



OPERATION NEW ARRIVALS



Young Vietnamese boy awaiting among other refugees and their luggage in one of the refugee camps at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, 1975. Official U.S. Marine Corps photographs

By Bill Parsons

Editor's note: 2020 is the 45th anniversary of the arrival of the refugees from Southeast Asia after the fall of Saigon, Vietnam. From the end of April 1975 through October 1975, tens of thousands of refugees would call Camp Pendleton "home" for a brief time while being processed and then resettling in their new country.

It's late April 1975. The last of the American military and civilian personnel have left Saigon, Vietnam. The Vietnam War or, if you wish, Conflict, and America's involvement

is over. The protective shield of the South Vietnamese Regular Army (ARVN) has begun to crumble and will fall shortly. The ARVN can no longer stop the communist onslaught into South Vietnam. Citizens are fleeing the country by the tens-of-thousands. They go by vehicle, by aircraft, or by boat. For most the goal is to reach American naval ships or nearby bases in the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. In a very short time the primary jumping off point to America will become Guam. Much of the transportation away from Vietnam is supplied by US military support through efforts such as "Operation

Baby Lift" and "Operation Frequent Wind".

We can call them refugees or boat people or whatever. They flee the country because they fear for their safety. They refuse to live under the mantle of communism and the retaliatory administration of the North Vietnamese government. Many want only to come to the United States to begin life over in a nation that represents freedom of choice and a guarantee of civil rights they will never be able to enjoy in Southeast Asia.

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Operation New Arrivals, Cont.

As the refugees began to make their way to America it became apparent their relocation did not enjoy unanimous support. President Gerald Ford twice approached Congress asking for millions of dollars in funding to support the movement. Both times the amount asked for was reduced or outright denied. Many American people were against refugees being brought to this country. Why? Because it was too soon; we had just fought a nearly 10-year war in Vietnam; a war that had become extremely unpopular and, since the Civil War, incomparably divisive to the nation. America had shed much blood and spent huge amounts of treasure on Vietnamese soil. As a nation, we needed time to heal. Or maybe the reason had a racial overtone? The Vietnamese people, especially the children, would be better off living with their own kind. Or maybe the reason was economic? How would the cost of relocation add to our economic woes? Would taxes go up? How much more money would be taken from pockets of the working man, and woman, to support and fund the refugees? The reasons were wide ranging and without focus.

Still the President continued to politick for support in aiding the Vietnamese. To shore up his position, President Ford pointed to the years since the end of World War II. In the years between then and 1975 the United States had welcomed, from several countries, 2 million refugees who were escaping the threat of Communism. The President, and his administration, believed we owed the same opportunities to the Vietnamese.

On April 28, 1975 Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton command is notified the Base has been chosen as one of four reception centers nationwide to receive Vietnamese refugees. And, not to put too much stress on an already stressful situation, refugees would begin arriving within twenty-four hours. Refugees began to land by transport at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, in Orange County and, by helicopter at Munn Field on Camp Pendleton. The refugees were then taken, via bus, to their new home on the base. They would be given documents, medical examinations and become, in essence, Americanized.

As with all other problems, the Marines dealt with this situation head-on. The base command almost immediately selected Camp Talega as the location where the incoming refugees would be housed. The camp was chosen because it is located at the northernmost region of Camp Pendleton where it was relatively separated from the personnel, training and day-to-day operations of the Base.

All other units assigned to Camp Pendleton gave, loaned

or offered assistance to prepare for and accommodate the refugees. This assistance included everything from materiel for housing, buildings to conduct operations and the people to put these units together. Medical facilities, personnel, equipment and supplies were given. Clerical personnel, Base personnel necessary to handle routine duties were assigned on a daily basis, pipes to transport water or sewage. Even law enforcement was taken from the Base to monitor potential criminal activity and to keep non-essential military personnel and refugees separate.

Help came from other Marine facilities in the form of clothing, bedding, food, even utility poles for electricity and telephones. Civilian agencies, especially from the City of San Clemente, assisted in getting electricity and water to the base and Camp Talega.

As the refugees began to arrive, each was given documents and assigned to a housing unit. A notification board was centrally located in the camp with the name of each refugee. This allowed members of families or villages, who were separated within Camp Talega, to connect and



Aerial view of the Refugee Camp at Camp Talega which encompasses areas 1, 2, and 3 aboard Camp Pendleton, May 5, 1975.

Operation New Arrivals, Cont.

helped with the transition into their new home. They were given complete physical examinations and assigned jobs to assist in the efficient operation of the camp. Classes in English were taught; as well as, the social and cultural aspects of America.

It would be just wrong to not mention the refugees themselves. They were big contributors to their own well-being and smooth transition into American life. They came together to form committees that helped to improve everyday camp life. Camp Talega started to look very much like a typical American small town. The refugees formed what could be described as a court system to deal with minor disputes between

residents. A mayor was even elected to oversee the operation of the camp from a refugee point-of-view and to act as liaison between the residents and military authorities.

To say this was a unified effort is to understate the facts.

Camp Talega, as a refugee Americanization camp, operated for a very short time. While in existence thousands of refugees passed through on their way to freedom. As each individual, couple or family acclimated and a sponsor was located they were allowed to leave Talega and assume their new roles in their new home. Most, as well as their children and their children's children, became

and have become accomplished well respected, contributing members of their communities.



A U.S. Marine takes time to walk along with a young Vietnamese boy at Refugee Camp #5, May 15, 1975.

President's Message

Richard B. Rothwell



With pleasure I introduce and welcome aboard two recent additions to our senior leadership team.

- Maj. Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, USMC (Ret) is the newest member of our Council of Advisors. General Coglianesse has been a friend of CPHS for several years. While on active duty he held two high level positions at Camp Pendleton: Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations West/ Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and Commanding General, 1st Marine Logistics Group. His knowledge and experience will be very valuable as we move forward.

- Michael Kelley has joined our Board of Directors. I have known Mike since he was a hard-charging NROTC midshipman at Miami University. After serving on active duty as a Marine Corps Officer, Mike earned an MBA and Ph.D. and went on to serve at

Camp Pendleton as the Deputy Director, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4 (Logistics). Mike's education and experience will make him a valuable member of our Board and Succession Committee.

Over 560 veterans, guests, and friends of the Corps gathered at Camp Pendleton's Pacific Views Event Center on Feb. 15 for a Memorial Service and Banquet to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the amphibious assault on Iwo Jima. The three Marine divisions that participated in the operation had trained in whole or part at Camp Pendleton before deploying to the Pacific Theater. CPHS Board member, Bo Hellman, and his talented graphics/photographer wife, Deb, partnered with the Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee (San Diego) to produce an 88-page commemorative magazine containing stories and photos of Marines and Sailors who fought on Iwo. All attending the banquet received a copy of this limited print magazine.

Our fourth annual "Golf with a Hero" golf tournament will be held on April 23 at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa golf course in Carlsbad, Calif. Those who attended our Old Corps Birthday celebration at

the Omni La Costa Resort last November will recall that it is a beautiful venue. Given the current security restrictions on military installations, the Omni La Costa Resort will also offer easier access for our civilian golfers than does Camp Pendleton. Every foursome will include an active duty Marine who will play for free. If you are in the area, please join us. "Golf with a Hero" is a major CPHS fundraiser so if you cannot attend please consider making a donation.

CPHS is in the final phase of preparing a formal offer to donate a monument to its namesake, Maj. Gen. Joseph H. Pendleton, for permanent placement aboard Camp Pendleton. When in place, it will enhance the history of Camp Pendleton in a beautiful and meaningful way. More will follow as we progress.

Thank you for your continued support of CPHS. You are essential to our efforts to help the Marine Corps preserve and tell the long and diverse history of Camp Pendleton. That includes not only the history of the Marine Corps in Southern California but the history of Southern California itself. With your assistance we will keep that history alive.

Richard B. Rothwell

Iwo Jima Veterans - 75th Anniversary



Iwo Jima veterans Al Nelson, Jr. and George Vouros at the Mech Museum.



Frank Steele and Iwo Jima veteran Delbert Littrell, 4th Marine Division in uniform.



Iwo Jima veteran and Navajo code talker, Thomas Begay



CPHS Advisor Lt. Gen. Edward Hanlon, Jr., USMC (Ret) and Bonnie Hanlon



Group photo of the Iwo Jima veterans at the 75th anniversary dinner. Photos by Deb Hellman

The Camp Pendleton Mechanized Museum hosted Iwo Jima veterans and their guests on Feb. 13. Led by Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee Board member, Dan Zepeda, the 54 guests were provided with a detailed tour of the museum. Marines from the Camp Pendleton History and Museum Division provided the museum tour, describing the various wheeled and tracked vehicles and providing a brief history of Camp Pendleton and the museum building. Among those touring the museum were Iwo Jima veterans Al Nelson, Jr. (Burlington, Iowa), George Puterbaugh (Oswego, Ore.), and George Vouros (Natick, Mass.).

The Mechanized Museum tour was the culmination of a full day aboard Camp Pendleton which included a stop at the 5th Marine Regiment Memorial Garden; static equipment display and meeting Leathernecks from 5th Marines; narrated bus tour of the base from Camp San Mateo to the 22 Area Mess Hall for lunch; remarks by Marine Corps Installations West - Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Daniel Conley, USMC before an afternoon concert by the 1st Marine Division Band.

On Feb. 15, twenty-eight Iwo Jima veterans and 540 guests gathered at the Pacific Views Event Center (PVEC) at Camp Pendleton to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima. This gathering was the last formal West Coast gathering of Iwo Jima veterans, an annual event hosted by the Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee (San Diego) since 1996.

After a brief solemn memorial service held outside of the PVEC surrounding the Iwo Jima monument, which included a wreath laying at the monument and 21-gun salute by a 105mm cannon section from 11th Marine Regiment, guests moved to the main PVEC ballroom for the banquet.

Retired Marine Lt. Col. Larry Rannals was the emcee for the ceremonial portion of the evening. During the ceremony, the name of each of the (28) Iwo Jima veterans present at the event was read, each veteran standing after their name was announced and received a rousing round of applause from the crowd; names of those known Iwo Jima veterans who had passed since last year were also read.

The I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) Commanding General (CG), Lt. Gen. Joseph Osterman, USMC delivered remarks to the assembled guests. Other active duty Marine Corps generals present were Maj. Gen. Robert F. Castellvi, USMC (CG, 1st Marine Division); Brig. Gen. Roberta L. Shea, USMC (CG, 1st Marine Logistics Group); and Brig. Gen. Daniel B. Conley, USMC (CG, Marine Corps Installations West - Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton).

A cake cutting ceremony was conducted with the oldest Marine, Tony Cappa, age 98, and youngest Marine, Cpl. Lizette F. De Paz, age 20, sharing a piece of the cake with General Osterman. An "empty chair tribute" was read by Marine Iwo Jima veteran and retired Master Gunnery Sgt. Len Maffioli; a flag raising re-enactment

was conducted on stage by local members of the United States Marine Corps Historical Company.

All who attended the banquet event received a limited print edition of an 88-page commemorative magazine, created by the Camp Pendleton Historical Society (CPHS) in collaboration with the Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee. The magazine contains (36) stories of individual Iwo Jima veterans as well as numerous informative articles about the battle and various photographs from Iwo Jima veterans and official U.S. Marine Corps photos from the 36-day battle.

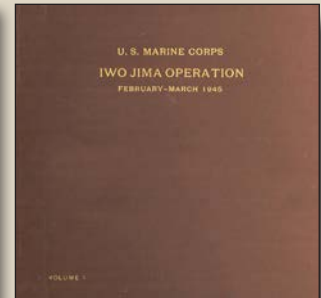
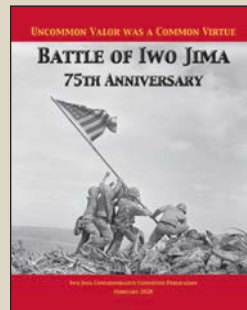


Family and friends trying to get a group photo of the Iwo Jima veterans.

Though this was the last formal West Coast gathering of Iwo Jima veterans, it indeed was a very special evening, spending time with the Iwo Jima veterans who clearly set the standard for future generations of Marines.

The limited-edition Iwo Jima 75th anniversary magazine and a republished circa 1945 official U.S. Marine Corps two-volume series titled "Iwo Jima Operation", which contains (240) 8x10 inch battle photographs and original captions, are available for viewing online at:

issuu.com/camppendletonhistoricalsociety



Welcome to our Newest CPHS Advisor



A New Jersey native, Maj. Gen. Coglianese was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant upon graduation from Indiana University South Bend in 1983.

He commanded at every level and has extensive joint and operational experience. Maj. Gen. Coglianese retired from the Marine Corps in 2019 after five combat tours and 36 years of active-duty service.

As a General Officer, he served as the Deputy Director for Operations, J-3, The Joint Staff; Commanding General of Marine Corps Installations West - Marine Corps Base, Camp

Pendleton; Commanding General, 1st Marine Logistics Group; Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics (LP); Inspector General of the Marine Corps; Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations Command / Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations & Logistics (Facilities).

Maj. Gen. Coglianese holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Public Environmental Affairs from Indiana and a Masters in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. He attended Penn State University as the Senior Marine Fellow, Supply Chain and Information Systems Program.

In addition to serving as an advisor to the Camp Pendleton Historical Society, Maj. Gen. Coglianese is a member of the Board of Directors for 11th Hour Service, Washington, DC.

Welcome to our Newest CPHS Board Member



Maj. Michael Kelley, USMC (Ret) was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 1978 upon graduation from Miami University. He was designated a supply officer and was assigned to a variety of supply billets where he served at all levels of supply and within each major combat element. His education includes a Bachelor of Applied Science, a MBA, and a Ph.D. He retired from the Marine Corps in 1998.

Following his military career, Mike accepted a position at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton working for the Assistant Chief of Staff (AC/S), G-4 (Logistics). Over the next 21 years, he served within the logistics departments at Marine Corps Base and then Marine Corps Installations - West. During his tour, he either designed or oversaw several large organizational innovations. Mike retired in 2019 as the Deputy, AC/S G-4. He is also active in various volunteer organizations to include serving as the School Board Chair for Tri-City Christian Schools. He and his wife, Nora, live in Vista. They have four children and two grandchildren.

Boy Scout Project at the Marine Corps Mechanized Museum



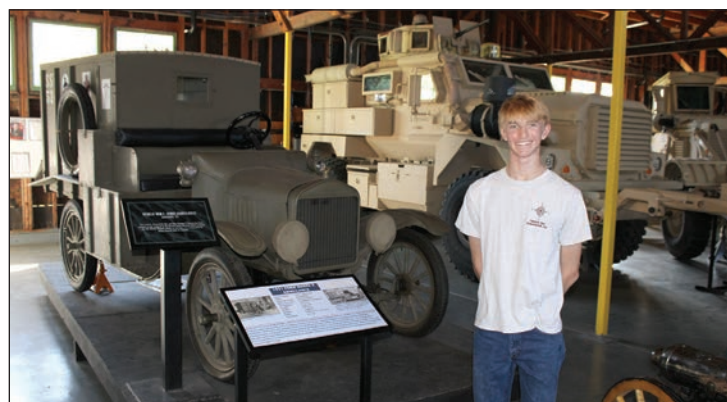
By Jerry Blandford

The Mechanized Museum received a much-needed upgrade to enhance a visitor's experience thanks to Garrett Blandford, a Boy Scout Life Scout with Troop 752 out of Oceanside, Calif. As soon as Garrett earned his Life Scout advancement, he immediately began planning his Eagle Scout Project. An Eagle Scout project is the final stage in a Boy Scout's journey and should be of significant impact and benefit to the community and should represent the Scout's best effort.

Garrett focused on the Camp Pendleton Mechanized Museum for his project. Specifically, he decided to create informational placards for the historic vehicles displayed in the Museum. This Life Scout drew up the plans, utilized a project planning website to track the project, and then enlisted the help of Scouts in Troop 752 to help him. Garrett gave each Scout a template of required information, and the Scouts researched their assigned vehicles in order to come up with all of the facts that they could find. Garrett would then transform this information into a placard which would eventually be displayed in front of the vehicles in the museum. The template and the information on each sign went through a multi-stage approval process before it was deemed satisfactory. The research and approval process took a year and a half to complete.

On Feb. 1, 2020 Garrett assembled a group of Scouts from his Troop and they completed the process by putting the signs all together. Each sign was placed in a metal frame, had a plexiglass cover and a thin plywood backing. The project materials (plexiglass and plywood) were funded by the Camp Pendleton Historical Society. The result was professional looking signs for 36 of the vehicles in the Mechanized Museum.

Garrett's goal was to have his Eagle project completed prior to the annual Iwo Jima commemoration which took place on Feb. 15, 2020. This year, the Iwo Jima veterans toured the Mechanized Museum as well as Marine Corps Recruit



Top Left: Members of Troop 752 in the Mechanized Museum. **Top Right:** Garrett Blandford (top middle) assembling the placard signs with Paul Boughman, Camp Pendleton. **Above:** Garrett Blandford in front of a 1918 Ford Ambulance at the Mechanized Museum. Photos courtesy of Jerry Blandford

Depot, San Diego. On Feb. 15, the date of the observance of the 75th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima, a number of Mechanized Museum vehicles were on display at the Pacific Views Event Center, where they surrounded the Iwo Jima monument. Each vehicle on display had one of the new placard signs in front of it so that the viewers could learn more about the vehicle.

Garrett began his Eagle project on May 8, 2018 and completed it on Feb. 1, 2020. Garrett is currently awaiting his Eagle Board of Review. After that Review, Garrett Blandford will become one of the only 4% of all Scouts who ever achieve the rank of Eagle Scout.

Right: Garrett Blandford meeting film producer/actor Clint Eastwood before the advance showing of Eastwood's film, "Richard Jewell", at the Base Theater, Camp Pendleton on Dec. 7, 2019.



On your next tour of the Mech Museum... try to find the placard with Clint Eastwood's signature on it.

Upcoming Events

Save
the
Date!

4th Military Children's Golf Clinic. In a recurring partnership between CPHS and Pro Kids / First Tee of San Diego, this free clinic for children of Camp Pendleton military families will take place on March 18, 2020 from 1-5 p.m. at the Pro Kids / First Tee Oceanside Campus (821 Douglas Drive, Oceanside, Calif.). The clinic is designed to facilitate a better appreciation of golf as a life sport while learning about the history of Camp Pendleton. All golf equipment will be provided to clinic participants.



4th Annual "Golf With A Hero" Charity Golf Tournament. Planned for April 23, 2020, the event will take place at the golf course at the Omni La Costa Resort and Spa (2614 Lewis Lane, Carlsbad, Calif.) from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Each foursome will be comprised of one active duty Marine and three other golfers, providing an excellent opportunity for golfers to converse with Marines who have recent worldwide experience carrying out the mission of the Marine Corps. Tickets are \$150 per golfer and can be purchased via Eventbrite at:

<http://bit.ly/3cSAJT8>

Further detailed information for the above events will be communicated via the CPHS Facebook page, CPHS web page, Eventbrite, and separate digital communication.

"Uncommon Valor" Exhibit at the Mechanized Museum



Visit the Marine Corps Mechanized Museum's exhibit of artifacts, vintage vehicles, armaments and information about Camp Pendleton's Marines who served on Iwo Jima in 1945. Mounted in honor of the 75th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima, the Camp Pendleton History and Museum Division exhibit, curated by Director Faye Jonason and volunteer Agnes Wojnar, features items both common and unique, including the ever-present herringbone twill (HBT) uniform, 1945 3-cent stamps commemorating Iwo Jima, a collection of Imperial Japanese military sake cups, a USS Utah life preserver and a rare Pharmacist's Mate uniform. Graphic banners designed by volunteer Bailee Roche presents historical imagery from the Camp Pendleton Archives.

The Marine Corps Mechanized Museum is open to the public from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 7:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Friday. To

gain access to the museum or reserve a guided tour, call (760) 725-5758 or email mcbcampen_history@usmc.mil.

For more information about the Mechanized Museum, visit the web site and Facebook page at:

www.pendleton.marines.mil/About/History-and-Museums/
www.themech.org/
<http://bit.ly/2W7OszB>



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