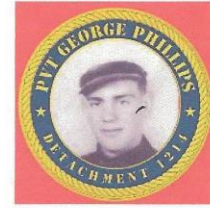


**Private George Phillips Detachment #1214
Marine Corps League
P.O. Box #1
Ballwin, MO 63022**



FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TO:

ONCE A MARINE ALWAYS A MARINE

Please send your dues in when you receive the notice from National. Our dues are \$40.00 a year. Send this amount with your renewal form to detachment address on page 2.

This newsletter and previous issues can be obtained from the **new Detachment Website. <http://www.pvtgeophillips.org/>**

Please contact the Editor to receive future issues electronically.

As a suggestion, anyone wishing to provide material *should try* to have it to the editor no later than the *fourth Friday* of previous month. (This doesn't mean don't submit anything at all if you need more time, instead please contact the editor.) If sent via email, please note that newsletter submission should appear the subject line.



Next Meeting will be April 17, 2018 @ 1930



April 2018
Volume XIV – Issue 4

Commandant:
Lyle McFarlin
314-630-5647

Sr. Vice-Commandant:
Ed Rau
636-978-3522

**Jr. Vice-Commandant/
Public Information
Officer:**
Hugh Smith
636-536-7040

Adjutant/Paymaster:
Dennis Simpson
636-230-5976

**Judge Advocate/
Benevolence:**
John (Jack) Bickerton
314-304-4360

Sgt at Arms:
Gerald Gerling
636-271-3778

Chaplain:
Larry Schwartz
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Web Sgt: Brad McNeil
636-225-2866



Meetings 3rd Tuesday of
Every Month
1930 – 7:30 PM



*News and Reflections by and for Marines
And other Patriotic Americans*

Published Monthly By

The Pvt George Phillips Detachment
Marine Corps League

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Pvt George Phillips Detachment
Marine Corps League
P.O. Box #1
Ballwin, MO 63022

Meeting Location:

225 Old Sulphur Springs Road
Ballwin, MO 63021-5356

Detachment
Membership as
of March 31

102

Trustee 3Yr:
Elliot Glassman
314-434-4868

Trustee 2Yr:
Mike Cicchese
636-208-4676

Trustee 1Yr:
James Grgurich
314-852-9511

**Jr. Past
Commandant**
Gerald Gerling
636-271-3778

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Rick Shelton
314-677-0087

Eagle Scout Liaison:
John 'Chris' Ketcherside
636-517-1447

Editor/Historian:
Carl E. Ramsey
314-304-7915



Meetings 3rd Tuesday
of Every Month
1915 – 7:15 PM

Commandant's Message.

To members and associate members of our Private George Phillips detachment, Marine Corps League. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Commandant for this coming year.

The officers you have chosen for this year are pledged to making your membership a rewarding experience. With the wide range of activities in which we engage, from supporting Toys for Tots, and FOCUS Marine Foundation, to name a couple, we have ways to provide all members opportunities to participate in meaningful activities.

My goal for this year is to increase our membership by ten percent and to promote greater participation of our members many who, for health or other legitimate reasons, are unable to attend meetings and other activities we promote in service to active duty Marines, veterans and their families in need.

I invite you to contact me by phone, 314-630-5647 or email, lylemcfarlin@sbcglobal.net, to share your ideas as to how we can make your experience with the detachment more meaningful.

Lyle McFarlin



April 2018

- 10 – Staff Meeting – 1900 Post #208
- 17 – Membership Meeting – 1930 Post #208
- 17 – Auxiliary Meeting – 1915 Post #208
- 21 – Marine Day at Busch Stadium

May 2018

- 8 – Staff Meeting – 1900 Post #208
- 15 – Membership Meeting – 1930 Post #208
- 15 – Auxiliary Meeting – 1915 Post #208

June 2018

- 12 – Staff Meeting – 1900 Post #208
- 19 – Membership Meeting – 1930 Post #208
- 19 – Auxiliary Meeting – 1915 Post #208

July 2018

- 9 – Staff Meeting – 1900 Post #208
- 14 – Pvt George Phillips Birthday
- 16 – Membership Meeting – 1930 Post #208
- 16 – Auxiliary Meeting – 1915 Post #208

August 2018

- 14 – Staff Meeting – 1900 Post #208
- 21 – Membership Meeting – 1930 Post #208
- 21 – Auxiliary Meeting – 1915 Post #208

**US Navy & Marines
disbanded April, 1783,
reactivated for Naval War
with French Republic,
1798.**

**Gold and scarlet become
official USMC colors,
April 18, 1925.**

MEMBERS MATTER by Lyle McFarlin

I was born October 12, 1949, in St. Louis, Missouri, as the second child, oldest son of four children. Our parents met in the South Pacific, during WW II, serving in New Guinea and Luzon, Philippines, under General Douglas MacArthur. They were both Army veterans. Thus, the first time I heard the word, *Marine*, in their home, I thought someone said tangerine.

I became fascinated with the Marine Corps, listening to my parents' record album of US military marches, and watching Marine Corps movies on TV. So, on April 8, 1968, during Easter Vacation in my senior year at Lutheran High School North, I enlisted on the 120-day delay plan in downtown Saint Louis. After Easter I shared my great accomplishment in my high school speech class, where a class mate responded by singing the Marine Corps Hymn to the tune, '*Darling Clementine*'.

I left for boot camp on July 3, 1968, (the anniversary of the third day of the battle of Gettysburg), and at MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot), San Diego, California, was assigned to Platoon 1038. I still remember yelling, "Platoon 1038 on top!" after climbing on top of anything on the obstacle course. When we were on the rifle range, at nearby Camp Pendleton, the Soviet Union marched into Czechoslovakia; so, our drill instructors told us to shoot straight because we may be going there next. After graduation I served in Papa 9, a two-week training company, at Camp Pendleton's Second ITR (Infantry Training Regiment) which actually took four weeks to complete. My trip to the gas chamber emptied out my nose so completely, I finally recovered from sinus problems that plagued me my entire last year of high school. I went home on recruit leave on my birthday, October 12, 1968, a day I have since associated with two tragic events. The Saint Louis Cardinals lost the World Series

to the Detroit Tigers. (It wasn't tragic for my Army mom, a Chicago native and obviously a covert Cubs fan who won a large wager from a local bookie). And it was the day after, October 11, when Chesty Puller's son was injured in Vietnam.

After recruit leave I attended AOA School (Aviation Ordnance A School) at MAD (Marine Air Detachment), NATTC (Naval Air Technical Training Center), NSA (Naval Air Station), Jacksonville, Florida. While there I learned three things: First, how to study through having a nightly review. Second, how to chase alligators in the Okefenokee Swamp: When I heard that notorious bog was a mere forty miles away, on Saturday night before the Marine Corps Birthday I caught a bus to Fargo, Georgia, where I got off and slept in the old car of a friendly security guard. Next morning after a stroll on the genuine Suwanee, River, I hitch-hiked into Okefenokee where I hired a boat guide. As I watched otters swim like Esther Williams around floating gators, he asked if I would like to explore one more stream or chase gators. "What do you would do if we catch one?" He said, "Turn it upside down in the boat and mess with it." I was naive enough to try it, so he gunned the boat full blast at the nearest mid-size reptile with the intention of running it to ground on an island where he could grab it and toss it in the boat. It was probably for the best that it escaped with its buddies. The third thing I learned, if you're an unpopular student sergeant major, and march two hundred students to class, you better not have a last name that rhymes with the number four. Whenever the unfortunate, but extremely petty corporal yelled, "Count cadence Count!" The entire class shouted, "One! Two! Three! Four! [Bleep] [Bleep] S---more!" This lasted until a special formation where the students were given a direct order not to use bad words while marching. One other unusual thing happened at School which I didn't notice until last summer when I offered to be guest speaker at our detachment's birthday remembrance of our namesake Pvt George Phillips (whom I had never heard of before joining the detachment). My graduation

picture is dated March 14, 1969, the twenty-fourth anniversary of his exploit. I was nineteen, the same as he.

Because of good study habits, I developed at AOA School, I graduated at the top of my class among the regulars (only a reservist finished with higher grades) and I earned first choice of duty orders. So, I went to MCAS El Toro, Santa Ana, California, where I served in HMS-33 (Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 33) and VMFA 531.

It was at El Toro my adult Christian life began, when I met a youth pastor, named Dr. Ray Rempt (PhD in Nuclear Physics from UCLA; his older brother Admiral Rodney Rempt, would one day be in charge of Annapolis). This is where my younger sister, Donna Ramsey Murdock entered the story (she's currently member of the Auxiliary). I had such a positive Spiritual experience at the Lutheran Church where Ray Rempt was youth pastor, when I received orders for Vietnam in early 1970, I asked around the church if there was a chance my younger sister and brother might come out for a visit. I was directed to a dentist, who had a friend in the church who needed a nanny for his three boys. I was introduced to the gentleman, and my sister was invited out to California. Now, the rest of that amazing story is hers to tell because I was on my way to Vietnam. (She met and married a Marine as a result.)

I landed at Danang, on Sunday, May 3, 1970, and was sent to Chu Lai, where I served in VMFA 122 until the base closed in August, 1970. Then I was sent to VMFA 115 at Danang, until that base began closing in, March, 1971. While in the ordnance shop in Danang I briefly served with Andy Riggle, a member Marine Corps League Detachment 725 in Saint Peters whom many of you know from Toys for Tots. In an authorized VMFA 115 Ordnance Shop picture I post on Facebook,

Andy is leaning against the jet intake of an F4, and I'm crouching in front. After he returned to the states in October, 1970, I wouldn't see him again until this past Marine Corps Birthday, in the entrance to the Walgreens Drug Store on Dorsett, in Maryland Heights. We recognized each other as fellow Marines and began swapping yarns about Danang, when he said, "Do you remember when that F-4 blew up in the fuel pits?" I certainly did, and even though we didn't recognize each other, we realized we served together 48 years ago. Another event happened at Danang which followed me to the present. While serving at the POW MIA Museum, a handgun was presented, belonging to Marine pilot Captain Bernard Plessmeyer, who on September 11, 1970, became an MIA from St. Louis County. His squadron, VMA 311, served at Danang next to my F-4 Squadron (although an internet article has him erroneously flying out of our previous base at Chu Lai.)

After Danang, I served my remaining enlistment at MCAS Yuma, Arizona, first in an intermediate Maintenance Activity, and finally in VMFAT 101. As I looked forward to my discharge, I wrote the following poem to remember my comrades and friends about to scatter in many directions.

The Traveler

(A poem about getting out of the Marines)

While passing down the road of life,
Avoiding and confronting strife,
I sometimes sit and search my heart
To see what sections me apart
From other people on this road—
The sly men, shy men, and the bold!

Companions often disagree
With my thoughts on tranquility,
And these I leave, or they leave me
For future opportunities,
And these I note within my heart
Were chosen for another part
Of God's creation all-about—
The treasures which will not die out!

After my discharge, in June, 1972, I raced an inner tube down the Colorado River in the annual race held at Yuma. Then I attended Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska where I applied those Marine Corps study skills, graduating in December, 1975 with High Distinction as the English Department's top student.

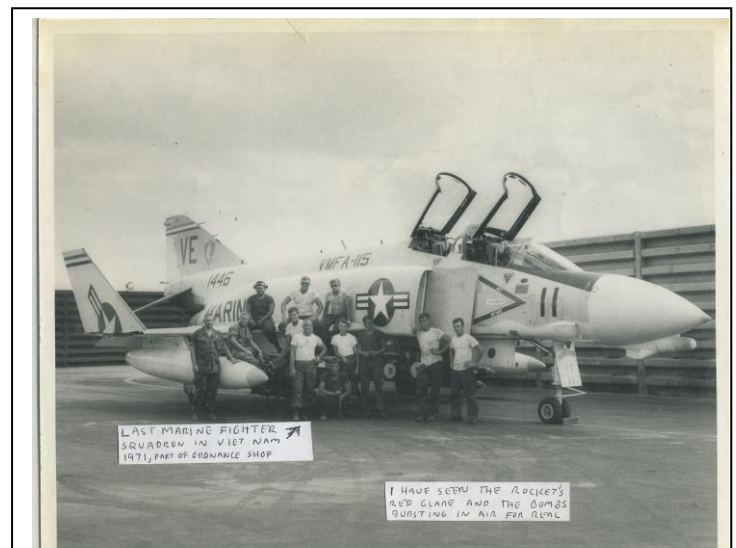
I taught secondary English for five years, where I was continuously told I should be a college professor. But I saw little opportunity and retrained for data processing, where I spent the next thirty years, mostly in the defense industry. In 2011, I turned down a job working as an Oracle application developer on the F-15 in Saudi Arabia, to take early retirement and do volunteer veterans work in Saint Louis, Missouri. At this time, I finished writing my first family values novel.

During my It years I gained some experience in Christian theatre, becoming a not-for-profit sponsor for the CubeCity Entertainment, Inc. (www.cubecity.org/) musical production of *Epimenides*, performed near Times Square in May, 2003 and in Maryland Heights, Missouri, in November. In 2004 my allegorical poem *Serpent Song* was acknowledged by CubeCity as one of the inspirations for its musical *Job and the Snake*. The group's founder, Pastor Roberto Munoz, dedicated that year's performance to me. The same year, under the pseudonym Chris North, my satirical poem *The Blight Before Christmas: An Example of Claus and Effect* appeared in the Saint Louis, Missouri production of *In A Poet's Mind* by Dr. Philip Popejoy. It was Dr. Popejoy who encouraged me to write comic dialogue, leading to development of my first book.

In 2007 I combined my IT/English skills to develop a military history calendar for a monthly church service at the Missouri Veteran's Home in north county Saint Louis.

The calendar's positive reception led to its use by Franklin County Honor Flight, the veterans program of a Saint Louis based Christian homeless shelter and former TV station (where I served on the board of directors), and a growing email list. I was also invited to serve as a volunteer historian for the Jefferson Barracks POW MIA Museum. In recognition for this and other community service my Marine Corps League Detachment, Pvt George Phillips #1214, presented me the 2012 Distinguished Citizen and Service Awards. I have served as detachment newsletter editor since June, 2011.

I am Carl E Ramsey



Picture 1 shows the 24th anniversary of Pvt George Phillips's medal of honor exploit. Carl Ramsey is in the back row below the arrow with a smirk. Picture 2: Andy Riggle is leaning against the jet intake. Carl Ramsey is crouching in front.

Carl Ramsey Danang Pictures Continued.



Missile launcher Maintenance



Home at the Hooch



**Dressing for the monsoon,
Carl Ramsey with life-
long friend, Fred
Speckman**

'In 1940, I lost my only brother as a night fighter. On the 20th of December, four days before Christmas, I had a chance to save a B-17 from destruction, a plane so badly damaged it was a wonder that she was still flying. The pilot, Charlie Brown, is for me as precious as my brother was.'

– Franz Stigler

Franz Stigler

On December 20, 1943, a battered B-17 flown by a 21-year-old American pilot was heading home over Europe after a bombing mission in Bremen, Germany.

Along the way, he encountered a Luftwaffe fighter plane. Yet, instead of shooting the U.S. plane down, the German pilot signaled for the pilot to land the plane, surrender, and be taken prisoner. The American refused, since his crew needed medical attention. To his surprise, the German pilot escorted them to the English Channel for a safe return and then saluted.

The German pilot was 2nd Lt. Franz Stigler, who was one kill away from earning the Knight's Cross, Germany's highest award for valor. Stigler's older brother had been killed during the war. A former Catholic seminarian, Stigler kept a rosary in his pocket. He later said he felt that if he had shot at the American plane, he would have been committing murder. After the war, Stigler moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, where he became a successful businessman.

The American pilot, Charlie Brown (for whom it had been his first combat mission), never forgot the incident. After the war, he tracked Stigler down and the two met and became friends.

Stigler died on this day in 2008. In his death notice, his survivors included his "special brother Charlie Brown." Brown died eight months later on November 24, 2008.

Submitted by Larry Schwartz for Chaplain's Report

March Meeting Captions



Guest GySgt John Deneve



Al Statler and son, Brad Statler



GySgt Deneve addresses detachment on Toys 4 Tots.



GySgt Deneve presents Toys 4 Tots plaque to Gail & Jack Bickerton.



GySgt Deneve presents Toys 4 Tots plaque to Ed and Candy Rau.

Right: Installation of Officers.



April Birthday Scroll

*John Bickerton Charles Corpening, Jr.
Theodore Eberley, Jr. Elliot Glassman
James Grgurich
Jerry Kisner Steven Lind*

*Auxiliary
Sheila Grgurich Arleen Jackson*



To the shores of Tripoli: US Marines take Derne, Tripoli, April 27-May 13, 1805, led by Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon pictured right.



EVENTS IN MARINE HISTORY

BY DR. CHARLES NEIMEYER

2018 is the Centennial Year

of the Marine Corps' participation in World War I as well as the 50th Anniversary of Marines fighting in Vietnam. The entries below represent key dates in WW I or Vietnam (1968) history within the Marine Corps.

Jan. 9, 1918: The First Marine Aeronautic Company departed the United States bound for Ponta Delgada, Azores. This was the first fully equipped combat force of Marines to deploy for World War I operations; the unit conducted anti-submarine patrols from the island in the Atlantic.

Jan. 22-23, 1968: Two Marines, Cpl Steven D. Nelson and LCpl Michael R. Rohn, escaped from a North Vietnamese camp north of Da Nang. After escaping, they walked barefoot along the mountainous jungle trails until

they arrived at the perimeter of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines.

Feb. 23, 1968: Khe Sanh Combat Base received more than 1,300 rounds of rocket and artillery fire. During the entire month of February the enemy fired 4,404 rounds at Khe Sanh.

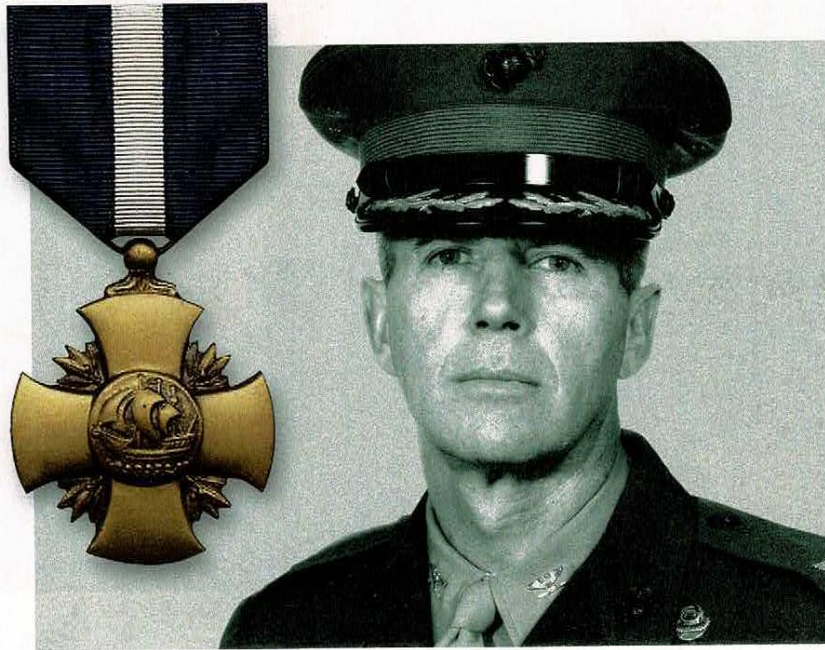
March 12, 1968: Major Robert J. Modrzejewski and 2d Lieutenant John J. McGinty, III, were presented the Medal of Honor by President Johnson for separate actions in Vietnam in 1966.

March 17, 1918: The first Marine unit to occupy front line positions in France moved into position; the remaining portion of the 4th Brigade moved into position shortly thereafter.

March. 31, 1968: Operation SCOTLAND ended in Quang Tri Province with 1,561 enemies killed and 204 Marines killed.

Valor Explosive Heroism

By Chuck Lyons



John W. Ripley
U.S. Marine Corps
Navy Cross
Vietnam
April 2, 1972

Capt. John Ripley was an adviser with the 3rd Battalion of the Republic of Vietnam Marine Corps on March 30, 1972, when the North Vietnamese launched its Easter offensive with a sustained artillery barrage. There was no sleep that night, as word came NVA troops supported by some 200 tanks were headed south toward the bridge

over the Cua Viet River just north of Dong Ha.

In the morning the 3rd Battalion moved closer to the bridge to check the NVA onslaught. But it could not hold against the estimated 20,000 enemy soldiers. The bridge had to be blown, and Ripley—who had trained with explosives at the U.S. Army Ranger School—got his chance on April 2, Easter Sunday.

Under heavy fire he and fellow adviser Maj. Jim Smock dashed down the riverbank beneath the bridge, where engineers had stacked crates of TNT and satchel charges of C4 plastic explosive. A chain-link fence topped with razor wire pressed against the underside of the bridge. While Smock pulled down on the wire, Ripley slung two satchel charges over his back, climbed the fence, grabbed the bottom flanges of the downstream I-beam, swung his feet up and inched his way over the fence, badly lacerating his legs in the effort.

With 90 feet to go to the first bridge pier, Ripley let his feet hang free and hand-walked down the I-beam, three stories above the river. Arriving at the pier, he heaved himself up into the channel between the first two I-beams and rested a moment. After positioning the satchel charges, he crawled facedown on elbows and knees atop the I-beam flanges back to the fence, where Smock manhandled two more satchel charges and two boxes of TNT over the razor wire. Ripley placed the boxes atop the flanges and inched backward on elbows and knees, dragging the 180-pound load back out to the pier, where he placed the charges. Knowing he would need to place charges in the four remaining channels, he dropped down, hung by his hands, then swung free and grabbed for the next upstream I-beam.

Whenever Ripley swung into view beneath the I-beams, the NVA troops fired at him. Regardless, over the next two hours the Marine worked his way back and forth in the four remaining channels, placing some 500 pounds of explosives in all. When finished, he maneuvered back over the razor wire, dropped to the ground and caught his breath before clambering back out to rig the primer cord and detonators. But Smock and Ripley couldn't find the crimpers needed to attach the detonators to the primer cord.

That left only one alternative.

Ripley, researcher John Grider Miller wrote, "had to bite down on the blasting caps to attach them to the fuzes. If he bit too low on the blasting cap, it could come loose; if he bit too high, it could blow his head apart."

Ripley carefully crimped the detonators, then inched over the wire to hand-walk down the I-beam. Firing broke out immediately from the north bank. One low-angle tank shell bounced off the bridge and exploded on the south bank, setting up a vicious vibration that almost broke Ripley's grip. He muscled through to attach the detonators, light the fuze and inch his way back to the south bank—albeit at a faster clip.

Meanwhile, Smock had found electrical detonators. A perfectionist, Ripley shimmied out one more time to set those as backup detonators, while Smock rigged an adjacent railroad trestle with TNT. Under covering fire from the Vietnamese Marines, Ripley and Smock then dashed back up the riverbank, playing out electrical cord as they went. Minutes later both spans blew.

For his heroism at Dong Ha Bridge Ripley received the Navy Cross. He later became the first Marine inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame. Ripley died at 69 in 2008 and was buried with full military honors at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. **MH**

Marine Sgt. Jeff Seabaugh, a squad leader with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), moves his Marines to their objective during a mission on March 23, 2003, near Zubayr, Iraq. The 15th MEU was one of multiple units to invade Iraq in March 2003 as part of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. By the end of the initial push on April 30, 2003, 74,405 Marines had been deployed to Iraq.



Under the code name *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, U.S. forces invaded Iraq at 5:34 a.m. on March 20, 2003. Led by U.S. Army General Tommy Franks, the invasion had eight objectives:

- End the regime of Saddam Hussein.
- Identify, isolate and eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.
- Search for, capture and drive out terrorists from that country.
- Collect intelligence related to terrorist networks.
- Gather intelligence related to a global network of weapons of mass destruction.
- End sanctions and deliver humanitarian support to the displaced, needy Iraqi citizens.
- Secure Iraq's oil fields and resources, which belong to the Iraqi people.
- Help the Iraqi people create conditions for a transition to a representative self-government.

Accomplishing these objectives took the service of men and women from many military components. Approximately 148,000 U.S. soldiers from the U.S., 45,000 British soldiers, 2,000 Australian soldiers and 194 Polish special operations soldiers were sent to Kuwait for the initial invasion.

By the end of the initial push into Iraq on April 30, 2003, there were 466,985 U.S. troops deployed for *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, according to a U.S. Central Command, Combined Forces Air Component Commander report.

This included:

Army, 233,342;
Marines, 74,405;
Navy, 61,296 (681 were members of the U.S. Coast Guard);
Air Force, 54,955;
Army Reserve, 10,683;
Marine Reserve, 9,501;
Army National Guard, 8,866;
Air National Guard, 7,207;
Air Force Reserve, 2,084; and
Navy Reserve, 2,056.

U.S. military units involved in the invasion included the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, 3rd Infantry Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, 1st Marine Division, 101st Airborne Division, the 82nd Airborne Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The immediate goal of the initial invasion was to swiftly take the capital city of Baghdad. The first American troops to reach Iraq's capital on March 30 were members of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division.

Coming out of Kuwait, the division had set a western course for Baghdad, moving rapidly through the desert to avoid populated areas.

Troops from the "Rock of the Marne" division faced their first major conflict in their advance into Baghdad near Karbala, about 60 miles southwest of Baghdad. Elements of the division assaulted the airport on April 3, while others patrolled the outskirts of the city.

The airport fell easily to Army control, and the first American plane, an Air Force C-130, landed there on April 7, opening it to use as an U.S. airfield.

Unlike the Army's 3rd Division, the Marines' 1st Division used more lightly armored vehicles.

Its trip to Baghdad was perilous, as Iraqi paramilitary units continually harassed them as they drove through cities such as Nasiriyah and Kut. (Be sure to watch for the April issue of *VFW* magazine for an article on the Battle of Nasiriyah.)

The 7th Marine Regiment encountered isolated firefights as it progressed slowly into the capital from the southeast.

By the morning of April 9, it was clear that Hussein's rule was over. U.S. tanks drove down city streets, encountering only Iraqi civilians, many smiling and cheering.

Though the Pentagon declared on April 14 that all major combat had ended, the war in Iraq would continue for more than eight years, officially ending on Dec. 18, 2011. ☘

EMAIL jdyhouse@vfw.org

MARCH 2018 • WWW.VFW.ORG • 15

Source: March 2018 VFW Magazine, Page 15.