WORLD WAR II
TIMES

USMC PHOTO

Old Glory returns to Wake Island

January, 1989
Vol. 4, No. 1

First bombing of Tokyo   Forgotten heroes   Maturing of a Marine   and "Lace"

XIV Corps Language Team, Bougainville Island, June 1944. Front row, left to right — Roy Fujii and Tatsuo Matsuda. Back row — *Hiroshi Matsuda, Roy Uyehata, Captain William Fisher, Mitsuo* Wakayama, and Masami Takira.

Forgotten heroes

Col. Roy Uyehata, retired

For 43 years since the termination of World War II, we veterens of the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Service remain as forgotten men. This rebuff is despite the fact that we served on many of the great battlefields in the Pacific, and our work was crucial to the success of our forces in many campaigns.

We served under many illustrious commanders: General Douglas MacArthur of the Southwest Pacific Command; Admiral William F. Halsey of the South Pacific Command; Admiral Chester Nimitz of the Central Pacific Command; General Joseph Stilwell of the China-Burma-India Command; General Alexander M. Patch on Guadalcanal; General J. Lawton Collins on New Georgia; General Simon Buckner on Okinawa, and many others.

In Burma, Sergeant Kenny Yasui crossed the Irawaddy River dressed in the uniform of a Japanese Army Colonel, induced a dozen Japanese soldiers to surrender and returned to our own lines with the captured POWs. Called "Little Sergeant York" for his bravery, he was awarded the Silver Star Medal.

Also in Burma, Sergeant Roy Matsumoto of the famous Merrill's Marauders, barked military commands in Japanese to 54 Japanese soldiers to charge ahead into evacuated American positions where they were decimated. He was awarded the Legion of Merit Medal.

On Saipan, Sergeant Hoichi Kubo entered a cave filled with Japanese soldiers and civilians, induced the Japanese soldiers to surrender and saved the lives of more than 100 women and children. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his brave act.

Eiichi Sakauye, serving with the British Army, saved a British officer's life and was awarded the British Medal, the enlisted equivalent of the Order of the British Empire for British officers.

Staff Sergeant Henry Kuwabara, serving with the British 36th Division, also was awarded the British Medal for performing outstanding intelligence work.

Yoshikazu Yamada, George Yamashiro, John Anderson, Faubion Bowers, and Richard Bagnall of the Allied Translation and Interpreter Section, translated "Operation Z," Japanese Admiral Koga's Combined Fleet Secret Operations Order No. 73, which contained the strategy and tactics for protecting the Japanese held Marianas and the Philippines. This resulted in the single greatest U.S. Army Military Intelligence Service feat, and led directly to Admiral Nimitz's great victories in the Great Mariana's Turkey Shoot and the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

A Nisei linguist was largely responsible in 1943 for the events that led to the death of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Japan's leading naval strategist.

My own act of saving more than 1,000 lives of the men of the 37th Division and Americal Division at the Second Battle of Bougainville has been totally discredited by the U.S. Army.

There are numerous stories of meritorious feats and deeds of the Military Intelligence Service linguists that remain largely forgotten.

Brigadier General Charles Willoughby, Assistant Chief of Staff, for Military Intelligence under General MacArthur, once stated that "the Nisei soldiers who served in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II saved countless lives, and were responsible for shortening the Pacific War by two years."

We were the eyes and ears of every combat commander.

We fought to overcome racial prejudice at home and silence the voices of journalists such as Walter Lippman, Westbrook Pegler, and Henry McLemore, who were contending that Nisei soldiers would not fight against the land of their ancesters.

We fought as no other group of American soldiers had ever fought since the War of Independence of 1776.

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, there were approximately 4,000 Nisei soldiers in uniform of the U.S. Army. All Nisei soldiers who were in infantry and training units suffered the agony and humiliation of having weapons stripped from them for no reasonable cause.

We suddenly became the most distrusted, mistrusted, and untrusted group of soldiers in the entire army.

The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps refused the entry of Nisei volunteers.

Executive Order 9066 sent our parents, brothers, and sisters into 10 concentration camps scattered from Tule Lake, California, to Camp Rohwer, Arkansas. The Fourth Army Intelligence School at the Presidio of San Francisco was forced to move to Camp Savage, Minnesota, because Nisei students were not permitted to remain on the Pacific coast.

Caucasian students who graduated from the Camp Savage Army Language School received commissions as 2nd Lieutenants. Nisei students were promoted one grade level.

Initially, Camp Savage graduates were not permitted to go on a furlough just prior to overseas shipment if their parents were confined in the concentration camps at Tule Lake, California, Manzanar, California Poston, Arizona, or Gila River, Arizona.

We were prime targets of Japanese snipers.

We placed a small replica of the American flag on the front and back of our helmets, and wore flag patches on the sleeve top to avoid being accidentally fired upon by trigger happy U.S. soldiers who sometimes fired first and asked questions later.

The names of 16 Nisei servicemen, including several Military Intelligence Service linguists, were removed from the American Legion Honor Roll at Hood River, Oregon, in

Guadalcanal, February 1943. Photograph of G-2 Section, XIV Corps Headquarters. Roy Uyehata is on the first row, sixth from left.

January 1945. This dealt a severe blow to the morale of all Nisei, *whether they were serving on the battlefields of Europe or the Pacific.*

All decorations and awards earned by the Nisei soldiers in the performance of military intelligence duties were kept as dark secrets until President Richard M. Nixon on March 8, 1972, signed Executive Order 11652, which started the declassification of classified documents of World War II.

At first, Executive Order 11652 was not widely publicized, so Nisei soldiers who had fought in the Pacific were reluctant to tell of their war experiences until Joseph Harrington wrote his book **Yankee Samurai** in 1978.

For the lack of a single widely acclaimed book by a nationally known author concerning the Nisei soldiers who fought against Japan, the stories of their achievements and activities as intelligence specialists remain untold, forgotten, or discredited.

When the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command published the book titled, **Military Intelligence: Its Heroes and Legend** in 1987, not one linguist among the 6,000 Nisei and several hundred caucasian officers who graduated from the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Service Language School during World War II, was mentioned.

What a deplorable oversight to the Nisei soldiers who served faithfully during the most shameful chapter in the U.S. Army's military history, only to remain rebuffed and forgotten for more than 43 years after the war ended.

Despite the unblemished record of unswerving loyalty to our nation during World War II, we Nisei remain the unrecognized and forgotten men of the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Service of that troubled period.

It's time to open the doors of history, and set the record straight.

FOREWORD BY BILL MAULDIN

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Attired as one of her "boys" Marlene Dietrich hamed it up with troops of the Ninth Army near the front lines in 1944.

US ARMY PHOTO

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Special men at Wake

There should be a special "Hall of Honor" for 98 civilian construction workers who were captured at Wake Island.

In January 1942 when the defenders of Wake were loaded aboard vessels to take them to Japanese POW camps, this unfortunate group was left behind to work as slave laborers on the island's defenses. Dr. Lawton Shank, a civilian doctor, remained with them.

With little food and no prospect to escape, the men struggled to survive during the long months of incarceration. As American air raids picked up and surface ships got close enough to lob large shells on to the island, the Japanese became convinced that the men were in radio contact with the Navy.

Finally, on the night of October 7, 1943, the haggard survivors met their ultimate fate. Their captors rounded them up, tied their hands behind their backs, and placed blindfolds over their eyes. Then they were led down to the beach on the north side of the island, placed in a line, and machine-gunned to death.

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I'M ALWAYS TRUE TO MY GIRLY AT HOME: OH YEAH!

Harold Jensen, veteran of the 3rd Army.

Hammelburg rescue mission

Dr. Tom Wilkison
Dwight, Illinois

Harold Jensen of rural Dwight, Illinois was a member of the crack 4th Armored Division of Patton's famed 3rd Army during World War II.

This courteous, soft-spoken man served in a tiny task force sent into unsecured enemy territory on a mission which held the utmost personal concern for General George Smith Patton, Jr., and which resulted in the death, wounding and capture of all the participants.

It was during the "Battle of the Bulge" in December 1944, that the 4th Armored participated in the famed breakthrough at St. Lo, and liberated the trapped 101st Airborne at Bastogne.

In March 1945, Patton used a small group of volunteers from the 4th to engage in a famous and controversial action. Patton's son-in-law, Lt. Colonel John Waters, had been captured in Tunisia and held in a Polish POW camp for Allied officers. Early in 1945, the advancing Russians threatened to overrun the camp and liberate the prisoners, so the Germans marched them westward.

According to Allied intelligence the men were incarcerated at Hammelburg, Germany. Out of several thousand prisoners, perhaps 1,500 were American officers. Waters was believed to be one of them.

The question nagging Patton was what would the Germans do with the prisoners as American forces approached Hammelburg. He decided to rescue them.

On March 20, Patton flew to Major General Manton Eddy's XII Corps headquarters to state his intention. Eddy was reluctant to send a separate force on such an excursion into enemy territory, not only because of the risk, but because he was attacking north to join Hodge's First Army at the Ruhr. Hammelburg lay to the east.

An Armored Command of 4,000 troops was large enough to take care of itself and might deceive the Germans on the direction of the XII Corps. But for a hit and run affair, a smaller group might be better. Patton agreed, but later thought his assent was a mistake.

Abraham Baum, a big, rough, and red-headed captain who had worked in New York's garment district before the war, took command of approximately 300 volunteers. Jensen says they set out in 10 medium tanks, six light tanks, 27 half-tracks, seven jeeps, and three motorized assault guns.

Baum's task was to drive to Hammelburg, 40 miles away, liberate the prisoners, load as many Americans on his vehicles as he could and bring them back.

Shortly before the mission got underway, Patton's aide, Major Alexander Stiller, showed up. Patton had asked Stiller, who knew and could recognize Waters, whether he would like to accompany Baum. Stiller understandably regarded the request as an order.

However, Captain Baum, at first, was suspicious of Stiller who outranked him. However, Stiller assured him he wanted to go along only "for the thrills and laughs." So Baum invited him into his Jeep. Stiller's presence prompted later talk that Patton's real motive to liberate the prisoners was simply to rescue Waters.

Baum's men rushed toward Hammelburg, rudely dispersed a small German tank unit, destroyed railroad locomotives, smashed anti-tank guns on flatcars, set free 700 Russian prisoners, and fought off an assault gun battalion before reaching the camp.

Jensen recalls that the force did about as much damage as an entire division because of its element of surprise. The Germans couldn't believe a small, isolated armored unit could be running around the country. Amazingly, as trains passed the engineers frequently would wave at the men, believing them to be German troops.

The German camp commander decided to surrender and sent four volunteers, among them Waters, to contact Baum. As they proceeded a guard shot and seriously wounded Waters. Baum's forces then broke into the camp as thousands of joyous officers milled about.

Loading his vehicles with as many Americans as he could, Baum headed back. Jensen recalls seeing officers swarm over the vehicles like bees attempting to go along. Many fell off and were run over, while others trotted alongside until they fell exhausted.

Down the road German troops were lying in wait, having been notified by a small aircraft of the small size of Baum's group. Other German units also had converged on Hammelburg.

As a firefight broke out, most of the prisoners walked back to the prison camp. Surrounded and outnumbered, Baum's men fought desparately and tried to escape, but eventually were killed, wounded, or captured.

Jensen thought the camp looked like an old cavalry post. He and 17 others, most of whom were wounded (including himself), took refuge in a barn. A German bazooka (Panzerfaust) company opened fire on the barn, leaving the men no choice but to surrender.

Captain Baum, hit three times, was sent to Hammelburg. Major Stiller, Jensen and most of the others who were able to walk were marched across country to Nuremburg. Jensen shared his shaving kit with Stiller and they slept together during the cold forced march. Some Germans shared their rations with the Americans.

A week later, several officers who had escaped into the American lines confirmed the presence of Waters in Hammelburg. Two days later, the Seventh Army overran Hammelburg and found about 70 prisoners, including Waters, whose life had been saved by a Serbian surgeon.

Major Odom, Patton's medical officer, brought Waters in a light plane to an American hospital in Frankfort. Waters' initial question to Patton was whether he (Patton) knew of his confinement at Hammelburg. Patton answered, "Not for sure."

Waters recovered from his wound and after a distinguished military career retired a full general. After the war Baum returned to the business of manufacturing ladies blouses. Major Stiller was liberated from a prisoner of war camp in April 1945, and rejoined Patton.

Jensen also was liberated with Stiller and became a farmer near Dwight, Illinois, where he lives today.

Footnote

General John Waters was among the obituaries recently appearing in the national press. He died January 9 of heart failure at the Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

The obituary noted that Waters once served as Commandant of Cadets at West Point, and retired a full general in 1966 as commander of the U.S. Army of the Pacific.

Also included was a short statement about his imprisonment, wounding, and eventual liberation by the Third Army commanded by Patton.

Paul Schlundt, third from left, is surrounded by several of his trainees at Douglas. Others, left to right: George Pierpont, Owen Patterson, Authur Arlowski, Jerry Osaduick, and Adam Oppel.

Building an Air Force

Paul Schlundt
former instructor

America's airpower on the threshold of World War II was woefully weak in comparison to that of the axis nations.

In 1939 Germany, Italy, and Japan had an estimated 21,000 aircraft and 300,000 personnel. This compared with fewer than 4,000 aircraft in the United States (Army and Navy combined).

Randolph Field, Texas, the only Army flight school, was capable of training about 500 pilots each year. At best, it would take between four and five years to build and staff a similar base.

General Henry "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the Air Corps, took immediate steps to deal with this deplorable condition. He met with 10 civilian operators of flying schools and asked them to help train Army pilots. The schools would be staffed by civilian personnel and approved flight instructors under the supervision of Army pilots and officers.

Arnold's idea quickly paid off. Ten schools in the beginning grew to 60 by the end of the war, with approximately 100,000 pilots trained annually.

One school was located near Douglas, Georgia. A small unpaved air strip adjacent to and owned by the South Georgia College was available with quite a large swampy area adjoining it. On October 1, 1941, the first school opened with 50 cadets. Later classes increased in number, with a new class arriving every five weeks.

Each class stayed 10 weeks and every student received 65 hours flight training, along with ground school identification in theory of flight, aircraft, engines, navigation, and aircraft recognition (friendly and enemy).

Students were taught to take off, land and handle the aircraft in stalls and turns. Those who were unable to control air sickness, or failed to learn fast enough were "washed out" and sent to navigator or bombadier schools.

Classes soon increased to 165 cadets and student officers. The air strip was enlarged, swamp land covered, and a divided field constructed with each half containing five landing strips.

The school finally closed in December 1944, having trained 9,000 pilots.

The following thumb-nail sketches indicate the fine quality of men who went through the program, and gained significant marks for themselves in the post-war era.

James B. Knox re-entered the U.S. Air Force in 1950 and flew with the "Special Missions" group. A chief assignment was to fly the President's plane "Air Force One." He retired as a Lt. Colonel in 1970.

George R. Vanden Huevel flew 72 combat missions with the Eighth Air Force in Europe. After the war he took part in drone testing B-17's, then moved to Great Britain where he joined the Royal Air Force. Eventually he became an Assistant Air Attache in London and retired a full colonel.

Brig. General John W. Baer was Deputy Director and Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, Headquarters U.S.A.F., Washington, D.C.

Colonel Lindsey M. Silvester became Director of Operations, Headquarters, Pacific Air Force.

Brig. General Emmett Reynolds specialized in tele-communications

standardization for the Army. He is listed in **Who's Who** and the **National Register of Prominent Americans.**

Major James F. Keenan resigned after five years active service to become a Roman Catholic Priest. He was a chaplain in Vietnam, 1967-70.

In the years since World War II many students and instructors stay in touch with each other through a locator service which records over 90% of the group.

Our goal is to have a complete record of what the Douglas School did for our country during the war. The story becomes more interesting as each person is located. If you are a former student, or know of one, alive or deceased, please contact the **World War II Times.**

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Colonel James P.S. Devereux, Quantico, Virginia, July 1946.

Colonel Paul A. Putnam headed VMF 211 Squadron.

USMC PHOTO

A gallery of Wake heroes

Every man who fought on Wake Island was a hero, if heroism can be measured by unselfish sacrifice.

May the four men here represent all the others who inspired a nation with their determination.

Winfield Scott Cunningham

Winfield Scott Cunningham, commander of the entire American garrison at Wake Island, dealt with frustration and heartache beyond that imposed on him by his Japanese captors.

A native of Wisconsin, Cunningham graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1919 at age 19. Assigned to the Near and Far East, he became interested in flying while stationed at Pearl Harbor and received his wings in 1925.

Cunningham was serving as navigator of the seaplane tender U.S.S. Wright when he was ordered to Wake on November 28, 1941, barely one week before the Japanese attack on U.S. Pacific bases.

On Wake, Cunningham took over from Major Devereux, USMC, who had been there since October shoring up the defenses and overseeing the construction.

Inexplicably, once Wake fell Cunningham became a forgotten man. The Navy, in fact, could not confirm that he was even on the island.

The first information about him came from Japanese radio reports broadcast in the United States.

During Cunningham's captivity, his wife fought to correct the misinformation which had seeped into the national press and the public mind.

The magnitude of her problem can be noted by the filming of the movie "Wake Island" which came out in the summer of 1942. At a private screening of the film she was shocked to find that Cunningham (Walter Abel) died after the first bombing raid, and Devereux (Brian Donlevy) took over command.

Though she protested and tried legal action to correct the inaccuracy, Mrs. Cunningham could do nothing to stop the film since the Navy and Marine Corps had already approved the script. The film gave a big boost to recruiting drives and war bond sales.

Cunningham spent 44 months in POW camps, including stints in solitary confinement for two escape attempts. Released in 1945, he was promoted to captain and commanded a seaplane tender. His final assignment was command of the Naval Air Technical Center at Memphis, Tennessee, where he retired as a rear admiral in 1950.

Throughout the rest of his life Cunningham tried to correct the record of his Wake Island service.

James P.S. Devereux

Major James P.S. Devereux's experience at Wake Island made him a popular hero.

Born in Cuba in 1903, Devereux attended schools in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Switzerland. He joined the Marines at age 19 and two years later was commissioned a second lieutenant.

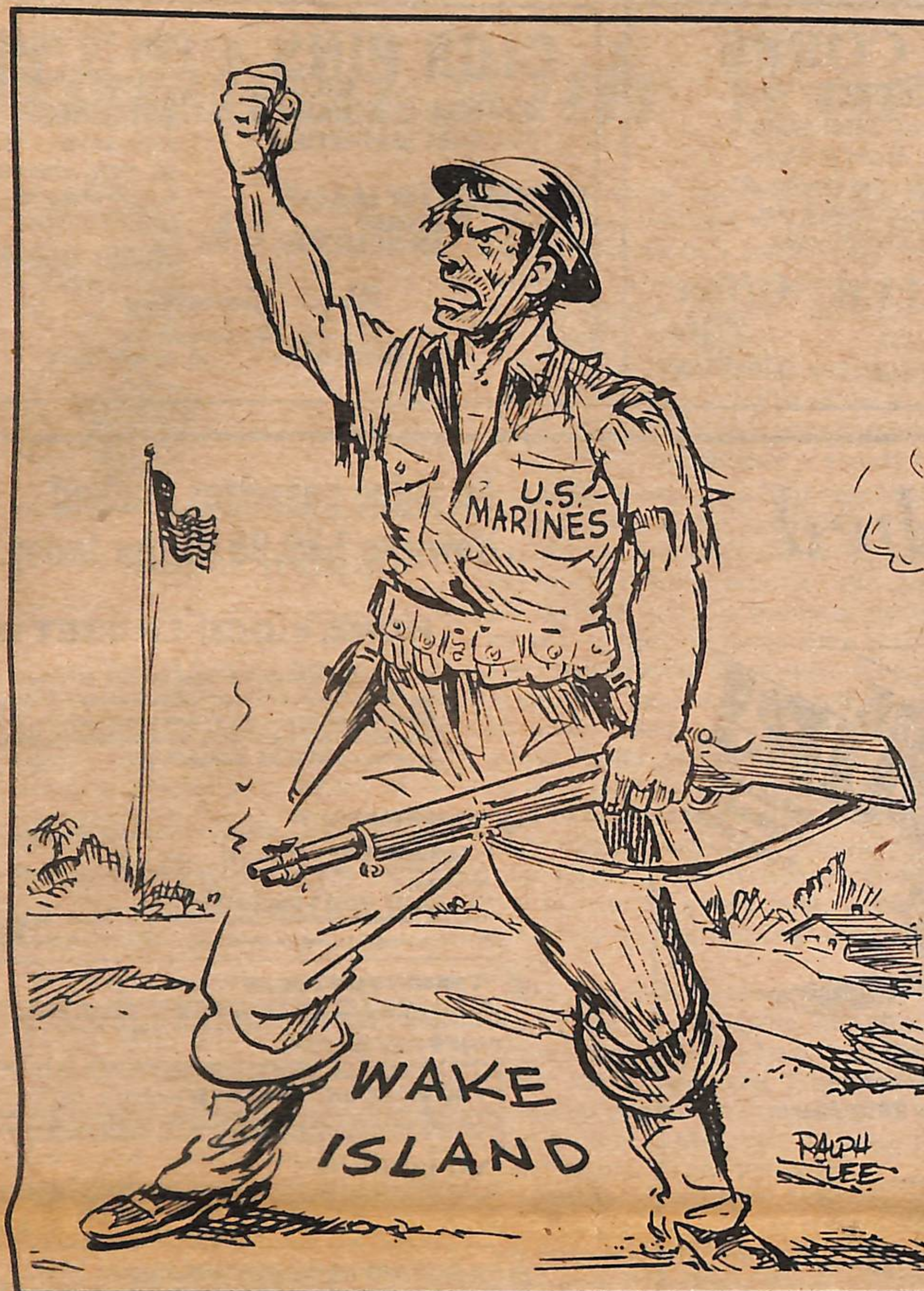
Devereux's duty stations included such places as Norfolk, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Cuba, Nicaragua, and Peking, China. Promoted to captain, he was stationed at Quantico, Fort Monroe, San Diego, and aboard the **U.S.S. Utah.**

Devereux's return home from imprisonment in 1945 was marked with a tumultuous hero's welcome in Maryland. He was promoted to colonel in January 1946 and to brigadier general at his retirement from active service on August 1, 1948.

During his military career, Devereux received many medals and citations: Navy Cross; Presidential Unit Citation with one star; Wake Island; Second Nicaraguan Campaign Medal; Yangtz Service Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one Bronze Star; and World War II Victory Medal.

In 1951, Devereux was elected to the first of four terms he would serve in the United States Congress. Most of his service was on the House Armed Services Committee. During a congressional round-the-world trip, he visited Wake Island and Japan.

After his retirement from Congress he served as Maryland's Director of Public Safety.



Paul A. Putnam

Major Paul A. Putnam commanded Marine Fighter Squadron 211 *(VMF-211) on Wake Island. Putnam had served with Devereux in Nicaragua.*

On November 27, 1941, Putnam was given secret verbal orders to prepare *to leave Pearl Harbor aboard the carrier* **U.S.S. Enterprise.** *On the morning of December 4, the task force ar*rived within 200 miles to the northeast of Wake. At that point Putnam and his dozen Grumman Wildcats (F4F-3s) took off and followed a PBY to Wake, where the entire garrison turned out to give them an enthusiastic welcome.

After the war, Putnam served in various commands: (1) command of a fighter group at Cherry Hill, North Carolina; (2) chairman of the NATO Standing Group at the Pentagon; (3) chief of staff of aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific; and Marine Corps representative on the Medical Evaluation Board.

Putnam retired as a brigadier general.

Henry T. Elrod

Captain Henry T. Elrod was the first Marine airman during World War II to receive the Medal of Honor. Unfortunately, Elrod died in battle at Wake Island and the medal was given posthumously.

A native of Georgia, Elrod enlisted in the Marines in 1927 at age 22 and was promoted to second lieutenant in 1931. In January 1941 he was transferred to VMF-211 in Hawaii, then to Wake Island.

During the defense of Wake, Elrod fought with reckless abandon and went far beyond the call of duty. On December 10, he single-handedly attacked a flight of 22 enemy bombers, shooting down two.

With his Wildcat he bombed and strafed enemy ships from a low altitude, becoming the first person to sink a major warship with small-caliber bombs delivered from a fighter plane.

When his plane was destroyed, Elrod organized a unit of ground troops which repeatedly repulsed enemy attacks. He finally was killed by a Japanese soldier playing dead.

The Medal of Honor was presented to Elrod's widow on November 8, 1946.

Poem catches spirit of "Defenders of Wake Island"

It's only a dot of coral and sand,
Thousands of miles from any land.
But its protection was our stand;
Hold at all cost was the command,
To the Defenders of Wake Island.

The Japs decided that they must begin,
A conquest of Wake they could win.
An elite fighting force of handpicked men
In planes and ships they would send,
Against the Defenders of Wake Island.

They came each day in the noonday sun,
Leaving death and destruction from the bombing run.
But we fought with every plane and gun,
We had to fight because we couldn't run.
We were Defenders of Wake Island.

They sent a naval force to take us in,
They began the battle they wouldn't win.
They lost their ships, their planes and men,
They would lick their wounds and try again,
Against the Defenders of Wake Island.

Try again they did, with all they had,
Their losses at Wake Island made them mad.
A few fighting Marines had treated them bad.
History will tell, the outcome was sad,
For the Defenders of Wake Island.

We buried our dead where they fell,
We began a new life akin to Hell.
In the many places where we would dwell,
In the dark cold confines of Jap prison cells,
The surviving Defenders of Wake Island.

We had lost our fight but not our pride.
Even though incarcerated we still tried
To inflict more wounds and stem the tide
Of Japan's claims of success far and wide.
Still the Defenders of Wake Island.

Many dark months would pass us by;
In thoughts of our loved ones we would cry.
From starvation and sickness more would die.
But a few more fortunate death did defy,
And remained the Defenders of Wake Island.

At last came the fall of the rising sun,
They lost the war they had begun;
And paid a high price for deed they'd done.
With the help of God the war was won,
For the Defenders of Wake Island.

The survivors came home and were met
By those who loved and praised them, but yet
There's a feeling of great loss and deep regret
For those who gave their all. We must never forget.
They were Defenders of Wake Island.

There's no Flanders Field where poppies grow
There's no white crosses row on row.
They rest in a common grave near the ocean's flow,
In the soil where the enemy struck the fatal blow,
To the Defenders of Wake Island.

Time will heal the wounds of war.
And Marines will stand fight and die for
A way of life in which there's no bar
To the door of freedom which was kept ajar
By the Defenders of Wake Island.

Captain M.A. Terry,
USMC, Retired

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NAVY AND MARINE CORPS V-12's, Washington, D.C., September 18-October 1, 1989. Contact Dr. Byron Doenges, c/o U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation, P.O. Box 12728, Arlington, VA 22209.

7th FERRYING GROUP, GORE FIELD, GREAT FALLS, MT., Seattle WA, September 12-16, 1989. Contact John Radzis, 560 Ruskin Drive, Elk Grove, IL 60007.

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Are we finished with World Wars?

A General Look

Wendell Phillippi

As we near the 21st Century most any military man must wonder if we will be able to prevent another World War.

Recently in an informal talk in Muncie, Indiana, before a group of distinguished educators and press people, Martin Blumenson, the great Patton expert and combat historian, said that there would not be another World War. His thinking is quiet logical.

I agree with Blumenson. Simply stated I doubt if we could afford another war — they never seem to get paid for. Perhaps the revenge factor in mankind is receding even though we are armed to our teeth, as the saying goes.

There are some of us who wonder if our young men have the moral fiber to wage another conflict such as World War II. The warriors of that war were depression hardened. They came from the dust bowl, farms, small towns, and mountain villages to join the city slickers in uniform for the common defense of their country which they truly loved. They had learned that love at home, school, and church. Big business and gaudy commercialism were almost another world to most of them.

There were few luxuries of life in the first third of this century for the common man. World War II G.I.'s came from towns and farms where the family was the core of life, without a great deal of outside distractions.

The youth of the 20th Century saw the automobile replace the horse and buggy. They began hearing strange voices and pleasant music out of the airwaves on a "thing" called radio.

Duty, honor, loyalty, obedience were passwords in those days. Father knew best. Now Big Daddy is afraid to even discipline his kids at times.

But forget about the home front and think how and why we have avoided World War III. Our country reestablished powerful military might during the Korean War,. and maintained it in Europe and the Far East after Red Russia dropped her *Iron Curtain on the world. We established NATO with our World* War II allies except for the Soviet Union, which stirred up trouble and pursued Communism in China and other countries that were trying to create their own ism — nationalism. The conflict led to a series of border incidents, minor wars, and some successful United Nations arbitration and peaceful occupation.

The Soviet Union flirted with many other countries and agitated for war on a limited basis to cause us to spend and spend in the defense of freedom.

Luckily we stumbled through it all without going to war directly with one another. Be thankful for that. But how did we avoid World War III? The simple truth is that the Russians never moved against us when they could. They had superior forces and still will even after the announced reductions in arms takes place. Did internal power fights prevent their moving? Or were the losses of World War II too high to undertake another slaughter of their courageous men and women?

Or did the threat of nuclear retaliation in event of a first strike prevent nuclear or conventional war moves by them?

The Soviets have never forgiven us for failing to recognize that their forces annihilated the bulk of the German forces and took the greatest losses in manpower — not to speak of the wanton destruction of much of their homeland and resources.

Some may call me a peacenik but who can give me a better reason why we have not had World War III and nuclear destruction of the World? We have to give the Soviet Union some credit. And we have to give credit to the valiant men of our own Armed Forces who have served in uniform abroad while we enjoyed the luxuries of the home front.

I also want to recognize those who served through an era of the Vietnam War, drugs, fragging, and outdated weapons when our Military forces were called weak and unprepared. I know our spirit never lagged, and I doubt if our forces were ever as bad as some politicians have tried to make them look.

We may have been poorly equipped at times when the emphasis was on a total nuclear destruction threat, but I don't think the morale was as bad as it has been portrayed.

Another encouraging sign is that Americans are learning to recognize nationalism for what it is — people wanting their own right to rule themselves without outside interference. In other words, to make their own rules; to worship as they desire; to live the good life; and to defend themselves against aggressors.

So what was our greatest progress in the 20th Century? Thus far we have avoided World War III. That's quite an accomplishment.

Phillippi, a retired Army major general, is former managing editor of The Indianapolis News.

We owe a lot to those who fought and won World War II

Rex Redifer

It seems to me that if the present generation owes *anything* to anybody, it owes the generation that fought and won World War II.

As I sat and watched the news about Mikhail Gorbachev's recent visit here, it struck me how fortunate we are today not to be living in a world hopelessly controlled by totalitarian rulers.

Very likely we would be, had not a generation of people fought to the death against the madness of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Hideki Tojo, whose combined forces threatened to conquer the world.

Let the present generation make no mistake that the possibility was very real back in 1941. The cut of the deck in our favor was a slim one. Only the weight of U.S. forces, joining late in the worldwide conflict, turned the tide.

America did not, as many suppose, win that war. It did, however, make the difference.

IT SEEMS odd to me that World War II is viewed so often by our younger people with the indifference of ancient history. They seem to have the idea that little occured before 1960, and what did was rather insignificant.

In the anniversary week of John F. Kennedy's assassination, the networks saturated us with accounts and reviews of the event. But the anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor passed almost without mention.

The grievance I have with that is simply in substance. The assassination of Kennedy was tragic; but on balance it had nowhere near the critical significance of America's entry into World War II.

Dec. 7, 1941, I sincerely believe, may have been the single most significant date of the century, if not the last 500 years. Had the Axis forces prevailed, it would have been a far different world we live in. Civilization as we know it may well have reverted back to who knows what?

Because there was no possibility of diplomatic negotiations with Hitler's Germany. It was simply a matter of destroy or be destroyed. Japan sought control of all Southeast Asia, from Tokyo to Honolulu — and beyond.

The master plan was to encircle and conquer the world and divide the spoils. Such dictatorial regimes would have ruled autonomously, crushing any opposition without mercy — ultimately including that of the United States. All of our visions of democracy, justice and freedom would have vanished.

PERHAPS IT is an over-simplification to speak in such broad terms. To an extent it is. All history is a complex web of circumstance; but if one could strip away all else and get to the bare bones of it, that was the alternative we faced in those bleak times.

It was a horror.

We read of the dreadful atrocities — the Holocaust, the rape of Nanking, the destruction of societies, of cultures, of peoples — and we shiver at the unreasoning barbarity. How was it possible?

Yet, it happened — not in the dark ages of the past — but within the memorable span of a lifetime.

Such unthinkable barbarism was acceptable only in the framework of unconscionable purpose. Humanity was reduced to the simple equation of kill or be killed.

"War," as Winston Churchill observed, "which was cruel and glorious, has become cruel and sordid."

The most cruel and sordid may have been the atomic bomb that ended it all. But such were the times.

Today, nearly half-a-century later, it is difficult to conceive of such desperation — especially for a generation which has not, and hopefully will never, face it.

WE LIVE today in a troubled, fearful world. Yet, despite all the terror, the upheaval and conflict, there is in place a thin veneer of civilization to maintain a certain balance.

It is an imperfect world, but there remain options and possibilities and, at the very least, there remains hope.

And I thought of our fading generation — those people who fought so hard and gave so much — who somehow managed through those terrible years to salvage a doubtful world and preserve for us that hope.

We owe them a lot — perhaps everything.

But I sometimes wonder if we know it.

Rex Redifer is a reporter for the **Indianapolis Star** and is a free lance writer for the **Times**. This column appeared on the editorial page of the **Star. Reprinted with permission.**

Ask the Colonel

Colonel Jim Shelton,
Indiana Wing,
Confederate Air Force

Q. *Code names were used by all sides in World War II. To whom did the code names of "Herr Wolf" and "Long Pounce" refer in a plan by the Germans?*

A. "Herr Wolf" — name used by Hitler. "Long Pounce" was code name for the plan to kill President Roosevelt at Teheran.

Q. *What U.S. General was removed from command of the Army II Corps after the Germans ran U.S. troops out of Kasserine Pass in North Africa?*

A. Major General L.R. Fredenhall. He said he did the best under conditions with "Green Troops."

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Q. *General Douglas MacArthur reserved a special B-17 bomber for his personal use. What name was given to this popular four engine fortress?*

A. The "Bataan."

Q. *A famous lawyer was later a sportscaster who went into service a private and rose to the rank of Major. Who was this very controversial man?*

A. Howard Cosell.

Q. *What was the code name given to one of the most famous of all bombings in World War II, the Doolittle Raid?*

A. "First Special Aviation Project" — flown from the aircraft carrier **Hornet**.

Q. *The Navy had many men with outstanding courage, bravery, and fighting skill. Many of these men received well deserved honors and decorations — but who was the "Fighting Lady" in World War II?*

A. The great aircraft carrier **Yorktown** CV-10. A motion picture was also produced with this name.

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Q. *Many entertainers pitched in to help morale in World War II. One fine singer was known as the GI's Sinatra. Who was this handsome singer?*

A. Johnny Desmond, who also was along with Glenn Miller's band on many occasions.

Q. *The P-51 "Glamourous Glennis" shot down five German aircraft in one encounter in 1944. Who was the famous pilot of this top fighter plane?*

A. Chuck Yeager, who was the first man to break the sound barrier three years later in 1947.

Q. *What American outfit in World War II was the most decorated unit of all?*

A. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, composed mainly of Japanese Americans. The unit did not have a single desertion. Their motto was "Go for Broke." They earned, among others, more than 560 Silver Stars and 4,000 Bronze Stars — also a Congressional Medal of Honor.

Q. *Name the Nazi "Bigwig" who was known as a man with dozens of women, his wife saying he had more than 25 mistresses. She tried to "unload" him without success. Who was this German Romantic?*

A. Joseph Goebbels.

V-12 Program geared to nation's war needs

Book shelf

THE NAVY V-12 PROGRAM: LEADERSHIP FOR A LIFETIME. By James G. Schneider, Houghton Mufflin Company Publisher, Boston, 1987, 596 pp. $29.95.

As World War II moved into the offensive commencing with the Guadacanal campaign in mid-1942, the officer manpower planners soon discovered that thousands of officers were going to be needed to man the ships, and staff six Marine divisions and the supporting echelons.

James G. Schneider, in a labor of love, has produced a well researched and well organized work about the World War II V-12 program, that ultimately turned out over 60,000 Navy and Marine Corps Officers to meet these needs. Of the 60,000 about 6,000 to 7,000 became Marine Corp Officers.

The Army and the Navy under President Roosevelt's direct oversight announced in December 1942, "the demands of mechanical war and of a steady growing armed forces require a flow into the respective services of young men who require specialized educational technical training which could be provided by colleges and universities."

The Navy Department took the position that the Navy and Marine Corps program were intended to provide a continuing supply of officers candidates in the various special fields required by the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. The Navy program was a "college" program requiring acedemic results as the prime criteria for retention in the program and transfer to the next step for commissioning.

There were 131 colleges selected for the V-12 program, with July 1, 1943, designated as the start-up day. Reporting for duty were Navy and Marine Corps reservists already in college, who had signed up as officer candidates after the war heated up.

Others included those who had scored well on a national examination for high school graduates, and selected enlisted candidates who showed officer potential from the Navy and Marine Corps.

Each college unit had permanent officer and enlisted personnel, usually a Lieutenant Commander as unit commander. Where there was a Marine Corps detachment a Marine Corps Captain or First Lieutenant was detachment commander, along with a drill sergeant Parris Island style, and a salty First Sergeant.

Upon completion of the college program the Marines went to boot camp and the Navy went to pre-midshipman's school. From these assignments the candidates went on to Officers Candidates School provided they made the various cuts along the way. About 50% of those who started made the final cut and received their commissions.

Schneider, a savings bank president, took six years to put this book together. He visited more than 100 of the 131 schools. The author was a Navy V-12 officer candidate himself. The Marine Corps is well covered in spite of the author's Navy bias. At the worst the book has a Navy flavor, a taste familiar to all Marines. This is not a serious problem to the essence of this book.

Schneider's theme is set out in the sub-title, **Leadership For A Lifetime**. He proves this point when he cites by name some 15 Marine Corps General Officers and 37 Admirals who started in the V-12 program in 1943-1946. In fact, one "right" footed V-12 Marine became an Army Lieutenant General.

Add to these success stories were V-12's who became chairmen of such companies as Honeywell, Union Carbide, Goldman Sachs, Ford Motor, congressmen, college presidents, an astronaut, editors, a bishop and on and on.

A significant footnote to black history is brought out in the book. A number of blacks scored high in the national examination of high school graduates. Under some pressure from Roosevelt they were admitted to the program; a major step at that time that was never publicized. Of the less than 75 blacks five are now listed in **Who's Who in America**. Navy Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. was one of the first black V-12's

The subject is remarkably well covered both as to accuracy and thoroughness. For instance, such areas as courses of study, discipline, recreation, high jinks and many other elements are included.

Who is the book for? 1. Certainly, those who were members of the V-12 program will enjoy the nostalgia and learn the details of the concept, organization and results; 2. For those looking at officer cadres of the future, the V-12 approach may have something to contribute to today's officer procurement programs; 3. The tutorial value of this book will be helpful to the aspiring author of similar works.

Lt. Col. George N. Mayer,
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, Retired

What-ifs hamper book's focus on military error

***MILITARY ERRORS WWII* by Kenneth Macksey. Arms & Armour Press Limited, London, England, 252 pages, illustrated.**

At a Writers/Fans conference in San Diego earlier this year, a member of a book reviewers' panel said he wrote reviews of only those books he liked. Since there are no rules set forth on book reviewing, I guess that is his call.

I did not dislike MILITARY ERRORS but I learned very little from it. To use a British expression, it was pretty much "the mixture as before." This is not an account of every error but a selection the author deemed significant. The errors were obviously man-made for a variety of reasons: stupidity, self-promotion, deliberate or accidental oversight, pride, nationalism, and in some cases a feeling of invincibility or omniscience.

The obvious error, pointed out by Macksey in his foreword was "the heinous and futile mistake by Japan and Germany, later compounded by Italy, to take up arms in the first place." Looking at the economic strength of Japan and Germany today, perhaps it was not a "mistake." He then speculates on a series of "what-ifs;" hardly the province of a serious historian.

I do not intend to catalog the errors he cites. We all know that the French put too much trust in the Maginot Line, that Hitler should have crossed the English Channel right after Dunkirk, and so on. My problem with Macksey and other British military historians I have read, is that they seem to write with mud instead of ink and prove the witticism that we are separated from them by a common language.

For example: "Time was to prove he and them wrong and right." "The boot changed feet." "...were poorly trained and shot badly." "Made fewer errors than them" He hyphenates in the middle of a line "dramatic-ally," "with-drawal," "commen-surate." What does he mean by "ill-afforded troops?" Or by saying "Rommel's impact was out of proportion to his intellectual capacity?"

Macksey mentions "conubations," a word that does not exist except in his book. Later he says "In the air the Russians were outflown," as opposed to being outflown on the land or sea perhaps. He prefers "Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFC's)" to the simpler "tanks." He calls bombadiers "bomb-aimers," ships "Boats," and talks about "pre-planned attacks" as contrasted with post-planned, maybe. He refers to the "US Army Air Force." Well, you get the idea.

At one point, Macksey says "America's entry into the war ultimately proved decisive in adding much needed strength and encouragement to the Allied cause." Of course, he was referring to World War I.

Actually, he doesn't find much fault with the Americans. He states Admiral King's rigid rejection of the convoy system resulted in a horrible loss of ships, crews, and cargoes. He chides Eisenhower for locating his headquarters in France on the basis of comfort rather than ease of communication and control. He also suggests that Eisenhower's hesitancy in approving the Arnhem offensive was more to blame for its failure than was Montgomery for his design and execution.

He also criticizes Admiral Halsey for leaving the San Bernadino Strait totally unprotected during the Battle of Leyte Gulf. He does admit, on the other hand, that General "Hap" Arnold was right in insisting on daylight precision bombing which brought on the Luftwaffe's defeat.

While Macksey doesn't list it as an error, he mentions that during 1943-1944 "an increasing number of Allied aircraft were cluttering up airfields in Sweden where their crews had landed and had been interned, ostensibly after losing their way or being damaged."

This book can be read in a matter of minutes because at the end of each chapter (except his summation in 16), the author prints inside of a heavy black border in bold-face print what he calls "critical flaws;" flaws being synonomous with errors, I presume.

Don Sandstrom

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November 24, 1944 — We rode up to the line this morning with Captain Leibman's crew in the six-by truck, debarked in front of our plane, and again began our pre-flight checks with flashlights. By now the routine is getting to be old hat — check plane — stand by — postpone 24 hours.

After last night's briefing update, some of the "doubting Thomases" were placing wagers on another postponement. Some were even offering odds that there would be another stand-down today.

My old buddy, Lt. Herbert Kelly from Madison, Wisconsin, pilot on Leibman's crew, asked if I thought we would go today.

"Yep, we'll go," I said. "And my sure-fire reasoning in this: Today is Thanksgiving back in the States. Crew 25 always reserves holidays to perform momentous flights. We left the States on a holiday (Armistice Day), and now because this is Thanksgiving, we will bomb Tokyo today."

"Don't hand me that crap," Kelly said. "But anyway Lightnin', I hope you're right — this wait is killing me."

John Cox looks serious as we go about checking over the plane and I can tell that he has that gut feeling we are really going today.

In the months Cox and I have flown together we have developed a precise flying relationship between us. Our unison in the cockpit is so fine-tuned that each of us can anticipate the other's action in just about any flying situation.

Tailgunner Sutherland has a running joke going with the other crew members about me. Most B-29 tailgunners won't land while in the tailgunner's station. They prefer to come up to the central fire control room in the center of the plane with the other gunners during the landing.

Not Sutherland. He likes to ride the tail position during the landing. He always calls on the intercom when we're returning to the base to see who is going to land the plane — Cox or me. If I make the landing, Sutherland will get out of the plane when we get to the hardstand, run back to check the tail skid, and yell out, "Lieutenant, you sure scraped the tail skid that time."

"The hell I did," I would say. "I scooted in so smoothly you didn't know you were on the ground until I began braking."

5:45 A.M., November 24th — As the morning begins to dawn all activity around is at a peak. Now we can see the crews huddled around the big, silver, heavily loaded B-29s. Last minute checks are being made and as we look out across Magicienne Bay past Kagman Point, we can see the sun's first rays against the spotted cirrus clouds, resembling a herd of fleecy sheep dancing across the sky.

Fifteen minutes now before we go and it will be time for General Emmet "Rosie" O'Donnell and Major Robert Morgan across the way to start up "Dauntless Dotty" and get the mission to Tokyo underway.

Standing by their B-29s ready to board are 111 crews, representing a strike force of 1,221 men from four Bomb Groups, the 497th, 498th, 499th, and 500th. They are members of the 73rd Bombardment Wing, 21st Bomber Command of the 20th Air Force, and they are about to write a new chapter in the history books by blazing a trail in the sky over Tokyo.

We have double and triple checked everything, had the crew inspection, and Bombardier Herb Feedman has scribbled in large letters "One for Rosie" on one of the 10 bombs hanging snugly to the rear of the bombbay racks. The bombs are unarmed and will remain so until Herb crawls into the bombbays later to pull the arming pins before we start our climb to altitude.

Our gross weight is 137,000 pounds. That is almost maximum for the plane and since we have never taken off before with a load that heavy, we anticipate using the entire length of the runway and gaining as much speed as possible before lift-off.

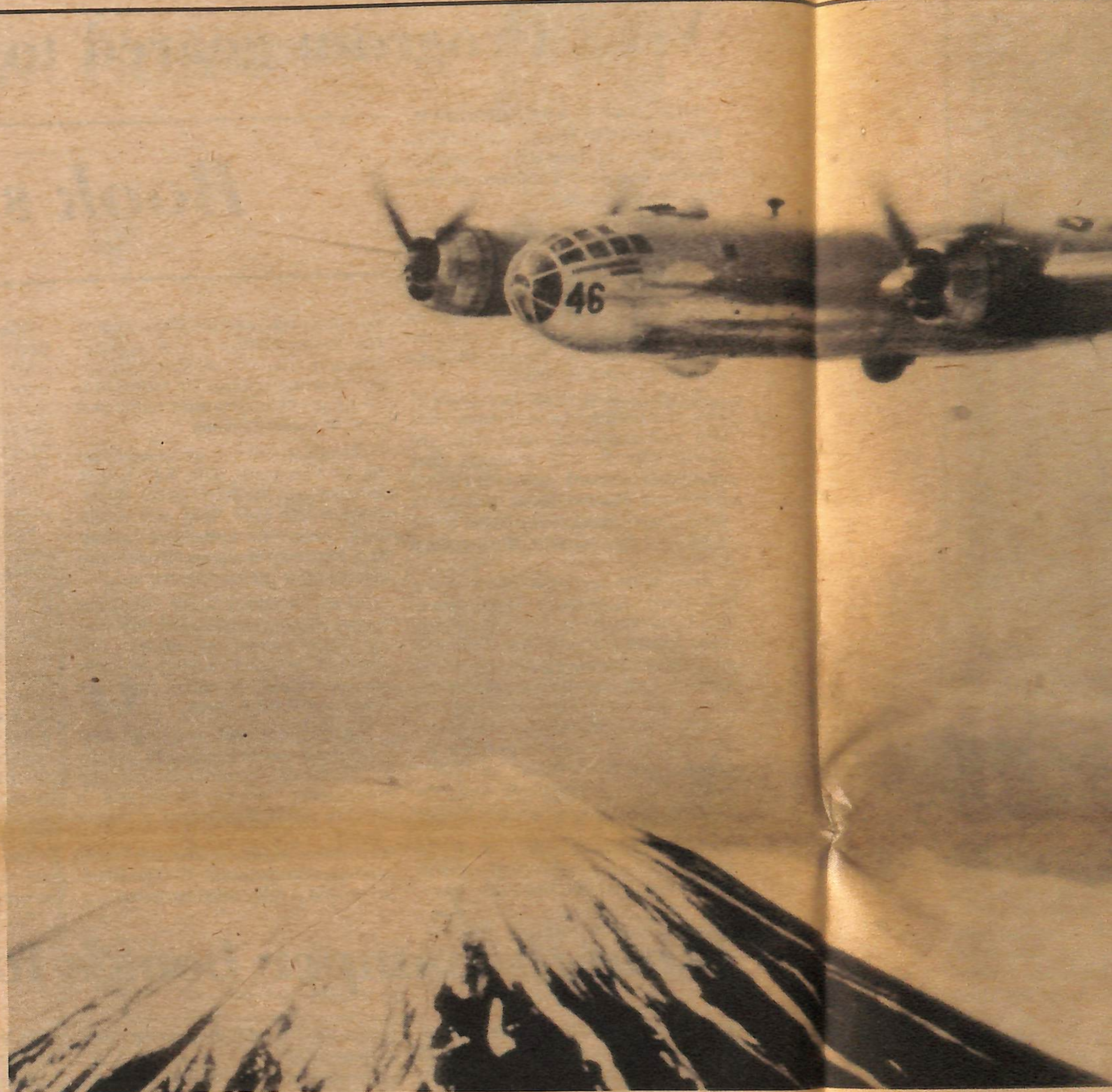
Lucky for us — the field is located on a plateau with a sheer drop of about 200 feet to the water just past the end of the runway.

The B-29 normally will become airborne when the airspeed indicator reaches 135 MPH. That is a safe liftoff speed. Today Cox and I have planned to hold the plane on the ground during the takeoff, run until the indicator reads 140 MPH or better, retract the landing gear immediately on liftoff, raise the flaps to 15 degrees to reduce drag, and nose down toward the water to pick up more flying speed.

The procedure for takeoff is automatic for Crew 25. We have practiced it so many times there is no way a foul-up could occur in this phase of our first trip to the Land of the Rising Sun.

Or is there?

6:00 A.M. — The word is GO.



Superfortress of the 499 Bomb Group, 73rd Wing off Saipan plies her course over Mount Fuji, the sacred Ja

Tokyo, here we

Chester Marshall

No postponement today. It is time to get this show on the road. We are still fidgeting around the plane talking to the ground crew. There will be at least a 20 minute lapse before we start up. Two Groups will precede us in takeoff.

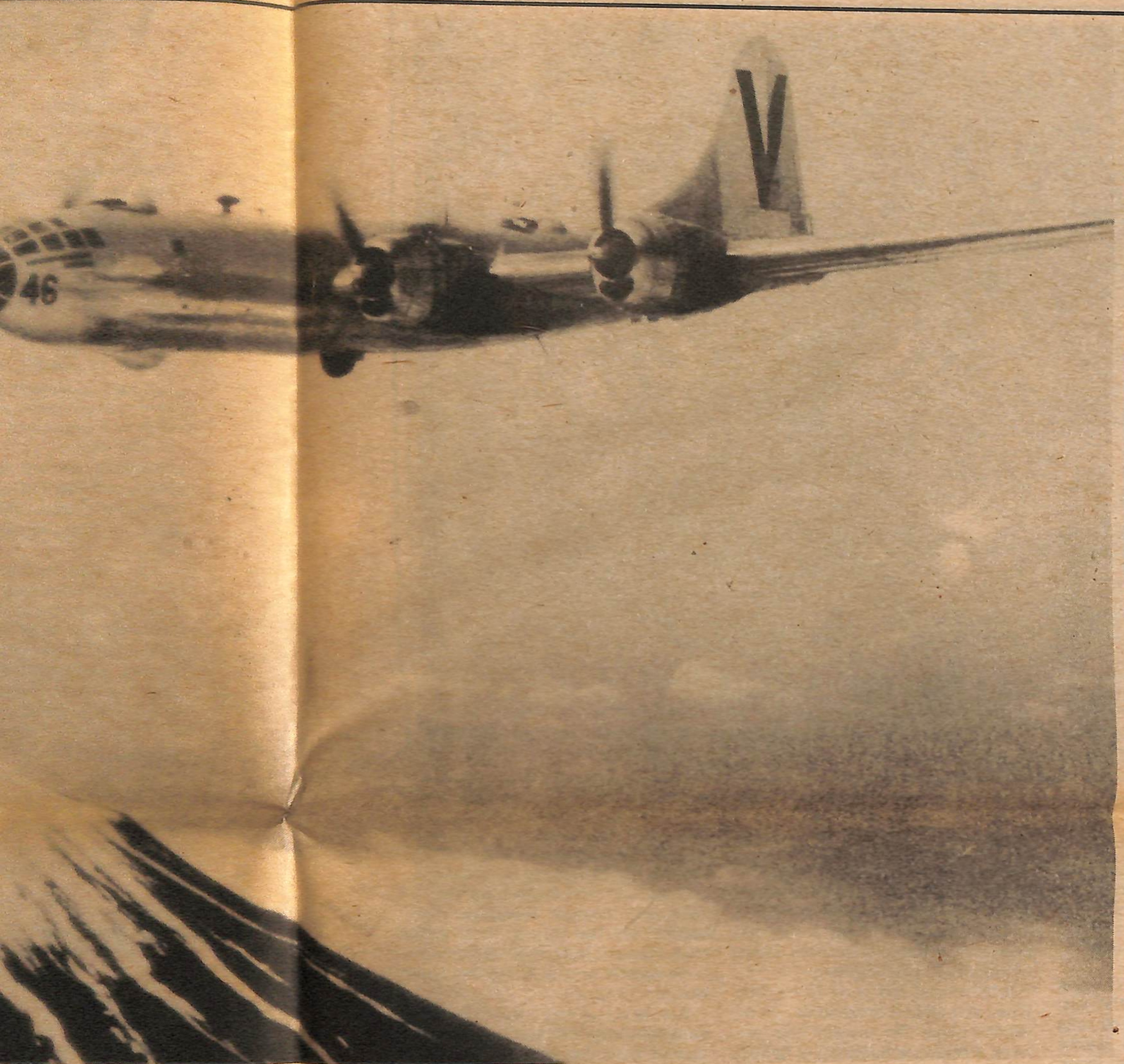
Spectators by the hundreds — Sailors, Marines and Engineers from all over the island have swarmed around the runways, standing on vehicles and hillsides, or other advantageous spots, to watch the massive takeoff.

Across the way the roar from the engines in the 498th Group has begun and General O'Donnell quickly leads the taxiing procession to the west end of the runway. There will be spotters to direct each pilot to the runway at the appropriate time. A flagman and a timer will be standing near the starting point to flag us off.

A plane will be flagged off every 60 seconds, and if all goes well the entire force will be airborne just under two hours.

We taxi by the group of Chaplains near the end of the runway as we nudge toward the starting point, hoping the spotters will let us in line for the takeoff. The Chaplains, including Captain Bray of the 499th Group, all give us a hearty wave and warm smiles.

7:00 A.M. — Our takeoff is fairly normal. The heavily loaded plane, rather sluggish after liftoff, picks up speed quickly as we nose down toward the water and skim out across Magicienne Bay.



...ing off Saipan plies her course over Mount Fuji, the sacred Japanese landmark used as the IP (Initial Point).

...o, here we come

...Chester Marshall

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The flight plan calls for the planes in our squadron, the 878th, to rendezvous just north of Saipan with the other squadrons of the 499th Group. Group Commander Colonel Sam Harris is in the lead plane flying with Lt. Les Hodson, our quonset hut mate. We jockey into our assigned positions in the formation and proceed north at about 2,000 feet altitude, maintaining positions and altitude to avoid using excessive fuel in climbing to higher altitude with the heavy load. At a pinpoint on the map located about two hours prior to reaching the Japanese coastline, we are to start our climb to bombing altitude.

Thirty minutes into the mission, with all four engines synchronized and groaning steadily, the first-mission jitters begin to subside a little.

Radio silence is in effect, but Cox is monitoring the command radio, just in case some of the brass on the mission should break radio silence to pass along a message. I am monitoring the intercom.

Time for weapons check. I press mike button and say, "Gunners, test-fire your guns. Fire at will, but be sure they are elevated and watch out for other B-29s. They are all around us."

The rat-a-tat sound coming from the twin fifties located in the five gun turret positions is reassuring indeed. Also, the "Whomp-Whomp" we hear, and the vibrations we feel, as the 20 MM cannon in the tail is test-fired, give us added comfort. Our guns are our only protection against fighter attacks over Japan.

Sgt. Slisewski, our radar operator manning the radar unit in his dark room located just aft the central fire control gunners' positions, calls out the blips on his radar screen, identifying them as small islands along our route. This aids O'Donnel in double-checking our position.

Corporal Alvin Torres, with pictures of his pretty wife and two small children pasted on the wall near his radio set, monitors the radio, listening for any possible SOS signals that might come from other planes in the strike force. He also is tuned into the same frequency of three U.S. Navy Destroyers and a submarine, who are circling in positions along our route to Japan. These ships would come to our aid if we were forced to ditch enroute to or from the target.

Our radio compass is tuned both to Radio Saipan and a radio station in Tokyo. The compass dial is calibrated in degrees, and by dialing to either station we not only can pick up the station's broadcast, but the pointer on the dial gives us the direction to the station.

10:00 A.M. — The weather so far has been good. Plenty of sunshine, with a few localized rain squalls in the area.

That situation is about to change — drastically.

O'Donnell came on the intercom to announce that Iwo Jima should be about 150 miles to the right of us.

Coming up, directly ahead and as far as the eye can see to the right and left, is one of those storms the weather man promised us during briefing. You can tell the wind is already picking up by the size of the white caps on the water. As we come nearer the storm we can see that its base almost reaches the water and it is decision time now. Should we dash into the pitch-black weather front in formation with the other B-29s, or try getting below?

Realizing there is very little, if any, tolerance between the base of the storm and the rampaging 20 to 30 foot waves on the water, we in the cockpit of "Lil' Lassie" have nevertheless made our decision.

Cox looks at me and says: "Let's get down on the deck before some of these guys ram into us."

So down we go. At 1,000 feet the dark clouds are still with us and we have to get lower.

We are leveling off at 500 feet above the water and it looks as if the churning waves will lash across the nose of our plane. Rain is coming down in torrents and it is blinding.

Only a few minutes before, my fears were anchored somewhere between the possibility of Jap fighters from Iwo Jima intercepting us and the unknown factor of the "welcoming committee" we would confront over Tokyo.

Now we are battling the elements and there is some doubt as to which enemy is the stronger — the weather or the Japanese.

I push the mike button and say, "Gunners, keep a sharp lookout for other B-29s — report all sightings — and Slew, see if you can pick up any planes on your radar screen."

Chance reports, "There's one B-29 about 2,000 yards directly behind us."

"Is that all you can see?"

"Roger. That's all, and he is on about the same level as we are."

Herb, sitting in his bombardier's seat in the nose of the plane, lets out a yell, "Lookout, there is a surface ship directly ahead of us."

Sure enough, there, directly in front and coming straight at us, is a big Japanese man-o-war ship. John and I instinctively pull up and skim directly over the top of the ship. We pass over it so fast that none of us can identify the type of ship, but to me it looked like a battleship. I think we surprised the ship's complement as much as they surprised us. Neither of us fired a shot.

TO NEXT PAGE

The storm front begins to dissipate a little at lower altitudes and we look around, trying to locate other B-29s, but there are none in sight. Even the one trailing us is nowhere to be seen.

Radioman Torres reports he is picking up messages from B-29s aborting. At least seven in the strike force, now scattered God knows where all over the sky between Iwo Jima and Japan, had to turn back due to mechanical problems.

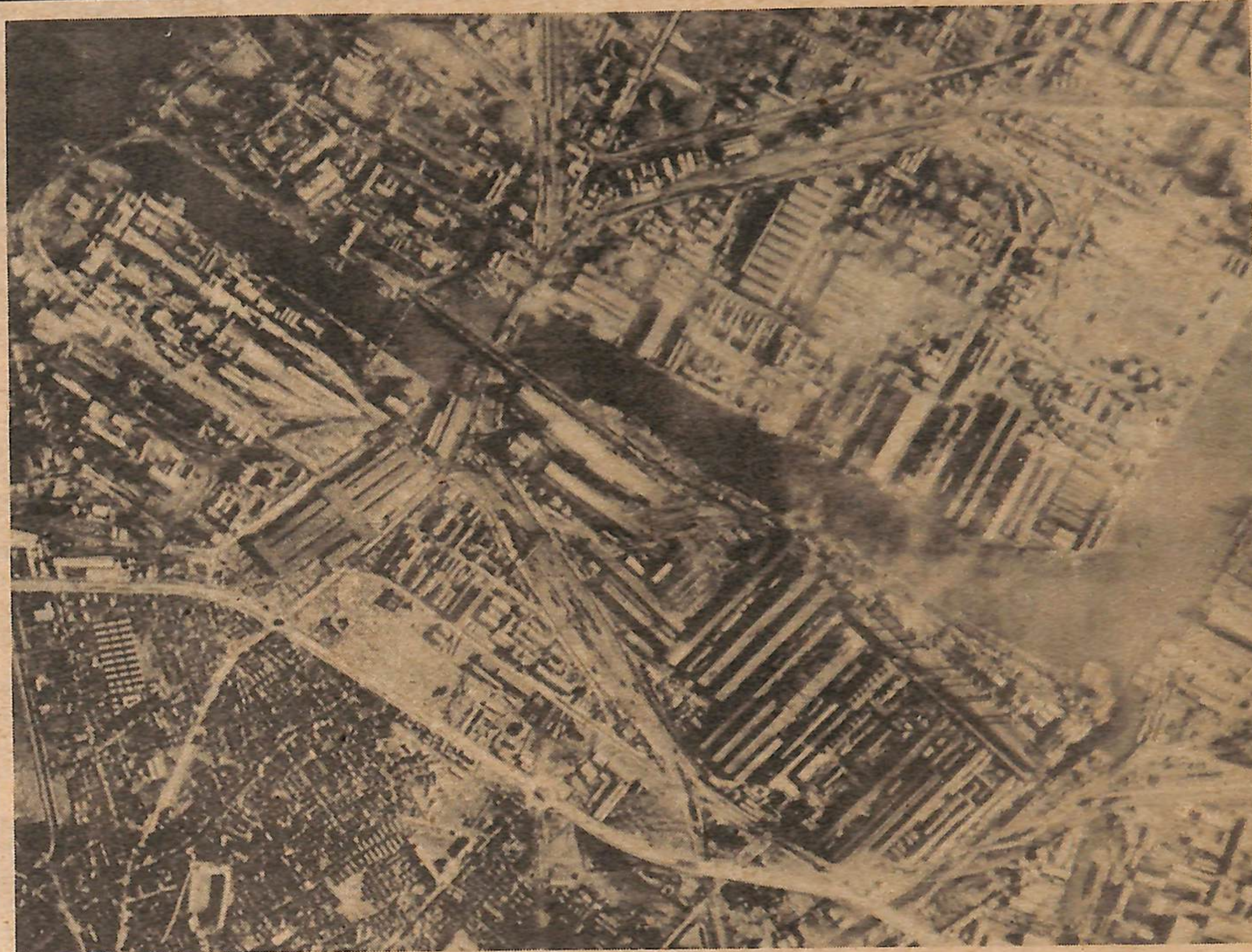
We keep going, alone now, pondering our chances of getting through the thick clouds still boiling above us, and hoping to join up with other planes if we can get above this front.

11:30 A.M– O'Donnel comes on the intercom: "John, according to my calculations, we should start our climb now. If my dead reckoning is correct, we are about 250 miles from the Japanese coastline.

"O.K." John says, "Let's button up and head for the high country."

I pass the word to the gunners: "We are starting our climb now; buckle your safety belts, and check your oxygen system. It may be a rough ride, and if we don't break out on top by the time we hit 10,000 feet, we'll pressurize while still climbing."

We increase power and set our climb rate at 500 feet per minute and hope and pray that the other B-29s will keep their distance. We are engulfed in a world of blackness with zero visibility.



Tokyo Harbor as it looked to a B-29 bombadier. Factories, shipping facilities, docks, warehouses, and railroad yards surround the harbor.

We break out on top of the front at just over 10,000 feet and everyone in the plane lets out a yell over the intercom. It is a joyous feeling to see the sun and blue sky again.

Lady Luck is with us. Soon we see about four other B-29s circling in the area and we immediately head for them. A flight leader in one of the planes shoots off a red flare, as preplanned under these circumstances, and we all join up with him. We make about two large circles, and as other planes pop out on top of the clouds they join our formation. Soon we have about 25 planes together as we turn on a course toward the target.

It is time to don flak suits and attach oxygen masks to our helmets. Our orders are to wear oxygen masks, even though the cabin is pressurized, as a backup in case the fuselage is punctured or the system is knocked out. Huck flips the switch to pressurize as we climb to our bombing altitude.

12:30 A.M. — O'Donnel, using his sextant, takes some readings by shooting the sun and verifies our position at 50 miles south and a little west of Tokyo Bay.

Our group of planes has reached 27,500 feet and levels off. We presume this is the altitude we will maintain over the target.

"Any minute now," O'Donnel says, "we should see the coastline — Tokyo, here we come!"

We have passed through the weather front, but there is a lot of haze and broken clouds below us.

The four engines on our plane are purring sweetly and we have no mechanical problems, but now as we strain our eyes to get our first glimpse of Japan, the tension is mounting.

It is hard to describe the degrees of tension — the long wait for the mission to start, the harried 1,500 mile trip from Saipan — and now, as we come closer to the doorstep of Japan — where the next split second could be our last on this earth — the apprehension is at a new level.

1:00 P.M. — Land ho! There she is! Through the light haze we can see the jagged outline of the coast of Japan.

We are coming closer and closer, and we all strain our eyes to get a better glimpse of the Island of Honshu, stronghold of the Japanese Empire. Off to our right we can now distinguish the mouth of Tokyo Bay. Just past Yokohama on this bay lies the city of Tokyo, where a few minutes from now we will drop our calling card. Directly ahead in a northwesterly direction and rising toward the sky is the beautiful snowcapped Mount Fujiyama.

We will use Mount Fuji as our IP (Initial Point) to line up our target. This means we will fly directly over the mountain crest, make a 90 degree turn to the right, and start our bomb run on the Musashino Airplane plant located in the Northwestern suburbs of Tokyo.

As we penetrate the air space over Japan and head for Mount Fuji I am baffled by the lack of action. Here we are over the enemy's homeland — have been for at least 10 minutes now — and not a shot has been fired. No flak in the area and no fighters have been sighted.

It is almost too good to be true. When will all hell break loose? In my visions about the mission this past week, I could see hundreds of fighters and the sky filled with flak bursts. WHEN WILL THE ATTACK COME?

I am constantly reminding the gunners to be on the alert and watch for "bogies." I try to steal a glance in the direction of Tokyo to determine what is happening to the planes that have preceded us. Everything below, so far, looks as peaceful as the plains of Kansas.

I have become obsessed with the thought that all of Japan's fighter strength is concentrated in the immediate area around Tokyo and they are waiting to pounce on us when we arrive.

The broken clouds and haze are obstructing our view of Tokyo, 60 or 70 miles away.

I glance down as we pass over Fuji and from my vantage point several thousand feet above the mountain, it resembles an upturned ice cream cone with the bottom bitten off.

Herb looks like a man from outer space sitting there in his bombardier's seat in front of Cox and me. He is completely covered with his flak suit and flak helmet and sitting on two flak suits — better to protect his family jewels, he says. He is constantly checking his bombsight and gunsight, making sure the switches are on.

We are in tight formation now, heading for the target. This is the most vulnerable time of the mission — no evasive action during the bomb run.

We will drop our bombs simultaneously with the lead bombardier. If Herb gets busy with a bogie, he will pass the flexible toggle switch to me and I will salvo our load.

ACTION HAS ARRIVED — AT LAST!

I was slow grasping the significance of what was beginning to take place around us. Anticipation had steadily increased the tension while waiting for the moment now at hand. As we move across the invisible line separating the "phantom" from the "real" enemy, I am suddenly shocked into combat reality. THE BATTLE HAS BEEN JOINED.

Eighteen year old right gunner George Koepke, subduing his excitement somewhat, shouts over the intercom: "FIGHTERS — three o'clock low!" I glance down in time to see our four fighters in single file zooming in on the B-29s on the right side of our formation. Tracer bullets criss-cross the sky as all guns from our planes on the right open up on the fighters.

There are no kills observed from either side. We weather the first attack, however, and we are still together heading for the drop zone.

Chester Marshall, back row second from left, and his crew June 8, 1945 at Isley Field, Saipan. Others: back row, left to right — John Cox (co-pilot), John Huckins, James O'Donnel, and Herbert Feldman. Front, left to right — Robert Slizewski, Alvin Torres, Kendal Chance, George Koepke, Arle Lackey, and John Sutherland. Tailgunner Sutherland was credited with five enemy planes, making him the top gunner of the 20th Air Force.

OUR TIME HAD COME!

I see the twin engine Nick fighter at 11:30, about the same time that Herb does. It is slightly below and heading directly toward us. Training his guns on the onrushing plane, Herb manages to get off three short bursts and sees his tracers go into the left wing and engine of the plane. As the Nick comes on with his tracers — and they all seem to be swerving directly at me — I flinch, trying to dodge the bullets by ducking my head behind the two-inch wide spars in the nose of the plane.

Before breaking off the attack, the Jap pilot pulls up sharply as if to ram us. He comes within 150 feet of accomplishing that, and as he noses down, his rear gunner tires to spray the belly of our plane.

Herb has already passed the toggle switch to me and is on super alert for another frontal attack. Any minute now, as we near the target, the lead bombardier will open his bomb bay doors, signaling the rest of us in the flight to open ours and get ready for the drop.

FLAK!!!

Directly ahead and on our level, the Squadron preceding us is catching hell. The planes are flying through a barrage of flak and black smoke, but they all keep going. I shudder at the thought that we still have our bombs aboard. If a burst of flak hits our bomb bays, nothing will be left of us but a big ball of fire in the sky.

Subconsciously, I urge the lead bombardier to open the doors. I am more concerned with the thought of our bombs exploding in the plane than I am of fighter attacks at this moment. I realize, however, that the reason we are here is to drop the bombs on our target.

I glue my eyes on the lead plane and suddenly their bomb bay doors swing open. I yell to Herb to open the doors. As the first bombs leave the lead plane, I squeeze the toggle switch as if it were a hot potato and send our bomb load toward our target in Tokyo.

The time is 1:39 P.M., NOVEMBER 24, 1944. The 5,000 pounds of demolition bombs we had just released, added to those dropped by 100 other B-29s, gave notice to the people of Tokyo that on this date the horrors of their war were coming home not to haunt them.

As we helplessly watch the flak bursts around us, I pray: "Five minutes more — please, Lord, give us five minutes more, and we will be out of this flak alley and over the water."

I stole a glance at the ground and through the haze, I could see one of the world's largest cities spread out below us. I could not help but wonder what the people down there were thinking today.

The flak begins to dwindle and we experience a slight feeling of relief. But not for long! Suddenly, Tailgunner Sutherland comes on with: "Fighters — 6 o'clock high! Three Toneys, and they're diving on us."

We feel the plane tremble as Sutherland opens fire with his two 50 caliber machine guns and the 20 MM cannon simultaneously. One of the attackers pays the price. Sutherland can't contain his excitement. Pressing his foot mike bottom down, he repeats over and over: "I got him, I got him —."

2:30 P.M. — Out over the water and heading for home! For the 11 men in our plane it is like a tremendous pressure being released from our bodies.

There is, however, one little thing causing some concern. Over to our right, out of range of our guns, there is a Jap fighter paralleling our course. He has been there since we left the coast and we are concerned about this.

4:00 P.M. — Another message picked up from Hodson's plane. They have lost power in a second engine and there is a strong possibility that they will have to ditch. That message is a heartbreaker. It is possible, but chances are pretty slim, that the Navy can get close enough to Japan to pick them up if they ditch.

The pesky little Jap who has escorted and kept us on guard since we left the coastline has turned back now and headed for home.

Our flight has broken formation now and each plane is on its own to try to make it home. This way we can stretch our gas. We have no doubt that O'Donnel can chart a beeline course back to the base.

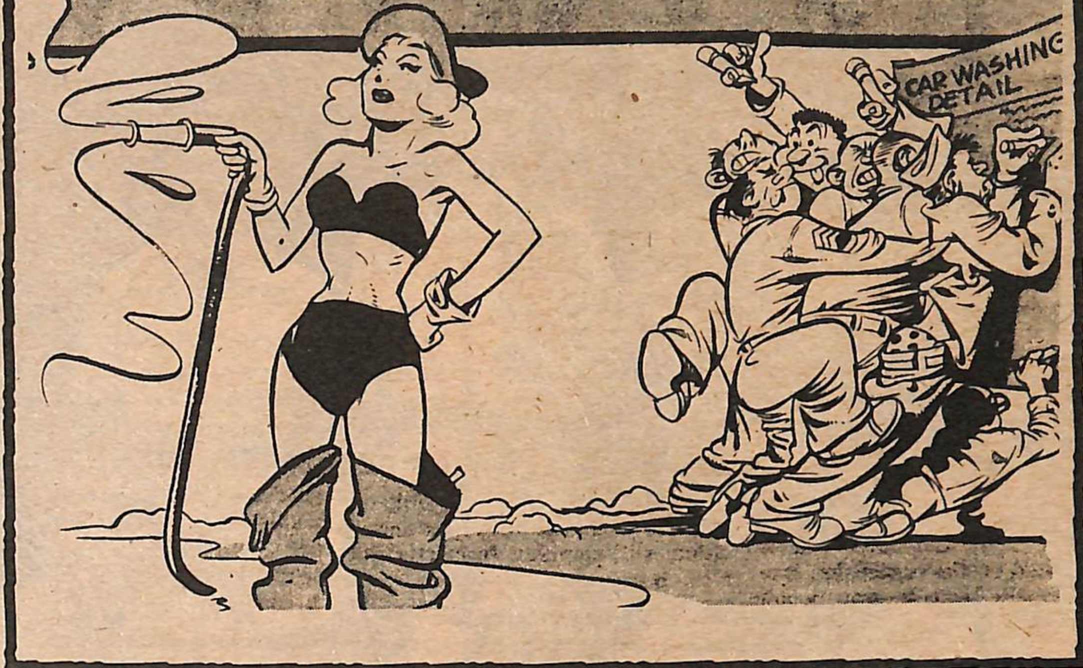
5:30 P.M. — The sun is getting low in the west and no artist could ever depict the beauty that is radiated for us by that setting sun. The red streamers peeping through the mountainous pillows of cumulus clouds, fanning out over the vast Pacific Ocean says more to us than any words or picture could ever describe.

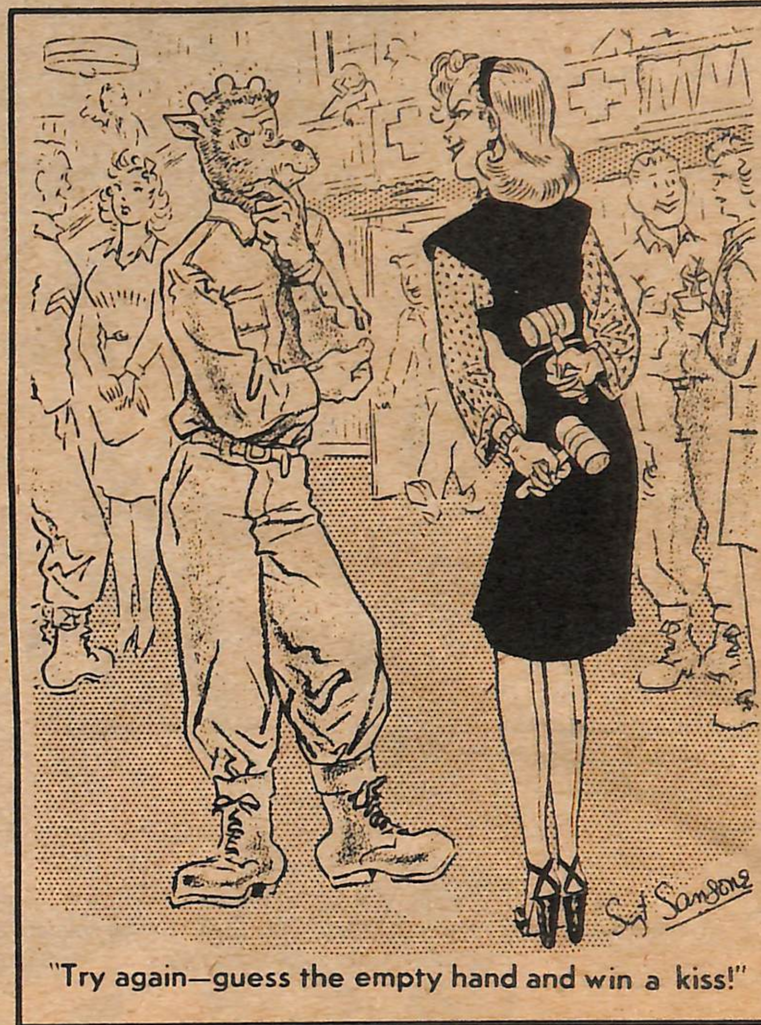
8:00 P.M. — We're nearing Saipan now, but since Huck says we have enough gas to make the extra 120 miles to Guam, we will land there as ordered.

As we approach Guam we notice that Harmon Field is lit up like a Christmas tree. We get clearance to land and as we turn on our final approach we notice a huge spotlight scanning the planes as they touch down on the runway. They tell us later that newsreel people were taking pictures of the planes as they arrived back from the Tokyo raid.

We touch down smoothly. Following the jeep we taxi to our parking spot near the runway.

None of us will ever forget the hour nor the date NOVEMBER 24, 1944, when we dropped the first bombs on Tokyo.




"Try again—guess the empty hand and win a kiss!"

On the lighter side

Male Call by Milton Caniff, creator of "Terry and the Pirates" **Long Overdue—Must Be Considered Lost**

1/31/43

Male Call by Milton Caniff, creator of "Terry and the Pirates" **Everything Went Pink**

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AIR WAR FILMS

AWF - 4
Drop Zone Normandy
(B & W, Approx. 90 min.)

This is an official film history of the airborne invasion of Normandy by the American 82nd and 101st airborne divisions.

AWF - 13
Naval Aviation - A Personal History
(Three films)

Vol. 1, 1911-1914 The Weapon is Conceived (B & W, Approx. 25 min.)
The beginnings of naval aviation is depicted by still photos and rare archival motion pictures of the earliest pioneers such as Naval Aviator #1 'Spuds' Ellyson's *first flight of 1911.*

Vol. 2, 1914-18 The Weapon is Tested (B & W, Approx. 25 min.)
Basically this is a filmed oral history spoken by surviving naval aviators. It is supplemented by rare archival naval aviation footage of the action the aviators describe.

Vol. 3, 1919-30 The Weapon is Developed (B & W, Approx. 25 min.)
Rare archival naval aviation film footage illustrates this series of oral interviews *by pioneer aviators like Pat Bellinger.*

AWF - 15
Attacks and Escape
(B & W, Approx. 66 min.)

Here is a historical report on three incidents that occured during America's air war in the ETO.

LAND WAR FILMS

LWF - 9
Famous Leaders
General Hap Arnold and Admiral Nimitz
(Two films)

The General Arnold Story, (B & W, Approx. 30 min.)
The Admiral Nimitz Story, (B & W, Approx. 30 min.)

LWF - 16
Climb To Glory
(B & W, Approx. 60 min.)

Here is the combat career of the only 'specialist' division in the WW2 US Army trained who were to fight in the mountains. Nicknamed 'Mountaineers', they received orders to deploy to the 5th Army fighting Germans in Northern Italy in Oct. 1944.

'WHY WE FIGHT' SERIES

WWF - 1
Prelude To War
(B & W, Approx. 60 min.)

In 1943 the big question for many draftees was 'Why drag me into this war?' The Army needed to give a reason for these men to fight. Lectures by officers had failed.

WWF - 2
The Nazis Strike
(B & W, Approx. 60 min.)

An animated cartoon depicting the origin and nature of German militarism thru the years opens this documentary.

SEA WAR FILMS

SWF - 1
Naval Action
(Two films)

Seapower in the Pacific, (B & W, Approx. 30 min.)
This documentary is an information film illustrating the mobile striking power of the US Navy's surface and air seapower in the battle for supremacy with the Japanese Navy during the war in the Pacific.

Greyhounds of the Sea, (B & W, Approx. 25 min.)
This is the history of the US Navy's destroyers from DD-1 'USS Bainbridge' of 1898 to the DD-931 'USS Forest Sherman' of 1952 as depicted thru historic naval archival film.

SWF - 2
The Coast Guard In Action
(Three films)

On Foreign Shores, (B & W, Approx. 25 min.)
During 1942-45 the Coast Guard manned thousands of landing craft that were used in the great and small amphibious operations.

Normandy Invasion, (B & W, Approx. 20 min.)
Coast Guard cameramen went along with the landing craft carrying 30,000 men and 3,500 vehicles of the 1st, 4th, and 29th Infantry divisions landing at Omaha and Utah beaches on June 6, 1944.

Story of A Transport, (B & W, Approx. 20 min.)
The wartime career of the USS 'Wakefield' was spent transporting tens of thousands of American soldiers to the battle fronts of the world.

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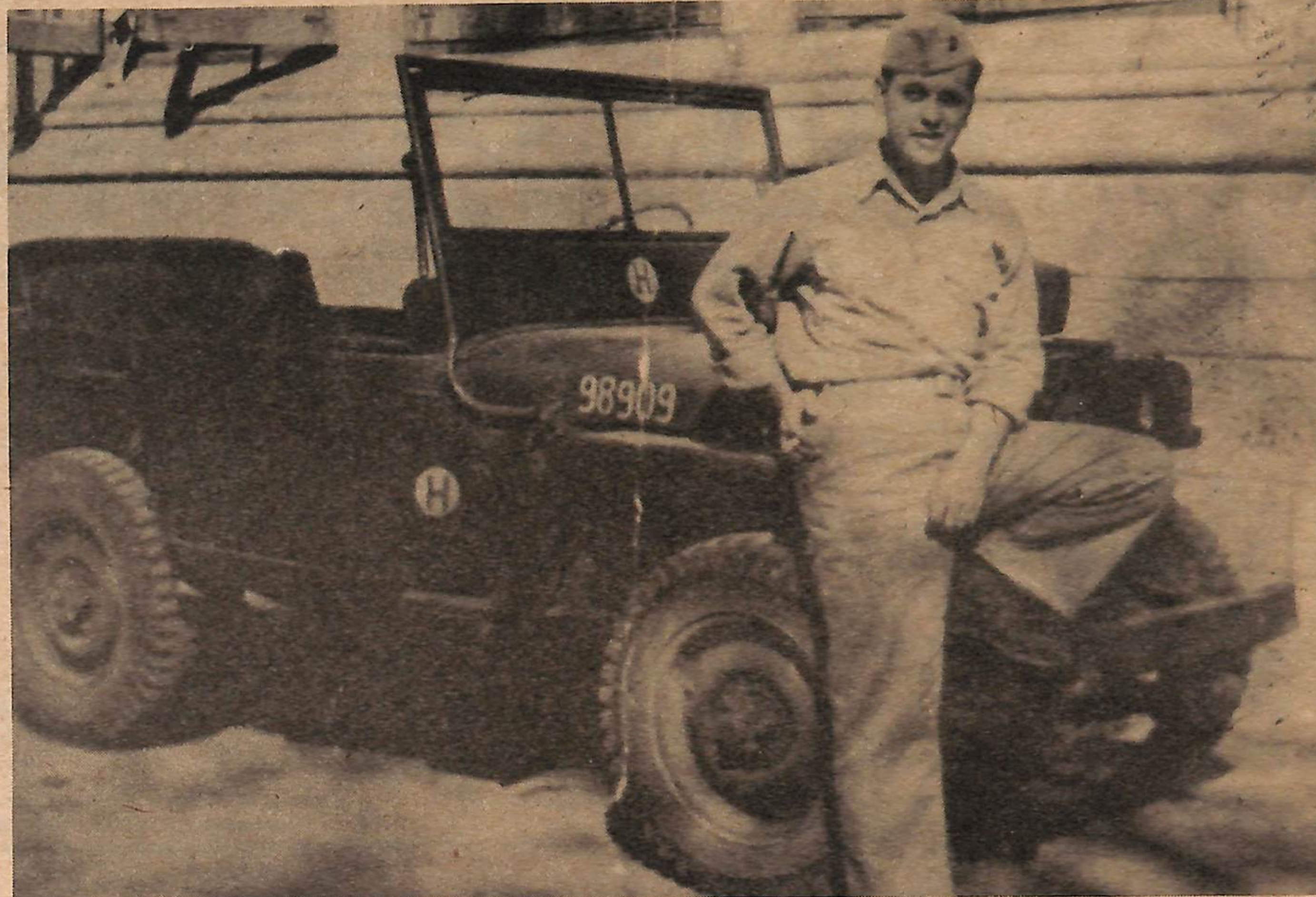

Ever the Marine, young Davis strikes a cocky pose on the fender of his Jeep.

Maturing of a Marine

Charles Davis's Memoirs

Part II
New Caledonia, and Guadalcanal

I boarded the U.S.S. **President Polk** for an unescorted trip to New Caledonia some 700 miles east of Australia. Too fast to be considered a submarine target, the **Polk** sped through the lovely Pacific Ocean, sometimes zigzagging but usually in an arrow-straight path.

The **President Polk** had been a passenger liner and even converted to a troop ship it was very nice. It was the largest ship I was ever to be aboard.

I spent most of my time "top-side" watching the sea for hours. Sometimes dolphins played in the bow wave and flying fishes soared alongside us. At right a phosphorescent wake trailed behind us into the starry darkness. I probably had a smile on my face the entire trip.

We arrived in New Caledonia in February or March of 1944. Immediately before or very shortly after we arrived, an ammunition ship exploded at the Nickel Docks in Noumea harbor. I never saw the damage and there was no official acknowledgment it ever happened but we heard rumors of tremendous damage and loss of life. Security around the dock area became very strict.

New Caledonia was and is a French colony whose primary worth seemed to be the nickel mines in the interior.

Noumea was a quaintly attractive little town of mostly one story frame buildings, built well off the ground on slender masonry foundation pilings. Nearly all had encircling verandas and large windows fitted with bamboo screens or blinds. Dogs and pigs roamed freely through streets, yards and under the buildings.

Camp St. Louis

We were located at Camp St. Louis (St. Louie) probably about 20 miles from Noumea in some remote mountains and gorges. Roads were mostly dirt paths bulldozed along bridges and across ravines, with stretches here and there covered with gravel or crushed coral. Small clusters of grass huts crowded between the road and the jungled hillsides in a few places.

Natives with very dark skins and fuzzy hair hawked a potent native booze called "gook juice" or "panther piss" to those foolhardy enough to try it. (I saw one man go screaming crazy and leap from a speeding truck after drinking some of the stuff).

The replacement group to which I had earlier been assigned in the States had moved to Samoa to join the 22nd Marines. I was attached to a Marine Raider battalion for continued training until transport to Samoa became available.

In an organization known for its esprit-de-corps, the Raiders stood out as a super gung-ho outfit. Still full of adrenalin from the famous raid on Makin Island by Carlson's Raiders, these men felt and acted as if there was nothing they couldn't do.

I found out the first day I wasn't in as fine a physical condition as I thought! About 10 miles from Camp St. Louis was a rugged place called Mount D'Or. Four to six days each week we walked, jogged and ran the 20 mile round trip over Mount D'Or with 30 pound packs and an M-1 rifle. One day we went up the long sloping side of the mountain and down the precipitous opposite flank. The next day we reversed the direction.

Scrambling up and down rocky ridges, along twisting trails through jungle thickets, wading cold mountain streams and, especially, climbing the steep face of Mount D'Or was exhausting. We had one five-minute break on the outward leg, another as we returned and a half-hour chow break on the mountain.

At the end of each hike the entire outfit double-timed the last two miles into camp. The first few trips I was among the stragglers who finally stumbled into camp gasping for breath. More than once I fell onto my cot physically sick with exhaustion and too near vomiting to answer chow call.

I improved as time went on but I never once finished with the leaders. At five feet six inches in height and about 135 pounds I was called a "feather merchant."

I developed a fungus on the bottom of my feet from wading the streams and swamps. Thereafter I had to go to sick bay each night for treatment of the little bloody pits that formed under broken blisters. I placed my feet into a solution of copper sulphate while an electric current passed through straps on my legs through my feet to an electrode suspended in the solution. The tingling charge on the raw sores was painful but it helped prepare my feet for the next hike.

The area we were in was made up of parallel ridges separated by deep ravines. The sides were often so steep they could be climbed only by hanging onto the rocks or vegetation above. Some ridge tops were so sharp there wasn't even a goat path along the top.

I went out with a group of 60 men mortar crews on a practice mission. The crews set up their weapons just off the top of one ridge to fire across a ravine at large square targets erected between two poles on the side of the next ridge.

Now, mortar shells drop in from a high angle so hitting a target on flat terrain is a tough problem, but it is simple compared to hitting the same target on a steep slope!

One crew had fired a number of rounds at their target always hitting well above or below it when an old Chief Marine Gunner walked up. Cursing the men as a bunch of civilians unfit for the Corps, he strode over to their weapon, made a slight adjustment, stripped a few increments off the propellant charge and dropped it into the tube.

With a characteristic hollow "thunk" the shell was on its way and a few seconds later it exploded on the opposite ridge, blasting the target to shreds!

With an aplomb seldom witnessed he turned on his heel and walked away without a word as if he could repeat the feat time after time.

The kids in the crew stood open-mouthed in astonishment, then began to smile at each other in admiration.

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It was sometime before I realized the Chief had observed where the previous shells had fallen and had merely interpolated the prior settings. Still, it was the work of a craftsman! He was the talk of the entire camp that night. I'm sure this tale has been repeated many times by those who saw it.

I was sent to Samoa, then immediately on to the Marshall Islands where the 22nd Marine Regiment was involved in the invasion of Roi and Namur Islands. I was there only a few days for the islands were secure before I went ashore.

On Guadalcanal

We went to Guadalcanal where I was finally integrated into a real regiment. I became part of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Marines.

Guadalcanal had been invaded in August, 1942, and was the first Japanese held island to be captured.

Our camp was located at Tassafaronga along the the beach some miles west of Henderson Field, across the Tenaru and Matanakao Rivers and just east of the Kolumbona River.

The camp was situated in a narrow band of coconut trees planted in a grid pattern along the beach as a part of a British copra plantation. The strip was only about 300 to 600 feet wide from the sea to the edge of the crushed coral road. Dense jungle crowded in the right against the inland side of the road. At the west end of the camp along the shore there were hulks of two troop barges and a fairly large ship, the Tina Marie, I seem to remember.

They had been beached by the Japanese after being hit by our naval ships and aircraft while trying to reinforce the Japanese garrison during the battle for Guadalcanal.

Many nights when we were not on work details at the docks, I laid on the beach looking at the stars and dreaming while the gentle waves of the channel lap-lopped at the shore.

Many nights we had to make up work parties to go to the docks across from Tulagi.

We were discouraged from going into the jungle alone or in two's or three's. There were stories, allegedly from the few natives, that small bands of Japanese soldiers still roamed in the mountains. A few men went into the nearby jungle anyway, and some once came back with a rusty rifle and some moldy personal effects found on the remains of three or four Japs. These forays stopped after Arliss Franklin, a scout for Charlie Company, found a well-oiled machine gun while on a training hike with his company. Machine guns don't stay well preserved for very long in the jungle unless they are constantly cared for.

Guadalcanal is a big island probably 85 miles long and up to 20 miles wide. I don't know what other outfits did but our battalion was never more than 3 or 4 miles inland from the north shore. There were hundreds of square miles in the mountainous center of the island where only aircraft spotter planes ever roamed, I imagine. I'm confident that small groups of Japanese survived a long time in the interior without being detected.

Food was terrible. Day after day we had dried eggs, pancakes, orange marmalade, a waxy margarine and canned Spam. Meal upon meal was some unimaginative combination of these. Even C-ration hash was a treat.

Movies were rare, too, so Sea-Bees from miles down the beach would sometimes invite 30 or 40 men at a time to their camp for a meal and a recent movie. They fed us on fresh meat and eggs, canned fruit and freshly baked breads and pastries.

Their theater was a big amphitheater they called the "Coral Bowl." We were usually given 2 or 3 beers before loading onto our trucks to return to camp late at night.

Although Marines are a part of the Navy, they often fought with sailors at the least provocation but the Navy Sea-Bees certainly were looked upon as friends.

During this period the 22nd Marine Regiment and the 4th Marine Regiment were under General H.M. (Howlin' Mad) Smith. Our 22nd Marine commander was Colonel "Red Dog" Snyder.

Davis

The 4th Marines were the old "China Marines" and had been "Horse Marines" I believe. The regiment had been pulled out of Shanghai before Pearl Harbor and had been a part of MacAuthur's Bataan defense in the Philippines where the survivors were captured. Our sister regiment was an entirely new 4th Marines, but the tradition of their regiment evoked as much pride as if every man had actually served in China.

My immediate commander was Lt. Jack Vaughn from Albion, Michigan, "Gateway to the South." That is the way he always answered when asked where he came from.

Jack was a very thin wiry young man with very light, almost yellow complexion and sandy hair that was very nearly red. He often wore a mustache. He had studied in Mexico and supported himself by boxing professionally while in college there. He walked with an unusual springy step as if bouncing up onto his toes.

Jack never took the Marine Corps or the war very seriously. He was a very good officer and all of us respected him, but we looked upon him as a buddy who just happened to be our commander, too. Jack became a director in the Peace Corps directly under Sergent Shriver, President Kennedy's brother-in-law. Somehow it seems to fit our image of him perfectly.

We had a sergeant from Gardiner, Montana. Because Vaughn always said he was from Albion, Michigan, "Gateway to the South," Sgt. ——— said he was from Gardiner, Montana, "Gateway to the Yellowstone." I believe the town really did use that motto just as Kokomo (Indiana) calls itself the "City of Firsts."

Platoon Sgt. Kimlin from Poughkeepsie, New York and Pfc. (later Sgt.) R. D. Hager from Nicholasville, Kentucky, had been among the few Marines who participated in the invasion of North Africa before coming to the Pacific. My memory says they landed at Arzew in Algeria but I'm not certain. At any rate both men were very well liked and were looked upon as "old salts."

The head of our communications section was a tall man with black hair, a heavy 5 o'clock shadow of a beard and a constant frown. His name was Elmo Reich and he came from North Carolina.

At roll call when all other section leaders answered "all present or accounted for, sir," Reich would often answer "two G-- D--- men missin', sir!" to the amusement of the entire company, including the officers.

A number of times he took off alone into the night on the front lines, a telephone wire running through his left hand and the shotgun in his right, looking for a break in the line.

Also attached to our headquarters was a combat correspondent named Ben Masselink. I think Ben was a sergeant but Ben was always a civilian regardless of Marine Corps designations or rules.

He was a tall, skinny, stoop-shouldered young man of maybe, 24. His shoes were seldom tied and he never wore a belt. Instead he tied the two front belt loops of his dungarees together with a string. Many days he didn't bother to shave.

Because of his special assignment, like me he did not have to stand most formations or inspections. He never had routine duty assignments.

After a while the officers and N.C.O.'s gave up on making a Marine out of Ben. For their own protection they tried to ignore his appearance and casual ignoring of the rules. They recognized they could never make Ben fit the Marine Corps mold.

Masselink had gone to Northwestern University's school of journalism while living with some older woman.

While in rear areas, he received packages regularly from his woman friend. They always consisted of cakes or loaves of bread hollowed out to contain a bottle of liquor.

At mail call, Ben's packages brought hoots and laughter but he would only smile and slouch off to his tent, contemplating his package.

The establishment often sent requests or orders to Ben for more stories and materials for articles in the Marine Corps magazine, **"Leatherneck."**

He once said he had written a many-page story and sent it to Washington headquarters. In the middle of a sentence on the last page, he stopped, adding "continued on page —" but sent no page —.

"I can see those fool people looking everywhere for page — and accusing each other of losing it," he laughed.

In the '50's I read a story in Collier's magazine written by Ben Masselink. The author's profile always carred by **Collier's** said he lived on an island somewhere in the Caribbean. It fit Ben.

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Poetry

Reminisce

As I grow older, and Reminisce
I can not help, but think of this
Would I be here, to write this today
If the Japanese, had had their way
If they had known, we had the atomic might
On the island of Tinian, ready for flight
The best kept secret, this world has known
Was the atomic bomb, before it was shown
Those two bombs, would never have been used
If Pearl Harbor, had not been abused
The Japanese killed hundreds of Americans that day
With their sneak attack, on our ships in the bay
The news media has been apologetic, for the atomic bomb drops
I guess it is because, with them the dollar is tops
We of the 509th, apologize to no one
We were sent there to do a job, and that job was well done
So on December 7th, I hope and I pray
The news media will print, the truth of that infamous day.

Ex T/Sgt Darwin C. Lewis
509th Composite Group
53 Moon River Lane
Thornville, Ohio 43076

Things that Stir the Soul

There are some things left
That stir the soul —

Standing at attention
During Morning Colors —
Thoughts of Shanghia
And China Marines.

Dress blue uniforms
With gold buttons —
Chesty Puller,
In Korea.

The Eagle, Globe and Anchor —
Cadence, the parade Deck —
Sharp salutes, and
Parade Rest, Taps.

And my son, home from
Marine Corps boot camp.

Bobbie Taylor,
Elwood, IN

How Soon They Forget

Ernest C. Tarter

Tired, bedraggled and lonely
Hearts as heavy as lead,
The battle they fought is over,
Many a Comrade lies dead.

Eyes sunken deep and staring,
Shrunken bodies where hunger abounds,
Orders shouted in a foreign language,
Oh! What frightening sounds.

Pushed with steel-tipped rifles,
Down roads to God knows where,
No rest — no food — no water,
What fate do these men have to bear?

To camps surrounded by barbed wire
And cruel guards so anxious to kill,
But spirits are starting a comeback,
To live, becomes the number one will.

Home-folks are told, "Missing in action,"
Some are presumed to be dead,
Family, friends and the Nation,
Stand in shock with prayer bowed heads.

Dear God, bring home these brave lads,
Who have fought far over the sea,
To a home of friends and loved ones,
For whom they're fought to be safe and free.

Ships appear on the horizon
On home soil these lads will soon land,
Let's all roll out the red carpet,
And greet them with a huge brass band.

They have all fought, oh so bravely,
Let's all do them what we can,
Let's tend to the sick and wounded,
Care for them down to the man.

Brave lads this war is over,
Your future of care is all set,
Adjust your life back among us
No need you to worry or fret.

You have fought so gallant for freedom,
To show you just how much we all care,
The things we amassed in your absence,
We are all so willing to share.

Years push the war to the background,
But a new war now shall reign
To remind the Grand Old Nation,
There's still bodies broken with pain.

So for us, the battle's not over,
The promises haven't been met,
We must fight for our daily existence,
Dear God, how soon they forget.

But let their freedom be threatened,
Who will answer their call?
These brave lads they have forgotten,
In battle would once more bravely fall.

We'd give life to win this battle,
On this, you surely can bet,
Although we're so few in number,
Thank God, we don't soon forget.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AVIATION HERITAGE RESEARCH CENTER

A moment in Flight History

Lockheed P-38 "Lightning"

In 1936 the program was started with Lockheed Aircraft Corporation to develop the XP-38, powered by one V-1710-C8 and one V-1710-C9, 1000 horsepower engine. In production this became the famous P-38 "Lightning" which was so widely used during World War II for intercepting, escort, fighting, night fighting, reconnaissance, photography, etc. A total of 9924 was built.

The YP-38's and the P-38 began the wartime production program and were then powered by two Allison F2, left and right-hand engines, having 1150 horsepower. Subsequent models were the P-38 F series, using the F5R and L engines, the P-38 G series powered by F10R and L engines, the P-38 H and J series, with F17R and L engines, and finally the P-38 L series, have F-30 engines. All of these were manufactured from 1941 to 1945, and the main advancement in engines was the increase in horsepower and efficiency through beefing up various sections and raising the blower ratios. The F17R and L and the F30R and L had a war emergency horsepower rating of 1600 and were turbo-supercharged as were all previous models. All through the war, engine advancement kept pace with airplane production and at the war's end new and more powerful engines were available for later models of the P-38. However, emphasis was turned to an intensive jet airplane and engine program which shelved further airplane development and finally ended in cancellation of the entire production programs.

A moment in Flight History is an exclusive regular photo-historic feature of World War II Times in cooperation with SunShine House's Aviation Heritage Research Center

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That gun wouldn't shoot

William McLaughlin

The Browning Automatic Rifle, Caliber .30, Model 1918 was a wonderful weapon, beloved of the G.I. in World War II, and hated by his enemies. It was relatively light, 15 pounds 8 ounces, with a clip of 20 rounds adding another 1 lb., 7 oz. and although the total kit added nearly 28 pounds to the BAR man's field pack, its firepower made it all worthwhile.

With a flick of the change lever the BAR could go from single shot like an M-1 to automatic fire like a machine gun, yet it didn't require all that extra gear; ammo chests, spare barrels and tripods, that went with the light machine guns.

Mine was the exception. It would only fire single shot. It hated to fire automatic.

I'd come into the Recon Troop of the Americal Division on Bougainville in mid 1944 after getting busted from my rank of sergeant, chief of section in the Field Artillery. They called it conduct unbecoming a soldier, but I thought of it only as telling off a particularly green and obnoxious second lieutenant. I'd already been a sergeant for 3½ years on active service, so being a private was a new experience. A new carbine had been issued me, light and flexible, and I'd come to like it.

Whenever action slowed down, duties were prescribed to keep the soldiers busy; roadwork, foot drill and schools. A school on the BAR was called for all hands, and Sergeant Artie Moreau of Lowell, Massachusetts was giving it. He didn't know too much about his subject, certainly not enough to make it interesting, and besides that, I'd been machine gun section chief for much of my artillery time. On slow days we used to run schools on the MG's and BAR's, racing to see who was quickest in field stripping and reassembling the pieces blindfolded.

Bill McLaughlin shows off his BAR rifle.

Artie stumbled on the name of a part, and held up the school while searching for it. Bored to death and hanging in the rear of the group I supplied it to get finished. I think it was the recoil spring guide, or something like that. Anyway, he looked at me kind of quizzically, but went on with his school.

Later, sitting in my tent I looked up to see a tall soldier coming toward me holding the BAR. "The sergeant told me to give you this," he said laconically, picking up my little carbine, and that was that.

Well, I found out right away that it would only fire single shot, and complained. It was sent to the Ordnance, repaired, came back and still wouldn't work. Back to the Ordnance, again and again. Everything was replaced, I believe, but the receiver with the serial number, when we finally shipped out for the Philippines.

Shortly after arriving on Leyte, we made a patrol out through the hills, and marvelled at the open country having spent nearly three years in the jungles of the South Pacific. As the line wound along a trail overlooking a grassy slope stretching down several hundred yards, I said to the lieutenant leading the patrol that I would like to test fire my BAR. He halted us and gave a rest while I looked for a suitable target. Several others asked to test their rifles, too, and were given permission. The most prominent feature in the grassy landscape was a huge rock some 150 yards down the slope. This became the common target.

Single shots were no problem, but throwing over the change lever, I squeezed off a burst, "bup, bup, bup..." and that was it, another jam. Disgusted I ejected the clip while the lieutenant hollered, "Cease fire, cease fire."

As we stood there clearing our pieces suddenly someone cried out, "Look." And as we did there was the blur of a disappearing Jap bolting off through the brush at the edge of the field. He had evidently been caught in the open when our patrol appeared and had hidden in the only spot available, behind the rock.

What thoughts must have gone through his mind while that concentration of fire opened up on his hiding place? How sure he must have been that he'd been seen, and being pinned down for the final blow.

The BAR went back to Ordnance and never returned to me. I carried an M-1 for the rest of the war and it worked fine.

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Reunions and the "Big 50"

Lt. Col. Bill Masciangelo
USMC (Retired)

Military reunions are on the rise! The number of units and oganizations holding reunions are increasing each year. A recent review of military and veteran's publications listed more than 3,000 reunions that are being planned or considered for 1989 alone.

For the reunion planner, this is a mighty task. Local laws, unions; alcohol liability, contracts, cancellation clauses, food and beverage guarantees, and registration procedures can sometimes make or break a reunion. Time, money and effort go into reunion planning, and it is only good business to follow sound practices and successful methods.

There are four categories of military reunions.

First is the large military association or veteran group that holds major conventions each year, which are attended by several thousand members. These are major events normally planned and executed by a professional (paid) staff.

Second is the medium-sized reunion or convention, where attendance is usually around 1,000. These events are the responsibility of local chapter volunteers who plan and execute the program. The success of such reunions varies from year to year, depending on the organizational ability and expertise of the local committee.

Third is the small reunion, attended by anywhere from 25 to 300 members. The majority of all reunions are considered small reunions. These events are usually planned by one or two members and are held in, or near, the hometown of the reunion planner.

Many of you may be thinking about organizing a reunion or wishing someone else would. Maybe this article will help get you started.

When planning a reunion, certain issues must be addressed, such as the who, what, when, where, and why. These include...

Hotel and City Selection:
Inspection, evaluation and negotiation.

Logistics and Administration:
Registration, banking, audiovisual, media coverage, suppliers, security, safety, transportation, printing, awards, postage, decorations, signs, tipping, etc.

Food, Beverage and Entertainment:
Menu, entertainment, VIPs, seating, liquor laws, coffee service, room arrangement, tours, trips, tournaments, and theme ideas.

Planning a reunion may take on the dimension of planning an amphibious operation. Let's begin this series by looking at the characteristics of the typical military/veterans reunion group.

Bill Mascangelo

Characteristics:

Attendees pay their own way. Less than 300 members attend. The average reunion lasts 3½ days. Spouses attend. Sightseeing and recreation are very important. Military guests attend. Flag rank officers are asked to speak. There is a memorial service. A banquet (and dinner dance) is held the last evening. There is usually a hospitality suite. Special menus are arranged by the hotel. Low budget is the main concern. Photos are taken. A one-or two-person committee organizes and runs the reunion. There may be special diet and handicap considerations. Reunions are held mostly in the summer months.

For extra assistance in planning a reunion, there are several resources available. The hotel staff, once the hotel is selected, can provide the most guidance and assistance. Independent meeting planners can save you money and help prevent mistakes, but you will pay for their services.

The convention center and visitors bureau in the host city are good sources for assistance and information about the city. Contact them in advance. The local military base commander, if one is nearby, can also provide assistance. This might include the local Reserve unit recruiting station.

Finally, and perhaps most important, read professional publications about meeting planning. A good book is "Professional meeting Management," published by the Professional Convention Management Association in 1985. It may be purchased from the Professional Convention Management Association, 100 Vestavia Office Park, Suite 220, Birmingham, AL 35216, for $49.95 plus $3 postage and handling.

Why would you want to have a professionally run event? Because a reunion should be economical and a good value for the dollar. A well-organized event will attract the members you want to attend.

Don't forget, many people attend a reunion during their one and only vacation, or they are living on a fixed retirement income and will not be attracted to an event that is too costly and/or poorly organized. You may get them the first time, but not the second. Also, a well-conceived and professionally run event will earn you the support and interest of the local base and military personnel.

While waiting for next month's article, you might want to begin looking for your retired friends. All the military services provide this assistance, while complying with the Privacy Act.

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He was betting a half million on it

Van Watts
USS Enterprise

On December 15, 1943, in the Naval officers club, Navy Supply Depot, Gamadodo, Milne Bay, New Guinea, I would be welcomed at the age of 23 into the Navy Supply Corps with many a toast "to the youngest warrant officer" in it.

Thus began a many-faceted career, involving on active duty and the retired list, 52 of the Corps' 200 fabulous years.

While still a chief petty officer, I had been handling funds and otherwise performing the usual duties of an assistant disbursing officer, duties into which — in the rich annals of the Navy Supply Corps — I had been uniquely initiated.

Earlier that year I was Australia for the first time. On August 27, the **USS ROCHANBEAU**, aboard which a day earlier I had observed my 23rd thday, would disembark at Brisbane the first eschelon of my Naval advance base outfit, **CUB SEVEN**.

Within hours it would re-embark on orders of MacArthur. Returning abruptly from an inspection of Australia's northern defenses to discover something had gone wrong with his instructions for staging CUB SEVEN's first eschelon, the General had redirected it further up the Queensland coast.

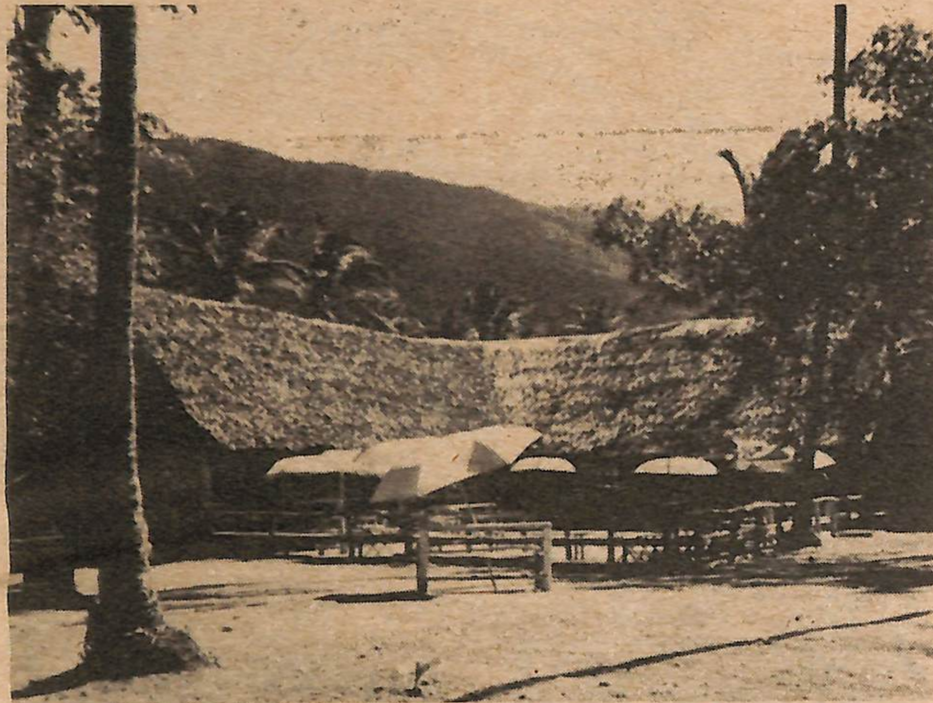
For six weeks, the first eschelon would be encamped at MacKay (pronounced to rhyme with "by"). Then, on October 7, it would be boated out to the U.S. Army Transport, **SEA WITCH**, for the last leg of its trip to the New Guinea battlefront.

All would be boated out, that its, except "**THE LAST YANK**" in MacKay".

Someday soon I would be boating and jeeping around Milne Bay, paying the 31 Naval activities which would mushroom around its 60-mile perimeter. But now, it had developed — and rather suddenly it seemed — that there was no means of getting the **CUB SEVEN's** heavy safe — and payroll — aboard.

MacKay's shallow port could not accommodate at its small pier vessels with the size and draft of the **ROCHAMBEAU** and **SEA WITCH**. And because no crane was available at the pier itself, a problem arose. On disembarkation, a small escort vessel with a crane equal to the task had happened to be in port. But this vessel had sailed — the only means of re-embarking **CUB SEVEN's** safe sailing with it.

It was decided to put the safe — and "**THE LAST YANK**" — on the train for Townsville up the coast. For aboard the **SEA WITCH**, which also had transported from San Francisco the first eschelon's heavy equipment, the **CUB's** second and third eschelons had arrived in the South Pacific. Members of these eschelons, after a month enroute without pay or leave, had been promised a day ashore.



Navy Supply Depot, Gamadodo, Milne Bay, New Guinea.

In Townsville, the safe and its custodian would be put aboard. The safe — and "**THE LAST YANK**" — would be hoisted aboard in a cargo net to the cheers and handclapping of thousands of unpaid sailors. A memorable moment — this tumultuous welcome aboard the **SEA WITCH**.

Back in MacKay, **CUB SEVEN's** first eschelon had been camped at the base of a rocky hill into whose opposite flank had been quarried an immense black hole.

Not a place one would easily forget, the campsite would be vividly and sentimentally remembered. It was both the place from which "**THE LAST YANK's**" recommendation for promotion to warrant officer had been sent to Washington, and the place from which a safe that would figure uniquely in his initiation as an assistant paymaster had been trucked into town.

There, in pre-dawn hours the **SEA WITCH** was to sail. An old Welshman had handcranked a rusty rope windlass with which the safe was laboriously hoisted from the truck and lowered onto steel rollers in a railroad box car.

Assisting were six first eschelon men who, at daybreak, would return the camp's utility truck to its Aussie owner. Then they would catch the last boat out to the anchored **SEA WITCH**. Already preparing to get underway, the transport would sail, leaving "**THE LAST YANK**" alone on a foreign beach with a 45, and a half-million dollars.

CUB SEVEN had come to the South Pacific not to care for its own needs only — many small outfits would be arriving in that part of the world without paymasters. "Take all the loot you can carry," was the order which had come down from the Chief of the Supply Corps.

As for the "**THE LAST YANK**" — he felt neither alone nor lonely. But what boy of 12, writing an essay on "**THE WOOL INDUSTRY IN AUSTRALIA**" could have imagined that, one day, he would be escorting a safe and a half million dollars through Australia's sheep country.

There was no reason to suppose that the safe's presence in the box car would become known to any ashore other than a few railroad hands.

The train, it turned out, would be only a locomotive pulling a coal car, the box car with the safe and, lastly, three cars loaded with freight. For company "**THE LAST YANK**" would have an engineer and a fireman.

For 17 hours and 250 miles — paralleling her course along the coast and approximating the pace of the **SEA WITCH** which, with a five hour head start, zigzagged northward through submarine-infested waters — "**THE LAST YANK**" would rumble slowly through the sheep country.

Stops would be made to drop freight at sheep ranches, or stations as they were called. In all 250 miles to Townsville, not one hamlet graced the countryside. Only once, near dusk, would a stop be made for a meal — a robust dinner of potatoes, boiled cabbage, and turnips.

On a great table in the station house's dining room and in full view of the kitchen area where it had been prepared in large shiny kettles, the meal would be served by a stout Cornish cook and her male helper to a dozen railroaders and sheepherders and the train's only passenger.

Introduced to all by the engineer, "**THE LAST YANK**" felt neither alone nor lonely. Oh yes, some Yanks ate mutton — but not "**THE LAST YANK**".

He could afford to be snooty. In the sealed box car, which never had been out of sight from his perch atop the locomotive and which even now could be seen through a window, he had ample provisions for the long night ahead.

But all would seem to have been worthwhile when, after a virtually sleepless night curled up next to a half million dollars, his journey ended with a standing ovation.

But again — back to MacKay —

The nearest thing to a USO had been the Australian Red Cross Canteen. It was there that "**THE LAST YANK**" left MacKay — he would board that box car with a box lunch prepared by a distant Australian cousin. A cousin — like a grinning Aussie watching the train depart — would never know he had been entrusted with a half million dollars.

As the train slowly pulled out, "**THE LAST YANK**", seated on the edge of the box car with his legs dangling from its doorway, playfully pretended to catch her kisses in his hat.

Laughed the Aussie, "We can't win a war like that."

"Just maybe we can." — "**THE LAST YANK**" shouted back — "I'll bet a half million on it."

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Close call

FROM PAGE 3

weeks was a forerunner of things to come for Americans who would be captured by the Japanese on Corregidor and Bataan in the spring of 1942.

Shortly after being loaded aboard a ship for transfer to a POW camp, Ed was given a horrible beating.

He recalls: **"The first blow was to the small of my back and my muscles twitched and I doubled over. Then they struck me on the face and arms with a rifle. I was rolling around on the deck, trying to avoid the blows, and I rolled through an opening in the deck of the ship and fell into the hold."**

There Ed lay for several days, barely able to move.

"About the 10th day out," he continues, "we were in the Yokohama Harbor and a Japanese officer came down and started picking out prisoners. I took another beating. The fellow next to me was among five men taken aside and beheaded on deck."

Ed was imprisoned near Shanghai, China. The men lived in horse stables which had been converted into a makeshift barracks. Their diet rarely varied from rice, watery soup, and a few vegetables.

They were beaten and abused on a regular basis.

Ed weighed over 200 pounds when he was captured. He was down to 85 pounds in August 1945 when he was finally released after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki forced Japan to surrender. He was blind in one eye and beset with malaria and internal parasites when he finally came home.

Fortunately, Ed's father was a physician who gave him excellent treatment, and gradually was able to restore his eyesight. Another physician was found in Duluth, Minnesota, who specialized in oriental diseases. He was able to clear up the parasites.

But the best medicine of all for Ed was his mother's home cooked meals.

There is a touching footnote to Ed Pearsall's gripping story. In June 1988, he and 169 other survivors, relatives, and friends returned to Wake Island to dedicate a monument in honor of the civilians. A memorial to the Marines was put up shortly after the war.

For Ed the most emotional moment of the trip came during the dedication ceremony. Suddenly it began to rain just as it had done 47 years ago.

When the television crew began to cover their cameras, Ed's mind flashed back to that time when he stood as a young Marine preparing to meet his ultimate fate. He had to walk away for a few minutes until he could regain control of himself.

At Wake Island, "Semper Fi," ("Always Faithful") applied equally to every defender. There were no distinctions.

Ed had many memories which flooded his thoughts as he wandered around Wake Island last June.

Pearsall searches for the company safe which he was ordered to bury on December 8, 1941. The safe, which contained $60,000, was not found. "Big Moe" Currey (left) and Pearsall place a wreath in Hawaii's Punch Bowl Cemetery in memory of their fallen comrades.

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Marlene Dietrich was more than just another pretty pin-up during World War II. A native of Germany, she had come to America in 1930 virtually unknown as an actress.

But success did not wait very long in the shadows. Within weeks of her arrival, her veiled glance, alluring body, and enticing legs had capitaved America's movie-going public. She had become part of the theatrical nobility.

The war did not cause Marlene any consternation as to her personal loyalties. "All my love always" was a typical thought from her heart as she signed thousands of autographs for thousands of young Americans on far flung battlefronts.

In 1943 she began to travel abroad to entertain troops near the European battle fronts. At age 42 she carried with her a maternal instinct to be near the young soldiers experiencing the horrors of war. The wounded and paralyzed in military hospitals got her special attention.

As one writer noted: "Dietrich was essentially a woman who mustered the troops. She was irresistible, and almost everybody adored her, except those who were jealous, or blind."

This assessment was borne out in June 1944 when she took a 10 week tour of North Africa and Italy with USO Camp Shows. Many soldiers remembered her as a person of great encouragement to everyone.

In Belgium Marlene held a contest to determine which soldiers had the best looking legs. Later in the show she showed off her famous gams to the resounding cheers of the huge crowd of troops.

On December 17 she showed up at the rest center for the 394th Infantry at Honsfeld, Belgium, then under heavy attack by German forces. It was necessary to hurriedly send her back behind the rapidly crumbling lines, which felt the first blows of the "Battle of the Bulge."

In February 1945 Marlene ignored her own comfort to be with the U.S. Ninth Army near the front lines. She insisted on the ordinary soldiers diet and clothes and was a source of great pride and comfort to the troops.

Marlene Dietrich, dream girl to her "boys."