

## At the End of His Life, Sixth Division Marine Jack Lawson Tells His Son the Story of His Service in World War II PART ONE

*Andrew Lawson, son of Cpl Jack Lawson of the Sixth Marine Division, writes:*

*"Following are my Dad's memoirs of his experiences as a Marine with the Sixth Marine Division during WWII as told to me when he was nearly 90 years old. Up until then, he rarely spoke about his war experience except in general terms. If he was asked, he would get that "thousand yard stare," get real quiet and say he didn't want to talk about it. But as he neared the end of his life, he wanted to leave an accurate account of what happened. I feel that accounts like this should to be honored and preserved."*

**Jack Lawson's story:**

I must say I am extremely proud of my service as a Marine, but not to be obviously boastful by embellishing the truth as I have heard many others do. I have talked very little about my experiences except to friends and family so as not to leave this impression. I was not a hero and won no personal awards.

### Boot Camp

When one is a Marine, you are exactly that. A Marine. I notice in some branches of military service, men and women are recruited for certain designated duties and are trained for only that. Sounds like being a civilian. Not so in the Marine Corps. There are certain special duties you may perform, but you are first and foremost an infantry-trained fighting Marine.

I voluntarily enlisted in the Marine Corps while in Johnson City, TN and was sent to Nashville to be sworn in. From there about 20 of us were sent on a Pullman car, which was switched from train to train in various cities until one reached San Diego four days later.

Boot Camp is a unique experience which one must go through to understand. It is an experience that will reveal what is inside of you, what you are made of. You will learn discipline. You will follow orders, exactly. You will speak only when spoken to. No exceptions.

*(continued on next page)*



Jack Lawson (6MarDiv) in later years

### Inside This Issue:

Jack Lawson Memoir.....	2-3
Officer and Unit Director Listing.....	4
Board of Directors Meeting.....	5
Mosquito Bowl Updates.....	5
Donations.....	5
Editor's Note.....	5
Rise of the Valiant Update.....	6
VMI Scholarship Winner.....	6
Michael Senko Memoir.....	7-9
RIP Jim Monbeck.....	9
RIP Robert Imoehl.....	10
RIP Herbert Kinney .....	10
TAPs.....	11-13
Leonard Turner Turns 100.....	14-15

# Jack Lawson

*(continued from prior page)*

You will address your D.I. (drill instructor) by first saying "Sir." You will be physically fit or it will kill you. You will learn weaponry and close order drill. Every minute of every day is planned, and that plan is followed.

I knew right away that it wasn't going to be any "piece of cake." It was rough duty but I had volunteered for this, and I was going to make the best of it. The secret to making your way through this was simply to keep your mouth shut and your ears open and do exactly as you were told. Those 10-12 weeks taught me many things, mainly to follow orders without hesitation. Those were lessons for survival later on.

The most enjoyable experience in boot camp was the week spent on the shooting range. We practiced rifle and machine gun fire all week. In a way, it was fun to compete, and I did quite well – expert rifleman. Every Marine recruit spends a week or more on the rifle and machine gun range. You must qualify with the basic rifle and 30 caliber machine gun. Every man must be able to swim. There is no liberty of any kind, and you are allowed no visitors. You will go into this as a civilian and come out a Marine and proud of it. This basic training will serve you well for the rest of your life...guaranteed.

## Camp LeJeune

After I completed boot camp in San Diego, I moved up the coast to Camp Pendleton, which is approximately halfway between San Diego and Los Angeles near Oceanside, California. I was as-

signed to a combat engineer training battalion.

From Pendleton I went across the country by troop train to Camp Lejeune, NC. There were three trains with Marines on board leaving the west coast at the same time, but each train traveled a completely different route to the east coast, for security reasons I suppose. This was a long, winding trip and took 7 or 8 days. We saw the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean and passed through 13 states.

It was at Camp Lejeune that the 29th Marine Regiment started to form. (It later became part of the 6th Marine Division when we reached the island of Guadalcanal.) We were formed into company units there. I was in "Charley" or C Company 6th Engineering Battalion.

The duty in Camp Lejeune was rugged. We lived in canvas tents in a swamp-like area only a few hundred yards from the ocean. We had to sleep under mosquito nets and the sand flies were with you constantly. It was not a pleasant place; it was almost like a prison camp. We trained every day except Sunday. We were out on night problems almost every night. Liberty was only granted for 4 or 5 hours, and the nearest town was very small.

## The Pacific

We were in Camp Lejeune for about 10 or 12 weeks and then it was back across the country on another troop train to California to ship out to the South Pacific. We did not know where we were



Camp Lejeune

going, but it was a relief to get out of that hell hole in North Carolina.

After we arrived in California, we were sent to Camp Elliott, just north of San Diego. This was just a temporary tent camp that was the staging area for Marines who were shipping out to the South Pacific combat areas. We weren't there long, maybe 10 or 12 days, and we were busy-busy loading ships with all kinds of ammunition and equipment. We got another physical exam and all kinds of shots for who knows what diseases.

Then it was aboard a foul-smelling ship which was crewed by merchant seamen. Maybe half the men were seasick. What a stinking mess. I was one of the lucky ones who did not get sick. We were fed only two meals per day and they were not very good. This was the only merchant marine ship I was ever on. Thank goodness.

On the voyage, we crossed the equator and the International

*(continued on next page)*

# Jack Lawson

*(continued from prior page)*

Date Line and were inducted into King Neptune's Kingdom in an unusual ceremony. I am no longer a "pollywog," whatever that is. [Editor's note: a pollywog is someone who has not crossed the equator in a ship.] I used to have a certificate proclaiming that, but it is long gone. A school of several porpoises followed alongside our ship for several days. They were beautiful.

## Guadalcanal

After 20 or so days we landed in the Solomon Islands at a place called Guadalcanal. The island sits very near the equator in the southern hemisphere. It is a miserable place to be. Hot – and I mean really hot – and humid. During the monsoon season it rains every day. Mosquitoes are much larger than the ones here, and they are carriers of malaria and dengue fever. I had the latter, and it was no fun. Camp Lejeune had been rough, but this was worse. Guadalcanal is mostly jungle except for the areas along the coast. Our camp was not far from the Pacific Ocean, but we were not there on vacation.

Guadalcanal is where the first land offensive of the Pacific war was fought and won by the 1st Marine Division. Of course, it was over when I was there except for a few pockets of holdout Japanese. They were on the opposite side of the island from us and posed little or no threat.

As many as four or five Japanese troop ships had been sunk by our Navy in 1943, and the water was too shallow for them to sink completely. We could look

out in the bay and see three or four Japanese transports with dead Japanese soldiers rotting on board in their watery graves. When we practiced beach landings, we often came alongside these ships.

I was on Guadalcanal for seven months while we trained for combat. The training was constant, almost every day except Sunday and the Marine Corp Birthday. Anything less than a 12-hour day was uncommon. Our C.O. had the bugler blow reveille at 5:00 am, even on Sunday so we "could have time to enjoy the time off" on Sunday. But we were being prepared for combat, and we knew that sometime in the future we would be needed somewhere.

We were tented eight men to a tent, and it was so hot we slept almost naked except for a mosquito net. Of the eight men in my tent, three were killed on Okinawa, one from mortar fire, one from a booby trap, and one from a Jap sniper. These were three close friends. A fourth man in my tent was badly wounded.

When it came time to leave Guadalcanal it was bittersweet. I remember when we were leaving to ship out. We had to climb up the side of our ship from small boats loaded with full gear and rifles using cargo nets, which hung over the side of the ship. All 782 combat gear that had been damaged was replaced, and we packed our packs. Nothing except the barest essentials were taken. We had to carry everything on our backs. Everything else was packed in our sea



Jack Lawson as a young Marine

bag and left behind for the rear echelon to take to Guam. There they would set up our new camp where the survivors would go after we had secured the next island. As best I remember, all I took in the way of clothing was an extra pair of green twill dungarees, a flannel shirt field jacket, extra underwear, socks, a poncho, and maybe a soft cap (though we wore steel helmets).

There would be no sleeping in a bed for another three months; we slept on five-high canvas racks onboard the troop ships. After went ashore, only God knew what. We would sleep on the ground in our clothes and cover ourselves with our poncho and whatever extra clothes we might have. There would be no regular meals to eat; only field rations that we could heat up if we could find a way.

I do not know how many days we were on board those ships, but it must have been more than 15. When we joined up with the whole task force in the Ulithi Islands there were what seemed like 100 or more ships.

In Part Two, Jack talks about his time in Okinawa. Look for it in the spring 2024 Striking Sixth.



# SIXTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION 2022-2023

## Board of Directors

### PRESIDENT

Connie Houseweart  
258 Sechler Drive  
Montoursville, PA 17754  
(570) 279-8197  
almostnuts@comcast.net

### SECRETARY

Lisa Benedetti  
6039 Wilson Mills Road  
Cleveland, OH 44143  
(440) 442-0386  
lisabene@sbcglobal.net

### TREASURER

Sharon Woodhouse  
12598 SW Dickson Street  
Tigard, OR 97224  
(503) 799-4455  
sjawoodhouse@gmail.com

### EDITOR

Carroll McGowan  
1423 Pueblo Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15228  
(412) 303-2906  
chm1423@aol.com

### JUDGE ADVOCATE

Bob McGowan  
1423 Pueblo Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15228  
(412) 580-7473  
chmcg11@aol.com

### MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Patty Payne  
439 Chalfonte Drive  
Catonsville, MD 21228  
(410) 978-2979  
pjpayne1984@verizon.net

## Unit Directors

4th Marines	Vacant
15th Marines	Vacant
22nd Marines	D.C. Rigby
29th Marines	Neal McCallum
6th Motor Trans Battalion	Vacant
6th Medical Battalion	Vacant
6th Engineering Battalion	Vacant
6th Tank Battalion	Vacant
6th Pioneer Battalion	Vacant
6th Headquarters Battalion	Vacant
6th Recon Company	Vacant
6th JASCO	Vacant
1st Amphibs	Vacant

## Historian

Laura Lacey  
262 Garretson Lane  
Mansfield, TX 76063  
(540) 809-4027  
laurahlacey@gmail.com

**It's time to send in your dues for the  
2024 Striking Sixth newsletter!**

**Payment is due on December 31.**

*See instructions to the right ———>*

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

Carroll McGowan  
1423 Pueblo Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15228  
chm1423@aol.com  
(412) 303-2906

## Striking Sixth Newsletter

This newsletter is an official publication of  
the Sixth Marine Division Association and is  
published three times each year:

March, July and November.

**Subscriptions are \$10 per calendar year.**

**Subscription checks and donations  
should be mailed to:**

Patty Payne  
439 Chalfonte Drive  
Catonsville, MD 21228

**Please make checks payable to:  
Sixth Marine Division Assn.**

**Address changes and death notices can  
be mailed to Patty at the address above  
or emailed to:**

pjpayne1984@verizon.net

For more information, please contact Patty:  
(410) 978-2979 or  
pjpayne1984@verizon.net



## Board of Directors Meet in October

*As a reminder, although annual meetings are no longer held, the Board of Directors meets annually via conference call to manage the Association.*

*Following is a summary of the discussion in the 2023 meeting:*

Our financial position is good, and we have enough money to continue publishing the newsletter and maintaining the website for several years.

Due to the passing of Harry McKnight and Jim Monbeck, the positions of Chaplain and Public Relations are vacant. The Board agreed that these vacancies do not need to be filled. There is no need for a Chaplain since we no longer have reunions, and the rest of the Board can handle inquiries about the Sixth Marine Division that formerly went to Jim.

It is important that we have adequate backup for all Board positions. The officers each reviewed their responsibilities and how they would be handled if they were no longer able to function due to death or disability.

Membership Chair Patty Payne has been doing extensive research in order to identify members of the Association who have passed away and can be removed from the roster. This is a time-consuming task, which is appreciated by the other members of the Board. The Association is no longer accepting new members.

Carroll McGowan and Connie Housewart reported that they met with our Website Consultant Robert Aydelotte to determine if we could reduce the costs of maintaining the website. Thanks to Robert's efforts, we were able to consolidate our vendors from two to one and significantly reduce the annual cost of the website. Robert is a huge asset to the Association.

Bob McGowan reported there are seven large and 12 small grave markers remaining.

### Sixth Marine Division Assn.

Checking account balance  
@ 10/31/23 = \$12,307

## Editor's Note



My favorite section of our website is the stories and memoirs written by Sixth Division Marines. Each individual

story paints a picture of the war that no one else saw. I wish we had more of them.

So imagine how pleased I was when I learned that two lineal descendants had stories from their fathers they wanted to share. (See Jack Lawson's memoir on page 1 and Michael Senko's memoir on page 7.)

If anyone has any stories or memoirs from a Sixth Division Marine they would like to share, please consider sending them to me so I can publish them in this newsletter and on our website. I am looking for stories that are interesting, unusual, humorous or touching and that are consistent with what is known about the Division's history. I am not looking for stories that present the author as great or heroic, because in my experience the real heroes don't talk about themselves.

I hope you all enjoyed celebrating the Marine Corps Birthday and Veterans Day, and I wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

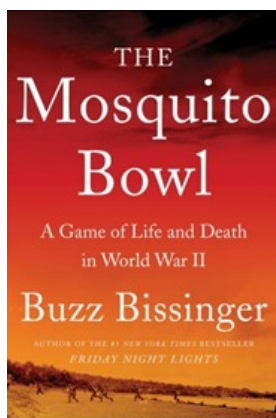
~Carroll McGowan

## *The Mosquito Bowl* Now in Paperback and Excerpted in the September *Leatherneck*

Count on us to keep you informed about the latest developments with *The Mosquito Bowl*.

September was a big month!

First, the book came out in paperback, so if you prefer that format, get thee to a bookstore or Amazon now!



Second, *Leatherneck* magazine ran an excerpt in the September issue. It's the chapter about Bob McGowan and the encounter with ants that saved his life. Buzz considers it one of the best chapters in the book, and apparently, *Leatherneck* agrees.

## Donations — Thank You!

General Operating Fund

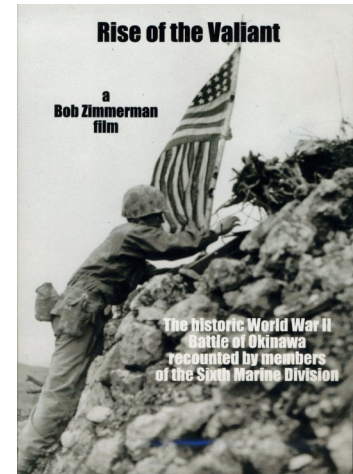
Michael J. Senko

# Sixth Marine Division Documentary Now on YouTube

If you have not yet seen *Rise of the Valiant*, a film about the Sixth Marine Division at the Battle of Okinawa, listen up! It is now available on YouTube. Produced by lineal descendant Robert Zimmerman, the film focuses on six members of the Sixth Marine Division who fought in the battle. In personal interviews, the Marines tell their stories beginning with their in-

duction into the Corps and ending with their homecoming after the war. But the principle focus is on Okinawa. The Marines' interviews are supplemented with superb photos and footage of the battle.

*Rise of the Valiant* won the prestigious Norman Hatch Award from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation in 2015. It can also be purchased on Amazon.

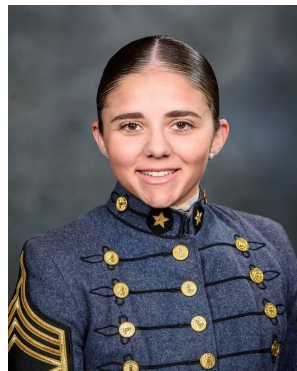


---

## A Note from VMI Scholarship Winner Angela Castagna

I am a psychology major with an exercise science minor from New Ringgold, Pennsylvania. While at VMI, I held ranks such as the Second Battalion Sergeant Major and the Regimental S3 position. These two positions allowed me to experience the cadre side and the staff side of being a cadet at VMI. I was involved with clubs such as the psychology club, Building BRIDGEs (working with the Lexington community), and Omicron Delta Kappa. In my free time, I worked out with my rat and Marine Option Brother Rats and enjoyed going out into town and on trips with them. Before coming to VMI, I was a competitive dancer. I spent about 20 hours a week in the studio. I did all types of styles such as ballet, lyrical, jazz, tap, and contemporary,

When I first came to VMI, I was signed up for Air Force ROTC because my family convinced me it was the best branch for a female. However, there was always a small part of me that



Cadet Angela Castagna

wanted to join Marine Corps ROTC ever since my first experience with Marines at an air show at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst when I was 10.

After experiencing a year of Air Force ROTC and not feeling like I had a sense of purpose or belonging, I knew it was time to change my path. With support from Marine Option Brother Rats, I changed to the PLC program out of Roanoke. As soon as I switched and began to experience Marine Corps ROTC, I felt like I was at home. I had found my people.

I am an aviation scholarship and hope to fly the F-35 or the V-22 Osprey. I am pleased to report that I spent my summer on tem-

porary duty orders with Strike Fighter Wing Atlantic out of NAS Oceana helping with COR-TRAMID ride along in the T-38. I am the first Marine officer in quite some time to activate and attach to an NROTC unit. Next, I began attending The Basic School in August. Once TBS is complete, I will travel to Pensacola to begin my flight training.

I chose VMI because I loved the rich history of the school. I fell in love with American Civil War when I was in Middle School, and that interest is what led me to VMI! It is the only college I applied to, and it will forever hold a special place in my heart

Very Respectfully,  
2ndLt. Angeline M. Castagna  
VMI Class of 2023

Editor's Note: Cadet Castagna was one of two winners of the 2023 Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd Award at VMI

# Michael H. Senko (29th Mar-2-F) Recalls the Battle for Sugar Loaf Hill

*Michael H Senko was born July 29, 1921 in Buffalo NY and died on March 31, 2004 in Tucson AZ. In 1992 at age 92, he wrote this memoir of his experience on Sugar Loaf Hill. It was sent to us by his son, Mike Senko, a former Marine Sergeant who served in Vietnam and is the former ambassador to the Marshall Islands and Mongolia.*

The battle for Sugar Loaf Hill remains a subject of much interest to historians due to its ferocity. I want to add my memories to those of the many prominent writers (William Manchester, Eugene Sledge, Victor Hansen) who have written about it. Until recently, I had tried to put the battle, and in fact all the 75 or so days I spent on Okinawa, quickly out of my mind every time I started to think about them. Many of my memories are now somewhat jumbled and I have fewer and fewer old comrades and friends to help with my recollections.

I landed on Okinawa on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945 as a Corporal and .30 caliber machine gun section leader in Company F, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Sixth Marine Division. I had been in the Marine Corps since 1939 as the Great Depression had left a scarcity of promising jobs for a high school dropout.

The Japanese did not strongly oppose the Easter amphibious landing. Rather, they dug in in

the interior of the island and planned to bleed us badly, which they were able to do. The 6<sup>th</sup> Marine Division, while new, was filled with combat veterans from other Marine units, and we moved rapidly in the northern part of the island and the Motobu Peninsula, winning praise from even the Army. We were then moved south to help relieve



Michael H. Senko (right) in World War II

the Army's 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, which had encountered stiff resistance. We moved into position and prepared to attack the heavily fortified Shuri line. That was where we encountered Sugar Loaf Hill and two smaller hills to the flanks code named Half Moon and Horseshoe. This would have been about May 12 or 13.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Marines G company first tried to take Sugar Loaf, and in several assaults were repulsed over the course of a couple of days, taking very heavy casualties from Japanese machine guns and artillery. My Company, F, of the 29<sup>th</sup> Marines, had seen some hellish days along some railroad tracks nearby and was next assigned to take the hill. My machine gun section was attached to a rifle platoon led by Lt. Charlie Behan, who had played football for the Detroit Lions. He and I had attended Infantry Leaders and Instructors School together at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. Lt. Behan assigned me to place two machine guns on the top of the left of the hill. I remember him saying, "Mike, I'm counting on you."

We got to the top of the hill, but there was very stiff resistance and mass confusion and men were falling everywhere. I saw Lt. Behan run across the top and front of the hill, and he was cut down and died there. I got my .30 caliber water-cooled machine gun up on the left side of the top. Someone near me leapt in a hole on top of another Marine and was immediately hit almost directly by a mortar, which may have saved the man underneath. Grenades, mortars, and small arms fire were everywhere, with no sign of slacking. I saw Cpl. Ronca and his team [Note: apparently from another machine

*(continued on next page)*



# Michael H. Senko

*(continued from prior page)*

gun section] had also gotten a machine gun to the top of the hill, but it was quickly put out of action and Cpl. Ronca was killed or wounded. It apparently became evident that there were too few of us left to hold the hill and we were ordered to pull back. We saved our machine gun, but my memory gets hazy here. I know I helped several wounded down to a secondary line. A Navy Corpsman advised me to calm down, but I continued helping other wounded. One wounded Marine couldn't see.

It was difficult to regroup, and two of my close friends in the squad – Ike Wanamaker and John Blanchard – did not even rejoin us until the next day. Ike later told me what happened: he and Blanchard had not yet gotten up the hill when they encountered an intense mortar barrage and small arms fire that killed Lt. Behan and Sgt. Fisher and took out Cpl. Ronca and his crew. They quickly came under fire from the right base of the hill and set up their gun and returned fire. They then threw smoke grenades for cover, and continued moving and setting up, firing, and throwing smoke until they were down and away from the hill. They believe they were the last off the hill from our assault. They settled down with a rag tag unit of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Marines who had a position a couple of hundred yards in front of Sugar Loaf. They rejoined us in the morning and accompanied us to assault either Half Moon or Horseshoe (I forget which) where



Michael Senko in later years

they were both hit by shrapnel in another day and night of intense fighting.

We had dug in and were holding our positions, continuously throwing hand grenades over the crest of the hill. About midnight the Japanese began attacking and jumping into our foxholes. I lost a .30 caliber air-cooled machine gun (we had disabled it) and several more Company F friends in that fight. I remember specifically Corporals Hebrank and Allen. Due to constant casualties, we had lots of replacements in my squad and in our ranks and I no longer remember all the names.

Later in the night, we got word to pull back, but two of my best friends, Wayne Snyder and Bill Luecke, were trapped in a shell hole and couldn't get out. We learned at daylight they were missing. The platoon commander, Lt. Bob Sherer, called for volunteers to find them. We all volunteered and started up the hill, and fortunately we quickly found them coming down. I believe one or both of their weapons had

been destroyed in combat that day. A Japanese soldier then attacked their hole and got off one shot which hit Luecke in the shoulder and traveled down into Snyder's groin. The Japanese soldier's rifle then jammed and Snyder grabbed it and pulled the soldier into the hole, where his war ended. Another note on Snyder – during the fighting, he was hit in the helmet by a bullet that went inside, around the helmet, and out the top. He still has the helmet as I write this.

Survivors remember Sugar Loaf because of the number of assaults it took to capture it – at least eight or nine. [Note: Easy Company followed Fox and went up at least four times one day, losing 150 men. Dog Company followed on May 18 and finally raised the flag over the hill.]

Our ranks were now badly depleted, and we got word the 4th Marines were moving up to relieve us. I remember the Japanese resistance was still strong and the shelling accurate and intense as we moved out.

Our Okinawa battle was not over, however. We regrouped in reserve and on June 4 made a landing in heavy rain further south. Many more nightmarish and memorable days lay ahead. Our Company Commander, Captain Fowler, was killed in this fighting, while we were perhaps moving toward Yoke Easy Hill or some such name. I was sent for explosives to close caves on Yoke

*(continued on next page)*



## Michael H. Senko

*(continued from prior page)*

Easy, and while returning through some buildings, I encountered a Japanese soldier crouching in the corner of a wall with his rifle pointing at me. I think he must have been wounded or he would have finished me. Others must have seen him too, and he did not last long.

Several days later on June 13, I was passing a cave when I saw

feet retreating into it. It was a Japanese, and I saw he had thrown a grenade near me. I quickly stood up against a hill near the cave. While I was hit by fragments, I felt I was lucky I had not dived to the ground where I believe I would have been more exposed to the blast. I was evacuated to a hospital ship which took me to an Army

hospital in Saipan.

Okinawa was secured about a week later, on June 21. I re-joined Fox Company on Guam, and we began preparing to invade Japan.

- Michael H. Senko  
1992

---

## Association Public Relations Officer Jim Monbeck, 1946-2023



Jim Monbeck and Neal McCallum  
(29th Mar-2-F), Baltimore, 2018

No one was better at researching the military careers of Sixth Division Marines than Jim Monbeck. He enjoyed helping lineal descendants learn about the wartime service of their fathers and grandfathers. He could talk at great length about the Marines and World War II, and there was nothing he loved more than talking to the Marines at our reunions.

Jim passed away on August 10. It's sad news for us, but we like to think it's good news for Jim. Think of all the Sixth Division Marines he can talk to in heaven!

Jim was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force where he flew the B-52 and the C-5 transport plane. After retiring as a Colonel, he began flying with FedEx, founded by former Marine Fred Smith, who Jim admired very much. Despite being an Air Force guy, Jim was always comfortable in the company of Marines, perhaps because he was raised by a Sixth Division Marine.

Jim was a great student of military history, especially the Sixth Marine Division. He came to his first reunion in Portland, OR in 2012, which was close to his home in Washington. Once he got to talking with Sixth Division Marines, he never missed another reunion, no matter how far he had to travel.

Everyone enjoyed talking with Jim. He was a great conversationalist and had a wry sense of humor. He was extremely generous to the Association, donating baseball caps and mugs with the Sixth Marine Division insignia. He donated countless cases of wine – also branded with the Division's insignia – to be auctioned off at our reunions. We can picture him trying to smuggle a case into heaven!

RIP, Jim, and thank you for all your contributions to the Association.



Jim Monbeck and Jim McGuigan (29th Mar-3-G), Quantico, 2014

## Granddaughter Remembers Robert Imoehl (22nd Mar-1-A)

It is with deep sadness that I report the loss of my loving grandfather, PFC Robert Imoehl. He voluntarily enlisted in the Marine Corps on 15 November 1943. After spending May 1944 to March 1945 on Guadalcanal, he landed on Okinawa on 1 April, 1945.

My grandfather earned two Purple Hearts on Okinawa. On 13 May he was wounded with shrapnel to the head, and on 9 June he received a leg wound. As a result of his injuries, he was discharged on 6 December 1945.

My grandfather was an amazing man, and he shared many stories with me that he felt only a prior soldier or service member would understand.



Robert Imoehl

Thank you for maintaining the website; it means the world to me. I would share what was posted on it with my grandfather, and he enjoyed keeping up with it.

Semper Fi, Grandpa! Thank you for your service and sharing your experiences with me. You are my hero!

Your loving granddaughter,  
Lisa Schaefer  
former SGT US Army

## Herbert Kinney (22nd Mar-1-A) Passes Away at 99

We are sorry to report that Herbert Kinney passed away in his sleep in the morning of Saturday, November 4. He had just celebrated his 99th birthday the day before.



Herbert was a 26-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He served in

World War II with the 22nd Regiment and Sixth Marine Division and later served in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. He received a purple heart after being shot in Eniwetok in the Marshall Islands.

A resident of Flat Rock, NC, Herbert received an associate degree from the Coastal Carolina Community College and was the owner of Kinney Electric for 35 years.

Herbert's daughter Brenda writes of her father, "He loved the Lord, his family and his country. When I was a kid, I asked him why he stayed in the military. He told me, 'So you and your friends could have freedom.

'Thank you, daddy, for your service. Because of you and so many more, we can live in freedom!'

'Yes, your generation is the greatest generation.'"



We join Brenda in thanking her father for serving our country and keeping us free. RIP.

far left: Herbert Kinney in the service as a young man  
above: with Uncle Sam later in life  
left: with daughter Brenda and son-in-law Jerry on his 99th birthday the day before he passed away



# 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.**

Barry	George R.	4th Mar-1-B	04/13/14
Battiste	John	29th Mar-3-H	10/10/22
Belleman	Carrie	wife of Delbert E. Belleman	03/28/18
Bennett	Minnie	wife of Bruno Bennett	03/01/21
Bohn	Claude H.	22nd Mar-1-A	07/11/15
Borglund	Robert E.	6th JASCO	05/31/22
Carvalho	John	22nd Mar-1-HQ	05/07/22
Clemensen	Christen E.	29th Mar-2-E	03/29/19
Connelly	Pat	wife of Thomas E. Connelly	02/06/14
Connelly	Thomas E.	4th Mar-3-K	unknown
Conner	Henry D.	4th Mar-3-K	03/02/20
Crillo	Helen	wife of Ralph E. Crillo	10/29/06
Crillo	Ralph E.	29th Mar-3-L	10/13/18
Cuddy	Walter C.	6th Tank Bn-B	12/10/21
D'Aloia	Joseph A.	4th Mar-3-I	12/10/22
Deaton	Billy H.	15th Mar-2-D / 22nd Mar-3-K	04/22/11
Deaton	Norma	wife of Billy H. Deaton	01/31/22
Dilworth	Al W.	29th Mar-2-HQ	09/08/12
Dilworth	Beatrice	wife of Al W. Dilworth	12/23/14
Eddy	Harry J.	22nd Mar-2-E	05/07/22
Eddy	Lucille	wife of Harry J. Eddy	04/01/10
Egiziaco	Geno P.	22nd Mar-1-A	01/19/18
Eschenbrenner	Maureen	wife of Thomas B. Eschenbrenner	02/18/15
Eschenbrenner	Thomas B.	4th Mar-3-K	11/25/06
Fabiochi	James	4th Mar-3-K	01/22/22
Fair	Joseph E.	4th Pioneer Bn-A	09/09/14
Filipek	Walter V.	29th Mar-1-C	01/26/23
Flournoy	Lawrence	6th JASCO	07/24/15
Friedhoff	Betty Lou	wife of William J. Friedhoff	12/13/15
Gillan	F. J. (Gill)	4th Mar-1-A	08/04/18
Gillan	Phyllis	wife of F. J. (Gill) Gillan	04/24/21
Gillbreath	Dorothy	wife of Gail M. Gillbreath	02/20/21
Gillbreath	Gail M.	22nd Mar-3-I	01/22/15
Gissendanner	Elise	wife of Julian A. Gissendanner	08/09/21
Gissendanner	Julian A.	4th Mar-2-E	11/04/16
Gobus	Carol	wife of William M. Gobus	01/27/14
Gobus	William M.	22nd Mar-3-HQ	10/04/23
Goodrich	Forrest R.	6th Pioneer Bn-B	04/02/23
Gresavage	Walter	6th Engineer Bn-H&S	09/05/21
Gross	Russell H.	29th Mar-1-A	12/31/14
Hazard	Dorothy	wife of F. Archer Hazard	10/18/16
Hazard	F. Archer	22nd Mar-H&S	03/24/04

## Reporting Deaths

Please report deaths as soon as possible to:

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





# TAPS (continued)

**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.**

Henry	A. T. (Pete)	29th Mar-2-HQ	08/20/23
Hodges	Gerald L.	29th Mar-1-B	09/24/18
Hoeck	Harley (Rusty)	15th Mar-3-G	05/10/15
Honeyager	Margot	wife of Dean Honeyager	10/26/23
Iannuzzi	Anthony J.	6th Mtr Transport Bn	09/02/22
Imoehl	Mary	wife of Robert J. Imoehl	12/04/19
Imoehl	Robert J.	22nd Mar-1-A	07/11/23
Johnson	Willard B.	22nd Mar-3-K	05/19/23
Kadin	Elaine	wife of Irwin J. Kadin	06/03/17
Kadin	Irwin J.	6th Engineer Bn-H&S	03/24/15
Kimball	Delbert E.	22nd Mar-3-K	12/23/21
Kinney	Herbert	22nd Mar-1-A	11/04/23
Klintworth	Merlin A.	4th Mar-3-L	10/11/22
Konnerth	Mary Ann	wife of Roy A. Konnerth	08/16/16
Konnerth	Roy A.	22nd Mar-3-L	01/19/23
Krey	James	22nd Mar-2-H	04/02/18
Krey	Marion	wife of James Krey	01/02/14
Law	Billy H.	29th Mar-C	09/11/19
Lindsey	Bertha	wife of J. D. Lindsey	12/13/12
Lindsey	J. D.	22nd Mar-1-C	08/21/14
Maritato	Mario E.	22nd Mar-3-HQ	03/21/15
Martin	Brice T.	4th Mar-3-K	02/06/23
Mathews	Toni	wife of Vincent G. Mathews	01/25/19
Mazurski	Connie	wife of Thaddeus M. Mazurski	07/16/23
Mazurski	Thaddeus M.	15th Mar-4-L	06/06/23
McKenzie	Walter J.	6th Medical Bn-D	11/29/13
Meakim	Jane	wife of Norman G. Meakim	01/26/18
Meakim	Norman G.	4th Mar-3-K	unknown
Mernin	James C. Sr.	29th Mar-1-C (Mg Plt)	01/12/22
Mutters	Lewis E.	6th Mtr Transport Bn	08/01/17
Nuckols	Betty	wife of Jack R. Nuckols	06/10/22
O'Quinn	Lester C.	6th Tank Bn-A	05/27/17
Parr	Kenneth	29th Mar-2-D	11/20/18
Pechtel	Lillian	wife of Wallace F. Pechtel	05/28/21
Pechtel	Wallace F.	22nd Mar-1-B	09/05/21
Perry	Glenda	wife of Russell Perry	12/09/19
Pfotenhauer	Jean	wife of Paul E. Pfotenhauer	04/30/16
Pfotenhauer	Paul E.	29th Mar-3-I	09/13/16
Phillips	Allan B.	4th Mar-2-F	01/03/23
Phillips	June	wife of Allan B. Phillips	12/04/16
Piotrowski	Felix	15th Mar-4-L	06/01/19
Piotrowski	Ruth	wife of Felix Piotrowski	unknown



# TAPS (continued)

**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.**

Powers	Robert A.	4th Mar-3-K	02/24/23
Pulford	Charles E.	4th Mar-1-HQ	08/01/17
Pulliam	Carl E.	15th Mar-1-H&S	05/22/23
Reichert	Daniel E.	15th Marines, 3rd Bn	04/04/23
Richards	Elbert R. Jr.	6th Tank Bn-B	10/23/15
Richards	Martha	wife of Elbert R. Richards Jr.	10/23/15
Roberts	Pat	29th Mar-1-A	06/17/22
Roberts	Priscilla	wife of Pat Roberts	05/15/22
Rouw	Frieda	wife of William W. Rouw	06/22/14
Rowland	Audrey	wife of William Rowland Jr.	03/30/16
Rucinski	Doris	wife of Raymond J. Rucinski	02/12/18
Rucinski	Raymond J.	15th Mar-4-H&S	11/27/21
Salla	Celestine	wife of David S. Salla	12/04/09
Salla	David S.	4th Mar-3-I	07/14/23
Schantek	Frederick	29th Mar-1-B	09/01/22
Scharfen	John C.	6th Pioneer Bn	01/2023
Scharfen	Nancy	wife of John C. Scharfen	03/16/20
Scomis	Mildred	wife of Peter Scomis	08/02/06
Scomis	Peter	29th Mar-3-H	11/05/21
Shashy	Paul M.	4th Mar-HQ-HQ	01/17/23
Shaw	Allan E.	29th Mar-2-D	04/10/20
Skocy	Richard L.	6th Amphibious Core	03/10/23
Stevenson	Delbert L.	22nd Mar-2-G	12/28/13
Stevenson	Kituri	wife of Delbert L. Stevenson	03/06/16
Thon	John Jr.	9th Amphib	03/13/13
Tipton	Elizabeth	wife of Walter G. Tipton	11/15/17
Tipton	Walter G.	6th Mar Div-HQ-Band	12/27/14
Toth	Sherman	4th Mar-2-HQ	12/23/17
Townsend	John B.	29th Mar-3-I	01/16/16
Tuohy	Faris M.	6th Pioneer Bn	06/02/23
Tuomey	Robert N.	15th Mar-3-K	11/28/22
Vallon	Ruth	wife of Richard Vallon	01/07/22
Vaughn	Martha	wife of Robert G. Vaughn	11/28/22
Walther	John M.	29th Mar-3-I	09/05/17
Warner	Virginia	wife of Charles J. Warner	09/29/13
Wasson	Jean	wife of Robert D. Wasson	05/27/07
Wasson	Robert D.	4th Amphib Bn	12/04/14
Winter	Melvin M.	29th Mar-3-G	10/25/17
Wolfe	Hilda	wife of Paul R. Wolfe	03/10/20
Wood	Elmer J.	6th Mar Div-HQ-Signal	11/22/21
Young	Mary	wife of Charles R. Young	07/18/23
Zacchini	Howard	22nd Marines	12/31/22

We thank our Membership Manager, Patty Payne, For researching our membership roster in an effort to identify members who have passed away without notifying the Association and remove them from the roster.

# Leonard Turner Celebrates 100th Birthday!

Leonard Turner (4<sup>th</sup> Mar-Wpns) is the last person who would want anyone to make a fuss over him. But his daughter, Karen, insisted he deserved a special celebration for his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, so Leonard reluctantly agreed to let her plan a party. What a party it was!

Sponsored by the local Marine Corps League and VA, the event was held on August 18, 2023 at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah Georgia. Among the attendees were Robert Magnus, retired USMC four-star general and 30<sup>th</sup> Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. Numerous other members of the U.S. Armed Forces and dignitaries from the State of Georgia, the U.S. House of Representatives, the City of Savannah and Chatham County also came to pay their respects.

Leonard received many gifts and honors including a commendation from Governor Brian Kemp, a flag that was flown over the White House from U.S. Representative Buddy Carter, and a proclamation from USMC Commandant General Eric Smith. Most special of all, the County Commissioner proclaimed from that day forward, August 19 would be known as Leonard B. Turner Day in Chatham County.



True to his nature, Leonard's only comment was a sincere thank you. He noted that he shared this honor with all of the men and women he had served with during his life.

His life began in 1923 in Detroit, Michigan, where he was one of nine children. At age 19, he left his job at Briggs Motor Works to enlist in the Marine Corps. He chose the Marines because of their legacy, reputation, and training and because he thought the Marines offered the best chance for victory and survival. Also, he liked the uniform!

After boot camp at Camp Elliot, California, Leonard was shipped to New Caledonia and was eventually assigned to Headquarters of the 2nd Raiders Battalion, known as Carlson's Raiders. He landed on Guadalcanal, Bougainville, and Guam before his unit became part of the newly formed Sixth Marine Division. With his fellow Sixth Division Marines, he fought on Okinawa

and served in Japan during the Occupation. Leonard described his service with the Marines succinctly: "I went in as a mere teen and came out as an old man."

After the war, Leonard went back to Detroit where he worked for General Motors and married his wife, Bernadine. He was transferred to Charlotte, NC then back to Detroit where his two children, Karen and Jay, were born. After 42 years, he retired from General Motors, and Leonard and Bea moved to Savannah to be near Karen. Sadly, Bea passed away at age 70 after a long illness, during which time Leonard remained steadfastly at her side.

In subsequent years, Leonard discovered the existence of the USMC Raider Association and the Sixth Marine Division Association. He enjoyed reconnecting with his fellow Marines and attended several Sixth Marine Division reunions with Karen.

Leonard is thankful for his long life. He says the only reason he allowed so much attention to his 100th birthday is that he carries the torch for all those who have fought to preserve the American way of life. As he explains, it was the ones who sacrificed their tomorrows that enabled the rest of us to have so many today.



# Happy Birthday, Leonard!



1) Sixth Marine Division flag

2) Birthday banner

3) Leonard Turner with daughter Karen and son Jay

4) Presentation of the colors

5) Leonard prepares to cut the cake

6) guests at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum



# Sixth Marine Division Association

439 Chalfonte Drive, Catonsville, MD 21228



**Striking Sixth Newsletter**

**Fall 2023**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit # 1040  
Leesburg, FL  
34748

## From the 248th Marine Corps Birthday Message from General Eric M. Smith, Commandant of The Marine Corps:



For 248 years, Marines have earned a reputation as the most disciplined and lethal warfighters in the world. This legacy of honor, courage, and commitment passed on to us was paid for in sweat, blood, and sacrifice...

Marines have given, and have been willing to give, their lives for Country and Corps in every fight our Nation has entered...

We sacrifice so our fellow citizens don't have to, and we seek nothing in return but a chance to be first to fight.