

jected a no-nonsense image in the eyes of admiring Grenadans. In several cases these were women MPs, handling supplies, rations and ammunition along with their male comrades-in-arms. At Carriacou, I studied 1stLt Ranay Blanford, 118th MP Company, Airborne, as she directed the swapping off of a new jeep for a disabled one. With confident efficiency she provided the newly arrived CPF members with adequate transportation to patrol the northernmost Grenadan Island. Lt Blanford then had a very lively discussion with a Carriacou native who was obviously haggling with her, trying to achieve some sort of administrative advantage over her. He had no luck. One of the MPs in her company volunteered an opinion about how Lt Blanford operated: "She's as hard as woodpecker lips"

Since a fresh supply of jet engine fuel hadn't been delivered at the heliport earlier that day, our pilot refueled at Pearls airport several times during the course of our long flying day. Several aspects of my pre-briefing on Pearls Airport immediately took on life as we approached it from the north. The commanding terrain feature was a single hill located a couple of hundred meters to the north of the runway's midpoint. On its bald peak a hastily prepared anti-aircraft position was hacked into the rich earth. Barren now, it was easy to picture a Soviet quad .50 caliber machine gun, propped up with cinder blocks, firing orange tracer rounds towards the Marines LZ located halfway between Pearls Airport and Telescope Point. Marine Cobras won that one, with 20mm Gatling gun and 2.75 inch high explosive rockets.

Two captured aircraft sat at the east end of the Pearls Airport apron near the operations terminal. Reportedly, both were used to train subversive parachutists. One aircraft, a twin turboprop Antonov AN-26 had Cuban markings. The other, an AN-27, a powerful single engine utility bi-plane was covered with the markings of Soviet Russia. After we landed to refuel, I looked over both aircraft closely. The AN-2, called a "Colt" had jump seats along the inside of the fuselage, enough to take sixteen parachutists aloft.

Atop the operations building

alongside the tower enclosure, I saw a pile of trash stacked on the roof. Sticking out of a pile of rubble, a yellow sign, upside down, had the letters MCAS showing. I remembered a photograph taken of the front of the operations building with an incongruously hung sign over the entranceway. Prepared, perhaps aboard ship by the Marines, it read, "MCAS Douglas" named after SgtMaj Frederick B. Douglass, USMC who lost his life in Lebanon. After hastily unstrapping from the Blackhawk, I climbed the Pearls Airport tower and requested permission of the tower operators to go out on the roof to retrieve the sign. They were only too happy to oblige. The Blackhawk pilots looked incredulous as I approached hugging my seven foot long sign. I threatened to unleash a half dozen "Danang" dogs to eat the tires off their helicopter if they wouldn't take the sign back to base with us. We flew at least three or four more hours up north that afternoon with the sign lashed to a crew seat, sticking out into the airstream on both sides of the Blackhawk.

Sunday morning bloomed bright and sunny. Puffy cumulus clouds grew larger and larger throughout the day. Having

strapped on my borrowed Makarov and loaded up my camera gear, I took off in a jeep with SFC Manuel Jimenez, USA. We drove all over the southwestern quadrant of Grenada examining many points of interest in detail. There seemed to be more goats of every size, shape and description, than there were people.

We walked through the Frequent truck, equipment and storage compound. It took little imagination to see scores of Soviet trucks ominously rolling around the countryside, especially in the area of nearby Salines Airport. On the other hand, I could picture eager Grenadan hands putting the heavy haulers back into commission to finish the airport and work hard in support of the Grenadan economy.

The Cuban workers barracks, just north of the Salines terminal area were functional, austere and plain. In many ways, the setting reminded me of a very special two weeks that I shared with the Army Special Forces Escape and Evasion School at Fort Bragg's Camp Mackall, twenty-five years ago. In one single-story barracks were several rooms with a small, plain sign over the entrance to each room. The signs read "personnel"

*Moving to rescue medical students from the Grand Anse campus, Army Rangers assault the beach from Marine helicopters with Navy and Air Force aircraft support.*



“education” “finance” and other innocuous, functionary titles. The rooms were small, private, and devoid of any furniture or trappings. In the room marked “education” I found a well used communist textbook, underlined in many places, explaining a perverted account of life in America, with heavy emphasis on distorted social ills.

Just north of the eastern end of the airport near Calliste, we examined the main Cuban enclave, a large installation consisting of barracks, support buildings, motor pool, drill pad, communications area and a well secured headquarters compound. Fighting had occurred in the area as attested to by damage caused by heavy weapons. By now, I was familiar with the tracks left by AC-130 gunships where they splattered machine gun and cannon fire all over the roofs and walls of permanent buildings. The pockmarked walls and holed ceilings attested to the horrendous rain of fire laid down during the Rangers’ jump into Salines on D-Day. Within a score of meters from the barracks site, in a marshy area, were several shallow graves, dug and unearthed within a week’s time last October. The sobering reality of that area, hidden in scrub trees, left me with an indelible impression.

At the eastern end of the Salines runway was the small, amphitheater shaped, True Blue Campus of St. George’s

Medical College. The small student buildings, mostly single story and motel-like, encircled a basketball court. Without question, the campus would necessarily have to be closed, once the Salines airport was completed. During the fighting on D-Day, the basketball backboards were taken down and the court used as a medevac area. Reportedly, some of the medical students treated the wounded.

Manuel and I jeeped eastward through the lush picturesque countryside, enroute to Calivigny. All along the way, Grenadans smiled and waved with a typical Caribbean easiness. Since it was Sunday morning, many families were strolling to church in their finest clothes. We stopped near some crossroads at Woburn, where we saw several walls and fences painted with mottoes from the 1979 Marxist revolution. The Grenadans were eager to discuss life before and after the invasion. They spoke in flawless, rapid English with an unmistakable British accent. They told of heavy handed oppression by Cubans and thugs of the Peoples Revolutionary Army (PRA), the Grenadan militia. Political turmoil had erupted during bloody October before the Eastern Caribbean States and the United States came ashore to quickly restore an uneasy tranquility to the island of Grenada. Most of the PRA disposed of their weapons and uniforms

and melted back into the population. Reportedly, several hundred Cubans retreated far into the triple-canopy mountainous areas inland where they still live a precarious existence dodging the constant patrols of the Caribbean Peace Force.

A short time later, we wound our way down a single access road on the Calivigny peninsula to a plateau-like area called Egmont. Here was the site of a fully operational secret terrorist/subversive training camp. Having recognized the area from previously supplied photographs, I was awestruck by the scene before me. Devastation was total. Debris of every sort littered the entire plateau. Not a structure remained. Numerous bombs had gouged deep craters in the ground. Grotesque, rusty skeletons of trucks reposed where the truck and equipment compound once stood. What appeared to be rusty snakes all over the landscape turned out to be rifle and cannon barrels, twisted and blasted almost beyond recognition. I picked up the tortured rifle barrel from a Russian AK-47 which lay near several shattered rotor blades from downed Army Blackhawk helicopters. About this time my old military senses reminded me that this was not a healthy place to be traipsing around. Undoubtedly there were live munitions still lying around. Manuel and I shortstopped our Calivigny tour at this point and retreated back along the lonely access road. I hadn’t noticed it on the way to Egmont, but nestled in a valley-like area formed by Petit-Calivigny Point and Egmont, was a full fledged primitive firing range. Two tiers of firing points were evident and a range tower as well. Obviously, the lower tier was used for small arms marksmanship while the upper tier provided firing points for crew-served weapons. This was no small-time operation.

Swinging back in a northwest direction we approached Richmond Hill from the opposite end of the ridge facing St. George’s. As we neared the base of the ridge which was straddled by Forts Frederick and Matthew and the Cuban headquarters I viewed the only instance of damage done to the local civilian sector on Grenada. Having studied the entire island and its environs for eight and

*An Army “Medevac” UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter offloads wounded on board USS Guam in cooperation with an Air Force medical team and Marine flight deck crew.*



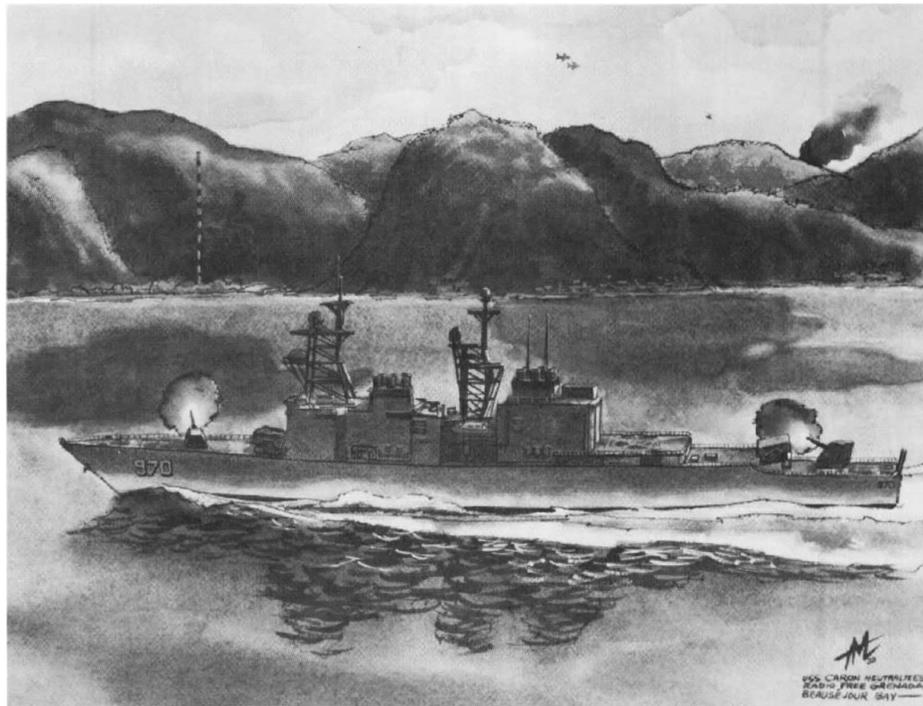
a half hours from a low flying Blackhawk, and spent a whole day combing the countryside where most of the action took place, I could only marvel that there was but a single incident of damage to other than a military target. Substantial damage was evident on a home at the base of the ridge supporting the old forts. Based on my experience in Vietnam, it looked like a rocket, launched from an aircraft at one of the forts, must have missed its mark and overflowed the ridge, impacting into a randomly situated house.

Cleanup of combat debris around Richmond Hill was proceeding at a remarkable pace. After jeeping to the former Cuban headquarters we hiked the rest of the way up to the pinnacle of Fort Frederick. There was still plenty of evidence of fighting. The fort's defenders used equipment covers and back packs filled with sand to reinforce their positions. When I tried to salvage a backpack the moisture and exposure to the elements caused it to crumble in my hands. I found a Grenada militiaman's jacket and amid several munitions boxes marked "Made in Havana, Cuba."

We wound our way back down Richmond Hill, headed for the Queen's Racecourse, alias "LZ Racecourse." We stopped at a major road intersection with expressions of appreciation painted on walls ostentatiously in large, colorful letters, thanking the Americans and the Caribbean Peace Force for rescuing Grenada.

At Grand Mal Beach, farther north, the telltale ruts in the beach, and the digging clawmarks leading up to the roadway attested to the Marine force of tanks and amphibian tractors which came ashore during the afternoon of D-Day. Many Grenadans along the beach expressed their deep feelings of gratitude for the continuing American presence which had ushered in warm feelings of stability over the island.

Downtown St. George's was extremely quiet with little activity on a lazy Sunday afternoon. Manuel told me that St. George's shuts down about noon on Saturday and doesn't come to life until Monday morning. The harbor area was as picturesque as any Caribbean port that I've visited.



*USS Caron (DD-970) silences "Radio Free Grenada."*

Alongside a pier, in the harbor, was the Coast Guard Cutter, *Cape Shoalwater*, her crew performing several dockside chores and relaxing. The Grenadans seemed to warm to the presence of the quiet, white cutters cruising watchfully around the island, displaying their jaunty American flags.

Just before heading back to the Army compound at the Grenada Beach Hotel at Grand Anse Beach, we stopped at the new netball stadium located at the lowest point in the St. George's area. Strolling out toward the center of a clear area to the rear of the stands, out in the grass, I reflected on the plight of Marine Captains Timothy B. Howard and Jeb F. Seagle and their ill-fated landing here with their Cobra during the afternoon of D-Day. An odd-shaped patch of bare earth marked the last position of the helicopter. Looking eastward, back up toward Fort Frederick, just over the Richmond Hill prison ridge, I could only marvel at the superhuman effort and expert airmanship Capt Howard displayed in setting his Cobra down in one piece. I kicked a few pebbles into the tall grass, forty meters or so from the impact point, grass which had provided concealment of sorts for Capt Howard until he was finally medevaced out to safety.

Later that evening, my final night in Grenada, my Army hosts treated me as

though I were an "old Corps" Army Airborne trooper. Adorning me with a red beret, a half dozen of my new-found friends, (pilots, mechanics, and MPs) invaded my quarters to look over my sketches, paintings and reference material. They gratuitously provided me with the "true" Airborne version of all events connected with the Grenada operation, humorously indicating that it was all a one sided affair—totally an Army Airborne operation. Then they began to pick on my seven-foot sign with its impudent red-and-gold inscription. I didn't realize it at the time, but several of the men in my quarters would accompany me on my return flight to the United States during the following two days.

A dozen of the pilots and troopers formed an unofficial honor guard for the "MCAS Douglas" sign from the time we departed Salines in an Air Force C-141B, spent an overnight at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, then returned to Pope AFB, North Carolina. The men protected that sign in transit with a determination and dedication that I'd only have expected from a squad of Marines. This was only one small example of the true inter-service cooperation of all the American forces involved in the Grenada operation.

# In Memoriam

GEN GERALD CARTHRAE THOMAS, USMC (RET), died at the age of 89 at his home in Washington on 7 April, after a long illness.

Gen Thomas was a lifelong student of military history and was deeply appreciative of its relevance to present and future operations and planning. Of his own experience of the Marine Corps' first combat in two world wars he would say: "Certain battles have a special quality. Belleau Wood and Guadalcanal were such battles."

A veteran of World Wars I and II and the Korean War, Gen Thomas was born on 29 October 1894 in Slater, Missouri, the son of Vander Wyatt Thomas and his wife, Virginia Young Thomas, whose families farmed Albemarle County, Virginia, for many years. He was a collateral descendant of Civil War MajGen George Henry Thomas, USA, who, although a Virginian, remained loyal to the Union and came to be called "The Rock of Chickamauga."

The Thomas family moved to Bloomington, Illinois when Gerald was 12 and he grew up there. He was a chemistry major at Illinois Wesleyan University when, on 15 May 1917, with two other classmates, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. The following August, after recruit training at Parris Island, he joined the 75th Company, 2d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, with which he went overseas. Of his rugged training in France before entering combat, Gen Thomas recalled that it made "the outfit so damned mean, that it would have fought its own grandmothers."

In France, Gen Thomas was promoted to sergeant and put in charge of the battalion's scouts and observers. He fought at Verdun, at Belleau Wood, Soissons and St. Mihiel, in the Champagne-Blanc Mont offensive, and in the Meuse-Argonne. For his gallantry in action during this fighting, he was awarded a Silver Star Medal, and was also given a Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action. 2dLt Thomas was commissioned in the field on 20 September 1918, and participated in the occupation of Germany after the armistice. Upon his

return to the United States, 1stLt Thomas was assigned to duty with the 1st Marine Brigade in Haiti. In January 1920, while in Haiti, he became severely ill with blackwater fever. He returned to the United States on sick leave and in November 1921, he was assigned to a special Marine guard company formed to provide security to the Washington Disarmament Conference. He was married in 1924 to Miss Lottie C. Johnson.

Between the wars, Gen Thomas' sharpened his professional proficiency at

Army and Marine Corps schools. He also served on sea and foreign duty, commanding the Marine detachment in USS *Tulsa*, and returned to Haiti for a second tour. In July 1935, Capt Thomas joined the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, Peiping, for a two-year period where he first met then-LtCol Alexander A. Vandegrift, with whom he was to be very closely associated during World War II and after.

One of the most interesting periods in Gen Thomas' career occurred during six

*This portrait of Gen Gerald C. Thomas, USMC (Ret), was painted in 1976 by former Marine Peter Egeli, whose father, Bjorn Egeli, painted portraits of five Marine Commandants. The painting, commissioned by Army and Navy Club friends of the general, hangs in the Center's library while the club building undergoes renovation.*





*On 11 August 1942, leaders of the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal paused for this photograph. Then-LtCol Thomas is second from right in the front row, flanked by future commandants MajGen Alexander A. Vandegrift and Col Clifton B. Cates.*

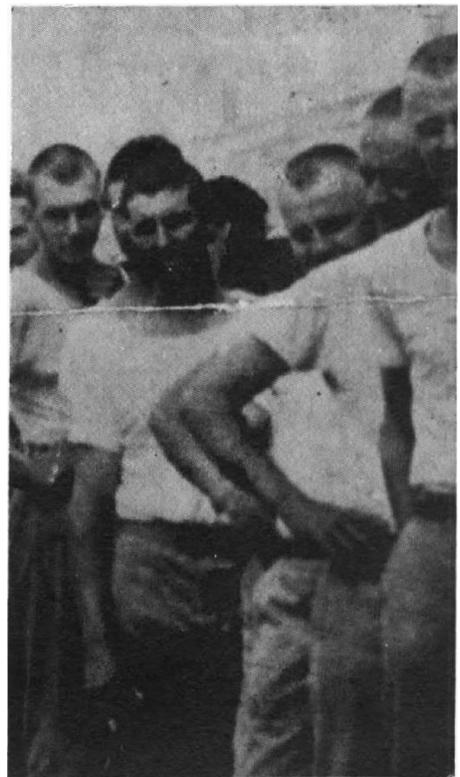
weeks of 1941, when, as a major, he accompanied Marine Reserve Capt James Roosevelt on a special mission ordered by the latter's father, President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This assignment took the two officers across the Pacific by Pan American's *China Clipper* flying boat with stop-offs at Pearl Harbor, Midway and Wake Islands, Guam, Manila, Hong Kong, Chungking, Kunming, Lashio, Calcutta, Karachi, and on to Cairo. From Cairo, the two flew to Crete, then under German attack, to deliver the President's letter to King George of Greece. After his return to Washington, newly promoted LtCol Thomas was assigned as assistant operations officer of the 1st Marine Division in Quantico, and left for the Pacific with the division in May 1942. He soon became the division operations officer and resumed his professional relationship with then-MajGen Vandegrift, who commanded the division. As D-3, LtCol Thomas played a very large part in the planning for and conduct of the Guadalcanal landing on 7 August 1942. Promoted to colonel, he became chief of staff in September and remained with the division throughout the Guadalcanal operation. In July 1943, when Gen Vandegrift took command of I Marine Amphibious Corps, Col Thomas accompanied him as corps chief

of staff. Before he left the Pacific to take up duties as Director of Division of Plans and Policies at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, Col Thomas was offered a job as chief of staff of an Army corps, an offer which he declined to remain with his Marine Corps.

During the remainder of the war, Gen Thomas worked very closely with Gen Vandegrift, now Commandant, in ensuring that the six Marine divisions and four Marine aircraft wings in the Pacific were fully supported in men, materiel and training. After war's end, when the continued existence of the Marine Corps was being threatened in the unification debate leading up to the National Defense Act of 1947, Gen Thomas played a pivotal role in the fight to save the Corps.

In July 1947, he was assigned as commander of Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific, with headquarters in Tsingtao, North China. As such he oversaw the withdrawal of Marines in February 1949, when the Chinese Communist Forces were victorious over the Chinese Nationalists. Between 1949 and 1951, Gen Thomas served as president of the Marine Corps Equipment Board at

*As a recruit, Pvt Thomas queued up at Parris Island in 1917. Training at Quantico, combat in France, and a field commission would follow in rapid sequence.*



Quantico, and later as commanding general of the Marine Corps Landing Force Development Center there. In April 1951, he took command of the 1st Marine Division during some very difficult fighting in Central Korea. He was promoted to lieutenant general to become Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for the period 1952-1954. Later he became Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools in Quantico, where he remained until December 1955. When he retired he was promoted to general for having been specially commended in conflict.

Throughout his career, Gen Thomas was interested in and involved with Marine Corps training and while at Quantico during his last command, he very often audited the courses that were being given, and was well known for his lecture on the World War I Gallipoli landing. He was called from retirement to active duty as a general in April 1956 by President Eisenhower, who appointed him Director of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee of the National Security Council, a post he held until his final service retirement in December 1958.

Later, Gen Thomas became involved with real estate investment and was one of the founders and directors of the Washington Real Estate Investment Trust, remaining a board member until

his resignation in 1982. He was a member of the Army & Navy Club, serving two terms as its president, and was a member of its Golden Circle, limited to those who had been members of the club for 50 years or more. Also a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity, together with John Wayne, he was awarded the fraternity's "Significant Sigma" award. He was also a founding member, life member, past president, and honorary president of the 1st Marine Division Association, in which he had a continuing interest over the years. In February 1954, he was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by Illinois Wesleyan. Gen Thomas was also a long-time member of St. John's (Episcopal) Church, Lafayette Square in Washington.

In addition to his World War I awards, he was also received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Army and Navy's Distinguished Service Medals, and was a Commander of the Netherlands Order of Orange Nassau with Crossed Swords.

In 1956, Gen Thomas was co-author, with Col Robert D. Heintz, Jr., and RAdm Arthur A. Ageton, of *The Marine Officer's Guide*.

Gen Thomas is survived by his widow, Mrs. Lottie Capers Thomas, two daughters, Mrs. Joseph A. Bruder of Alexandria and Mrs. Jay Richards An-



*LtGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, CG FMFPac, visited MajGen Thomas, commanding the 1st Marine Division in Korea in 1951. Both generals sport Haitian "coco-macaque" walking sticks.*

drews of Washington; two sons, Col Gerald C. Thomas, Jr., USMC (Ret.) of Taipei, Taiwan, and W. H. Johnson Thomas of Washington, as well as 11 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. He was buried with full military honors on 11 April at Arlington National Cemetery near Gen Vandegrift's grave.

MAJGEN WILLIAM L. MCKITTRICK, USMC (RET), veteran Marine aviator, died in Pensacola at the age of 87 on 27 March. A native of Pelzer, South Carolina, he graduated from The Citadel

#### *MajGen McKittrick*



and enlisted in the Marine Corps in March 1918, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in December. For his first three and one-half years of service, Lt McKittrick was a line officer posted to Quantico and the Dominican Republic. He applied for aviation training and received his wings in 1923. Lt McKittrick was first detailed to flying duty at Quantico and then to Haiti. For the rest of the 1920s, his assignment varied between stateside stations and Nicaragua. Prior to U.S. entry into World War II, he was detailed to Cairo to observe British air operations against the Axis in the desert. In February 1942, LtCol McKittrick took command of Marine Aircraft Group 24 and brought it overseas to join the 4th Marine Air Base Defense Aircraft Wing at Ewa, Hawaii. In March 1943, the group joined the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Bougainville, where Col McKit-

trick assumed additional duties as Commander, Air Operations, Northern Solomons. He later became 1st Marine Aircraft Wing chief of staff. In the late months of the war, Col McKittrick was Air Defense Commander at Saipan, and then returned to Headquarters, Marine Corps for duty as Assistant Director of Aviation. He was promoted to brigadier general in January 1945, and two years later was ordered to Guam to command the 1st Wing. He became chief of staff and Inspector General of the Department of Pacific in San Francisco in July 1949, and in the following year, was ordered to Cherry Point, where he commanded the air station. His assignment before retirement in October 1951 was as Commanding General, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing. Gen McKittrick was buried at the Barrancas National Cemetery in Pensacola, Florida on 30 March.

BGEN WALTER H. STEPHENS, USMC (RET), died at the age of 66 in Dallas, Texas on 23 March. He was born in Macon, Georgia on 27 May 1917, and graduated from Mercer University in 1937, when he was appointed a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve. Following Reserve Officers Course, Lt Stephens was assigned to the 1st Marine Brigade at Guantanamo, Cuba. He commanded Company B, 1st Pioneer Battalion in the Guadalcanal operation, and then became executive officer of the 2d Engineer Battalion, 17th Marines. During the Okinawa campaign, LtCol Stephens commanded the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines. Upon his return to the United States from China, LtCol Stephens was assigned as executive officer of the Southern Recruiting Division in Dallas. In 1949, he reported to Little Creek, where he was first Director of Basic Training for the Marine Amphibious Section, and then officer in charge of the Basic Amphibious Section. Col Stephens then attended the Armed Forces Staff College, from where he was transferred to the staff of the Allied Forces Command, North Europe. In 1958, he assumed command of the 8th Marine Corps Reserve and Recruitment District in New Orleans, remaining here until his retirement in September 1959, when he was promoted to brigadier general for having been specially commended in combat. Gen Stephens was buried on 24 March at Hillcrest Cemetery in Dallas.

*BGen Stephens*



*Col Decker*

COL DONALD J. DECKER, USMC (RET), a charter member of the Marine Corps Historical Foundation, died 25 November at National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, where he had been hospitalized. Col Decker was born in Baldwinsville, New York, in September 1908. He was a 1932 graduate of Cornell University and was commissioned in 1935. At the outbreak of World War II, he was serving with the 3d Defense Battalion on Midway Island. During the war, Col Decker served on the staff of Adm Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific. His postwar assignments included command of the 4th Marines, tours on joint staffs in the Pentagon, on the U.S. staff at the Baghdad Pact conference, and on the staff of the National War College. He was a graduate of both the Naval and National War Colleges. Following his retirement in 1964, Col Decker obtained master's and doctor's degrees in international relations at American University. He worked for Hughes Aircraft, and at the time of his death, was a research director at B-K Dynamics in Rockville, Maryland. Col Decker was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on 30 November.

SGTMAJ SIR JACOB C. VOUZA, BRITISH SOLOMON ISLAND PROTECTORATE ARMED CONSTABULARY, (RET), KBE GM, died on 15 March 1984, at the age of 87,

at his home village of California on North Guadalcanal. A retired police officer of the Constabulary when World War II broke out, he was one of the first natives of Guadalcanal to offer his services to the 1st Marine Division after it landed on the island. He first visited Marine Corps lines to guide in a downed pilot from the USS *Wasp*. He then volunteered to scout behind Japanese lines for the Marines. It was on one of these scouting forays that the Japanese captured him, tied him to a palm tree, and tried to get information from him. Vouza refused and, after being severely bayoneted in the arm, neck, shoulder, face, and stomach, he was left to die. He managed to free himself after his captors departed, and made his way to U.S. lines, where he gave valuable information of the enemy before allowing himself to be treated. For gallant conduct and exceptional devotion to duty, he was awarded the George Medal, the second highest British gallantry award for civilians. He was also decorated with the U.S. Silver Star and later with the Legion of Merit. He visited the United States in 1968. In 1979, SgtMaj Vouza was knighted. He was buried with military honors on 17 March 1984 at California Village.

*SgtMaj Vouza*



# World War II Chronology

## *March-May 1944*

### Marshall Islands

1 March. The Marshall Islands atoll commander, RAdm Alva D. Bernhard, received orders to neutralize and control the Lesser Marshalls, those atolls and islands thought to be undefended or lightly held.

2 March. Regimental Combat Team 106, was released from the operational control of Tactical Group-1, and became a part of the Eniwetok Atoll garrison force.

3 March. BGen Thomas E. Watson, Commanding General, Tactical Group-1, departed Eniwetok Atoll for Pearl Harbor.

4 March. The 4th Marine Base Defense Aircraft Wing's campaign against Wotje, Jaluit, Mille, and Maloelap Atolls in the East Marshalls opened when Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron 331 bombed Jaluit; the attacks continued until Japan's surrender.

5 March. The 22d Marines on Kwajalein Atoll had been disposed as follows: 1st Battalion, Bigej Island; 2d Battalion, Roi-Namur; 3d Battalion, Edgigen, and the remainder of the regiment on Ennubirr and Obella Islands with the regimental command post on Ennubirr. The 2d Separate Pack Howitzer Battalion relieved the 1st Battalion, 14th Marines, on Edgigen. Company A, 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was directed to remain at Kwajalein to work with the 22d Marines.

7 March. The First Reconnaissance Group, including two reinforced companies from the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, departed Kwajalein Atoll to clear Wotho Atoll.

9 March. BGen Lewie G. Merritt, Commanding General, 4th Marine Base Defense Air Wing, established headquarters at Kwajalein.

9 March. Two reinforced companies of the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, landed on Wotho Island, Wotho Atoll, without opposition.

10 March. Two reinforced companies from the 1st Battalion,

22d Marines, secured Ujae and Lae Atolls, West Group, Marshall Islands, without opposition.

11 March. A reinforced platoon from the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, secured Lib Island, south of Kwajalein Atoll.

14 March. In the Marshall Islands, a Marine reconnaissance force comprising two reinforced companies from the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, returned to Kwajalein Atoll, having completed its task of securing islands and atolls in the Western Group.

19 March. Two landing forces from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines departed Kwajalein Atoll, to clear the South Group.

20-21 March. Two landing forces from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines, landed on Airlinglapalap Island, South Group, Marshall Islands, and secured it against opposition on 21 March. One of the landing forces departed for Ebon, the southernmost atoll of the Marshalls.

22 March. Tactical Group-1, the Eniwetok landing force, was disbanded.

23-24 March. A landing team from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines secured Ebon Atoll, South Group. The troops then proceeded to Namorik Atoll and Kili Island, South Group, where no Japanese were found, and the areas were secured.

24 March. The Japanese on Namu Atoll South Group, Marshall Islands, surrendered to elements of the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines.

27 March. A reinforced company of the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines began clearing the North and Northeast Groups; Ailinginae, Rongerik, and Bikar Atolls were by-passed.

*Ashore in the Marshalls, Adm Raymond A. Spruance (left) briefs SecNav James V. Forrestal (3d from left). On Forrestal's right is RAdm Richard L. Connolly and on his left are MajGens Harry Schmidt, and Holland M. Smith, RAdm Ben Moreell, LtCol Evans F. Carlson and RAdm William R. Purnell.*





*While communicators set up the equipment of a forward command post, a Marine light tank, properly supported by infantry moves out in the assault on Namur Island, Kwajalein Atoll.*

**28 March.** The 2d Landing Team from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines, returned to Kwajalein Atoll, after securing islands and atolls in the Southern Group.

**28-30 March.** A reinforced company of the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines, raised the American flag on Bikini after scouting the atoll.

**30 March-3 April.** A reinforced company of the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines, scouted Rongelap Atoll, and declared it secure.

**1 April.** A reinforced company of the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines secured Ailuk Atoll, Northeast Group, Marshall Islands.

**2 April.** A reinforced company from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines, secured Mejit Island, Northeast Group, Marshall Islands.

**3 April.** A reinforced company from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines secured Likiep Atoll, Northeast Group, Marshall Islands.

**5 April.** The reinforced company from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines, returned to Roi-Namur, having completed its mission to seize the Northeast Group, Marshall Islands.

**17 April.** Marines from the 1st Defense Battalion, V Amphibious Corps, landed on Erikub and Aur Atolls; no Japanese were found and one party returned to Majuro.

**21-22 April.** Elements of the 3d Battalion, 11th Infantry, reconnoitered Ujelang, the westernmost atoll of the Marshall Islands, and raised the American flag before reembarking.

### Aviation

**15 March.** In the Solomon Islands, MajGen Hubert R. Harmon, USA, relieved MajGen Ralph J. Mitchell as Commander, Aircraft, Solomons.

**19 March.** In the Green Islands, Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron 243, Marine Torpedo-Bombing Squadron 134, and part of Navy Bombing Squadron 98 were detached from Strike Command, Piva, and transferred to Commander, Aircraft, Green.

**1 April.** The 9th Marine Aircraft Wing, commanded by Col Christian F. Schilt, was commissioned at Cherry Point, North Carolina.

**14 April.** Marine Night Fighting Squadron 532 flew the Marine Corps' first successful interception by F4U night fighters, near the Marshall Islands.

**18 April.** In the Caroline Islands, B-24s of the 5th Bombardment Group, Thirteenth Air Force, began a series of attacks on Woleai Atoll from Momote airfield, Los Negros, in preparation for the Hollandia Landings.

**21 April.** Seabees and aviation engineers completed the airstrip at Mokerang Plantation, Manus I, Admiralty Islands.

**30 April-1 May.** Aircraft of Task Force 58 attacked Truk and the Caroline Islands.

**2 May.** Marine Fighting Squadron 115, the first squadron of the Marine Aircraft Group 12 garrison on Emirau Island, St. Matthias Islands, arrived and flew its initial combat air patrol.

**8 May.** Marine Air, Hawaiian Area was disbanded when the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing arrived, and its headquarters assumed control of Marine aviation in the Hawaiian area.

**20 May.** Carrier planes of the Fifth Fleet Task Force opened a two-day assault on the Marcus Islands.

### New Britain

**6 March.** On New Britain, Combat Team A (5th Marines), 1st Marine Division, landed at Volupai Plantation on the Willaumez Peninsula in preparation for the Talasea operation.

**9 March.** Elements of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines captured Mount Scheleuther and the Waru Villages on the Willaumez Peninsula, and found the Japanese had withdrawn south. Talasea was declared secure.

**10 March-25 April.** The three infantry battalions of the 5th Marines patrolled north, south, and southeast Bitakara on Willaumez Peninsula, to mop-up Japanese stragglers from western New Britain.

*Soon after landing on Namur, Marine communicators rig a field telephone on the beach. They are armed with the M-1 carbine a lightweight weapon for those not armed with the rifle.*



16 March. Company K of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, reached Kilu Village on the Willaumez Peninsula, where it engaged Japanese forces for the last time.

18 March. Patrols from the 5th Marines reached Numundo Plantation at the eastern base of the Willaumez Peninsula, New Britain.

30 March. A small Marine patrol destroyed the rear guard of the withdrawing 17th Japanese Division near Linga Linga .

8 April. Arrangements were made to relieve the 1st Marine Division on New Britain by the 40th Infantry Division, stationed on Guadalcanal.

13 April. A 16-man Marine patrol landed on Cape Hoskins, New Britain, to reconnoiter the Japanese airfield 5,000 yards to the west.

24 April. The 1st Marines, and detachments from a number of 1st Marine Division supporting units, withdrew from Cape Gloucester.

25 April. The 185th Infantry, 40th Infantry Division, USA, arrived at Willaumez Peninsula, and the Army commander took over responsibility for the area from the commander of the 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division.

4 May. The last elements of the 1st Marine Division departed New Britain, leaving one Marine unit, the 12th Defense Battalion, at Cape Gloucester.

7 May. A patrol of the 185th Infantry occupied Cape Hoskins airdrome on New Britain and found the area deserted.

## Bougainville

8 March. On Bougainville, the Japanese opened their attack against the 37th Infantry Division's sector.

24 March. The Japanese launched their final attack against the XXIV Corps perimeter; it was their last attempt to retake the Cape Torokina area.

27 March. The Japanese began to withdraw from the Empress Augusta Bay area.

28 March. Elements of the 93d Infantry Division arrived at Empress Augusta Bay for combat duty.

23 May. On Bougainville, Navy and Marine Corps TBFs mined the Buin-Kahili waters.

## Bismarck Islands

20 March. In the Bismarcks, the 4th Marines landed on two beaches near the eastern end of undefended Emirau Island, St. Matthias Islands, to establish a light naval and air base.

23 March. U.S. destroyers shelled installations on Massau Island, St. Matthias Islands, forcing the Japanese to attempt to evacuate to Kavieng.

25 March. The first supply echelon reached Emirau Island, St. Matthias Islands, carrying a battalion of the 25th Naval Construction Regiment, followed (30 March) by three additional naval construction battalions assigned to the construction of an air base and light naval facilities.

11 April. The 4th Marines on Emirau Island, St. Matthias Islands, was relieved by the 147th Infantry Regiment, USA.



*Casualty of a shootout between two light machine guns and a Japanese 37mm gun, a wounded Cape Gloucester Marine is carried to a dressing station, by stretcher bearers, under fire.*

12 April. MajGen James T. Moore formally assumed command of all ground forces on Emirau Island.

## Operational Planning

10 March. In Washington, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed upon the following timetable for operations in the Pacific: the invasion of Hollandia, New Guinea, 15 April; the Marianas, 15 June; the Palaus, 15 September; Mindanao, Philippines, 15 November 1944; and Formosa, 15 February 1945.

12 March. In Washington, a Joint Chiefs of Staff directive covering future Pacific operations ordered the Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, to advance the date of his attack on Hollandia, New Guinea, to cancel the proposed operations against Kavieng, and after seizing bases in the Admiralty Islands, to isolate that Japanese base and the one at Rabaul. The Commander in Chief was instructed to increase carrier strikes against the Marianas, Palaus, and Carolines. Seizure of the southern Marianas was scheduled for 15 June 1944. The 1st Marine Division was to be returned to the control of the Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area for employment as an assault division in the Palaus operation.

12 March. Adm William F. Halsey, Commander South Pacific, ordered his amphibious commander to take Emirau Island, Matthias Group, on 20 March, and recommended that the 4th Marines be utilized as the landing force.

15 March. Adm Halsey approved the operational plans for the seizure of Emirau. BGen Alfred H. Noble, Assistant Division Commander, 3d Marine Division, was directed to command the landing force.

20 March. The Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, Joint Staff office issued a study to guide commanders in their advance planning. It called for the employment of the V Amphibious Corps (the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions and the XXIV Corps artillery,) in the seizure of Saipan and Tinian. The plan also called for the utilization of the III Amphibious Corps (including the 3d Marine Division, the 1st Provisional Marine

Brigade, and Corps artillery) in the recapture of Guam. The 27th Infantry Division was designated Expeditionary Troops Reserve, and the 77th Infantry Division area reserve for Saipan. LtGen Holland M. Smith was named the Commander, Expeditionary Troops, and Adm Raymond A. Spruance, USN, was chosen overall commander.

**22 March.** The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was activated at Pearl Harbor, Hawaiian Islands. Major subordinate units of the brigade, which would assemble on Guadalcanal in April under the command of BGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, were the reactivated 4th Marines and the 22d Marines, respectively veterans of Emirau and Eniwetok fighting.

**25 March.** The Joint Chiefs of Staff issued a directive outlining a redistribution of forces in the South Pacific, to take effect on 15 June. The bulk of Commander South Pacific's strength was assigned to Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific operational control, for participation in the advance to the Philippines. Marine ground forces in the area were assigned to Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area to take part in the Central Pacific drive, and Marine air units were detailed to Gen MacArthur's command to support the aerial blockade of by-passed enemy positions in the Solomons and Bismarcks.

**1 April.** Japanese Imperial General Headquarters activated the *Thirty-second Army*, with headquarters on Okinawa, to control the defense of the Nansei Shoto Chain.

**2-27 April.** The submarine USS *Greenling* reconnoitered the Marianas Islands.

**3 April.** The Commander, Expeditionary Troops, approved a tentative operation plan for the recapture of Guam: III Amphibious Corps, designated Southern Troops and Landing Force, was directed to make simultaneous landings at two points on the west coast of Guam.

**23 April.** In the Pacific, Adm Nimitz issued Operation Plan 3-44 for the capture of the Marianas: Adm Raymond A. Spruance, USN, and VAdm Richmond K. Turner, USN, followed suit. Task Force 56 (Expeditionary Troops) was directed to capture, occupy, and defend Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, and to prepare for further operations.

**1 May.** Northern Troops and Landing Force Operation Order 2-44 was issued, ordering the 2d and 4th Marine Divi-

sions to land on Saipan's western beaches in the Charan Kanoa vicinity.

**7 May.** The III Amphibious Corps received its final operation and administrative plan for the seizure of Guam.

**10 May.** In Washington, James V. Forrestal was appointed Secretary of Navy.

**10 May.** In the Pacific, Adm Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, issued "Joint Staff Study Revised; for the Palaus operation. It named Commander, Third Fleet in overall control; Commander, III Amphibious Force, as Joint Expeditionary Force Commander; and Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps as Commanding General, Joint Expeditionary Troops; the landing date was set tentatively for 15 September.

**29 May.** Adm Nimitz issued a warning order envisioning the seizure of the Palaus as a larger operation than either Saipan or Guam. The III Amphibious Corps (the 1st Marine Division and the 81st Infantry Division) was directed to assault the southern islands of Peleliu and Angaur simultaneously with landings by XXIV Corps on the main island of Babelthup. MajGen Roy Geiger, USMC, (Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps) was named Commander, Expeditionary Troops and Landing Force. A target date of 8 September was designated for the assaults to take place.

## New Guinea

**22 March.** U.S. Army troops landed at Hollandia, New Guinea.

**30-31 March.** In the Palaus, Task Force 58 struck the islands in support of the Hollandia operation in New Guinea, permanently crippling the Palaus as a naval base of real importance. The first systematic aerial photographs were collected.

**22 April.** On New Guinea, Company A, 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, supported the assault forces at Tanahmerah Bay in the Hollandia operation.

*Marines uncover during funeral services on Roi Island for their comrades killed in the Marshall Islands invasion while smoke from burning Japanese installations rises in the background.*



## Historical Foundation Lists Recent New Members

The Marine Corps Historical Foundation (MCHF) is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization whose primary purpose is to augment the official Marine Corps Historical Program. The Foundation was incorporated in the District of Columbia on 9 January 1979 with Gen Wallace M. Greene, Jr., USMC (Ret), as its Honorary Chairman. Total membership as of 31 December 1983 was 743; of that number, 81 individuals and institutions were sustaining members.

During 1983, 144 new members joined, including 14 who are sustaining members. Since 1 January 1984, the following persons have joined the Foundation:

LtGen Wallace H. Robinson, Jr., USMC (Ret)  
BGen James S. Blais, USMC (Ret)  
James V. Warren, M.D.  
BGen Louie C. Reinberg, USMC (Ret)  
Col John A. Daskalakis, USMC (Ret)  
Col James H. Barton, USMC (Ret)  
Ms. Patsy R. Robson  
Mr. Carl H. Sciortino  
Maj William H. Sager, USMCR (Ret)  
Sgt Donald M. Dickey, USMC (Ret)  
CWO-2 Robert G. Walther, USMCR  
Mr. Art Buchwald  
The Hon. Ed Herschler  
Mr. Joseph R. Luebbert  
LtCol Norman J.E. Murken, USMCR (Ret)  
Maj Else M. Bjornstad, USMCR (Ret)  
MGySgt Helen L. Hannah, USMCR (Ret)  
Mr. William A. Delaney III  
Maj Tom L. Gibson, USMC (Ret)  
Mr. Frank E. Cowley

Col Ronald J. Lynch, USMC (Ret)  
Col Margaret M. Henderson, USMC (Ret)  
Mr. Arthur R. Samsøe  
Gen Merrill B. Twining, USMC (Ret)  
Col Ruth C. Streeter, USMC (Ret)  
Capt Albert J. Beveridge, Jr., USMC (Ret)  
Mrs. Mary G. Knap  
Mr. John B. Loomis  
Col Edwin C. Godbold, USMC (Ret)  
LtCol John A. Crown, USMC (Ret)  
Mr. James M. Kane

Member volunteers who are currently assisting the Historical Center's staff are George C. MacGillivray, who is working with Chief Curator Charles A. Wood and Personal Papers Curator Joseph M. Miller and continuing well over a year's dedicated effort in organizing the map collection, and Donald Whetherbee, who brings his Marine Corps and State Department experience to the task of helping Reference Section Head Danny J. Crawford with his Marine Security Guard history.

The Foundation's newsletter and an updated membership list was mailed to members during March 1984. A meeting of the Board of Directors of the MCHF held at the Historical Center on 2 April. Members are reminded that the next annual general meeting will be held at the Center on 5 November.

Information on membership and Foundation activities may be obtained by writing: Secretary, Marine Corps Historical Foundation, Building 58, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374. The Foundation's office number is (202) 433-3914. — HIS