterans for their service. Carroll read an email Watson Crumbie received from a prior printer, Jerry Wadley of Finisterre Publishing, stating it was his honor to be the printer of the newsletters for many years in the 2000s.

Carroll announced that she and Connie are now able to post on the Division's Facebook page. The intention is a way to continue to build and maintain awareness of the 6th Marine Division. She asked anyone who has ideas of things to post to contact either of them. She noted that she maintains the website, but has limited web skills. She would like to make it easier to operate and asked if there is anyone who is skilled at building websites and willing to donate their time, to contact her.

Judge Advocate Bob McGowan:

Bob reported there are large bronze grave markers and small ones for urns for the veterans available for free. If any veterans or family members would like one, please see Bob.

Membership Chairman Patty Payne:

Connie read the Membership Report. A thorough review of the 2018 roster, which had 1827 members listed, was conducted. Deceased members and Associate Members whose dues had not been paid were removed. There are 940 active members, 13 organizations, 6 honorary members and 15 new members since 2019. 145 members receive the newsletter.

Service Officer Jim White: No report.

Public Relations Officer Jim Monbeck: No report.

UNIT DIRECTORS' REPORTS: No report.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

Reunion Committee:

Sharon Woodhouse reported there are 71 people in attendance this year and it has been a good reunion. The veterans were

(continued on next page)

Annual Meeting Minutes (continued from the prior page)

honored at a ceremony at Stafford County War Memorial yesterday, which was very nice with reporters on hand. Due to a mix up, medallions from Virginia Senator Bryce Reeves, which were supposed to be given to the veterans at the ceremony, were not, so Sharon distributed them this evening.

Bylaws Committee: Bob McGowan had no report.

Finance Committee:

Connie Houseweart reported the committee met pursuant to Article X (9) of the Bylaws of the Association on September 15, 2021. The books were reviewed and the committee finds that the financial records and reports are in order.

ELECTIONS:

Nominations and Election of Officers:

President Houseweart presented the slate of officers for 2021-22 as follows:

President – Connie Houseweart
Secretary – Lisa Benedetti
Treasurer – Sharon Woodhouse
Chaplain – Harry McKnight
Editor – Carroll McGowan
Judge Advocate – Bob McGowan
Membership Chairman – Patty Payne
Service Officer – Watson Crumbie
Public Relations Officer – Jim Monbeck

Connie asked for any nominations from the floor. Seeing none she asked for a motion to accept the slate.

Ken Wells, seconded by Kathy Schadt, moved that the slate of officers as presented be accepted in perpetuity. All in favor, motion carried.

Unit Directors:

The current Unit Directors were reviewed. There was unanimous consent to keep the current unit directors and no additional directors were nominated for the vacancies.

Unit Directors for 2021-22:

4th Marines – George Scott
15th Marines – Vacant
22nd Marines – D.C. Rigby
29th Marines – Neal McCallum
6th Motor Transportation Battalion – Vacant
6th Medical Battalion – Vacant
6th Engineering Battalion – Vacant
6th Tank Battalion – Vacant
6th Pioneer Battalion – Vacant
6th Headquarters Battalion – Vacant
6th Recon Co. – Vacant
6th JASCO – George McAfee
1st Amphibs – Vacant

NEW BUSINESS:

Connie stated there are 6th Marine Division Association Cookbooks for sale for \$20.00. These were compiled several years ago by a daughter of a Marine. Not only are there recipes, there are stories from some of the Marines as well in it. Connie will send them to anyone interested in purchasing one.

Connie updated everyone on the schedule for Saturday.

Natalie Wells asked about getting pictures that were taken by others for yesterday's ceremony at the County war memorial and at the Marine Museum. Connie stated a link will be shared and also Carroll has been posting pictures to our Facebook

page. Barb McKnight asked for the Facebook link. She also suggested these posts could be shared with veterans who do not have access to keep them abreast of happenings and cheer them up. The link is @sixthmarinedivision on Facebook.

Buzz Bissinger announced his book, *The Mosquito Bowl*, which has been about a 5½ year process for him, has a tentative release date by HarperCollins on Father's Day 2022. [Editor's Note: The release date is now September 13, 2022.] He started it in 2017 and has never lost enthusiasm for the book and it has actually grown. He feels a great responsibility and obligation to all of the veterans to make it meaningful and put the 6th Marine Division and Okinawa in its rightful place in history, which he does not feel has been done. While it is not a comprehensive book about Okinawa, it focuses on five incredible men who played in this football game called the Mosquito Bowl. He hopes it serves as a lesson about how these men fought not as much for patriotism, but love of their brothers and serving one another and realizes when one has a sense of duty, one does not get to choose. These men endure in his heart. The book has been a personal journey for him and while his father who was in the 4th Regiment has been gone for 20 years, it is to let his father know how proud he is of him, although they never talked about the war. He is honored to be doing it and thanked everyone.

Association Items:

The Board wanted to get the input from the veterans as to what to do with all the items that have been used at all these reunions, as they are their items. Various suggestions were pursued to give some options this evening.

Pacific Battle Map - Connie announced that arrangements have been made, if the veterans agree, to send the large Pacific battle map and the 1st Provisional Brigade flag to the USMC Assault Amphibian School, Del Mar, Camp Pendleton, which has a museum. They promised the battle flag would be hung and on display every day. The school would pay the cost to ship it to them. Sallie Garrett Shepherd, granddaughter of General Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., connected Connie with the Executive Director, Major Dan Petronzio, to make the arrangements and we are excited for this possible option.

Lisa Benedetti also explained that the Board has been discussing what will happen with these items for over a year. Several museums including the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, the National Museum of the Pacific War in Texas and the Virginia Military Institute, were contacted to see if there was interest in any of the items, but since these items are not directly from the war, they declined, as space is of concern and their exhibits are actual war related items.

Ken Wells spoke of his concern about rushing into this and he would like to see the proposal for the memorabilia be put in writing.

Ken Wells, seconded by Watson Crumbie, moved that the Board be responsible for making the decision.

Karen Turner commented that this proposal does seem to be a good thing so the map does not end up getting moldy somewhere. Perhaps Zoom meetings could be held to determine what to do if it cannot be decided this evening. Connie pointed out that Laura Lacey, Neal McCallum and Bob McGowan have spoken just yesterday to the National Museum of the Marine Corps and they are not interested either and cannot promise anything would be displayed, if they accepted it.

(continued on next page)

Annual Meeting Minutes *(continued from the prior page)*

If approved this would be sent immediately after the reunion and it is a good option. We have nowhere to store these items. Mary Brauer offered to store the map and flag, if a decision was not made this evening that everyone was comfortable with. Connie stated no one wants to give up these items, but it has to be done. Neal McCallum stated he has asked the hard questions of the Board. The items are historical and have monetary value and the concern is they can be traded. This place is on Camp Pendleton and he does not think they would dishonor them. He feels strongly they should be preserved and the Association can no longer hold them itself. Bob McGowan clarified this offer on the table is for only two items, the map and the 1st Provisional flag (white). There are ideas for the other items, but the map is hard to ship and display, and as this is the only offer he feels this is a good home for the map. The flag is another issue, but a decision should be made on the map. Bob suggested that something could be put in writing as to where it is going and by whom tomorrow, if that is needed. Buzz Bissinger commended the Board and believes it is a great opportunity and a win for the map to be displayed 365 days of the year. Connie noted one of the guests here this evening stated he goes to Camp Pendleton for work and he would like to speak. The Marine, known as 49, stated the museum is on the grounds of the school. He has been through it and it is a great place. Mary Beth Tierney asked if Camp Lejeune had been offered it and Connie stated no. Displaying such a large item is the issue. Again, the Quantico Marine museum was offered it, but they could not promise it would be displayed.

Ken Wells, seconded by Buzz Bissinger, moved to amend his motion to approve the Pacific Battle Map and the 1st Provisional flag be sent to the USMC Assault Amphibious School Museum on Camp Pendleton. All the veterans and all other members were in favor.

Karen Turner asked that since this Association will be going forward as a virtual group, that pictures be taken of all the memorabilia and be posted on the website. She also requested that if the school/museum does not want the map and flag anymore that the Association, if it still exists, be given the right of first refusal. Connie stated all veterans should sign the map before the end of the reunion and pictures would be taken with them in front of the map and once the map is hung a picture will be sent to the Association.

Connie asked the veterans if they had any ideas on what should be done with the other items. They are:

- US Marine Corps flag
- 1st Provisional Marine flag
- 4th Regiment flag
- 15th Regiment flag
- 22nd Regiment flag
- 29th Regiment flag
- Memorial Service bell
- Annual Reunion banner
- Okinawa the Last Battle banner
- Heroes of Okinawa banner

The Battle Streamers are going with the Division Colors to the National Museum of the Marine Corps at Quantico.

Ken Wells suggested putting them up for auction with a reserve price. Karen Turner noted an auction could be held online. Connie stated everyone here is family versus an online auction. Natalie Wells asked if anyone not here has indicated an interest in any of it. Connie stated everything was put in the newsletter about what would be up for discussion at the reunion. No one

contacted anyone. Discussion was held on holding the auction this evening or tomorrow after the banquet as a silent auction. The vets could then think about the value they would like to see as a reserve price. Laura Lacey suggested some items could go to a local Junior ROTC. It was decided to hold a silent auction at the banquet tomorrow evening.

Discussion and Voting on the Future of the Association:

1. Apply any funds remaining after the 2021 reunion to publishing the newsletter and maintaining the website.

Anita Benedetti, seconded by Bob McCalmont, moved to approve the above stated motion.

Karen Turner asked about continuing the newsletter on the website, if it is not printed. Carroll McGowan replied the newsletter will continue for as long as there are veterans, then it will stop, but she will still post things on the website after that. It will be the means of communication. Joe Kite asked about continuing to publish the newsletter and when the money gets low, start charging for it. Connie replied, the Association is still charging \$10 per year for a subscription to the newsletter, but there are not enough subscriptions to cover all costs, so it is subsidized, as there are many vets who look forward to receiving it. Sharon Woodhouse remarked each newsletter costs about \$1150 an issue with color. With Lakes' donation of the color, the cost is about \$550 on each issue. The cost depends on how many pages also. There are three issues per year with about 145 copies mailed out. Karen Turner offered to help fundraise if money becomes an issue to continuing publishing it. Carroll McGowan explained the Association has enough money to continue the newsletter for the next few years, but would keep her offer in mind. She noted the main reason there is a charge is then we know who still wants to get it.

All in favor on the above stated motion, motion carried.

2. Continue the newsletter as long as we have Sixth Division Marine Subscribers and the money to pay for it. Thereafter, we will use the website and Facebook and any other means for building awareness of the Sixth Marine Division.

Karen Turner, seconded by Watson Crumbie, moved to approve. All in favor, motion carried.

3. Stop soliciting memberships and dissolve the Association effective when our funds run out.

Watson Crumbie, seconded by Karen Turner, moved to approve the above stated motion.

Karen Turner asked who would be responsible for the website when the funds run out and the Association is dissolved. Connie stated she is now paying the cost to continue the website as her donation to the Association. Carroll added that the board members would do it on a volunteer basis, not as a board and if Connie can no longer pay, then funds could be raised through our Facebook page. Karen was not for dissolving the Association, but Carroll stated it has to be dissolved at some point. Connie commented unless the younger generation wants to take over and there has not been a lot of attendance by them at the reunions. Karen suggested perhaps a friends group could take over. Ken Wells asked if there was anything in the Bylaws that covers this discussion. Carroll McGowan stated the Bylaws state that if the Association is dissolved, the remaining monies go the National Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation or another 501(c)(3) Marine

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Annual Meeting Minutes *(continued from the prior page)*

Corps related organization. This was started by the Marines for the Marines and when they are gone, she feels it should be dissolved and if another organization wants to form with a new purpose that is fine. We will maintain the website with volunteers and will try to recruit younger people to take it over. There are a lot of rules to follow in the bylaws of an association and most will no longer apply. We do not need an organization like this to have the website. Barb McKnight remarked the reason this Association has continued is because of the sons and daughters who are sitting in the front. Frank McBride asked how the Association members would decide/know when it would be dissolved. Bob McGowan replied we have not run out of money yet and there are several more years left, so we will cross that bridge when it happens by some communication. There is the website and Facebook page. Karen pointed out both the website and Facebook page stated Sixth Marine Division Association. Carroll noted the Bylaws state a vote has to be taken to dissolve the Association. This is the last meeting, so it has to be voted on today. The motion is worded that it would be dissolved when the funds run out. Sharon suggested that she could provide a bank balance that would be posted in each issue of the newsletter so members will see what is left as the years go on. Also, donations are always accepted. Watson agreed that was the way to go and there will be several more years left.

All in favor of the motion stated above, motion carried.

Chaplain McKnight gave the benediction

Kathy Schadt, seconded by Mary Walker, moved to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Adjournment 9:15 p.m.

Attachment to Minutes:

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Financial Statement 2019-2021

Beginning Balance August 20, 2019 \$23,307.18

Revenue

Membership dues/newsletters/ donations	2,998.60
2019 Auction and 50/50	2,752.57
2021 Reunion	7,172.00
Cookbooks	200.00
	13,123.17

Expenses

Printing of newsletters	4,455.59
2019 Reunion	13,971.24
2021 Reunion	126.32
2019 Reunion Refunds	511.72
2021 Reunion Refunds	272.00
Misc. (NSF fees/shipping)	144.00
	(19,480.87)

Ending Balance September 10, 2021 \$16,949.48

Sixth Marine Division Association

Checking account balance @ 6/30/22 = \$14,352

Summer 2022

6MD Veteran John Thek To Be Honored at Flag Ceremony

On select nights during the summer, Cape May, NJ holds a special flag-lowering ceremony on Sunset Beach at 7:00 pm. The flag, which was raised that morning, once covered the casket of an American veteran. This moving ceremony, which has been a tradition for 40 years, includes a tribute by the family, the Pledge of Allegiance, the national anthem, and "God Bless America."

On August 15, the flag that draped the casket of Sixth Division Veteran John "China Jack" Thek will be lowered. John joined the Marines in 1916 and served until 1930, during which time he married and started a family. He was recalled to active duty in 1942 and became part of the Sixth Marine Division on Guadalcanal in 1944. He participated in the invasion of Okinawa the following year. John retired from the Marines in 1959 and died in 1984 at age 83.

You can find more information on John Thek and the flag ceremony on our website:

www.sixthmarinedivision.com/21DivisionNews.html



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Summer 2022

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Praise for *The Mosquito Bowl*

"Buz Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights* is an American classic. With *The Mosquito Bowl*, he is back with a true story even more vivid and profound. This book, too, is destined to become a classic. I devoured it." —JOHN GRISHAM

"Take your pick. This is either the story of the most improbable game of football ever played, an anthem to immigrant America, or a brilliant tribute to an exemplary breed of heroism that was decimated at Okinawa. In every case it's an readable account of promising young men themselves hurled into history. Buz Bissinger has stitched their story together as no one else could, powerfully and seamlessly, offering up a tender-tough tale in his signature high-octane prose." —STACY SCHIFF, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Witcher*, *Salon*, 1692

"Here may be the most uniquely fascinating story ever written about World War II. Like the best of Buz Bissinger, it is about far more than a football game or even the war. It's a gifted narrator and prodigious researcher, and in this book his skills are all on display: incredible characters, a bizarre and remarkably distinct setting, action, drama . . . a great story told with wit and humor and deep feeling. Do not pass this book by. It is magnificent." —MARK BOWDEN, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Black Hawk Down* and *Heat* 1698

"Harrowing, profound, and illuminating, *The Mosquito Bowl* humanizes war and elevates athletic competition in one fell swoop. Bissinger is the master of showing us life in a single grain of sand, and he has done so brilliantly here. As familiar as the subject of World War II may seem, this book makes you see it in a fresh and exquisite way, with all its pain and triumph rendered in close detail." —SUSAN ORLEAN, *New York Times* bestselling author of *On Animals* and *The Library Book*

"Stephen Crane famously discovered 'the rage of conflict' while watching a college football game. For Buz Bissinger, football is no metaphor; it is the way into one of the bloodiest battles of World War II. Deeply researched, told with extraordinary empathy and verve, *The Mosquito Bowl* will break your heart." —NATHANIEL PHILBRICK, National Book Award-winning author of *In the Heart of the Sea* and *Travelers with Geck*

"*The Mosquito Bowl* is savage, piercing, and haunting. Buz Bissinger has written an utterly heartbreaking saga that fuses the macho glory of college football with the brutality and futility of combat. It is a measure of Bissinger's singular talent that his searing account is tragic yet also inspiring and unforgettable." —DAVID ZUCCHINO, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Wilmington's Lie*

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— John Grisham

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— **Nathaniel Philbrick**, National Book Award winning author of *In the Heart of the Sea* and *Travels with George*