



POST SOLANT AMITY

With Former Members of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment



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1st Marine Division: Origins through WWII *By Ed Shea*

(Because the Pacific Theater of WWII and the Marine Corps' thorough involvement in it was so expansive, it can be a daunting experience to array the "chess pieces" in one's mind. This article confines itself to the efforts of the Marine Corps' first Fleet Marine Force division. Enjoy some of the surprises.)

Long before the advent of WWII, the destiny of the Marine Corps was being, unwittingly, prescribed. Military strategists, sitting before their world maps and oceanographic charts, contemplated how best they could defeat the forces of Japan's evermore threatening imperialism in the Pacific arena.

As the war in Europe took on what was perceived by Washington and its war-lord strategists as having greater military and political significance, containing the Japanese would by default become a problem, primarily, for the Marines. Fortunately, the Corps had been preparing for just such an event, not only in the war rooms but in the tropics, for the better part of a decade.

By 1933, the Marine Corps consisted of a cadre of some 20,000 hardcore "Old Breed" personnel

performing a variety of military tasks all over the world. It was then that the 1st Marine *Brigade*, the only tactical unit of the newly developed FMF at the time, was formed. Though officially based at Quantico, it spent most of the next six years in the Caribbean training for amphibious warfare. Indeed, so much of its time and the service time of its members, such as the later revered General Chesty Puller, had been spent in the Caribbean over the preceding two decades they had acquired the unflattering but appropriate moniker of the Corps' "Raggedy-Ass-Marines."

Trivia Question 1: Combat Operational Marine aircrews carry a written notice, in several languages should they be shot down, requesting help from local populations. The notice is called a what? (See answer on page 4)

The only other Marine *Brigade* to emerge around the same time was the 2nd [later to become the 2nd *Marine Division*] stationed in San Diego, California, whose personnel were pejoratively referred to as the Corps' "Hollywood Marines."

In anticipation of the war to come, the 1st Marine *Brigade* on 1Feb41 became the 1st Marine *Division* consisting of, on paper only, three regiments: 1st, 5th and 7th. Still lacking, however, was the "base space" to keep them

Thus, while these regiments were being developed, through April of 1941, they were split between Quantico, Virginia and the soon famed Parris Island, South Carolina. Then, on 1May41, they were united at New River, North Carolina where "111,000 acres of land, water, and swamp" awaited them.

From this point, until deployment following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the members of the 1st Marine Division had but two living environments, 1) a tent city in an insect infested wilderness of what in 1946 would become Camp Lejeune and 2) the crowded and stifling bowels of troop transports. Their efforts and all of their energies were thereafter expended learning their trade: forcible amphibious landings on beaches held by men wanting to kill them.

On 11Aug41, ten years of accumulated wisdom was put to a functional test. An amassed armada of 42 naval vessels, 4 squadrons of Marine aircraft and 16,000 men of the 1st Marine Division *assaulted* Onslow Beach, North Carolina for

the first time in history. They drove inland for nine miles and then simulated a forced withdrawal over the next three days. It was to be America's first testing of assault techniques, yet to be refined, required of Marines for the next four years. And it *seemed* to work. Though, of course, there was still the *real* world of warfare.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor,

Trivia Question 2: A corpsman's inspection of personnel, usually in unit formation, for signs of sexually transmitted diseases was called what? (Answer on page 4.)

the Division was transported to Camp Balcomb near Melbourne, Australia. There they received still more and intensive training for what was to be their first combat assignment in the Pacific theater of WWII, **Guadacanal** [7Aug-15Nov42], under the command of Major General Alexander A. Vandergrift and assisted by the then Brigadier General William H. Rupertus.

Afterwards and leaving Guadacanal located at 9°32'S—160°12'E, the Division's force had been depleted by 612 killed, 1,517 wounded and an additional 5,600 personnel hospitalized with the likes of such things as malaria, jungle rot, dysentery, heat exhaustion/stroke and battle fatigue. They returned to Australia to "freshen up" and strengthen in body, spirit and, of course, numbers, reduced by more than forty percent on Guadacanal. It would take seven months. Then, once again, they would proceed with initial preparations for
(Continued on page 2, column 1)



Hurricane Victims Need Your Help!

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"Brotherhood of Heroes" and the WWII Battle for Peleliu

Few events in United States military strategic history can stir up a room full of critics than the assault upon the pacific island of Peleliu, in the fall of 1944.

And, Bill Sloan, an author of long repute about subjects as varied as musical history to a fictional effort about the mafia, has turned his talent loose on the Corps' VERY costly taking of a piddling bit of real estate of VERY questionable strategic value to U.S. interests at the time.

However, what makes "Brotherhood of Heroes," published by Simon & Schuster,

copyright 2005, different is Sloan's anecdotal presentation of the battle from the perspective of the *grunt* and not the generals.

Oh, he elaborates on the failures of icons like Roosevelt, MacArthur, Nimitz, and our own, then Lieutenant Colonel, Chesty Puller of the 1st Marines. But his greatest strength is in presenting the horrific physical circumstances, the brash-to-brave acts and the sometimes absurdly humorous experiences of both the surviving and slaughtered.

He writes of 115 degree Fahrenheit temperatures and commen-

surately high humidity, insects, disease, crocodiles, fuel tainted water supplies and the preoccupation of many with obtaining canteens of water from the swollen and stinking corpses of Japanese soldiers. He writes of death by heat stroke and friendly fire, about the lack of ammunition and manpower and, of course, the unrelenting and merciless attacks by a determined enemy looking to annihilate them.

Then, in the midst of this terrible insanity, Sloan also tells of a lighter moment when one Marine, part of a small contingent in a fixed position with its back at the

edge of a falling cliff, is overwhelmed by the burdens of dysentery. Anxious not to "soil" the immediate area, he fills up several c-rat cans with his waste, throwing the lot over the cliff behind him.

Only seconds passed before the infuriated rantings of a Japanese soldier below, clearly unhappy with the air mailed "Poo-Poo platter," filled the blackness of the night.

Get a copy of this book. Read it and thank God you weren't there.

Peleliu—For more on the battle, read the piece provided "above the fold" on page one.

combat.

By July of '43, under the command of the recently promoted Major General Rupertus, the 1stMarDiv had shipped out for New Guinea, where training began in earnest for their next rendezvous with insanity, Japanese tenacity, treachery and banzai attacks. This time the objective was to be New Britain's **Cape Gloucester** located at 5° 53'S—148° 42'E, beginning on 26Dec43.

Christmas provided little merriment.

The New Britain campaign was not the first combined USMC/USA friction filled combat operation in the Pacific nor to leave a bad taste in the mouth's of Marine officer and enlisted alike. But it was the first such campaign for the 1st Marine Division. And, it had its lasting impacts. What was supposed to be a landing on "damp flat" with a quick slashing advance to the capture of airfields put them instead on a very short beach, into a troop swallowing mangrove filled with crocodiles, snakes, three inch wide centipedes, falling trees, disease carrying mosquitoes and still more unpleasantness.

However, as events came under control on New Britain, Army units in two stages, beginning in April, relieved the last of the 1stMarDiv in late May44. Known as Operation *Cartwheel*, the 131 days of horrific jungle warfare cost the lives of 311 Marines, wounded another 1,036 and left "several thousand" more disabled by tropical diseases. But, unlike the reprieve provided them prior to their Guadalcanal campaign, there would be little respite for the tattered remnants of the Division.

Oh no, there'd be none of that, because ongoing successful military efforts had provided places closer than the bars and more of Australia.

Trivia Question 3: The necktie worn as part of a Marine's uniform was called what? (See answer on page 4)

In addition, the new *digs* were to be closer still to their next yet, publicly, unannounced assignment. No, instead of the "good times and Waltzing Matilda" of Australia, what was left of the 1st Marine Division would find itself on a spit of stinking, sodden Pacific flotsam literally over-running with rats and GIANT land crabs, under the persistent and dense barrage of monsoon rains: Pavuvu. Located at approximately 8° 00'S—159° 00'E is a virtual neighbor to Guadalcanal.

Much is made of this wasteland in Bill Sloan's "Brotherhood of He-

roes," discussed on page one of the newsletter. What was supposed to be an offering of R&R furnished instead four months of physical and psychological horrors worse than Papillion's Devils Island of French Guyana. So horrific were the perceptions of their circumstances that some surviving Marines to this day suggest "that it had to be deliberate," as they had left the island not angry but "madder than when they arrived. And, in many ways, it prepared us for *all* to come."

The first of the "all" was Peleliu.

Also known as Biliou, **Peleliu** is situated 600 miles east of the Philippines' Mindanao, at 7° 00'N—134° 15'E. And, General MacArthur was insisting that his right flank be protected while he concentrated on his own efforts for a "return" to the Philippines. It was a plan agreed to by MacArthur, Roosevelt and Admiral Nimitz more than two years earlier, shortly after the *Emperor General* had fled Manila Bay's Corregidor, in March of '42. However, much had changed since then. Specifically, the probability of Peleliu based Japanese forces impacting on *Dugout Doug's* plan were damn near zero. Their air power capabilities were none and, with the island surrounded by U.S. naval forces, any attempt to move the 11,000 garrisoned Japanese troops would have proven disastrous.

The Navy protested but, when MacArthur won the debate over the appropriateness of proceeding with the battle, the Marines were left to do the dying.

Theirs was a battle beginning on 15Sep44, thought likely to be over within three days, that lasted 30 days when the last of Col. Bucky Harris's 5th Marine survivors were relieved by the Army's 81st Division.

Col. "Chesty" Puller's 1st Regiment had been relieved by the Army's 321 RCT on D+7, as his forces had already been depleted by 1,672 Marines, a 60% casualty rate—the largest loss EVER sustained by a regiment in Marine Corps history.

And, Col. "Hammer Head" Hanneken's 7th Marine Regiment had been relieved on D+21, after sustaining 1,486 casualties among its original force of 3,217.

Gen. Rupertus and Cols. Puller, Harris and Hanneken—along with all personnel having served twenty-four months in combat—returned stateside in Nov44 for long overdue leave. None again saw combat in WWII. Rupertus was reassigned to Marine Corps School, affectively ending his career. He succumbed to a heart attack in March of 1945. He, along with others, had not yet accepted that the banzai attack period was over and

every square inch of land yet to be taken in the Pacific was going to be more costly.

After losing 1,121 killed, 5,142 wounded and 73 missing, the 1stMarDiv pulled up stakes, boarded troop transports and sailed eight days to an unbelievably much improved Pavuvu! There, they now found paved streets, electric, non-leaking tents, mess halls, a parade field and — count 'em — six female Red Cross workers.

Trivia Question 4: In the military, sleeping bags and mattress covers are called what? (See page 4)

Refreshed and reinforced with staggering numbers of totally inexperienced personnel, they trained under the leadership of their new CO: Lieutenant General Pedro A. DeValle a Naval Academy graduate with command experience back to WWI. Twice during Jan-Feb45, they received still more intensive training on Guadalcanal, returning each time to Pavuvu, while another battle raged on distant Iwo Jima.

Finally, on 15Mar45, they once again boarded ships and eight days later joined with an amassed armada preparing for the Division's last combat mission of WWII. For the very first time, however, they were to fight in the northern Pacific. They were to fight in a place NOT within 10° latitude of the equator but, instead, within the same latitude zone as Hawaii, Florida and the Bahamas. A place where the average temperature remains a balmy 72° and never drops below 50°F that extends from 24-27°N and 122-128°E: **Okinawa**.

Okinawa's *Operation Iceberg* began 1Apr45, under the command of the
(Continued on page 3, column 1)

Mameluke Sword

Marine Officers were initially allowed swords of any style - as long as they were yellow-mounted.

In 1805, Marines assembled a fleet to put down Barbary Coast pirates taking a toll on American merchant ships in the Mediterranean. Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon and his Marines marched across 600 miles of North Africa's Libyan desert to successfully storm the fortified Tripolitan city of Derna.



A desert chieftain, Prince Hamet Bey the Pasha of Tripoli, presented Marine Lieutenant O'Bannon with a scimitar to show his appreciation. The scimitar was used by Mameluke warriors of North Africa. By 1825, all Marine officers were mandated to wear the Mameluke sword.

Except for the period from 1859 to 1875, commissioned Marine officers have carried the Mameluke sword.

Regulations adopted in 1859 outlined the specifications for the sword still carried by today's noncommissioned officers. The design is based on the 1850 Army foot officers' sword, which Marine officers carried from 1859 to 1875.

Coming Soon to a Theater Near You

STRAIGHT-JACKET
Your city's underwater. Looters are running wild. Thousands are homeless. What's a Mayor to do?
BLAME BUSH!!
NOMINATED BEST NEW DOCUMENTARY OF 2005

Army's Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr. His 10th Army was to consist of the XXIV Corps' 7th, 27th, 77th and 96th Infantry Divisions and the Marine Corps' III Amphibious Corps, Major General Roy Geiger, commanding. The latter included the 1st, and 6th Marine Divisions with, initially, the entire 2nd Marine Division—after making a feigned landing attempt on Okinawa's southeast coast—as an afloat reserve.

Begun as a whimper with little resistance, over the coming weeks the battle grew both in intensity and expense. Finally ending on 21Jun45, it marked the official ending to the major hostilities of WWII.

Okinawa was catastrophic in terms of losses. Overall, the effort resulted in: 223 ships damaged and 30 sunk along with 5,000 sailors, mostly the result of kamikaze attacks. There were an incredible 12,250 men killed and 36,361 wounded. The 1st MarDiv alone suffered 7,665 losses.

WWII produced 92,000 Marine casualties, more than 19,000 killed. One in very four of the 2,230 Marine POWs died in captivity. Comprising 5% of all Americans serving, Marines suffered 10% of all casualties. From a Depression Era force of some 20,000, the United States Marines by the end of WWII had grown to six combat divisions and nearly one-half million men and (19,000) women.

Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, in his "The Battle History of the U.S. Marines," had the following to say to say about a conflict that produced eighty-one *Congressional Medal of Honor* recipients, forty-eight posthumously: "The war in the Pacific was girt with a special horror, but the Marines who fought there brought home a distinctive sense of achievement, an 8,000-mile, four-year campaign against a savage and relentless foe under some of the worst conditions imaginable."

It was a time before *our* time, under circumstances almost unendurable. When you meet a man who lived through it: thank him, praise him and ask if he'll share his experiences with you. Then, pass on what you've learned to your friends and family...your grand-children. Do it with clear admiration for service "well done" as part of an organization YOU are part of: the United States Marine Corps. But, ALWAYS, be thankful to God that YOU were not there.

Semper fi

Trivia Question 5: Eisenhower's interstate highway system requires one of every five miles be straight. Why? (See answer on page 4)

Toronto Tower

Did you know that the Toronto Tower is over 1800 feet tall?

Check it out.



Ab-so-lute-ly, amazing....

Your General Orders

Should you have forgotten, it's time to refresh your memory:

1. To take charge of this post and all government property in view.
2. To walk my post in a military manner, keeping always on the alert, and observing everything that takes place within sight or hearing.
3. To report all violations of orders I am instructed to enforce.
4. To repeat all calls from the post more distant from the guard house than my own.
5. To quit my post only when properly relieved
6. To receive, obey, and pass on to the sentry who relieves me all orders from the commanding officer, field officer of the day, officer of the day, and officers and petty officers of the guard only.
7. To talk to no one except in the line of duty.
8. To give the alarm in case of fire or disorder.
9. To call the corporal of the guard in any case not covered by instructions.
10. To salute all officers, and all colors and standards not cased
11. To be especially watchful at night, and during the time for challenging, to challenge all persons on or near my post, and to allow no one to pass without proper authority.

Now, as your wife lies sleeping, you will stand at bed's foot and recite them one hundred times, *in a whisper*.

International Symbol for Marriage is Approved

After 5 years of heated debate, the Commission of Human Rights approved the new symbol :



Attitude is the Difference

"I have only two men out of my company and 20 out of some other...."

"We need support, but it is almost suicide to try to get it here as we are swept by machine gun fire and a constant barrage is on us."

"I have no one on my left and only a few on my right."

"I will hold." reported First Lieutenant. Clifton B. Cates, USMC; Belleau Wood, 19 July 1918.

"We have two companies of Marines running rampant all over the northern half of this island, and three Army regiments pinned down in the southwestern corner, doing nothing."

"What the hell is going on?" queried General John W. Vessey Jr., USA, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; during the assault on Grenada, 1983.

Veteran's Benefits

A new edition of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) handbook, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents, updates the rates for certain federal payments and outlines a variety of programs and benefits.

Most of the nation's 25 million veterans qualify for some VA benefits, which range from health care to burial in a national cemetery. In addition to describing benefits provided by VA, the 2005 edition of the 120-page booklet provides an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies.

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, with a listing of toll-free phone numbers, Internet addresses and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country. The handbook can be downloaded [free](http://www.va.gov/opa/feature/) from VA's Web site at www.va.gov/opa/feature/.

The handbook is one of the top selling consumer publications of the U.S.

Government Printing Office (GPO). The GPO accepts credit card orders for the publication at 866-512-1800 (toll-free) for a cost of \$7 each to U.S. address. It can be ordered by mail from the GPO at Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954 (stock #051-000-00228-8).

In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guaranties, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. In some cases, survivors of veterans may also be entitled to benefits.

The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities. *Charlie LaMarr*

ICE your cell phone

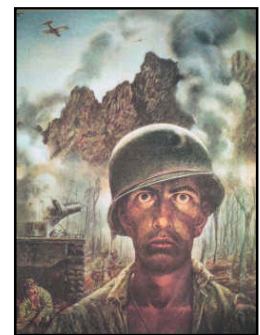
Paramedics will turn to a victim's cell phone for clues to that person's identity.

You can make their job easier with a simple idea that they are trying to get everyone to adopt. It's called ICE, which stands for *In Case of Emergency*.

Simply add the letters ICE before the names of persons you would like contacted in the event of your injury.

It takes about as long to do as it took to read this message.

Thousand Yard Stare



Tom Lea's depiction of bone weary 1stMarDiv combatant, after weeks of mind numbing efforts on Peleliu Island, 15Sep-15Oct44.

Trivia Question 6: When was the "utility" cover, though her-ring-bone twill, first issued to Marines for field and barracks use. (See answer on page 4)

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See the whole story at:
SolantAmity.com

The First Marines to Land in Monrovia

Katrina’s Aftermath, the Media & Our Members

The liberal media had a field day abusing Washington [Bush] following the N’Orleans debacle. Wishing to be fair and balanced, I thought we should publish some our members reactions to the media coverage.

After flattering, in a “Letter to the Editor,” those *doing* versus complaining in the devastated Gulf Coast region, our Colorado *correspondent* continued with:

“In New Orleans, we have seen and heard of the looting of business, shooting and assaults on both police officers and military aircraft. These acts, committed by the sub-human scum among our population, comes as no surprise to those of us who are former military and/or law enforcement members.

“I would urge all responsible citizens to have a weapon for home defense and take a course in the proper use of such weapon. For those of you who would like to

reach out and touch...whack...a dirt-bag at 500+ yards, please feel free to contact me to learn the finer points of marksmanship...no charge.

Oh yes, I nearly forgot about you liberal-leftist, touchy-feely, anti-gun, kiss their ass at any cost weenie warriors. Well, YOU can find ample supplies of squirt guns and K-Y Jelly at your local Wal-Mart. And don’t forget to wear a Jane Fonda T-shirt for body armor. It will stop a .45

Trivia Question 7: In Vietnam, the illumination of a combat zone by dropping 55-gal. barrels of napalm from CH-53 helicopter was called what? (See answer on page 4)

slug—honest—trust me.

Dave Beraudo

Then, from Massachusetts:

“Well, the Communist News Net-

work (CNN) has done it again. Their ass-hole reporter, Anderson Cooper, was walking through one of the neighborhoods of Biloxi, MS, when he happened upon a man and woman looking over their utterly destroyed house and property. Cooper had his camera man stay on the couple as they rummaged.

“Happening upon a tattered American Flag lying among the ruins, the man picked it up, looked it over and quietly reflected. After a bit of turning it about with his hands again and again, he threw it to the ground and walked away. His wife then approached Cooper and his crew and said “AND THIS IS AMERICA.”

“The last shot of the property was our nation’s flag lying on the ground.

“George, words alone cannot reveal the hatred that I harbor for CNN.

“I’m thinking now of another of CNN’s anchormen, Aaron Brown, who on 9/11 blamed all that was happening on the President. They are, as far as I’m concerned, the slime-balls of the news media. Pure and simple; THEY SUCK.

“Eddie, if you wish you can put this in our next news letter. It just feels so good to correspond with my old Marine buddies about this.”

Trevor E. Davies

From our “political analyst:”

“Almost anything from the mouths of CNN and MSNBC crews is *extremely* negative about a America, its govern-

ment and especially its president. With slippery bleeding heart rhetoric they cleverly express concern for the “oppressed” while expressing *opinions* as though facts, baiting those interviewed into making statements later converted to sound-bites not indicative of what was said, and introducing elements of passion not in evidence until they compassionately ask

Fear not the enemy They take but your life. Instead, fear the media. For they, having none of their own, will steal your honor.

‘Aren’t you angry?’

“America’s media more closely reflects the interests of the Howard Dean super-minority philosophy of whine and dine the brain-dead among us.”

George Bitsoli

And, finally, from Florida:

Gov. Kathleen Babineaux (*My-mind-went*) Blanco and N’Orlean’s Mayor (*Ragin’-Cagin’*) Nagin “ain’t neva’ goin-a-be a Guil-li-ahhni.” Or a re-elected Louisiana official either, though history does suggest that Democrats do LOVE their losers: Kennedy, Kerry, Dean and DC’s

Trivia Question 8: A tanker’s pejorative term for infantrymen? (See answer on page 4)

drug-addicted former mayor Marion Barry for but a few examples.

As for the effete elite of media’s majority, in print or on the airways, trying to recapture the lost limelight of the 60’s, they’re burning out their welcome in homes, offices and laptops across America.

We are a nation of mostly positive thinking people, proud of our heritage and of our nation’s accomplishments. We *trust in one God* or another. And we believe that nationalism need not result in pogroms, concentration camps and the loss of civil rights.

I hope the media AND the Democrats keep up their negative mantra. It’ll cost them in both ‘06 and ‘08. Thus, proving that something good DOES come from everything.

Your editor

Mailed as a black on white copy to those without computers, a colorized version can be found at our website, where on page one you will find a link to a down-loadable version.

I hope you’ve enjoyed this effort. Send us your thoughts to make for an even better next issue.

Semper fi; Ed Shea

What’s been happening “out there” since last we published

Amadio “DiBo” DiBounoven-tura, reached out to us in July. He and his wife of 35 years, Barbara, are fine and doing well in Sewell, New Jersey.

Trevor Davies and Ruth are doing well. Were it not for the impacts of media “I’d be even better” explained Trevor recently. “The Communist News Network is driving me out of my mind.”

A neighbor, however, was quick to point out that his *drive* to insanity has been more of a *putt*. 😊

Ed Hart called to say he’d found a lead as to our G-2-6 Captain Skipper who served with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines in the midst of 1968 Vietnam. The search continues.

Diana McGibbeny, wife to our former redheaded rifleman, has

asked for your prayers on behalf of her sister, who is quite ill. God bless.

Rodney “Ron” Parrot, a former Weapons Platoon member, came “on board” in early August and remains the only Jarhead I’ve known to wear a reverse collar.

James J. McQuaid, former 3rd Platoon member and firemen of some 40 years in Saugus, MA was contacted in late August.

All-in-all, it’s been a productive quarter: two 3rd and one Weapons Platoon members accounted for.

The biographies of all new members contacted are on the website.

Ron Smith just celebrated his twentieth year of broadcasting at Baltimore’s WBAL.

Congratulations Ron.

Charlie Wilson, who served with DiBo, in the Philadelphia PD for nigh onto 20 years, was looking forward to speaking with him.

That’s something I’d like to see more of: *reaching out*. We may no longer have our youth but we’ve got *our* history. Email, call or write just one other member before Christmas...please.

Answers to Trivia Questions: 1) blood chit, 2) short arm inspection, 3) field scarf, 4) a fartsack 5) so they may be used as air strips during times of war or emergencies, 6) in 1943, 7) thrash light, 8) track lube.

[Form SF-180 is posted on website’s “Links & Things” page. It’s needed to obtain military records.]