PORTAL to the CORPS

Chronicling the National Museum of the Marine Corps

Edited by Jessica del Pilar

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ENTWINED

in the history of our great Nation is the storied legacy of the United States Marines. For 231 years, the raw physical courage, rigorous discipline, and iron will of Marines on and off the battlefield have earned a reputation that is second to none. This heritage is sacred to our Corps, and not since the dedication of the Marine Corps War Memorial in 1954 has there been as tangible a tribute to the United States Marine Corps' legacy as the founding of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

The design of this museum reflects the crest of Mount Suribachi on the island of Iwo Jima, where in the closing months of World War II the image of five Marines and one Sailor raising the American flag was seared into our national consciousness.

Foreword

General Michael W. Hagee, 33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps

Sixty years has done little to diminish the striking images of Iwo Jima. This hallmark battle is one link in the long chain that binds all Marines together—from the Continental Marines at Bunker Hill to the *Teufelhunden* crossing the wheat fields of Belleau Wood, where in 1918 they stemmed the tide of battle after being told that the war was lost. This chain binds us to the Marines on Guadalcanal in the early days of World War II, whose fighting spirit and unshakable determination prevailed over disease, privation, and relentless enemy attacks from the land, sea, and air. It passes through the ice and snow of the Chosin Reservoir, through the steaming jungles of Vietnam, and is anchored firmly in the current battlefields of the Global War on Terror.

Preserving this history means a great deal to Marines; our history is the standard against which we measure our performance today. We study the great Marines who fought in our touchstone battles and analyze what they did to forge the modern Marine Corps. Marines serving today stand in awe of the accomplishments of previous generations who fought and sacrificed for the United States around the globe. They gladly shoulder the responsibility to uphold the legacy they have inherited.

The National Museum of the Marine Corps is a place for every Marine—both past and present—to reflect on our heritage and pay tribute to the Marines of yesteryear. It is also a place where we commemorate the service and honor the memory of each of our fallen. Most of all, it is a place where we will tell the Marine Corps story to all Americans—and it's a great story to tell.

Semper Fi

Mike Hagee

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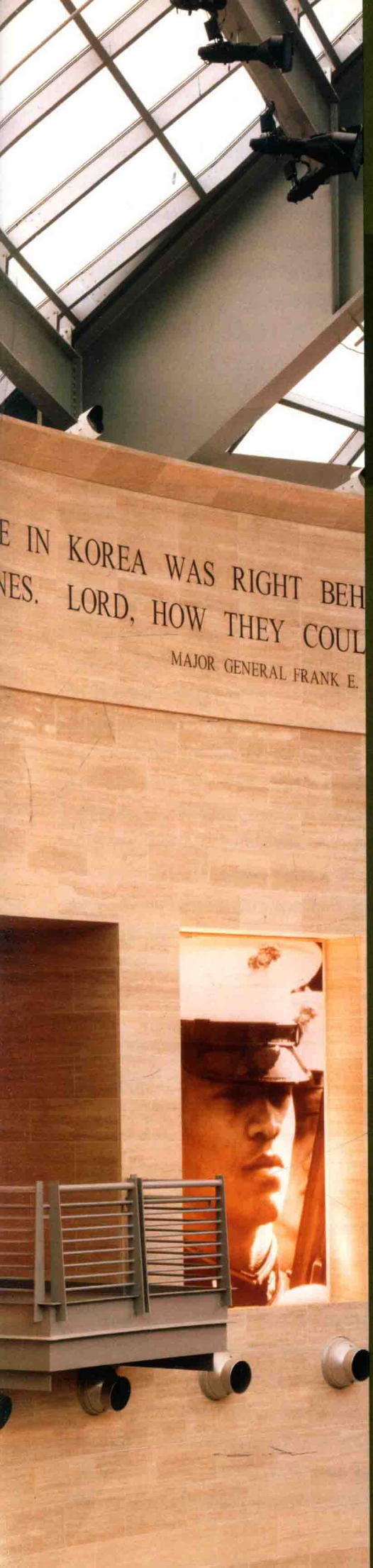
ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD."
GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR, US ARMY
"THE SAFEST PL
PLATOON OF MA

Esprit de Corps

Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, USMC (Ret)



AMERICA

established a corps of Marines even before the nation declared its independence from Great Britain. Created on November 10, 1775 by the Continental Congress, the Marines have literally grown up with the nation; an intrepid band of sea soldiers committed from the start to preserving their country's freedom. Within weeks of their creation, the new Marines boarded ships of the Continental Navy, eluded the British blockade, and captured an enemy fort in the Bahamas, the first of their storied flag raisings around the world.

Photos and quotes representative of all Marines line Leatherneck Gallery.

Proficient on land or sea, and inherently useful during emergencies, the Marines have acquired a unique eyewitness view of historical events. Marines crossed the Delaware River with George Washington; raided the British homeland with John Paul Jones; marched 600 miles across the Libyan desert in the attempt to free US hostages held captive in Tripoli; stood with Andrew Jackson against British regulars at New Orleans; sailed with the Wilkes Expedition to discover Antarctica; stormed Chapultepec Castle, "The Halls of Montezuma," in Mexico City; rescued the hostages held by John Brown at Harpers Ferry; accompanied President Lincoln to Gettysburg for his haunting address; and stopped the German advance on Paris in World War I after three weeks of horrific fighting at Belleau Wood.

Armed with little more than Springfield "03" bolt-action rifles and their bold new doctrine of amphibious assault, the Marines launched the Pacific War's first offensive by landing on Guadalcanal in 1942; later they stormed the heavily defended bastions of Tarawa and Iwo Jima, vital stepping stones to Tokyo. In the first winter of the Korean War, the First Marine Division fought its way through ten Chinese divisions from "Frozen Chosin," or the Changjin Reservoir, to the sea.

Traditional Marine readiness and their unrelenting forward presence in troubled waters helped the nation persevere throughout the 40-year Cold War with the Soviet Union. Yet, as Secretary of the Navy Edwin Denby observed in 1921, "There is no peace for Marines." Subsequent peacekeeping and counterinsurgency operations in Lebanon, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq took a frustrating toll in casualties and public support, but also spurred the Marines' adaptations to the changing nature of 21st-century warfare.

Patrons are given the unique opportunity to experience these and other remarkable stories through the architecture and exhibitory of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, which was guided by the following core statement and nine primary messages.

Core statement

The Marine Corps provides a vital contribution to the nation and the preservation of freedom.

Primary messages

1. Marines are a global, expeditionary force-in-readiness. The Marine Corps has unfailingly provided the nation with ready forces; forces that are armed and equipped for sustained, short-notice deployment with fleets around the world. Their ageless slogan: "First to Fight," is less a chest-thumping boast of past achievements than an operational goal for the immediate future. Evidence of this professional readiness appeared as early as the Creek and Seminole Wars of the 1830s, when the Commandant closed his Washington office to lead half the Corps in the field. The Marines deployed ready forces with the first wave of U.S. troops to France in World War I: to Iceland, Samoa, and Guadalcanal as World War II began; and to Pusan and Inchon in the first desperate months of the Korean War. A reinforced Marine division rapidly converged on Da Nang as the first air-ground combat troops to deploy to Vietnam in 1965. An entire Marine Expeditionary Force, 80,000-strong, deployed on short notice to Saudi Arabia in 1990, fully armed and organized for sustained combat in the liberation of Kuwait.

2. Marines operate in partnership with the U.S. Navy—and have since 1775. Operating closely with the Navy fleet allows Marine expeditionary forces to reap the benefits of mobility, surprise, and access provided by the open seas. This unique seagoing teamwork began early in the Revolutionary War with the landing on New Providence. And as recently as 2001, helicopter-borne Marines launched from Navy amphibious ships in the Arabian Sea for an unprecedented 400-mile deployment into Afghanistan. In addition to enabling forcible entries across hostile shores, this historic Navy–Marine relationship bears a number of other benefits. Navy chaplains, doctors, dentists, and hospital corpsmen have served in the ranks of Marine field units in every campaign over the last century. Twenty-three of these individuals have received the Medal of Honor for their commitment under fire "above and beyond the call of duty."

3. Marines fight as a self-sufficient, combined-arms team—ground forces, aviation, and logistics support in a single task force. Marine Air–Ground Task Forces provide the national command authority and joint combatant commanders with useful, flexible forces in any crisis—fully integrated task forces that train together, arrive early, and are ready to fight. Marines have been an air–ground team since the dawn of military aviation. One of every four Marines serves in an aviation unit. Marine pilots provide responsive close air support to their fellow Marines on the ground. Other aviators serve as forward air controllers with infantry units. Integrated firepower from aircraft, naval gunfire, and field artillery protects Marine maneuver forces as they storm ashore.

4. Tough training and shared hardships forge the Marines' warrior spirit. Marines are warriors by choice and temperament; they are ingrained with an aggressive spirit and a willingness to engage the enemy at close range. Rigorous basic training instills discipline, initiative, and teamwork in new recruits and officer candidates. Marines learn to thrive on chaos, a consequence of being "First to Fight." Earlier Marines were described as "shock troops." Combat

correspondent Robert Sherrod modified that label after sharing the Marine landings at Tarawa, Saipan, and Iwo Jima. "They're not shock troops," Sherrod wrote, "they're *shock-proof* troops."

5. Every Marine, air or ground, is a rifleman. Marines take pride in their marksmanship. John Thomason wrote of the "Old Breed" Marines arriving in France in 1917: "Rifles were high and holy things to them." A year later the same Marines cut down German infantrymen with well-aimed fire from 800 yards at Les Mares Farm near Belleau Wood. Other armed services provide an obligatory weapons familiarization for their non-combatant specialists. The Marines have no non-combatants. Every Marine—officer or enlisted, regular or reserve, man or woman, pilot or "grunt"—must be proficient with their assigned weapon. This distinctive axiom has paid enormous dividends: the Marine artillerymen picking up their carbines to withstand the Japanese *banzai* attack at Saipan, the Marine truck drivers wielding their M-1s against ambushing Chinese Communists near Koto-ri, North Korea, and the Marine cooks taking up arms against North Vietnamese infiltrators at the Liberty Bridge combat base in Vietnam.

6. The Marines' traditions of rapid deployment and assault from the sea demand constant innovation. Marines must innovate to survive. Rapid, global deployment and amphibious assaults, two of the most difficult military operations, require Marines to be constantly innovative in doctrine, force structure, weapons, and tactics. Marine innovations led to the doctrine for forcible amphibious assault; the doctrine of extremely close air support to ground troops; the tactical employment of helicopters; the air–ground, combined arms task force; the doctrine for fighting "Small Wars;" the use of Navajo code talkers; the Combined Action Program in counterinsurgency wars; the concept of forward-based maritime pre-positioning as a strategic mobility enhancement initiative; the pre-deployment qualification of entire expeditionary units as "Special Operations Capable;" long-range tilt-rotor aircraft; and the "three-block war" concept of 21st-century urban warfare.

7. For Marines, uncommon valor is always a common virtue. Careful planning, violent execution, and quick-witted adaptation characterize expeditionary operations and amphibious warfare. Examples abound: Presley O'Bannon crossing the Libyan Desert in 1805; the fleet Marines storming Fort Sumter in a long-shot night attack in 1863; the 5th and 6th Marines advancing through the wheat toward Belleau Wood; the former stunt pilot Christian Schilt landing his biplane in the streets of Quilali, Nicaragua, to evacuate wounded Marines; the 2nd Marine Division attacking across the reef at Tarawa; Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, the leading Marine fighter ace, challenging Japanese pilots at Rabaul to come up and fight his "Black Sheep" squadron; the Marines of Fox Company defending Toktong Pass at "Frozen Chosin;" the 1st Marine Division's wild tank battle in the Burquan Oil Field in 1991; and the protracted urban battle for Fallujah in Al Anbar Province, Iraq in 2004.

8. Marines instill leadership by example in all ranks. Like any armed force, the Corps reveres its legendary combat leaders, such as Chesty Puller, Joe Foss, Merritt Edson, and Ray Davis, but the distinctive story of the Corps concerns the legions of lesser-known Marines who swallowed hard and stepped up to take the lead when the plan went awry or their commander went down. Examples include Sergeant John Quick in the assault of the Sohoton Cliffs in the Philippines; Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly at Belleau Wood; Staff Sergeant Jimmie Howard's defense of Hill 488 in South Vietnam; Corporal Charles Ingraham, directing airstrikes from his rooftop in Khafji, Kuwait, while surrounded by Iraqi soldiers; Sergeant James Wright retaining command of his ambushed squad in Iraq despite losing both arms to a rocket-propelled grenade.

9. The Marine motto *"Semper Fidelis"* (always faithful) epitomizes the virtues of honor, courage, and commitment. *Semper Fidelis*, the Marines' motto since 1883, has evolved into a special bond, an affirmation, and a work ethic. In essence it means that Marines take care of their own, including the recovery of their dead and wounded comrades—no matter what it takes. The motto also means there are no "ex-Marines." Membership is for life.

In conveying these primary messages to visitors, the National Museum of the Marine Corps offers a combination of artifacts, images, testimonials, audiovisual presentations, interactive displays, dioramas, full-scale tableaus, oral histories, maps, and immersion galleries.

The crown jewel of the artifacts is the U.S. flag raised by the Marines on the crest of Mount Suribachi on the fourth day of the battle for Iwo Jima, the scene captured in Joe Rosenthal's Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph. The smaller first flag, raised under enemy fire several hours earlier, is displayed alongside.

Two dozen Marine aircraft are suspended overhead, ranging from fabric-covered biplanes to attack jets and helicopters. Full-sized tableaus on the floor of the Central Gallery capture the moment of the Marines' first use of "Alligator" tracked amphibians in the assault on Tarawa in 1943, and the first use of transport helicopters to deliver infantry troops into battle at Hill 884 in Korea, 1951.

Other large artifacts catch the eye, including tanks, assault amphibians, howitzers—even the unique and much-maligned "ONTOS," a pint-sized tracked vehicle sporting six 106mm recoilless rifles. Many macro artifacts are displayed within a realistic tableau. The "Alligator" amphibian is jammed across a Japanese seawall, a Sherman medium tank approaches an enemy cave at Peleliu, the ONTOS guards a shell-swept intersection in the 1968 battle for Hue City.

All weapons used by the Marines and many others captured from their enemies are displayed. Some Marine weapons reflect their traditional propensity for closing with the enemy—boarding axes, pikes, and cutlasses in olden days; submachine guns, portable flame throwers, and K-Bar fighting knives in more modern times. Several tethered weapons, breeches safely sealed, give visitors the heft and feel of such classic firearms as the Garand M1 rifle, the Browning Automatic Rifle, and the Vietnam-era M79 40mm grenade launcher.

Intermixed with the weapons displays are artifacts of a less lethal nature, such as bandmaster John Philip Sousa's original sheet music for his march *Semper Fidelis*, and an authentic 18th-century leather stock, worn by the earliest Marines to protect their necks from enemy cutlass slashes in ship-to-ship fighting (hence the abiding nickname *Leathernecks*).

Full-scale "Marine Life" exhibits capture the Marine experience at various points in history. All Marine recruits and officer candidates stood "Junk on the Bunk" inspections, laying out their clothing and equipment on top of their bunks for the commanding officer's critical eye. A World War II tableau captures such a scene at Montford Point, the segregated recruit depot in North Carolina that prepared the first African-American volunteers for service as U.S. Marines.

Immersion galleries portray the Marines' experience during three touchstone battles: D-Day at Iwo Jima, 1945; the defense of Toktong Pass by Fox Company 7th Marines during the Chosin Reservoir campaign in North Korea, 1950; and the defense of Hill 881 South, the critical outpost protecting the besieged Marine base at Khe Sanh, South Vietnam, 1968.

Visitors at the Iwo Jima exhibit "ride" an assault craft to Green Beach on D-Day, surrounded by actual footage and sounds of the ship-to-shore assault into the teeth of Japanese defenses. When visitors enter Toktong Pass the temperature drops, the Siberian winds hit, and the lights fade to depict a Chinese night attack against the nearly frozen defenders of the critical pass. In Vietnam, visitors "ride" a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter to the hilltop, debarking quickly to avoid the inevitable mortar fire from nearby North Vietnamese gunners.

For all its illustrious artifacts, the National Museum of the Marine Corps places greater emphasis on the faces, stories, and accomplishments of its people. A number of "Individual Marine" displays introduce visitors to Leathernecks of all ranks and achievements. Among those highlighted are legendary World War II figures like Col Lewis ("Chesty") Puller, Gunnery Sergeant "Manila John" Basilone, the raider LtCol Evans Carlson, and LtGen Roy Geiger, the first Marine and the only aviator of any service to command a field army in battle. Among the Korean War Marines are Capt Robert Barrow, a future Commandant whose rifle company spearheaded the recapture of Seoul, MajGen Gerald Thomas, a division commander who served as a sergeant at Belleau Wood and Soissons in World War I, and Capt Ted Williams, the future Hall of Fame baseball player with the Boston Red Sox, who flew combat missions in an F9F Panther jet. Vietnam-era individuals include Navy Chaplain Vincent Capodanno, whose protection of wounded Marines under fire resulted in a posthumous Medal of Honor, and PFC Charles Mawhinney, the sniper with a Corps-best 103 confirmed kills.

Museum visitors can listen to 30 recorded oral histories from individuals who served from Guadalcanal through the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam. World War II testimonies include one of the storied Navajo Code Talkers, a sergeant in Edson's Raiders, and a former Congressman who as a child witnessed the liberation of his native Guam by the Marines. Korean War testimonies include a motor transport officer who helped rescue hundreds of survivors of Task Force Faith from the ice of Chosin Reservoir, and an enlisted Marine pilot, shot down, captured, and imprisoned by the North Koreans. Vietnam-era oral histories include that of the Marines' first black aviator, a fighter squadron commander who would become the Corps' first black general, a helicopter crew-chief shot down four times during medevac missions, and the survivors of a reconnaissance patrol ambushed above Dong Ha.

The personal words of hundreds of other Marines are displayed to visitors, sometimes in letters home from distant battlefields and more often as direct quotations that introduce each exhibit panel.

Audiovisual programs educate visitors throughout the museum, beginning with an introductory series of testimonies by 16 men and women in the Orientation Theater. Visitors can stand on the famous "yellow footprints" at Boot Camp as anxious recruits arrive to begin their transformational process or step into a unique kiosk to experience a personal "guidance" session with a very attentive Drill Instructor. Alcove theaters along the Fast Track Gallery provide audiovisual examples of the Marines' distinctive warfighting methods—launching "from the

sea" to force entry to inland objectives, deploying and fighting as an integrated air–ground team, relying on innovation and field improvisation to achieve tactical advantages. Another Fast Track exhibit invites visitors to browse the life stories and citations of all Marines and attached Navy and Coast Guard personnel who have received the Medal of Honor. A similar exhibit offers an interactive search for all Commandants and Sergeants Major of the Marine Corps. A flight simulator challenges visitors to experience a combat mission as "pilot" or "gunner" in a modern jet fighter.

The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation provided the vision and leadership to create the national museum. The late Col Gerald C. Thomas, Jr. USMC (Ret) personified the Foundation's dedication to this multi-year project.

The other principal leaders in the NMMC project have contributed chapters to this book. All of the Marine authors served in combat in the Republic of Vietnam. Generals Hagee, Christmas, and McKay, and Col Ripley were all company commanders. Colonel Long was then an enlisted radio operator, typically the "most valuable player" in any firefight. All contributed their experience and leadership to the design of the museum and its exhibits.

Other retired officers contributed significantly to the vision and design of the National Museum storyline, including Gen Carl E. Mundy, the 30th Commandant, and BGen Edward H. Simmons, Director Emeritus of Marine Corps History.

The membership of the exhibit design team changed over the five-year effort, but among those who contributed significantly were Brian Chaffee, project architect for Fentress Architects; Col Jon Hoffman, LtCol Robert Sullivan, Ken Smith-Christmas, Charles Girbovan, Keith Alexander, Charles Grow, and Beth Crumley of the former History and Museums Division of Headquarters, Marine Corps; Christopher Chadbourne, Peter Barton, David Whitemyer, William Ruggieri, Mary Macfarlane, Julie Duncan, Robert Krick, and Kimberly Nelson-Hanser of Christopher Chadbourne and Associates; and Robin Sylvestri, Alice Rubin, James Lovell, and Tara O'Boyle of Batwin and Robin Productions. Collectively, their contributions helped illuminated the Marines' ongoing story, a history that renews itself each new day in some far-off corner of the earth.

Colonel Alexander, author of *Utmost Savagery: The Three Days of Tarawa*, served as lead historian for the NMMC exhibit design team from 2001 through 2006.