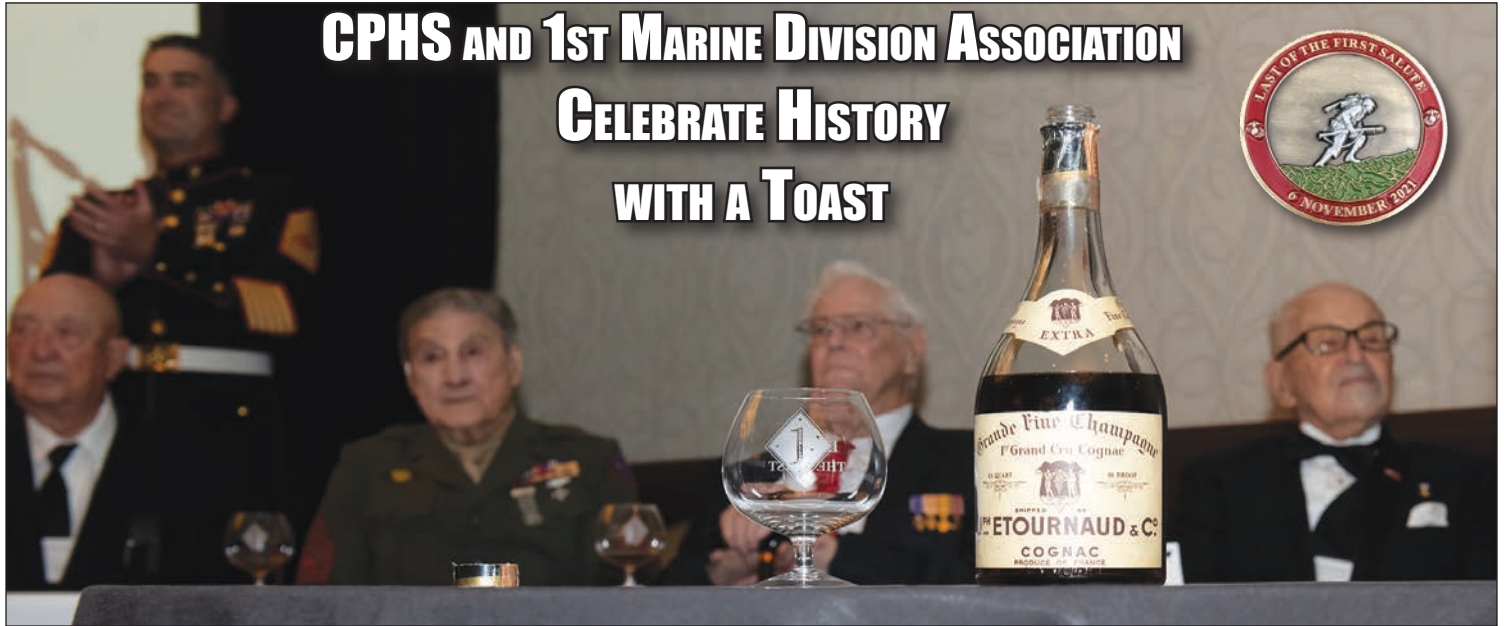




CPHS AND 1ST MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION CELEBRATE HISTORY WITH A TOAST



On Nov. 6, 2021, Camp Pendleton Historical Society (CPHS) and the 1st Marine Division Association (FMDA) co-hosted a Marine Corps Birthday celebration and "Last of the First" salute at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa (Carlsbad, Calif.). This special event was genuinely a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a historic occasion as we recognized surviving World War II combat veterans of the 1st Marine Division.

Over the past almost two years, COVID had indeed put a stranglehold on many planned gatherings of Marines,

Above: Four of the 1st Marine Division combat veterans seated during the "salute" ceremony with the 1920s "Last Man's" bottle of cognac in the foreground.

Bottom Left: Sgt. Donald Procter raises the first toast of the "salute" to his fellow World War II 1st Marine Division comrades.

Bottom Right: Lt. Col. Alex Martin, USMCR presents the "Last Man's" bottle of cognac to the Division World War II veterans. Photos by Deb Hellman



Toast, cont.

families, and friends of the Corps. FMDA was planning to conduct an appropriate ceremony in which to honor the surviving members of the World War II (WW II) 1st Marine Division veterans by opening the 1920s bottle of cognac set aside in 1946 by the “Last Man’s” bottle club, comprised of 14 Marines from the battle of Guadalcanal. As time marched on and COVID severely restricted gatherings, it appeared that it might be years before this much-anticipated event would take place.

In light of the dwindling number of surviving WW II combat veterans, it would be regrettable if this event did not occur before that last WW II 1st Marine Division Marine departed without this special honor. That was until CPHS Board member and FMDA member, retired Marine Lt. Col. Charlie Kershaw, engaged in conversation with FMDA President Jerry Corrento, Sr. in early August 2021 about combining the FMDA “Last of the First” event with CPHS at the Historical Society’s scheduled 246th Marine Corps birthday celebration.

In the event’s early planning stages, Charlie briefed the CPHS Board on this unique opportunity that was made known to CPHS with regards to partnering with the FMDA. FMDA expected to conduct the “Last of the First” ceremony in August 2021 at the annual Division Association reunion but COVID prevented that reunion from happening. FMDA leadership posed the question, “How long can we wait”?

After their dialogue, the FMDA President welcomed the idea of combining the “Last of the First” salute the planned CPHS Marine Corps Birthday celebration. With an agreement among the two organizations, event tasks were disseminated among the two organizations. FMDA primarily identified World War II veterans willing and able to travel to the event, facilitated their travel, and provided administrative, financial and event support assistance. Camp Pendleton Historical Society focused their efforts on the inclusive event planning, funding, advertising, ticket sales, and reservations.

Partnering with FMDA presented many advantages to CPHS, of which primarily was likely access to and the backing of the 1st Marine Division for active-duty resources to support the

Birthday celebration. Although the Marines’ Memorial Club & Hotel (San Francisco) preferred that the ceremony be held there, especially since the “Last Man’s” bottle of cognac had been “stored” and on display there for years, the Committee deemed that course of action not feasible.

One of the main challenges to overcome was how best to resource getting these WW II veterans to California. With little to no funds available through FMDA and limited resources available from CPHS, the Committee decided to offer an event ticket category that provided an opportunity for individuals to “sponsor” a WW II veteran and their escort. Fortunately, three individuals and two organizations stepped up to the challenge and each donated \$1,500 to help defray the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and event ticket for the eight veterans and their escorts. To those charitable people and organizations, we and the WW II veterans are forever grateful for your generosity.

Through the extraordinary efforts of the local (Camp Pendleton) FMDA staff, June Cormier and Dennis Coady, FMDA was instrumental in reaching out to the 137 WW II 1st Marine Division veterans on the FMDA membership rolls. Due to the age and health of these veterans, many were not able to attend the event but eight veterans did travel from within and outside of California to attend this historic event. Veterans arriving from out of state traveled from Florida, Conn., Minnesota and Indiana. These eight veterans ranged in age from 94 to 101 years of age. June and Dennis gathered and compiled biography information and photos (before and current) of each of the veterans attending. The veterans’ Marine Corps service history was used in a 16-page limited edition “Last of the First” program, replete with a message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, history of the “Last Man’s” bottle club, individual veterans’ information, and Honors awarded to the 1st Marine Division.

With nearly 200 guests assembled and everything painstakingly set in place at the Omni La Costa, it was time to begin the customary birthday ceremony. CPHS President Col. Richard Rothwell, USMC (Ret) provided the guests with a brief background of and introduced the guest of honor,



Guest of honor, Brig. Gen. Thomas V. Draude, USMC (Ret) and CPHS Treasurer and event narrator, Master Sgt. Tim Anderson, USMC (Ret)



Col. Richard Rothwell cuts the cake during the ceremony.



Col. Richard Rothwell

Brig. Gen. Thomas V. Draude, USMC (Ret), a graduate from the United States Naval Academy who had a distinguished 30-year career in the Marine Corps, retiring on Jan. 1, 1993. Having served in the 1st Marine Division as a company and field grade officer and as the Assistant Division Commander during Operation Desert Storm, General Draude provided an inspiring narrative, reflecting on his experiences as a U.S. Marine.

The 1st Marine Division, headquartered at Camp Pendleton, supported the ceremonial portion of the event by providing the Color Guard detail, led by Color Sergeant Sgt. Antonio Flores; ceremonial musical support was provided by the 1st Marine Division Band, led by Staff Sgt. Nathan D. Doggett.

Adhering to the Marine Corps' time-honored tradition, the oldest and youngest Marines were recognized during the cake cutting ceremony. The celebration included the traditional reading of Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune's 1921 birthday message and viewing the birthday message video from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. David H. Berger. Soon after the conclusion of the ceremony, guests were served dinner.

The historic portion of the celebration was the "Last of the First" salute. Following a brief overview of the history of the "Last Man's" Club by Dick Rothwell, the FMDA Associate Regional Vice President for the West, Nick Warr, introduced each of the eight 1st Marine Division World War II veterans. After the veterans made their way to an elongated series of tables at the front of the ballroom, Lt. Col. Alex Martin,

EIGHT DECADES AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUNGEST MARINE AND OLDEST MARINE AT THE 246TH MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



The oldest Marine present was Sgt. Donald Procter; he was born on July 5, 1920 in Philadelphia, Pa. and enlisted in the Marine Corps in April 1940. The youngest Marine present was Lance Cpl. Jezeabelle Rowley; she was born on July 26, 2002 in Klamath Falls, Ore. Cpl. Rowley enlisted in the Marine Corps on July 2019 and is currently assigned to the 1st Marine Division G-2 as an intelligence analyst.

THE BOTTLE OF COGNAC WON THE AWARD FOR "MOST PHOTOGRAPHED"



USMCR (from the San Francisco Bay area), accompanied by a bagpiper, marched up with the "Last Man's" bottle of cognac. Of a particular note, Lt. Col. Martin had transported the bottle of cognac from the Marines' Memorial Hotel to the ceremony. Martin said, "Transporting the historic bottle was both exciting and anxiety-producing -- you don't want to be the guy that screws this one up! It felt really good to hand it over and to watch those Marines toast their comrades in arms and enjoy it."

After ceremoniously opening the bottle, Lt. Col. Martin poured each veteran a glass of the cognac in a customized etched "Last of the First" snifter glass. Each veteran individually stood up, briefly reflected on their time in the Corps, and then toasted their fellow 1st Marine Division comrades, United States Marine Corps, and United States of America. What a particularly extraordinary night to be able to witness this historical moment, never to be repeated again.

With the conclusion of the "Last of the First" salute and the official retirement of the "Last Man's" bottle, the empty 1920s cognac bottle now resides with the 1st Marine Division Association aboard Camp Pendleton.

We're extremely grateful to the 1st Marine Division leadership and Staff for their superlative support of the event in providing active duty Marines for the Color Guard detail, cake escorts (one was the youngest Marine for the cake cutting ceremony), and an ensemble from the 1st Marine Division Band, all adding to the pomp and circumstance befitting of an extraordinary Marine Corps birthday celebration and historic "Last of the First" salute.

We sincerely appreciate the generosity of our event sponsors, Rancho Mission Viejo and Cow Camp Caridades, sponsors of our World War II veterans, and numerous donors who contributed to CPHS and FMDA. Your donations significantly contributed to the success of this memorable and historic event.

Lastly, CPHS extends a very special thanks to the staff at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa and Camp Pendleton USO who went the "extra mile" to ensure that the venue was befitting of an exceptional Marine Corps birthday celebration and "Last of the First" salute.



Elmer Hawkins holds up his cognac glass after the toast.





THANKS TO ALL
THE GUESTS THAT
ATTENDED OUR
246TH MARINE
CORPS BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION AND
“LAST OF THE
FIRST” SALUTE



ADDITIONAL IMAGES CAN BE FOUND AT: [HTTPS://CAMPPENDLETONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG/PAST-EVENTS](https://camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/past-events)

THE 1ST MARINE DIVISION WORLD WAR II VETERANS PRESENT WERE:

SGT. DONALD PROCTER

An original plank holder in the 1st Marine Division (he was there when the Division was formed in February 1941); awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry in action on Guadalcanal and also fought on New Guinea and New Britain.



SGT. WILLIAM S. DARLING

Assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment and fought on Peleliu and Okinawa and awarded two Purple Heart medals.



STAFF SGT. EANOS "TOM" EVANS

Assigned to 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment and saw combat on Okinawa and awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart medals.



SGT. ELMER HAWKINS

Assigned to 1st Signal Company, Headquarters Battalion and served on Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu.



CPL. LOUIS A. IMFELD

Assigned to 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment and saw combat on Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu.



GUNNERY SGT. THEODORE MAROLDA

Served with 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion and participated in landings at Guadalcanal, New Guinea, New Britain, and Cape Gloucester.



CPL. CARL F. SCOTT

Assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment and served on Cape Gloucester, Peleliu, and Okinawa and awarded the Purple Heart medal.



PVT. PAUL W. WOJAHN

Assigned to 1st Pioneer Battalion and served on Cape Gloucester, New Britain, Peleliu, and Okinawa.





Carl Scott being greeted by local Marines and the USO at the San Diego National Airport. Photo courtesy of the USO.



Paul Wojahn and Donald Procter share their photos, important documents and stories at the Holiday Inn at a meet and greet on Nov. 5.



Donald Procter and his family getting a tour of the 1st Marine Division "White House" on Nov. 6.

President's Message

Richard B. Rothwell



On Nov. 6, 2021, CPHS partnered with the 1st Marine Division Association to produce a memorable celebration of the 246th anniversary of the Marine Corps and the ceremonial retirement of the "Last of the First" Bottle at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa in Carlsbad, Calif. A highlight of the evening was the opening of a 100-year old bottle of cognac followed by toasts by seven Marines who served in combat during World War II with the 1st Marine Division. Brig. Gen.

Thomas V. Draude, USMC (Ret), former deputy commander of the 1st Marine Division and commanding officer of the 5th Marine Regiment, was the guest of honor. A special thanks goes to Board member Charlie Kershaw and his team whose meticulous planning was directly responsible for the highly successful evening.

During the ceremony, I presented a \$1,000 check to Laura Scott. Laura, a senior at San Diego State University, was the winner of the first CPHS essay contest. Her paper, "A Bridge Between: The Relocation of Vietnamese into Southern California" tells the story of Camp Pendleton's role in the relocation of Southeast Asia refugees to the United States after the end of the Vietnam conflict. Hats off to retired CPHS Board member Cal Frantz who donated his time, talent, and treasure to guide our first essay contest to a successful conclusion.

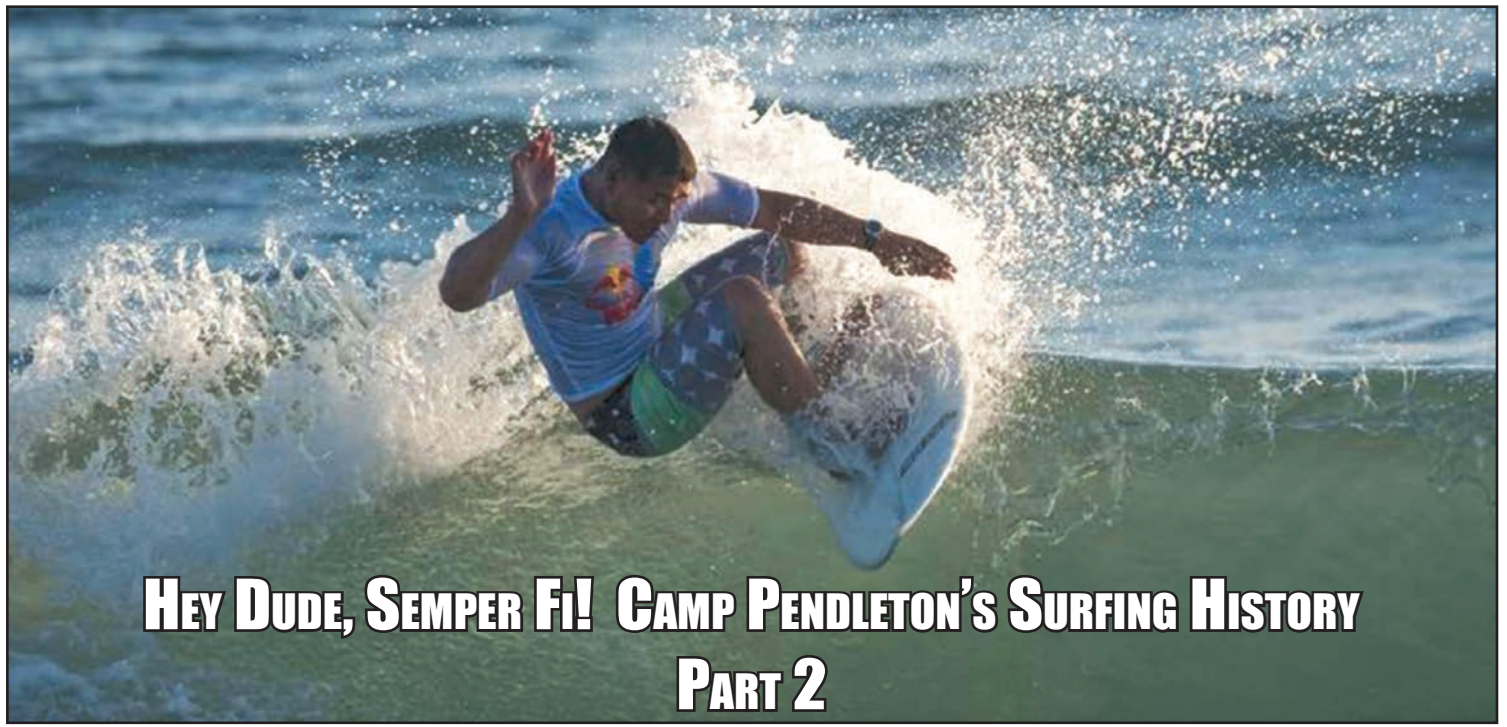
After many years of staffing and funding challenges, work has begun on a new headquarters for the 1st Marine Division. The new headquarters building will be located at Camp Margarita. This is great news for the Division. The current headquarters, built in early 1942, has long been obsolescent. It is also interesting news to those involved with the history of Camp Pendleton because the current headquarters building, affectionately known as "The White House", is historically significant. So far, the Marine Corps has not announced its long term plans for the building.

Our offer to donate a monument to Camp Pendleton in honor of Maj. Gen. Joseph H. Pendleton is proceeding favorably, but slowly. The offer is currently in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, awaiting his action. I have every reason to believe that the decision will ultimately be favorable. In the meantime, we have agreed with Base leadership on the monument site; our fundraising is going well; and our sculptor is on track to complete the monument in time for a dedication in the Fall of 2022. Our hope is that the Marine Corps will agree on a dedication date in September, which would coincide with the 80th anniversary of the dedication of Camp Pendleton.

Mike Lewis, Chairman of our Events Committee, and his team have begun planning for our 6th annual "Golf with a Hero" golf tournament to be held on May 20, 2022. This is a major fundraiser for CPHS. A unique feature is that every foursome will include an active duty Marine or Sailor who will play without cost to him or her. Standby for further word on this event.

My sincere thanks to all who supported our "Old Corps" Marine Corps Birthday celebration and retirement of the "Last of the First" Bottle. If you were able to attend, I am sure that you will agree it was a moving experience. Your backing is essential to our efforts to help the Marine Corps preserve and tell the history of the land we know today as Camp Pendleton.

Richard B. Rothwell



HEY DUDE, SEMPER FI! CAMP PENDLETON'S SURFING HISTORY PART 2

By David Matuszak

Camp Pendleton history is rooted in the native peoples there, the Acjachemen. Following the 1769 Portolá Expedition, the first Spanish land crossing through Camp Pendleton, the San Onofre Native Americans were colonized and renamed the Juaneños after the Mission San Juan Capistrano. I determined that they were not a particularly avid sea-going people and believe that they were not the first surfers there. The Spanish named San Onofre during that expedition and it eventually became one of three Spanish cattle ranchos that made up Camp Pendleton today. All three ranchos were merged into the Rancho Santa Margarita that became the largest beef producing rancho in California during the late 1800s. I chronicled the evolution of the vaqueros and cowboys there that evolved into the Camp Pendleton rodeo. It became one of the biggest rodeos in California where movie stars and dignitaries frequented, such as Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe. A constant reminder of ranching's influence on Camp Pendleton in the base logo, derived from the rancho cattle brand.

Following a tour of early Camp Pendleton history, I placed early California history into context with early Hawaiian surfing culture. Many of San Onofre's pioneer surfers in the early 1930s surfed in Hawaii and brought back Polynesian culture to Southern California. The most significant Hawaiian import was aloha. San Onofre surfing beach became famous for its aloha spirit among surfers. The friendly brotherhood of surfing is still alive at San Onofre, unlike most other surfing spots. Because of crowded waves around the world, the 1960s friendliness in the water has disappeared in most locations and been replaced with tribalism and localism. San Onofre remains the aloha capitol of the mainland. In fact, it is the site of the Hawaiian Surf Club at San Onofre. Founded in the early 1990s, by Kalani Akui and popularized by legendary Hawaiian big-wave surfer, Paul Strauch, San

Onofre became a gathering place for native Hawaiian surfers because of its Waikiki-like wave. The club consists of both native Hawaiians and Anglos and is always welcoming new members. I am member of the club and the legendary San Onofre Surfing Club as well.

The San Onofre Surfing Club was founded in 1952 in response to Marine dictate. San Onofre Surf Beach, located south of the Marine beach, was the original gathering site of pioneer surfers. Today it is called "Old Man's." Following the founding of Camp Pendleton in 1942, the Marine Corps allowed surfers to continue to congregate there, but only if they policed themselves. When surfers were unable to control their behavior there, base brass offered them one final solution: develop a private surfing club where membership would be limited and behavior better controlled. The club was formed and membership was limited to 500 surfers. A locked gate was established and monitored by the surfing club. It became the most exclusive club in the world with a five-year waiting list that turned down movie stars to get in. In the early 1970s when the State Parks took control of that beach, San Onofre went public. The San Onofre Surfing Club remains an influential force there, working with the California State Parks to keep the beach primitive and undeveloped.

I first arrived at San Onofre about 1980, following its opening to the public. For my first couple of decades surfing there, I remember a strong Marine presence. Not just military maneuvers off the coast with ships and helicopters during war games. But it was not unusual to hear the roar of cannon fire in the distance over San Onofre Mountain. At night when the cannons boomed, the ridge-line from behind San Onofre Mountain would glow orange from the muzzle flashes and explosions. Another memory was the regular sighting of Marines jogging through the Old Man's surf beach, dressed in Marine t-shirts and maroon gym shorts. They all sported



Group of Marine surfers watching the line-up before heading out to surf.



Wounded Warrior Marine "catching a wave" at Camp Pendleton beach.



San Onofre Surfing Club logo



San Onofre Beach, Camp Pendleton

recruit buzz cuts and were typically sunburned only on their necks and faces from boot camp training. I remember thinking that if I was a young Marine, I'd be jogging along the beach with all the pretty girls in bikinis too. To their credit, they were always true to Marine conduct. I never once saw them stop and talk to the girls. They were all business. After the 9/11 attack, I never saw them jogging on the beach again; a security precaution, I suspect.

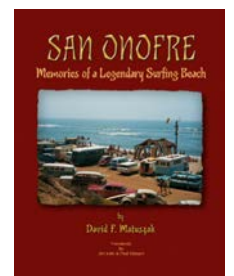
The prominence of Marine surfing is featured in *San Onofre* as well. Evidence of the popularity of Marine surfing is offered in photographs of Marine Beach, including the historic officer club there, the surfing supply section at the base PX that included everything you'd find in a regular surf shop, Marine surfing teams, and the Wounded Warrior surfing program. I also included mention of an old family friend, Gene Peterson, who was stationed at Camp Pendleton during World War II. Peterson and his friend Allen Cottle are the only Camp Pendleton Marines I could document that actually surfed at San Onofre during the war. Peterson had two duties on the base: base lifeguard and insect control, presumably mosquitos. My childhood friend, Chris Bones, an early and rare woman surfer, is featured too. She worked for the YMCA with her husband, Mark. The two of them were co-directors in charge of education, entertainment, and assimilation for the children in the Camp Pendleton Vietnamese (refugee) Camp #5. The camps were another colorful aspect of Camp

Pendleton history where over 50,000 Vietnamese refugees were temporally housed in five camps following the fall of Saigon. Their story is chronicled in *San Onofre* as well.

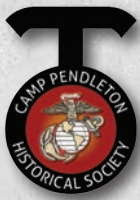
As noted in the last Groundbreaker newsletter, the 1,550 page coffee-table book with 5,000 illustrations and 200 contributors includes so many Marine related stories that they cannot be all mentioned here. *San Onofre: Memories of a Legendary Surfing Beach* is not just the most comprehensive study of surfing history ever attempted, it is a thorough examination of Camp Pendleton surf culture and the place called San Onofre.

Ask for *San Onofre* at the San Onofre Marine Corps Exchange (Camp Pendleton), Marine Beach campground store, your local surf shop, or order it online at:

www.pacificsunset.com



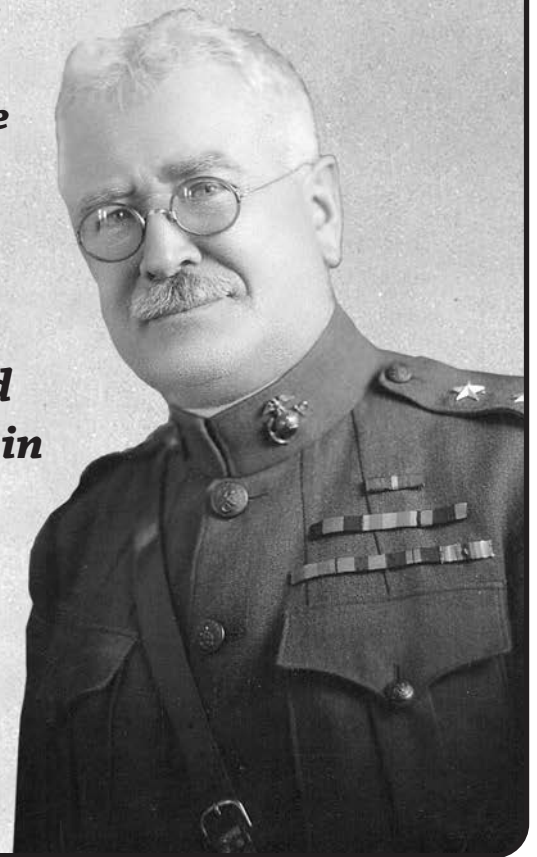
David F. Matuszak is a retired high school teacher and wrestling coach. For forty years, he taught "Advanced Weight Training and Fitness," a course he designed for students preparing for military boot camp. San Onofre is the author's ninth book. This year marks his 50th anniversary as a surfer. You can find him every week "sliding a roller" at San Onofre's Old Man's Surf Beach.



***The Camp Pendleton Historical Society
invites you to join us in placing a
permanent monument to the name sake
of Camp Pendleton,
Major General Joseph H. Pendleton,
U. S. Marine Corps.***

***A visionary leader who championed
a permanent Marine Corps presence in
Southern California***

***Major General
Joseph H. Pendleton,
U. S. Marine Corps
1860-1942***



Monument Artist Scott Streadbeck's rendering of the proposed General Pendleton monument (scale will be 1.25 his height)

How do I participate in the Pendleton Monument Project?

Donations

If you would like to contribute by check, please send your check to the following address:

Camp Pendleton Historical Society
Attention: Pendleton Monument
PO Box 5497
Oceanside, CA 92052

Paying by credit card or Paypal?
Donate via the CPHS Projects website:
camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/projects

Volunteer/Fundraising

For additional information, email us at:
pendletonmonument.cphs@gmail.com

For More Information / Track our Progress:

Go to the CPHS Projects website
camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/projects



General Pendleton raises the flag at MCB San Diego. 1921.



Col. Pendleton in Guantanamo, Cuba. 1913.

***CPHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to helping the Marine Corps preserve
and tell the history of Camp Pendleton. Tax ID #83-0443585.
Consult with your tax advisor about listing your donation as a tax deduction.***

Upcoming Events

Save
the
Date!

CPHS Events - 2022

The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is currently planning the following event:

6th "Golf with a Hero" Golf Tournament

Date: May 20, 2022

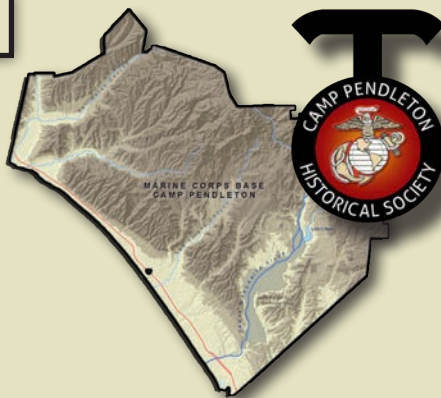
Location: Omni La Costa Resort & Spa

For more information, please contact the CPHS Events Committee at cphs.events@gmail.com. Additional information about the event will also be posted on the CPHS Facebook and web pages and broadcast via Eventbrite and separate digital communications.



2nd ANNUAL

2022 Essay Contest



Who is eligible?

Undergraduates enrolled in colleges or universities in Orange, Riverside, or San Diego Counties

What is required to compete?

Seeking papers on the history of Camp Pendleton both pre and during Marine Corps ownership. This scope includes the pre-history (archeology) of the land, its native American occupants, the Spanish exploration and mission era, the rancho era, and the history of the Camp as a significant cultural and economic institution in San Diego County since 1942. Not included in the scope is military history of Marine Corps units stationed at the camp as tenant organizations.

When are the deadlines for submissions?

Initial applications are due by March 31, 2022 and Papers are due by Aug. 31, 2022.

What can you win?

\$1,000 - 1st Place, \$500 - 2nd Place

For more information, please visit:

camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/education



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OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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NO GOVERNMENTAL STATUS.*

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome aboard to our newest members who recently joined our cause:

Larry Baber

Carl Scott

Many thanks to our loyal members for their recent membership renewal:

Richard Althouse
Daniel Beach
Mike Bray
Marilee Cherry
Carol Childs
Mike Doody
Elizabeth Draper
Gerald File
Amy Forsythe

James Fulks
Robert Gleisberg
Jennifer Hiett
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246th Marine Corps Birthday Celebration / "Last of the First" Salute

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