

# Johnson Rifle Was a Favorite of Marine Parachutists

by *Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas*  
*Curator of Material History*

**M**ANY WEAPONS, uniforms, and accouterments which saw service in World War II are not newcomers to the collection; indeed some of them came into it a decade ago, but they are being brought out, spruced up, and examined anew as parts of museum exhibits helping the Marine Corps to mark the 50th anniversary of World War II. Several such weapons have been chosen for two of these cased exhibits: one on the Bougainville campaign and one on Marine parachutists.

The role that the Marine Corps' parachute battalions played in the Bougainville campaign is a theme of the first exhibit. A Johnson light machine gun and a very rare magazine carrying case will be mounted in the case, along with other artifacts which have a particular connection to the fight for Bougainville. Later, a Johnson rifle is planned for display in an exhibit which will center exclusively on the history of the Marine parachutists throughout the war.

*The hard-to-find magazine carrying case will accompany the Johnson light machine gun in the "Parachute Battalions" exhibit being prepared at the Quantico Museum.*



*The fully assembled length of the Johnson M1941 light machine gun was 42 inches. It was used during World War II by all three Marine parachute battalions fighting in the Solomon Islands. The parachutists were said to favor the Johnson's buttstock.*

hibit which will center exclusively on the history of the Marine parachutists throughout the war.

This rifle designed by Capt Melvin Johnson, USMCR, was held in high esteem by a number of official admirers in 1940, and, in some circles, the Johnson rifle was considered a favored contender against the M1 Garand when the Marine Corps opted for the M1 just prior to the outbreak of World War II. When the M1 won over the Johnson, the only official use of Johnson-designed weapons by the Marine Corps was in its parachute battalions. One of the weapon's most desirable characteristics for airborne troops was the quickly-detachable barrel. In the case of the other weapon in the Bougainville exhibit, the M1941 machine gun, it was the buttstock.

**T**HE .30-CALIBER M1941 light machine gun fired the standard .30'06 cartridge from a curved, single-row 20-round magazine, which fed horizontally into the

*Just prior to World War II, the rifle designed by Capt Melvin Johnson, USMCR, was in contention with the Garand M1 to be the Marine Corps' primary individual weapon. It fires 10 .30-caliber rounds from a rotary magazine loaded without opening the bolt.*



left side of the weapon. Firing both fully and semi-automatically, it had a cyclic rate of 550-600 rounds per minute, although a single operator reasonably could fire only 150-180 rounds per minute. The fully assembled length of this light machine gun was 42 inches, but it could be broken down to a mere 23 inches and carried in a parachute pack. These recoil-operated machine guns were used by all three of the Marine parachute battalions fighting in the Solomon Islands and by a special U.S.-Canadian unit in Europe.

The M1941 Johnson rifle fires 10 rounds of standard .30-caliber ammunition from an integral rotary magazine which could be loaded without opening the bolt. Unlike the gas-operated M1 Garand, it is also recoil-operated. Invented in 1936 (the year in which the U.S. Army adopted the M1 rifle), the Johnson rifle did not go into wartime production until 1940, when initial orders were received from the Netherlands Indies and the Dutch Navy. Subsequent rifles were produced for Chile

and were chambered for the 7mm Mauser cartridge. The rifles had several serial number ranges; the first has four digits and the others are a four-digit series preceded by a letter. All production at the Rhode Island plant ceased in 1943, by which time the rifles had been used against the Japanese by Dutch troops in the East Indies and by Marine parachutists in the Solomon Islands.

A Johnson rifle has been on exhibit since 1960, both at the Air-Ground Museum at Quantico and at the Marine Corps Museum in the Washington Navy Yard. It does not have any known provenance and is in the "A" serial number range, as

are two others in the collection. In 1990, a former officer in the 2d Parachute Battalion, Robert Spangler of Nicolaus, California, donated another to the museum. This rifle has a "B" prefix to the serial number. He had purchased it after the war, because he was so fond of the Johnson weapons which he had used during his service on Choiseul. This rifle is in our "hands on" study collection, which was set up for students at Quantico's Marine Corps University.

**I**N SPRING 1992, a museum volunteer, Col Elliot R. Laine, USMC (Ret), located another rifle in North Carolina and

found that the owner wanted to donate the rifle to the collection. Col Richard S. Johnson of New Bern (no relation to Melvin Johnson) still had the rifle he used on Gavutu in the opening days of the campaign for Guadalcanal, while a captain with the 1st Parachute Battalion. The rifle was one of 10 given by the inventor to certain officers of the battalion, prior to their movement overseas, and has a serial number in the 9,000 range. The rifle was delivered to the museum by retired LtCol Rudy T. Schwanda, the staff historian for MCAS Cherry Point. This is the only rifle of this type in the collection with bona fide provenance. □1775□

## Tarawa 50th Anniversary Marked at Museum

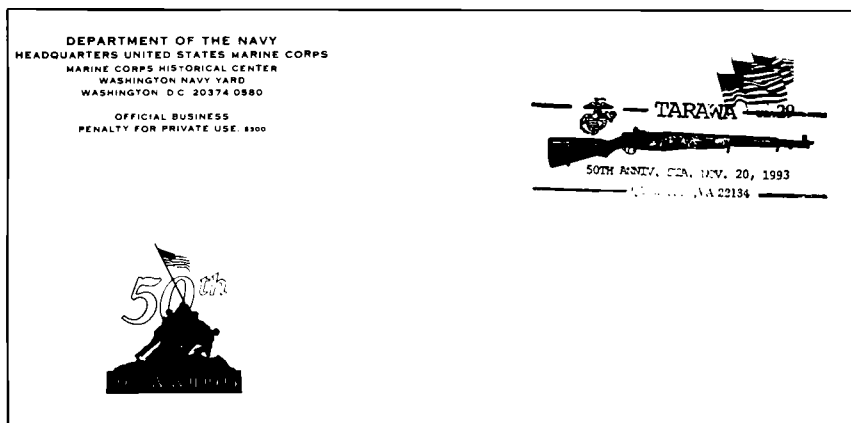
by Col Alfred J. Ponnwitz  
Head, Museums Branch

**A** COMMEMORATION CEREMONY for the 50th anniversary of the Marine landing at Betio, Tarawa Atoll, was conducted at the Marine Corps Air-Ground Museum at Quantico on 20 November. U.S. Postal Service officials were on hand with a commemorative cancellation device to mark the historic anniversary.

A temporary postal booth and audience seating were placed in the vicinity of the Tarawa exhibit in the Museum's World War II hangar. The program began with the MCCDC Band playing period music. The MCCDC adjutant acted as master of ceremonies, welcoming about 25 guests.

Colors were presented, an invocation was given, and the adjutant introduced me as the guest speaker. I gave a 20-minute presentation on the historic event, talked about its significance and lessons learned, and concluded by reading excerpts from the Commandant's remarks in ALMAR 322/93.

Each spectator was given a copy of the History and Museums Division publication, *Across the Reef: The Marine Assault of Tarawa*. At the conclusion of my presentation, the colors were retired and the spectators were invited to purchase stamps to commemorate the event from the Postal Service personnel. Throughout the day the Museum's "post office" remained open for the approximately 150 people who visited that day.



## Answers to the Historical Quiz

### Blacks in the Marine Corps

(Quiz on page 12)

1. Montford Point, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.
2. On 18 August 1942, the Headquarters and Service Battery of the 51st Composite Defense Battalion was activated at Montford Point.
3. 51st Composite Defense Battalion.
4. Second Lieutenant Frederick C. Branch was commissioned as a Reserve officer on 10 November 1945.
5. Five.
6. PFC James Anderson, Jr., was posthumously awarded the nation's highest decoration for action in Vietnam in February 1967.
7. LtGen Frank E. Petersen, Jr., was designated a Naval Aviator in October 1952, and on 27 April 1979 was advanced to the grade of brigadier general.
8. Camp Johnson, formerly Montford Point, was named for SgtMaj Gilbert H. "Hashmark" Johnson, one of the first black Marines.
9. Leon Spinks won the title in 1978 by beating Muhammad Ali. Ken Norton was awarded the title by the World Boxing Council the same year as the governing body claimed Spinks had reneged on an agreement to fight Norton.
10. LtCol Charles F. Bolden, Jr., was selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in May 1980.

# Foundation Cites Greenwood's Life Accomplishments

by Charles R. Smith  
Historical Writer

COL JOHN E. GREENWOOD, USMC (Ret), was recognized for contributions both to the Marine Corps and to Marine Corps history along with other recipients of honors at the annual awards dinner of the Marine Corps Historical Foundation on 24 October.

Col Greenwood, former Deputy Director for Marine Corps History in the History and Museums Division, was presented the Foundation's highest honor, its Distinguished Service Award, for his "lifetime accomplishments as a Marine and his productive interest in Marine Corps history."

Col Greenwood joined the division in 1977, following a tour as instructor at the Naval Academy. His long service to the Marine Corps began as a private in 1945. Graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1950 on the eve of the war in Korea, he served there with the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. On his return from Korea, he spent three years as an instructor at Annapolis. He was editorial officer, a key position in the production of doctrinal publications, at the Marine Corps Education Center at Quantico from fall 1958 until late summer 1961.

The next several years saw him attending the Amphibious Warfare School, serving on an exchange tour with Marine aviation, and serving on the staff of III Marine Amphibious Force at the time of its entry into Vietnam in 1965. During a second tour in Vietnam, he served as commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 27th Marines, and the 4th Combined Action Group.

He served twice as an aide de camp: first to LtGen Victor H. Krulak, then commanding general of Fleet Marine Force Pacific, and later to Secretary of the Navy John Warner. He also served a second tour as an instructor at the U.S. Naval Academy. Upon retiring in 1980, he became editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*.

In addition to Col Greenwood, the Foundation recognized four individuals for their written scholarship pertinent to Marine Corps history and professional subjects during 1992.



Marine Corps Gazette Editor John E. Greenwood entertains his Foundation audience.

THE SERGEANT MAJOR Dan Daly Award, given for superior writing pertinent to Marine Corps history by an enlisted author for a Marine Corps post or station periodical, was presented to Sgt Thomas J. LaPointe, USMC, for his contributions as managing editor of *Pass in Review*, the monthly magazine of Marine Barracks, 8th and I.

The General Roy S. Geiger Aviation Award, for the best article published in the *Marine Corps Gazette* in the field of Marine Corps aviation, was presented to Maj William R. Cronin, for his article "The Future of Marine Corps Close Air Support" from the April 1992 issue. Maj Cronin, F/A-18D pilot, is currently director of aviation development and tactics evolution for Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1 at Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma.

Col Allan R. Millett, USMCR, was this year's recipient of the General Wallace M. Greene, Jr., Book Award for the outstanding nonfiction book pertinent to Marine Corps history. His *In Many a Strife: General Gerald C. Thomas and the U.S. Marine Corps, 1917-1956* (Naval Institute Press, 1993) chronicles the career of the man who, as a veteran of both World Wars and Korea, had a profound impact on shaping the Marine Corps in the 20th century.

The Colonel Robert D. Heinl, Jr., Award for the best article pertinent to Marine Corps history published in any journal was given to Maj Jon T. Hoffman, USMCR, for his series of articles, "Legacy and Lessons," which appeared in the August, September, and December 1992 issues of the *Marine Corps Gazette*. This was Maj

Hoffman's second Heinl Award.

The Foundation also recognized CWO Charles Grow, USMC, presenting him the Colonel John W. Thomason, Jr., Award for his work as a combat artist, depicting events in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and Marine Corps operations in Somalia. The award, named for the highly decorated combat officer and artist, is given for excellence in the fine or applied arts, including photography, in depicting the historical or contemporary Marine Corps.

IN THE FIELD of museum exhibitry, the Foundation's Colonel John H. Magruder III Award was given to the 2d Dental Company, 2d Dental Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group, Camp Lejeune. The company's quarterdeck display was selected not only because of its execution, but also because of its emphasis on the concept of the Navy-Marine Corps team and particularly those in the dental community who have served heroically with the Fleet Marine Force.

The Foundation's Heritage Award was presented to LtCol Lily Hutcheon Gridley, USMCR (Ret), the first woman to serve as a judge advocate in the Marine Corps, for her lifetime accomplishments as a Marine and her contributions to the Marine Corps Historical Foundation. In presenting the award, Col Mary L. Stremlow, USMCR (Ret), noted that "no one in the Foundation could be more deserving of the Heritage Award, reflecting as it does service and devotion to the Marine Corps and its history, and, on a large canvas, to community and country." □1775□

# Iwo Jima Marine, First Woman Judge Advocate Mourned

by *Benis M. Frank*  
*Chief Historian*

## *BGen Leland S. Swindler*

BGen Leland S. Swindler, USMC (Ret), 100, died on 29 October 1993 in Berlin, Maryland. A native of Indiana, Gen Swindler graduated from Whittier College, Whittier, California, in 1916, and had served with the California National Guard for five years before enlisting in the Marine Corps after graduation. He was commissioned in October 1917 and began a series of assignments in ships detachments.

In the interwar period following the end of World War I to 1944, he served at a number of stations at home and abroad, as well as at schools and at sea. During the course of this period, he was assigned to quartermaster and supply duties and, as a colonel, in February 1944 went to the Pacific, where he was assigned command of the 6th Base Depot. In the Iwo Jima operation, Col Swindler served as the the V Amphibious Corps shore party commander, for which he was awarded a Legion of Merit with Combat V.

Following the end of the war, Col Swindler served at Camp Pendleton as post supply officer. He retired in July 1950 and was advanced to brigadier general on the retired list for having been decorated in combat. Gen Swindler was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on 4 November.

*Then-Col Leland S. Swindler*



*LtCol Lily H. Gridley in 1965*

## *LtCol Lily H. Gridley*

LtCol Lily H. Gridley, USMCR (Ret), the first woman Marine to be appointed a judge advocate, died at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., of a heart attack at the age of 86 on 18 December 1993.

LtCol Gridley was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and attended the University of San Francisco. She received her law degree from Golden Gate College, and practiced law in San Francisco in the 1930s. In 1942, LtCol Gridley enlisted in the Navy WAVES and was commissioned in the Marine Corps in February 1943, one of the very first Woman Marine officers. Assigned initially to Camp Lejeune as assistant legal officer and judge advocate for general courts martial, she later was transferred to Headquarters Marine Corps, and then to the office of the Judge Advocate of the Navy.

LtCol Gridley returned to civilian life in the late 1940s, but was recalled to active duty in 1949 at HQMC for various assignments. She retired in 1965 to Tantallon, Maryland, where she continued the practice of law. She joined the Marine Corps Historical Foundation in 1981, one of the first women to do so. In 1993, she was awarded the Foundation's Heritage Award, reflecting her service and devotion to the Marine Corps and its history. (See

p. 15.) In commemoration of her life and service as one of its most accomplished members and long service as a Director, the Foundation has established the Lily Gridley Memorial Research Grant. This consists of an annual grant of \$2,000.

LtCol Gridley's ashes were interred in Arlington National Cemetery's columbarium with full military honors on 3 January.

## *Col Frank E. Walton*

Col Frank E. Walton, USMCR (Ret), 84, died 20 November 1993 at Tripler Army Hospital in Honolulu after a brief illness. He retired from the Los Angeles Police Department as a deputy chief in 1960 and joined the U.S. State Department as a public safety advisor to the government of South Vietnam. Col Walton served in World War II as an intelligence officer with Marine Fighter Squadron 214, LtCol Gregory "Pappy" Boyington's storied "Black Sheep," and wrote about them in *Once They Were Eagles*.

## *Helen Regina Strother*

Helen Regina Strother, longtime photo-archivist and member of the History and Museums Division staff, died on 30 December 1993, following a long illness. Mrs. Strother will be remembered by the many researchers she assisted in seeking out historic photographs. Her colleagues in the Marine Corps Historical Center remember the cheerfulness and charm she maintained at all times, even when faced with her illness. Mrs. Strother was buried in St. Gabriel's Cemetery in Washington, D.C., on 7 January.



## Col Jeremiah A. O'Leary

Col Jeremiah A. O'Leary, USMCR (Ret), 74, a second-generation veteran Washington journalist, died 19 December 1993, after a long bout with circulatory ailments.

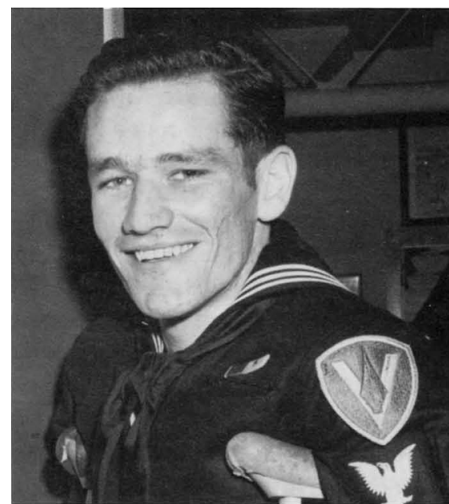
He began his career in 1937 as a copyboy with the now-defunct *Washington Star*, from which newsroom he was recruited, together with other newspapermen from around the country, to become a Marine Corps combat correspondent in World War II. As did they, he went through boot camp and, when graduated, was given sergeant's stripes and assigned to duty in the Pacific. O'Leary went to the 1st Marine Division and covered its landings on Peleliu and Okinawa.

At the end of the war, O'Leary returned to the *Star*, following national stories as well as the Latin American beat. He joined the *Washington Times* in 1982, served as its White House correspondent, and, in

1989, began a column entitled "O'Leary's Washington." Also following the war, he remained in the Marine Corps Reserve, was commissioned, and recalled to active duty for the Korean War, serving as the public affairs officer, once again with the 1st Marine Division, this time in Korea. He retired from the Reserves in 1976. Col O'Leary was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on 23 December.

## John Bradley

John Bradley, the Navy corpsman who was the last surviving member of the group of six who raised the second flag on Iwo Jima and who, together with them, is immortalized in the Marine Corps War Memorial in Washington, D.C., died of a stroke at the age of 70 on 11 January at a hospital in his home town, Antigo, Wisconsin. Three of the flagraisers died on Iwo



*Corpsman John Bradley in 1945*

Jima, while Ira Hayes, Rene Gagnon, and Bradley survived. Following the end of the war, Bradley returned home and to his family's undertaking business, which he helped to run. □1775□

# Portrait Bust Honors 'First Commandant' Nicholas

*by Col William J. Davis, USMC*

*Deputy Director, Marine Corps History and Museums*

ON 10 NOVEMBER 1993, the Marine Corps Museum received a birthday gift directly related to the founding of the Marine Corps in 1775. A life-sized bronze bust of Maj Samuel Nicholas, who is generally regarded as the first Commandant of the Marine Corps, was donated by artist, sculptor, and World War II Marine, Clarence Frederick Runtsch.

Mr. Runtsch's creation was accepted on behalf of the Marine Corps by Gen Carl E. Mundy, Jr., 30th Commandant. During the dedication ceremony at the Marine Corps Historical Center, Gen Mundy noted that the Continental Congress granted Samuel Nicholas the first commission of the Continental Naval Service as a "Captain of Marines" on 28 November 1775.

Mr. Runtsch, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, is a noted American portrait artist who was born and raised in rural Nebraska. According to Mr. Runtsch, the bust was produced as a personal token of respect and admiration for the Marine Corps, which was gained during his four years of active duty during World War II. During two tours of duty in the Pacific with the 1st and 2d Marine Aircraft Wings, Mr. Runtsch served on Guadalcanal and participated in the

landings on Bougainville, Green Island, and Okinawa. He attained the rank of technical sergeant before being discharged on 27 April 1946. Following his wartime service, he attended the Cumming School of Art and earned bachelor and master of fine arts degrees from the Kansas City Art Institute. Other sculptures by Mr. Runtsch include bronze busts of American Indians, Civil War heroes, and nuclear scientists. His works are owned by private and cor-

porate collections, and appear in major museums, including the Smithsonian Institution.

THE CAST-BRONZE bust of Maj Nicholas is based on a 1777 miniature portrait of the first Commandant painted from life by Charles Willson Peale. The story of the Peale portraits was reported in the Winter 1989-90 issue of *Fortitudine*. □1775□

*Gen Carl E. Mundy, Jr. accepts the Samuel Nicholas bust from artist Clarence F. Runtsch.*



# Papers Give Closer Look at 'Fighting Commandant'

by Amy J. Cantin  
Head, Personal Papers Unit

THE MAN KNOWN AS the "Devil Dog Marine" and the "Fighting Commandant" finally has his place in the U.S. Marine Corps Historical Center. Materials a century old have surfaced to illustrate the career of a Marine whose World War I exploits brought him additional fame.

Wendell Neville's career began in 1892 upon his graduation from the Naval Academy with a commission as second lieutenant. He earned a brevetted commission as captain at Guantanamo Bay, in 1898, and the Medal of Honor for his valor at Vera Cruz in 1914. Neville's propensity to charge in nearly every battle and minor skirmish in which Marines fought, quickly earned him the nickname of "Follow-Me Neville," and he became known as "the Fighting Marine".

Through a neatly organized collection of photographs, awards, and official orders, researchers now can trace and reconstruct the history of the general's career from one assigned tour of duty to another. The materials donated by his grandson, Col Wendell N. Vest, USMC (Ret), on 13 December 1993, supplement a sparse collection of previously contributed material.

"CHANGE OF STATION" and "orders to onboard duty" dominate the official records which outline Neville's career in the Marine Corps from 1890, as a naval cadet, to 1929, as the Major General Commandant. Diplomas, commissions, and citations complement the orders saved by Neville while fulfilling his appointed tours. In addition to U.S. honors for Neville, France presented him several awards, including the Croix de Guerre—four times.

The extensive photograph collection not only illustrates the Marine presence in such countries as China and the Philippines, but it also allows the historian to trace the evolution of the Marine Corps uniform, from the undress jacket to the Sam Browne Belt. Included in this compilation is an original John W. Thomason print depicting the famous incident of Neville and the notorious mule (wearing his overcoat).



*A mule in the print by the late Col John W. Thomason, Jr., USMC, is wearing Gen Neville's heavy overcoat. The soldier who "tailored" it for his animal mistook the doffed Marine coat for a captured German garment, and was blasted by an outraged Neville.*

Numerous newspaper articles were published on the local and national levels after Neville's appointment as Commandant was confirmed by Congress. Reporters interviewed subordinate officers for additional information on Neville. The write-ups included brief synopses of his career and the personal viewpoints of these subordinates, who portray Neville with the highest of regard.

The Wendell Neville collection includes more than just his own records. His father-in-law was RAdm John A. Howell, who was an inventor. Among his inventions was the patented amphibious boat known as the Howell Sea Tank. The amphibious boat was intended not only for the Navy, however. It was also submitted as a 25-passenger amusement boat for tourists! This small collection of materials includes sketches, blueprints, photos, patents, and boat descriptions.

Neville died in office as the Commandant, after 38 years of service. □1775□

*Gen Neville, wearing the "Indianhead" patch of the U.S. 2d Division, poses in the window of his headquarters in 1918.*





## In Photographs, Look For Things Which Are 'Firsts' of Their Kind

*(Continued from page 24)*

Obviously a lot of the subjects suitable for command chronologies covering contingencies are also suitable for routine chronologies. In peacetime chronologies, however, a little selectivity is in order.

Ask yourself, "How is this picture relevant?" If it shows a new way of doing something, or wearing something, or a "first," then it is probably significant. A few shots of Marines participating in major evolutions such as an IG inspection or a CAX are fine, but keep in mind that no one has yet found a use for scores of pictures of Marines capturing Dime Dingo.

### Group Shots

For a command chronology, a single

group shot of the commander, his principal staff, and immediate subordinate commanders is highly encouraged. If the commander prefers, a shot of all the unit's officers is fine. Naturally, all persons should be clearly identified with full rank and name (and middle initial) and their billets given. Multiple group shots, or group shots of each staff section, subordinate command, etc., are not needed.

In non-combat situations, posed group shots generally are not very useful (although in combat situations they can be very valuable). For instance, "the staff at endex" is not historically important. If a unit participated in the first joint exercise with a foreign nation, however, a group shot of the principal officers from both nations would be in order.

Photographs of promotions of senior officers (i.e., colonels and general officers)

and change of command ceremonies should be included, but a single photograph of the event is usually sufficient. For example, a shot of the old and new commander on the reviewing stand together, or a shot of them exchanging the unit color, but not both. Pick the best shot and use that.

Only include major award presentations. A good rule of thumb is Legion of Merit or above for non-combat awards and Bronze Star or above for combat awards.

The examples given above are illustrative, not prescriptive. Command historians should be constantly asking themselves, "What events can be better described with a picture?" Before including a picture, the command historian should ask, "How is this picture historically significant?" If the picture doesn't have a solid caption, then the odds are it's not worth including. □1775□

## Volunteer Restores 12th Marines' 'Vietnam' Cannon

*by 1stLt Julia N. Garvin  
Adjutant, 12th Marines*

**I**N FEBRUARY 1967, Battery C, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, moved to Gio Linh, Republic of Vietnam, approximately one mile south of the DMZ, where it participated in Operation Highrise. During this operation, Marines of Battery C discovered what turned out to be a 17th Century English cannon.

The diameter of the cannon's barrel indicated that it probably was a six-pound naval cannon. It was taken to the 12th Marines' headquarters near Dong Ha, and then on to Okinawa. Once in Okinawa, the cannon followed the 12th Marines from camp to camp and eventually ended up in front of the 2d Battalion headquarters on Camp Foster.

In April 1993, the battalion replaced the cannon with an Iraqi D-30 Howitzer that was captured during Operation Desert Storm. MSgt James A. Williams, the 2d Battalion field artillery chief, volunteered to restore the old cannon during his free time, so that it might be displayed inside 12th Marines' headquarters.

During the cannon's restoration, MSgt Williams found that there were cannonballs lodged deep inside the barrel. Working with Capt Jim Tadlock, of 3d Force Service Support Group's Explosive Ord-

nance Disposal detachment, five cannonballs and a green bag of gunpowder were dislodged using high water-pressure. The five cannon balls were non-explosive, solid iron balls. Also inside was a piece of what appeared to be a metal spike. It is believed that the firehole of the cannon was spiked to prevent an enemy from using the cannon, once it fell into his hands. The green bag of powder behind the cannon balls likely represented an attempt to fire the cannon balls, with the spike apparently foiling the attempt.

**D**URING RESTORATION, MSgt Williams used a "Bondo" type filler to account for all the holes and dents, except for a two- to three-inch gouge taken out of the end of the barrel. This gouge was left to bear witness to the past history of

the cannon. Once the cannon tube was restored, and using only left-over and scrap wood, work began on a custom carriage. The goal was to accurately fabricate the carriage. Sources ranging from old photographs to a souvenir cannon pencil sharpener were used as models for the heavy wooden carriage. The wheels were not the typical wagon-wheel shape often depicted in historical scenes, but were made small and wide enough to accommodate movement of the cannon on and off naval vessels.

The restoration program was completed following 300 volunteer manhours. On Veterans Day weekend 1993, the cannon, complete with replicated tools and accessories, was formally presented to the 12th Marines commander, Col Walter G. Ford, on 12 November 1993. □1775□

*MSgt James A. Williams, right, who restored the 17th century English cannon and built its carriage, shows his work to regimental ordnance officer CWO-3 Frank L. Cote.*



# Bell UH-1 'Huey'

by Michael E. Starn  
Curator of Aviation

**D**URING THE KOREAN WAR the Marine Corps battle-tested helicopters. It was abundantly apparent that helicopters could play vital roles in search-and-rescue, medical evacuation, troop insertion and extraction, and equipment movement. The limits placed on the number of aircraft in the Marine Corps' air arsenal was an overriding problem. For every helicopter that was accepted, a fixed-wing aircraft had to be deleted. An aircraft was needed which could be used both as an assault support aircraft and as an observation platform.

On 16 October 1961, the Navy's Bureau of Weapons solicited bids for a new assault support helicopter from 10 different manufacturers. The criteria for the new helicopter included the ability to carry a payload of 800 pounds or three troops at a cruising airspeed of 85 knots, while not weighing more than 3,500 pounds. Bell Helicopter's HU-1B (later changed to UH-1E) was selected to fill the contract, with slight modifications, on 1 March 1962. It is because of its original designation, HU-1E, that the UH-1E was nicknamed "Huey."

In Vietnam between July 1966 and June 1967, the Huey reportedly flew a total of 10,745 missions. These included administration and liaison, tactical air controller, casualty evacuation, command and control, search and rescue, and reconnaissance. Because the missions took place forward of friendly lines, it was determined that defensive weapons needed to be mounted on the aircraft. Mounting kits that would accommodate 2.75 rockets and machine guns were installed on the Hueys. These modifications suggested a new mission for the Huey: attack. This would lead to the development of the AH-1 Cobra.

The UH-1E in the Marine Corps Air-Ground Museum's Collection, BuNo: 154760, was piloted in Vietnam by Maj (then-Capt) Stephen W. Pless on 19 August 1967 in southern Quang Ngai Province. While in flight, Maj Pless learned of four U.S. Army soldiers being attacked by a large Viet Cong force near Duc Pho. After breaking off, he arrived to find 50 Viet Cong in the open, some of them beating and bayoneting the four Americans.

Maj Pless maneuvered his helicopter over the four Americans, driving the Viet Cong back into the woods using his machine guns and rockets. While Maj Pless placed the helicopter between the Viet Cong and the four Americans, the co-pilot, Capt Rupert E. Fairfield, and his enlisted crew, GySgt Leroy N. Poulson and LCpl John G. Phelps, left the aircraft and assisted the four Americans back to safety. The crew were credited with a confirmed total of 20 VC killed. Capt Fairfield, GySgt Poulson, and LCpl Phelps each received the Navy Cross; Maj Pless received the Medal of Honor, the first to be awarded to a member of the 1st MAW for action in Vietnam.

After flying as a Marine Corps aircraft until early 1977, Pless' Huey was transferred to the Navy at Pensacola, where it served until early 1983, when it was acquired by the museum. In 1988 it was placed on loan to the Liberal Air Museum, Liberal, Kansas. In 1991, restoration was begun by a commercial firm, and now is being completed by the Quantico Museum. □1775□



*The Air-Ground Museum's "Huey," BuNo: 154760, with restoration nearly complete, awaits eventual display. It was once flown by Medal of Honor holder Maj Stephen Pless.*

## Technical Data

**Manufacturer:** Bell Helicopter Company, Fort Worth, Texas.

**Type:** Utility and transport helicopter.

**Accommodation:** Pilot plus up to 14 passengers; internal load capacity, 4,000 lb.

**Power Plant:** One Pratt & Whitney (UACL) T400-CP-400 Twin Pac coupled turboshaft engine.

**Dimensions:** Rotor diameter, 48 feet 2 1/2 inches; overall length, 57 feet; height, 14 feet 4 3/4 inches.

**Weights:** Typical empty weight, 6,000 pounds; max take-off weight, 10,000 pounds.

**Performance:** Max level speed, 127 mph at sea level; initial rate of climb, 1,745 ft/min; service ceiling, 17,300 ft; max range, 286 miles.

**Armaments:** Defensive rocket/machine gun pods and door guns.



## September—December 1944

*by Robert V. Aquilina  
Assistant Head, Reference Section*

**F**ortitudine's World War II Chronology continues with the mid-September 1944 assault and capture of the Palau Islands, located about midway between the Marianas and the southern Philippines. The fall of 1944 would also witness the recapture of the Philippines, as American forces continued their march towards Tokyo.

### Palaus

**10 Sep**—Task Group 38.4, having bombarded targets in the Volcano-Bonins and Yap and Ulithi Islands, arrived off the Palau Islands and began a two-day strike against anti-aircraft positions and the beach defenses on Peleliu and Angaur in preparation for the invasion.

**12 Sep**—The Western Fire Support Group of the Western Attack Force (Task Force 32) arrived off the Palau Islands and began naval bombardment in preparation for the projected landings. The group was covered by Task Group 38.4 and escort carrier forces making aerial attacks.

**15 Sep**—Preceded by carrier-based air and heavy bomber support, the 1st Marine Division (Reinforced) (III Amphibious Corps) landed on Peleliu Beaches White and Orange against

*A quickly assembled medical aid station is located directly on one of the two beaches used by the 1st Marine Division (Rein-*

heavy opposition. The 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, drove eastward prior to turning north and deploying across the southern edge of the airfield. Company L reached the eastern shore, cutting the island into two parts. A Japanese tank-infantry counterattack against the airfield aborted, and Company L, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, drove north in the wake of the repulsed Japanese, nearly reaching the center of the field. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, advanced south to capture isolated Japanese.

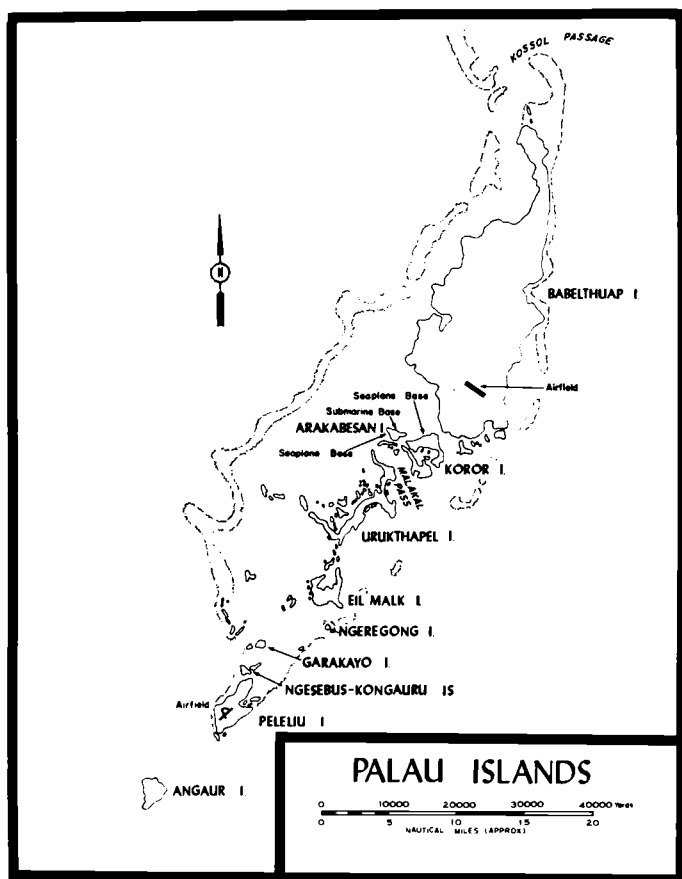
**16 Sep**—The 5th Marines, supported by the 1st Marines, swept the northern portion of the airfield. Company I, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, reached the eastern shore and consolidated the unit's beach position. Company K attacked southward to the southeast promontory, followed by the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines.

**16 Sep**—The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, landed on Beach Orange 3 in 1st Marine Division reserve, and was attached to the 1st Marines. The 1st Marines launched an attack northward against the ridge system following the axis of Peleliu's northwest peninsula, which harbored the core of Japanese resistance.

**17 Sep**—The 2d Battalion, 1st Marines seized Hill 200, and Company L, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, secured the southern promontory.

*forced) to land on Peleliu on 15 September. The landing was preceded by both carrier-based air and heavy bomber strikes.*





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17-20 Sep—Regimental Combat Teams 321 and 322, 81st U.S. Infantry Division, secured Angaur Island, although a sizeable pocket of Japanese resistance remained in the northwest corner of the island.

18 Sep—In the 1st Marines' zone, the 2d Battalions, 1st and 7th Marines, captured Hill 210, and Company B, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, seized Hill 205. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, secured the southern portion of the island with the capture of the southeast promontory.

19 Sep—Elements of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, reached the Five Sisters, the southern face of the final pocket of Japanese resistance; Company C crossed Horseshoe Valley and gained the summit of Hill 100. A patrol from Company K, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, reached the east coast below Purple Beach; and Company G occupied the southern end of the beach and patrolled toward the northeast. Two artillery observation planes from Marine Observation Squadron 3 flew onto the island.

20 Sep—The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, advanced east and Company F succeeded in gaining the crest of Hill 260 facing the Five Sisters. Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured the northern end of the northeast peninsula and sent a patrol to the off-lying Island "A." Marine Observation Squadron 3 began operations from the airfield.

21 Sep—The 1st Marines, owing to heavy casualties, ceased temporarily to exist as an assault unit on the regimental level and retired to the eastern defense zone to recuperate.

21 Sep—The 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, seized Island "A" off the northeast coast of Peleliu, and Company F secured the adjacent island of Ngabad without opposition.

23 Sep—Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, concluded the regiment's mission in its northeast zone with the seizure of a

small island due north of Ngabad, thereby isolating Japanese resistance on the northwest peninsula.

23 Sep—Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 321, 81st U.S. Infantry Division, landed on Beach Orange and was ordered to isolate enemy resistance in the "Umurbrogol Pocket," with the cooperation of the 7th Marines. The 2d and 3d Battalions of the Army RCT relieved the 1st Marines on the western shore.

24 Sep—Company E of the 321st Infantry Regiment seized Hill 100, the northern extremity of the "Umurbrogol Pocket" in which the main center of Japanese resistance was located. The first Marine fighter planes, an advance echelon from Marine Night Fighter Squadron 541, flew into base on the airfield. The Japanese garrison was reinforced from the islands to the north.

26 Sep—The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, attacked toward the Amiangal "Mountain," the island's northernmost hill system. Company B secured Hill 2, and the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, bypassed Hill 1 and advanced north. The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Hill 80 and reached the northwest peninsula's eastern shore, sealing off the northern tip of the island. Marine Fighter Squadron 114 arrived on the airfield.

27 Sep—Army RCT 321 advanced to compress the Umurbrogol Pocket and sweep north to the central ridge system which had been by-passed by the 5th Marines. The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Hill 1.

27 Sep—The U.S. flag was raised at the 1st Marine Division command post to symbolize that the island was secured.

28-29 Sep—The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Ngebus Island off Peleliu's northern shore, and Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, captured the northern tip of the northwest peninsula.

30 Sep—Northern Peleliu was secured and organized resistance declared ended; final mopping-up was assigned to RCT 321.

1 Oct—The remainder of Marine Fighter Squadron 122 and Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541 arrived on the airfield, filling the complement of Marine Aircraft Group 11 assigned to the island.

2 Oct—Elements of RCT 321, supported by Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, seized Radar Hill, thereby completing the mop-up of the northern peninsula.

2 Oct—The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, secured Walt Ridge and Company K, 3d Battalion reached the summit of Boyd Ridge, the two tactically important ridges which bounded the Umurbrogol Pocket on the east.

10 Oct—Companies E and G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, attacking the Umurbrogol Pocket, secured Baldy Ridge.

11 Oct—Hill 140, a position of tactical importance situated north of the Five Brothers, was secured by elements of the 2d Battalion. *Blending in somewhat with the blasted terrain on Peleliu, a Marine is able to go to work on Japanese positions without early detection. On 27 September the island was declared secured.*



ion, 5th Marines. It provided a site from which fire could be directed on the Horseshoe and the draw between Walt and Boyd Ridges.

12 Oct—The “assault phase” of the Peleliu campaign was declared ended, signifying a transfer of command functions from the assault forces to the Central Pacific administrative echelons, which comprised the Forward Area and the Western Carolines Sub Area.

15 Oct—The permanent relief of the 1st Marine Division by the U.S. 81st Infantry Division began when the 2d Battalion, 321st Infantry, took over the area held by the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, across the northern end of the Umurbrogol Pocket.

17-18 Oct—The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, engaged Japanese infiltrators who had reoccupied caves a short distance south of the Umurbrogol Pocket; this was the last combat action of the 1st Marine Division on the island.

30 Oct—The final 1st Marine Division units—the reinforced 5th Marines—departed the island.

27 Nov—RCT 323 secured the Umurbrogol Pocket, and its commander reported officially that the Peleliu operation was ended.

### Philippines

8 Sep—The JCS issued a directive to Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, and Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, for the invasion of the Philippines.

15 Sep—The JCS decided to by-pass Mindanao, Philippines, in favor of Leyte and moved up the landing date from 20 December to 20 October. Forces belonging to the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, assigned to preliminary operations against Leyte, were released to Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, for use in the campaign. The only Marine Corps ground troops (two artillery battalions from the V Amphibious Corps) to see action in the Philippines were part of this group.

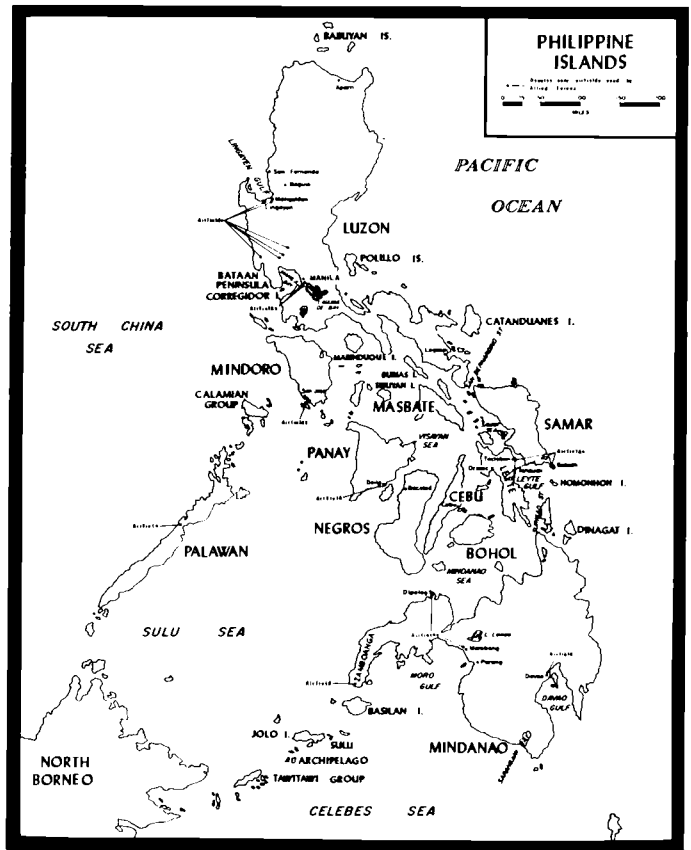
17 Oct—The Commander, Army Air Forces Southwest Pacific Area, issued detailed instructions concerning air facilities for the Luzon campaign and named actual units to participate, including the seven dive-bomber squadrons of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

20 Oct—The main invasion of Leyte began when the X and XXIV Corps, U.S. Sixth Army, went ashore on the east coast of the island.

23-26 Oct—In the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the U.S. Third and Seventh Fleets destroyed the major power of the Japanese Navy in the last serious threat to the U.S. capture of the islands. The Japanese lost 4 carriers, 3 battleships, 10 cruisers, 9 destroyers, and a submarine. The U.S. also sustained heavy losses, which included attacks from Japanese kamikaze aircraft, which appeared for the first time in the Pacific area.

2 Nov—The U.S. Sixth Army had gained control of Leyte Valley and its airfields.

2 Nov—Commander, Aircraft, Northern Solomons, issued Operation Instructions No. 24-44, assigning dive-bomber squadrons of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and Headquarters and Service Squadrons of Marine Aircraft Groups 24 and 32 to the Fifth Air Force (308th Bombardment Wing) for operational control during the Lingayen Gulf, Luzon occupation. VMSBs-133, -142, -241, -243, and -341, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, were directed to provide close air support for ground operations in the Lingayen area and Central Luzon, while Headquarters and Service Squadrons, Marine Aircraft Groups 24 and 32, were to establish base and



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servicing facilities for the Marine scout-bomber squadrons.

3 Dec—Marine Night Fighter Squadron 541 of the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing on Peleliu and Marine Aircraft Group 12 (VMFs-115, -211, -218, and -313) from the Solomons arrived at Tacloban under the operational control of the 308th Bombardment Wing, Fifth Air Force.

5 Dec—Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541 and Marine Aircraft Group 12 made their first aerial contacts with the Japanese, while covering naval forces.

7 Dec—Marine aircraft attacked a Japanese convoy carrying reinforcements to Ormoc Bay. Pilots of Marine Fighter Squadron 211 critically damaged a Japanese destroyer withdrawing from Leyte. Later, with planes from Marine Fighter Squadrons -218 and -313 and Army P-40s, they sunk a troop transport and damaged two destroyers of the convoy.

11 Dec—Twelve F4Us from Marine Aircraft Group 12 with Army P-40s twice intercepted a Japanese reinforcement convoy off the northeast tip of Panay Island. The aircraft later sank four of the 10 Japanese ships in the convoy, five miles from Palompon.

12 Dec—Marine Aircraft Group 12, supported by P-40s sank one Japanese destroyer of a reinforcement convoy and set fire to a tank landing ship off the northeast tip of Panay. This was the last large-scale Japanese attempt to reinforce the Leyte garrison.

15 Dec—Elements of the U.S. Sixth Army landed at San Jose Bay, Mindoro, covered by units of the Fifth Air Force, including Marine Aircraft Group 12, and Marine Night Fighter Squadron 541. Marine flyers continued to support the landing force until 18 December.

26 Dec—Leyte was declared secured, and the U.S. Eighth Army relieved the Sixth Army the following day.

Dec 44—Jan 45—Marine Aircraft Group 12 conducted fighter sweeps in support of the projected Luzon landing. □1775□

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



## *Making the Command Chronology*

# One Good Photo May Be Worth Many Pages of Text

by Capt David A. Dawson, USMC  
Historical Writer

Photographs are an important part of the command chronology. As the old cliché says, “a picture is worth a thousand words.” Pages of text cannot describe the appearance of a vehicle, a new way of wearing field equipment, or a person’s face, as well as a single photograph can. Just think of the difference between a description of the second flag-raising at Iwo Jima and Joe Rosenthal’s famous photograph.

The subjects suitable for photographic documentation are practically endless. The following guidelines will help the Marines of today ensure that the photographs they submit are as useful as possible to the Marines of tomorrow.

### **The Most Important Part: The Caption**

For historical purposes it is fair to say that the most important part of the picture is the caption. All photographs are practically useless if they do not have good captions. Include as much detail as possible. At a minimum, captions should include: full names (with middle initials or an indication of No Middle Initial), ranks, and assignments of persons pictured at the time the photograph was taken; location; date; and circumstances of the picture. For example: “Sgt Archibald NMI Henderson, sqd

ldr, 1st Sqd, 2d Plt, B/1/6, briefs his fire team leaders, (L to R) Cpl John A. Lejeune, Cpl Jacob V. Zeilin, and LCpl Alexander A. Vandegrift, just before their attack on Chapultepec, while LtCol Wendell C. Neville, CO of 1/6, looks on. Approx. 0900 10Nov93.” The worst caption is the dreaded “Marines in Southwest Asia during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm,” which tells the user almost nothing about the picture.

Generally, black-and-white prints are preferable to color, since these produce sharper images in publications. For pictures in which color is important, such as those intended to illustrate a new camouflage pattern or foreign uniforms, use color prints. Prints do not need to be larger than 4x6, but if possible they should not be any smaller.

### **Contingency Operations**

Command chronologies covering contingency operations and combat operations should include a large number of photographs. For example, the MAG-16 command chronology for Operation Restore Hope included pictures of the major landing zones in Mogadishu. In most peacetime operations pictures of LZs would not be very useful, but the major contingency operation in Soma-

lia made MAG-16’s contribution very valuable.

Operational pictures which show Marines in tactical situations employing their weapons and equipment are particularly useful. Pictures showing how Marines actually wear their gear and employ their equipment (sometimes vice how they are supposed to) are very important. This is particularly true of the less obvious equipment—the archives hold plenty of pictures of snipers in ghillie suits, but few of ROWPUs (Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units) in operation. One or two shots of any given style of gear or equipment often suffices.

Field modifications to equipment should be thoroughly documented with multiple pictures from various angles. An example would be the “cow catcher” placed on AAVs in Somalia.

The uniforms and equipment of foreign units serving alongside Marines should also be captured in detail. This is particularly true for nations which do not regularly exercise with Marine units. This is an exception to the black-and-white rule; here color prints are preferable.

*(Continued on page 19)*