The President of the United States dedicated the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC) on 10 November 2006. Located in Quantico, VA and with an average annual visitor attendance of more than 500,000 during each of its first three years, the NMMC is one of the most popular cultural attractions in Virginia. Its exhibitions recreate environments and immerse visitors into Marine Corps action. The Marine Corps Museum’s mission includes:

- Collecting and preserving objects that reflect the history of the Corps;
- Interpreting Marine Corps history;
- Educating students and families;
- Conducting collections-based research; and
- Supporting the recruitment, education, and retention of Marines.

The National Museum is being constructed in phases, the first of which includes approximately 120,000 square feet. It opened with permanent galleries dedicated to “Making Marines,” World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. In 2010, three additional galleries will open to tell the story of the Marine Corps from 1775 through World War I. In immersive exhibits, visitors take their places alongside Marines in battle. Aircraft, tanks, and other vehicles are prominently displayed, and period uniforms, weapons, medals, flags, and other artifacts help visitors trace the history of the Corps. Future phases will add a giant-screen theater, classrooms, an art gallery, visible storage, and more exhibition space to the flagship building. A chapel that overlooks the Museum and Semper Fidelis Memorial Park opened in October 2009. Also planned as part of the 135-acre “Marine Corps Heritage Center” are a hotel/conference center, artifact storage and restoration building, hiking trails, and additions to Semper Fidelis Memorial Park.

The NMMC reports to Marine Corps University and is federally funded and staffed by Marine Corps civilian employees and uniformed Marines. However, its construction and expansion would not be possible without the assistance of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. This strong public-private partnership, approved by Congress in 2001, allowed for the construction of an iconic building and the delivery of the highest-quality programs.

The strength of any history museum rests with its collections. NMMC’s key-stone objects that represent how Marines...
have waged war since 1775 — weapons, tanks, vehicles, aircraft — were transferred to the museum by the Marine Corps. But pride in being a Marine has prompted many generations of leathernecks to donate their personal items to the permanent collection. Because the museum is called with caring for its collections — some 30,000 objects — in perpetuity, curators add to the collection very selectively, consulting a formal collections rationale for guidance. Stewardship responsibilities are divided among five broad categories: ordnance; uniforms and heraldry; aviation; art; and general collections. Curators and collections managers work together to fully account for the collection.

As is often the case with museums, less than ten percent of NMMC’s objects are on exhibition at any one time. Most of them are in storage at Marine Corps Base Quantico, while some objects are on loan to other museums around the country. A team dedicated to the preservation of aircraft, vehicles, artillery pieces, and other large artifacts completes the detailed restoration of several artifacts each year.

An in-house exhibitions team, working with curators and historians, designs and oversees permanent and temporary installations, including the Commandant’s Corridor at the Pentagon. Museum educators use these exhibits to craft formal education programs that meet the needs of classroom teachers and are linked to specific standards of learning.

Education at the museum can definitely be fun, especially for (“Little Marines”), with puppet shows, hands-on activities, story telling, trains, and gallery hunts. During the museum’s second year of operation, it served more than 29,000 students in formal programs. Popular family day programs are offered on the second Saturday of each month. Marines
attending formal schools also make good use of the museum as part of their professional military education.

Since World War II, the Corps has been instructing a small number of Marines to “go to war and do art!” Continuing in that tradition, in 2009 the Museum deployed two artists to Iraq, Afghanistan, and training sites in the United States to capture what today’s warriors are accomplishing. More than 60 works from the combat art collection were featured in a multi-service show in Newport News, VA, in 2009.

In 2009, the museum received the Themed Entertainment Association’s award for Best New Museum, and the Secretary of the Navy recognized the museum with the Award of Merit for Group Achievement. The museum stands as a proud acknowledgement of the courage and commitment to duty delivered by all Marines, in support of today’s Marine Corps families, and as an inspiration to the next generation of Americans.

In addition to the NMMC, command specific museums are located at Camp Pendleton, CA; Recruit Depots San Diego, CA and Parris Island, SC; and at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, CA. These museums reflect the unique interests and objectives of those facilities. For additional information, see www.usmcmuseum.org.
Established in 1801, Marine Barracks Washington D.C. is the “Oldest Post of the Corps” and has been the residence of every Commandant of the Marine Corps since 1806. The selection of the site for the barracks was a matter of personal interest to President Thomas Jefferson, who rode through Washington with Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Burrows in search of a suitable location. They chose the current site due to its location near the Washington Navy Yard and its easy marching distance of the Capitol.

Marine Barracks has also been home of the United States Marine Band since 1801. Shortly after its formation in 1798, the band played for President John Adams at the Executive Mansion. This engagement began a tradition that has become so established that today the names “Marine Band” and “The President’s Own” are synonymous. John Philip Sousa, the most famous director of “The President’s Own,” wrote many of his immortal marches — such as “The Stars and Stripes Forever” and “Semper Fidelis” — while stationed here.

Today, Barracks Marines perform many tasks in support of the Marine Corps’ diverse missions. These include infantry training, ceremonies, and presidential support duty to include a company of “8th and I” Marines that fulfill a security mission for the First Family at Camp David, MD.

The barracks is also home to the Marine Corps Institute (MCI). Founded in 1920 by the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General John A. Lejeune, MCI is the Corps’ distance training center, which is responsible for all nonresident military education programs.

**EVENING PARADE**

An 85-minute performance of music and precision marching, the Evening Parade features “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band, “The Commandant’s Own” United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon. The Evening Parade is held Friday evenings from 7 May through 27 August 2010. The ceremony starts with an 8:45 p.m. concert by “The President’s Own.”

**HOW TO MAKE PARADE RESERVATIONS**

Seating for the Evening Parade requires a reservation. Guests with reservations are admitted beginning at 7 p.m. and should arrive no later than 8 p.m. Reservations may be made in writing, facsimile, or, for groups of six or less, online
at www.mbw.usmc.mil. Mail reservation requests should be addressed to:

Protocol Officer, Marine Barracks
8th and I Streets, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20390-5000

They should be mailed at least 30 days prior to a desired parade date. Requests via facsimile should be faxed to the Protocol Officer at (202) 433-4076. The request should include the name of the party (either group or individual), the number of guests in the party, a complete return address, and a point of contact with a telephone number. An alternate parade date should be included in the request in case the primary date requested is unavailable. Confirmations and gate assignments for reservation requests will be made by return mail. At approximately 8:10 p.m., guests without reservations, who are waiting outside the main gate of the Marine Barracks, are offered unclaimed seats.

There are no designated public parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of the Marine Barracks. Guests can park at Maritime Plaza, located at 1201 M Street, S.E., for free shuttle service to and from the barracks. The first shuttle departs Maritime Plaza at 7 p.m. and the last shuttle departs the barracks at 11 p.m. Additional information is available at the parade information line: (202) 433-6060, or at the Marine Barracks Washington website.

SUNSET PARADE

A one-hour performance, the Sunset Parade features the music of “The Commandant’s Own” United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps and a precision drill exhibition by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon. The Sunset Parade is conducted Tuesday evenings from 1 June through 10 August 2010, beginning at 7 p.m. except for the final two parades which begin at 6:30p.m. The Sunset Parade, held at the Marine Corps War Memorial, is open to the public at no charge. Reservations are not necessary. Spacious lawns provide ample room for guests to bring lawn chairs and blankets for informal viewing. There are no public parking spaces available at the memorial grounds on parade evenings. Guests may park at the Arlington National Cemetery Visitors’ Center for a nominal fee. A free shuttle service is provided from the Visitors’ Center to the War Memorial from 5 to 7 p.m. before the parade and from 8 to 9 p.m. following the parade.
International Affairs Officer Program (IAOP)

In a rapidly changing and frequently chaotic world, well-trained and experienced international specialists are increasingly important for operational and strategic success in political-military affairs. The goal of the IAOP is to identify, select, and train a corps of officers for future assignments to Marine Corps, joint, or combined staffs in operations, planning, or intelligence billets, and for duty with the defense attaché system.

The IAOP is an umbrella program that governs two separate but related occupational fields: the Foreign Area Officer and The Regional Affairs Officer. Through assignment of free military occupational specialties (FMOS), the IAOP manages a system that trains, tracks, and assigns officers specializing in international affairs and who continue to maintain proficiency in their primary MOS (PMOS) through a dual-track career path. The IAOP monitors an officer’s progression from basic level CONUS-based education and in-country training (ICT), to an experienced international specialist possessing a master’s degree in regional expertise; and in the case of FAOs, proficiency in a foreign language.

FOREIGN AREA OFFICERS (FAO)

FAOs are at the pinnacle of the international affairs, political-military officer hierarchy. Carefully managed and assigned, FAOs provide the Marine Corps with the assets it needs to meet the demands of the current and future strategic environment. By virtue of their extensive academic training, linguistic skills, and regional experience, FAOs are qualified to serve in the most demanding billets within the Marine Corps operating forces, as well as service and component (MARFOR) headquarters, unified commands, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) offices, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

Officers selected to train as FAOs begin with a 12-month assignment to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA. After completing graduate-level study in international and regional affairs they proceed to the Defense Language Institute (DLI), where they undergo eight to 15 months of basic language instruction. Their training culminates in a one-year immersion period in a country within their regional/linguistic area of expertise, in which they are expected to hone their language skills and regional knowledge.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS (RAO)

The primary purpose of the RAO track is to train and identify international affairs officers who will serve in billets that require specialized regional knowledge but do not require foreign language ability. Officers selected to train as RAOs report to NPS for 18 months of graduate-level study in international and regional affairs. Upon graduation they immediately apply that education in high-level political-military billets within the Marine Corps as well as in joint and other Department of Defense (DoD) agencies.
As the strategic environment grows more complex, emerging requirements for regionally focused and culturally adept officers will increase. Identification, training, and placement of FAOs and RAOs in critical billets will enable commanders and staffs to leverage the expertise garnered by international affairs officers and will ultimately set the conditions for success both on and off the battlefield.
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