



Spearhead NEWS

"Uncommon Valor was a Common Virtue"

OFFICIAL
PUBLICATION
of the
5TH MARINE
DIVISION
ASSOCIATION

**62ND ANNUAL REUNION - BRANSON, MISSOURI
OCTOBER 12 -15, 2011
GRAND PLAZA HOTEL**

Returning war souvenirs in spirit of reconciliation

By Dan King, Interpreter
Pacific War historian/film consultant

"It is past midnight and I'm writing by candlelight, my son. Your wife is sitting next to me, and your child fast asleep on her lap." The soldier's mother described the status of the rest of the family; the bombing of the cities, the food shortages; and trains over-loaded with war workers, refugees, military recruits and replacements. She wished for him the courage to do his duty and remain a strong, loyal soldier at all times.

The letter was sent to her son, 1stLt Genichi Hattori, who was the executive officer under Maj Kyusan Matsushita's 10th Independent Anti-tank Battalion. The unit was charged with the defense of Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima when the American Marines landed on Feb. 19, 1945.

According to records, his sector was the eastern side of the mountain facing Green Beach where the



Military collector Rex Butler (right) returns a letter to Motoki Hattori (center), grand nephew of Genichi Hattori, a first lieutenant in Japan's 10th Independent Anti-tank Battalion who was killed Feb. 22, 1945, on Iwo Jima. The letter was written to Genichi Hattori by his mother.

28th Marines landed. Hattori never saw the flag go up on Suribachi, for he was killed on Feb. 22, 1945. The letter from his mother was found and taken home

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SPEARHEAD NEWS

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Branson, here we come

By now, you surely must have made your 62nd Reunion reservation at the Grand Plaza Hotel, 800 850-6646, mentioning the group code (5th MRN) for the reunion rate. Should a situation arise that would require you to change or cancel your vacation plans, you need only to call the hotel 24 hours prior to your reservation check-in date to change or cancel your reservation.

Recall that in the Spring/March *Spearhead News*, I suggested that we all check-in by 11 October for a reception and briefing at 1900. If the officers and trustees are there, we could schedule an informal BOD meeting, with all hands invited, and hold a “first read” on the bylaws and, if necessary, appoint a committee to re-craft any articles that are overly contentious.

Otherwise, as scheduled, we will have a BOD meeting, with all hands invited, at 1000 on 12 October for the “first read” of the bylaws, to develop a slate of members to be nominated and elected to fill present BOD vacancies and discuss sites for the 2012 and 2013 reunions at the Friday business meeting.

You may be working on a packing list of what to take to the reunion. DO NOT forget to include a couple of items for the Ladies Auxiliary Silent Auction. All proceeds from the auction are later donated to the Wounded Warrior Project. Dee Dee Dietz is heading up that noble project. Let’s support it.

As you scan the registration form, you will note asterisks in the event column. These mean that the cost of that event does not include a shuttle service. The cost of a shuttle ride will be determined as soon as we know who needs a shuttle, and the fee will be collected prior to the event.

Let me assure those members who may be driving to any of the shows that each theater has ample free parking. Those of you who wish to schedule other shows or events are urged to contact Suzy at the hotel’s ticket office (Ext. 166) for the hotel bargain price.

This reunion in Branson, the Entertainment Center of Middle America, will not only be a fun experience, but a great opportunity to renew friendships and camaraderie among our membership and set the stage for a West Coast 2012 reunion. I have received an attractive proposal for the Silver Legacy Resort Casino in Reno, Nev., for 30 September through 4 October at a phenomenal room rate of \$69, plus tax. Should any member have a reunion site in mind for 2012, as well as 2013, please be prepared to brief the members.

**REGISTER NOW!
SEE YOU IN BRANSON!**

**– Tom Kalus
President**

THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Ray Elliott



Bert Clayton: Remembrance of a man now gone but not forgotten

Whether you agreed or disagreed with former *Spearhead News* editor and Fifth Marine Division Association secretary and Iwo Jima Marine veteran Bert Clayton, who spearheaded the BAR on the Beach statue now in place in Semper Fi Memorial Park at the Marine Corps Heritage Center in Triangle, Va., you can't deny that he left his tracks on the legacy of the association and the division.

Because of the illness that ultimately took his life, Bert was unable to attend the memorial dedication on Feb. 18 during the Iwo Jima Association of America's 66th Reunion and Symposium. But as Don Pero (A Company, 5th Eng) wrote in his letter to the editor, "It dawned on me that he was at the dedication in spirit and looked down with satisfaction."

And perhaps he did. I don't know about that. Nor do I need to say more about either the statue or Bert's footprints on the association. I want reflect upon my personal relationship with the man who encouraged me to take the *Spearhead* editor's job — talked me into it, really.

In 2007, I'd gone with Jim Kelly (5th Ser) to the Fifth Marine Division Association Reunion in Raleigh, N.C., and sold and signed my novella, *Iwo Blasted Again*. Bert was in the process of turning the job over to another editor, but the person who was going to take the job had only agreed to edit two issues. So I was next in line. While I was honored to be considered for the job, I was reluctant to take it because I knew the pitfalls. I'd taught journalism and edited newsletters for years.

But Bert was persuasive. He ran a review of my novella, told me the new association president Ken Watterson had asked him to work together with me to effect a smooth transition. And Bert gave me his word that he'd stick around and submit articles, help out as needed and turn over his file of sources that he used

to secure permission from major publications to reprint articles of interest to the association's members.

"You run the show," he said. "I'll cheer you on."

And he did. He told me to redesign the newsletter, if I wanted, to put my signature on it. I told him it wasn't about me, that it was about the members of the Fifth Marine Division Association. I had no intention of changing the basic look of the newsletter. He seemed to like that, and when I told him I would keep Final Muster (which he had initiated) as the heading to list members who had passed on, he was quite pleased.

For the first year or so, I showered him with questions by email about the association, its members and anything else that came up. Whatever success I had with the newsletter in the last three years has been the direct result of Bert's mentoring me along the way. He never failed to answer an email in a timely manner or take a phone call when I had a question or merely needed to run something by him for a look by another set of eyes.

Some time ago, he started sending me more of his files and past issues of *Spearhead*. Looking through the issues he sent, it occurred to me that since there didn't seem to be an archive with a complete set of past issues, an effort needed to be made to gather a set for deposit with the Archives and Special Collections in the Library of the Marine Corps in Quantico.

Bert thought that was a good idea. We even talked about the possibility of a collection of the best *Spearhead News* articles in an anthology for posterity and as a way to help maintain and promote the legacy of the division. Volumes have been written and films have been made about the Fifth Marine Division, but nowhere is there a better representation of the collective memory of those who fought on Iwo Jima all those years ago than from the pages of past issues of *Spearhead News*.

Unfortunately, Bert and I never found a complete set of the newsletters or anybody willing to part with them. Maybe there will never be an anthology, but perhaps at some point somebody will donate a set of the newsletters to the Archives and Special Collections to have as a collective members' historical record for posterity and the division's legacy.

Whatever happens in that regard, I feel fortunate to have known and worked with Bert Clayton. I appreciate the opportunity to support the Fifth Marine Division Association and get to know the people who are part of it. Bert Clayton is the one who made that possible for me. That's another mark he left.

Iwo Jima Survivor Marine Corps ring found

I recently received a phone call asking me to help locate the owner of a Marine Corps ring found near New Braunfels, Texas. Would you please include the following notice in the next newsletter:

“Found in or near the Guadalupe River, New Braunfels, Texas: an Iwo Jima Survivor Marine Corps ring engraved with the name ‘Justin Tomlinson.’ Would the owner please call David Reis at 361-779-2086 in Corpus Christi, Texas, and identify your ring.”

– Col Dave E. Severance, USMC, (Ret.)
E/2/28
La Jolla, Calif.

Looking for information about Sgt Anthony Fraley, 5th Motor

I am looking for anyone who possibly was in the 5th Motor Transport Battalion in 1945 that might have known my father, Sgt Anthony Fraley, who was in the H&S Company, Service Troops, Company A, 5th Motor Transport Battalion, 5th Marine Division, Fleet Marine Forces-Pacific Theater.

He was at Camp Tarawa. I have pictures of his some training there, but they do not mention the details of his exact participation at Iwo Jima. He did not talk about it much.

UPCOMING REUNIONS

19th Annual Subic Bay/Sangley Point Marines Reunion

Aug. 18-21, 2011
Lisle, Illinois
Contact: Bob White
Phone: 815 544-3932
Website: www.subicbaymarines.com

11th Engineer Battalion Marine Association

Sept. 14-18, 2011
Reno, Nevada
Contact: Charles Luhan
Phone: 773-585-9629
Email: CL11engrnb@sbcglobal.net

My mom said he was in the second wave that hit the beach on Feb. 19, 1945. I just would love to know more about his experience.

Thank you so much for your time. I wondered how to get this message out to others who might remember him.

– Debbie Fraley Roth
debbieroth1a@verizon.net

BAR memorial an achievement of a dedicated Marine

The *Spearhead* arrived in today’s mail, and another masterful and informative edition it is. I quickly read the article about the “BAR on the Beach” dedication. I had eagerly looked forward to it since my last conversation with Bert Clayton, when he talked of the dedication on Feb. 19, 2011, last fall.

I was disappointed that his name was not mentioned, until I read The Editor’s Desk, and his name was mentioned between the late MajGen Fred Haynes and the late Tom Trye.

I was thinking Bert was ill and unable to attend. Then I saw the Final Muster with Bert’s name at the top of the list. I was in shock and deeply saddened. It dawned on me that he was at the dedication in spirit and looked down with satisfaction, after all he gave and the abuse he took in marshaling efforts to accomplish the project.

In my mind, it will stand as a memorial to him and a reward for its achievement. He and I talked several times about the project, and I made sure A Company Engineers and all who read my ECHOES letters were aware and made contributions to the project,

SEMPER FIDELIS to that dedicated Marine. I look forward to joining him when my time comes.

Congratulations on [Ray Elliott’s] appointment as communications director for the IJAA. It is my sincere hope that you will also continue to edit the *Spearhead*, which has become one of the finest publications for military units. Please keep up the great work. At age 85 plus, I eagerly look forward to every issue. God Bless!

– Don Pero
A Co., 5th ENGR
Rochester, NY
pennydon@frontiernet.net

YOUNG MARINE:

A day I'll forever remember

By SgtMaj Erin DeVivies
Quantico (Va.) Young Marines

Recently I had the honor of attending the Young Marines Leadership Symposium in Washington, D.C. When I received the news that I would be attending, I was elated; in my mind, this was a BIG deal. The symposium started on a Friday evening, so I had already planned to take that day off from school when I got an email requesting Young Marine assistance at the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

They were conducting a ceremony for the Battle of Iwo Jima veterans. Had this been any other school day, I would have had to decline; however, since I was off from school already I decided why not seize the opportunity? Little did I know how big of an impact this ceremony would have on my life.

Most Young Marines were saluting the veterans and assisting them, but I thought it would be nice to wish them all a good morning and shake their hands. I'd shaken a few hands already when I came to this one veteran. He never told me his name, but I'll never forget him.

I shook his hand, wished him a good morning and as I prepared to move on to the next veteran, he grabbed my arm and asked, "Do ya got time?"

I smiled and replied, "All the time you need, sir."

His eyes lit up as we dove into conversation. At first we talked about the battle, but soon I learned that this elderly man not only had a poem published in the Library of Congress, but also an academic paper he had written in response to one of Steven Hawking's papers.

We talked about science, we talked about art, we talked about the Marine Corps and we talked about life in general. Over the course of this 25-minute conversation, this gentleman had gone from a seemingly frail old man to a vivacious and enthusiastic source of wisdom.

In that short time, I had formed a friendship with this man that resembled one of many years. I had my picture taken with him and we said our goodbyes, as the ceremony was soon to start. The day progressed and the whole experience was extremely moving.



SgtMaj Erin DeVivies (right) of the Quantico Young Marines, visits with Iwo Jima veteran Ted Dougherty, D-2-27, in front of the Marine Corps Heritage Center in February 2011 as part of the 66th Iwo Jima Anniversary Reunion and Symposium hosted by the Iwo Jima Association of America.

Motivated and inspired by the veterans, I headed to the Young Marines Leadership Symposium where I was informed that the next night we would be having dinner with the same veterans. So there we were on Saturday night; we had our alphas on and we were looking good.

A few of us volunteered for a color guard, during which the President's Own played, which was extremely nerve-racking but equally exciting. After that, there were several speakers. All of which told a similar tale – the tale of the Battle of Iwo Jima.

The Battle of Iwo Jima is one that most every Marine, and every Young Marine for that matter, is familiar with. The 36-day battle epitomizes the Marine Corps. Boys as young as me and men as old as my father put their lives on the line and nearly 7,000 of

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RETURNING SOUVENIRS

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as a war souvenir where it surfaced 65 years later at a flea market in South Carolina, it's importance not understood.

John Puett, a member of the Fifth Marine Division, brought the letter home after the war but had recently passed away. Somehow his box of World War II-related memorabilia had found its way to a flea market.

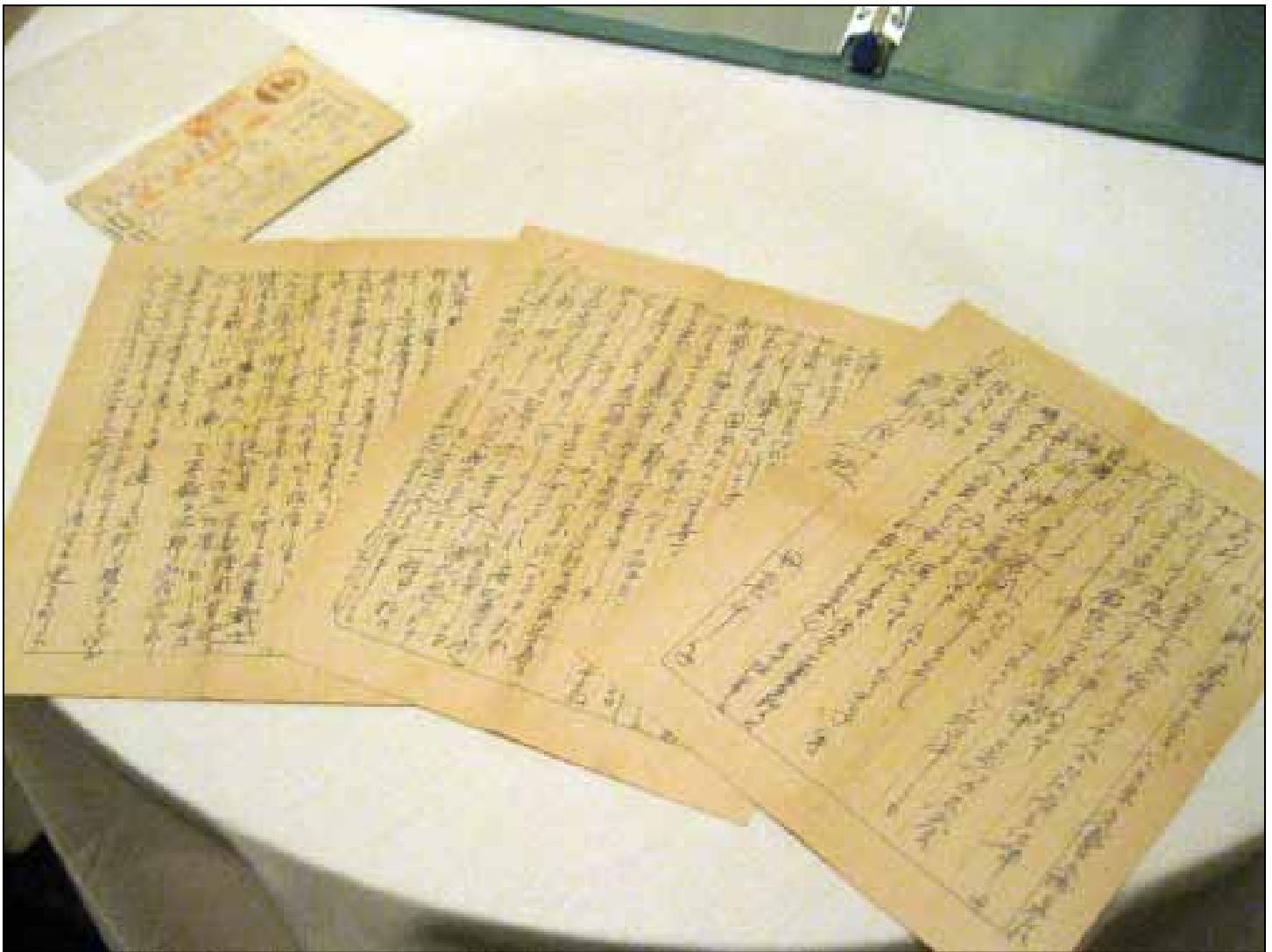
It was common for WWII Marines, soldiers and sailors to bring home souvenirs of their battles, just like we all do today when we visit Niagara Falls, the Grand Canyon or the Statue of Liberty. People like to bring home reminders of their adventures. Some of the souvenirs were postcards; some were flags or rifles. In this case, it was an unassuming letter from Iwo Jima.

Rex Butler, a military collector, was at the flea

market and recognized the Iwo Jima connection and purchased the grouping of items. After finding the son of the dead Marine and returning the related correspondence to him, Rex decided to do the same for the Japanese family.

It took the cooperative efforts of a dozen selfless people, both in Japan and California, but the Hattori family was located and contacted about the letter. The grand nephew of 1stLt Hattori flew out to accept the letter at a dinner hosted by the local chamber of commerce and the City of Oceanside, Calif.

The letter was taken back to Japan where Buddhist funeral rites were conducted at the temple to pray for the departed. Since no body was ever recovered, the letter was treated as the decedent's remains and prayed over. It was then given to 1stLt Hattori's daughter, Chikako, who is mentioned in the letter. She was moved to tears



Since the body of 1stLt Genichi Hattori was never recovered from Iwo Jima, this letter written to him by his mother, Machiko Hattori, was honored upon its return many years later in Buddhist funeral rites held by the family. "This letter is my treasure," his daughter says. Pacific War historian and Japanese interpreter Dan King assists those who want to return personal artifacts once claimed in battle.

at reading her grandmother's handwritten letter to her father.

"This letter is my treasure," Chikako said.

Another Iwo Jima item

Coincidentally, at that very same dinner in Oceanside Calif., another WWII Japanese artifact surfaced and was handed to me by Vickie Proesser (the organizer of the event). It was the Japanese Army service booklet of Pvt Kawasaki, who had been a crew member of a 150mm rocket unit on Iwo Jima!

He had been killed and his service record taken to the States where it, too, surfaced at a flea market. The man who bought it had heard about the return of the Iwo Jima letters and decided to give the booklet to Vickie Proesser to see if it could be returned, as well. (Having lived in Japan for 10 years, I learned to read and write the language.)

When I got home, I examined the booklet (*Guntai Techo*) and learned quite a bit about this man. Before being sent to Iwo Jima with the 86th Field Artillery Regiment, he had already served his three years of active duty in Korea with an artillery unit. He had gone back to work at a desk job in a naval shipyard when he was recalled and sent to Iwo with the 86th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 1st Company, on a 150mm mortar team.

In order to find the family of Pvt Kawasaki, I requested assistance from fellow WWII Pacific war historian Nobuhiro Nakamura (in Japan), who was able to find the family after an amazing sequence of phone calls and letters to various temples in Nagasaki that had maintained records after the war.

I mailed the service booklet to Kawasaki's only surviving sibling, a younger brother, Sadao Kawasaki, who was deeply moved to see the booklet. There are no surviving photos of his brother, or anything his brother had ever owned, so the booklet became the only physical evidence that his brother had ever lived.

Q. What types of war souvenirs can be returned?

A. Anything with personal writing on it is a good candidate to be returned; flags, letters, postcards, caps, ancient swords with a capture tag or the owner's name, hats, helmets, etc. Because of Japanese laws, military firearms of any type are not permitted into the country. Bayonets and NCO swords that were machine-made fall into this category.

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Writer translates another re-discovered Japanese flag

After Ernie Petersen (HS-4-13) died, his widow, Ruth Steffens, discovered a Japanese flag among his belongings that he brought home from Iwo Jima. She would like it returned to the family, if possible. In addition to an effort being made to locate the family, Dan King translated the writing on the flag.

"The flag is signed by a lieutenant general in the upper center," Dan says. "I can make out the rank, but not the name. It is a good chance this flag was given to him when he enlisted, or was drafted, into the army. The lieutenant general might have been a family member or a family friend. He might have been retired or active duty — hard to tell at this point. It is also signed by a first lieutenant, as noted below.

"There are eight interesting writings on the flag that I was able to decipher; there are a couple more, but I can't make those out yet."

- 1) Prayers for Long Life, Victory in Battle. Given to Mr. Kenzo Matsuo
- 2) LtGen (?), then illegible patriotic saying
- 3) 1stLt Mimura, Sure victory for the Emperor
- 4) Banzai, Banzai. Tojiro(?) Nagahashi
- 5) Prayers for our military to be victorious
- 6) Prayers for Long Life, Victory in Battle
- 7) Offer even seven lives for the Emperor (if one had seven lives to give, they would all be offered up in his service)
- 8) Offer seven lives for the Emperor (name illegible)

The Meaning of Iwo Jima

By Mark Flowers



A Marine stands at the grave of GySgt John M. Basilone, killed in action on D-Day at Iwo Jima on 19 February 1945.

(USMC Photo)

The fighting on Iwo Jima symbolized the role of the Marines in World War II. This epic campaign became a touchstone that forcefully demonstrated the sacrifice of Leathernecks in pursuit of victory. In military history, Iwo Jima ranks among the most demanding and costly battles ever. Of the 71,000 Americans who served there, 26,038 were killed, wounded or missing in action.

Expressed as a math equation, to conquer each one of Iwo Jima's eight square miles of volcanic slag, 3,255 America servicemen were killed or wounded. The vast majority of these heroes were Marines, but men of every branch became casualties in the fight to capture Iwo Jima. Adding Japanese casualty figures, more than 46,000 men died or were wounded during the 36 days of this indescribable battle. Without question, Iwo Jima was beyond human comprehension in terms of the slaughter.

And still, the Marines prevailed.

For many Americans, the flag raising on Mount Suribachi became the ultimate symbol of World War II. The picture, snapped by Joe Rosenthal, didn't just show some Marines putting up a flag. It reinforced the ethos of the Marine Corps. But lost in the publicity was the grim fact that only three of the six Marines in the photo survived the battle, and only one lived to old age, and he was haunted by post-traumatic stress for the rest of his life.

The flag raising is an iconic image instantly familiar, even to people with no knowledge of World War II. But, at least in my opinion, the true symbols of Iwo Jima were much quieter places. They were not on the top of Mount Suribachi, but down below, not far from the black sand beaches where American fighting men first set foot on this piece of hell on a morning like no other in February 1945. The cemeteries that sprung up even as the fighting raged, served not just as collecting spots for the dead, but as powerful and sobering reminders to the Marines who were left behind and to the American people.

Each of the thousands of graves were not just a marker, but a life cut short, with buddies left behind, and families who would never really share in the joy of homecoming and victory. As weary survivors of battle were pulled off the line, they made their way alone and in groups to visit their friends. Standing at the graves of their friends and comrades, many must have been awe-struck that so many other graves surrounded those of men they knew.

Iwo Jima was an equal opportunity killer of Marines. Among the dead were high-ranking officers,

Medal of Honor Marines, buck privates, Navy Corpsmen and Seabees, infantrymen, tankers, cooks, runners, staff officers and clerks. They were a cross section of the best America had to offer in 1945. Although almost all wanted to live, many ultimately had no say in the matter. They died from shellfire, sniper bullets, antitank rounds, machine gun fire, edged weapon attacks and a thousand other ways. This was not just death in an individual sense, but on a machine-age scale that took advantage of every bit of technology to kill.

There was little glory to be found on the hellish wastes of Iwo Jima, but honor could be found everywhere one chose to risk a look under the rain of fire that fell there in 1945. It was the quiet honor of a Marine who strapped on his pack and loaded a rifle, even though all his buddies were dead and he knew he would soon join them. It was the honor of a runner with a critical message to get back across a piece of fire-swept ground where two guys had already gotten hit trying to cross it. It was the rifleman with a fusillade of machine gun fire ahead and no one else to do the job.

That honor still echoes across time, if you listen closely for it. Staunch and determined, not wanting to die, but ready nonetheless, the Marines wrote their own place in history. Each paragraph was the inscription on a cross or Star of David. So many stories, so many chapters. Can you hear them?

Reprinted with permission of Mark Flowers, editor of the Emerald Empire Detachment #917 Marine Corps League newsletter, February 2011



The Spirit of Iwo Jima, honoring the Marines of the 5th Amphibious Corps who conquered this critical objective of World War II.
(USMC Photo)

RETURNING SOUVENIRS

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Q. Is it always possible to find the family?

A. No, sometimes the family can't be located, so don't get your hopes up too high. Be prepared for anything. It could take a month, it could take a year or the family might not ever be found.

Q. What is the best way to return an item?

A. Just as there are many trails that lead to the summit of Mt. Fuji, there are many ways to go about trying to return an item to Japan. One could contact the Japanese Embassy, a local university's Japanese department, the chamber of commerce in the dead soldier's hometown (if you have a friend who can read Japanese) or contact a Japanese newspaper. If you just want the item returned to the "nation of Japan" and don't care about it going directly to the family, you could mail it to the Yasukuni War shrine in Tokyo.

Request

Please do not try and contact the family unless you are willing to let it go. There have been several unfortunate cases where the Japanese family had been contacted and the American changed his mind. This caused a great deal of heartache and bad feelings and hurt other people's legitimate attempts to return items.

Also, it is in very poor taste to ask the family to buy the item or reimburse you for your costs in acquiring it. If you are unable to freely give the item with no strings attached, perhaps it is better to keep it. If you feel the item should stay in your family because it represents a father or grandfather's military service, then it is understandable to keep it and not even contact the family.

Writer's note

I did help return the WWII Japanese soldier's service booklet to his younger brother in Japan. Photos are on my website at www.historicalconsulting.com

The North County Times article, "OCEANSIDE: WWII Japanese soldier's military record returned to family," is online at www.nctimes.com/news/local/oceanside/article_829137f3-5d34-5192-8633-d86bdd4ee665.html