



# POST SOLANT AMITY

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



Volume 4, Issue 1

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## New England's 2nd Marine Division Association *Trevor Davies*



Back in 1992 while active with the William R. Caddy Detachment of the Marine Corps League, I and two of my closest Marine

buddies, Sergeant Martin F. Flaherty and Gunnery Sergeant Robert D. "Whiskey" Wuschke, became Life Members of the 2nd Marine Division Association. About six months into our membership and after a *Caddy* meeting, we three discussed among ourselves the possibility of starting a State Chapter of the 2nd Marine Division Association. Our *journey* began with that conversation.

The chore of making contact with Division fell upon me, as the "lowest ranking member" but, more importantly, because I was also considered both a good talker and persuasive. I took on the project with vigor.

My first contact with the 2nd Marine Division Association was with Robert L. Roberts, Sergeant Major USMC, Retired. After contacting Bob and telling him of our plans, he instructed me as to what we had to do to receive a Charter. He explained that we had

to build a Chapter Membership of at least fifty and required a Constitution and Chapter By-Laws in place. He provided us with a boiler plate set of instructions on just how to go about getting things done in order to receive our Charter.

I took this information to Marty and Whiskey and from there we appointed ourselves pro tem officers of the Chapter. Marty was President, Whiskey was Judge Advocate and I became the Adjutant. Then, off we went on a recruitment drive.

Within a month, through phone calls and word of mouth, we had achieved the 50 man minimum goal and then some. Bob Roberts phoned me at this point and told us that the Association's National President had indicated we should form a New England chapter of the SMDA. Thus, we expanded our recruiting efforts throughout Massachusetts and into Rhode Island, Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Maine. We also made contact with former Marines of the 2nd Marine Division from upstate New York, north of the New York thruway to Niagara Falls.

**Trivia Question 1** Who was it that said, "Old breed? New breed? There's not a damn bit of difference so long as it's the Marine breed!" (Answer page 4.)

After three months of active recruiting we informed Bob Roberts that we had around 640 prospective New England Chapter members. He was overwhelmed at the number and made a visit up to



Massachusetts to meet with Marty, Whiskey and myself to discuss our chapter's charter.

When he arrived, we took Bob and his wife Jackie out to a great restaurant and had a ball. He said that we were the only Chapter to be formed up within nine months and that we were the apple of his eye.

Everything fell into place after that and we received our New England Chapter, SMDA Charter at a USMC Battle Color Ceremony at Veterans' Memorial Stadium in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1993 in front of 6000 people with Bob Roberts being the master of ceremony. Also in attendance that evening was the Silent Drill Team, 200 recruits who were leaving for Parris Island within a day or so and

**Trivia Question 2:** Who said and where did you first hear that, "Marines die, that's what we're here for. But the Marine Corps lives forever. And that means YOU live forever?" (See answer

their recruiters.

After receiving the Charter, we continued our recruitment drive and finally ended up with 780 members from New England and upstate New York. Needless to say, we were very proud of what we'd accomplished. From then on, we were initiated into the Quincy Veterans' Council and performed in all ceremonies including parades, firing details, funerals for veterans' and so on. We presented the Colors whenever asked. Our uniform was undress blues with black collar emblems, scarlet and blue *piss-cutters* with blue piping representing the blue trousers of all Marines. Blood stripes became a must for appearance sake, as there was no rank within the Chapter. Ribbons and shooting badges were also permitted. The uniform standards remain intact to this day.

Soon thereafter, we connected with the Toys-for-Tots Foundation of Boston Massachusetts. Whiskey and I canvassed stores and super markets, asking for permission to use their premises on behalf of the Foundation for four weekends during the Christmas season. We made our request always while in an undress blue uniform and were, astonishingly, denied permission by all! Some *politely* classified us as a sales prospect liability and others defiantly announced that they "wanted nothing to do with veterans."

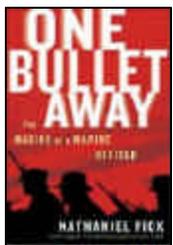
On one occasion, the representative of a nationally recognized department store chain informed us that it was company policy not to allow organized veterans' activities of any kind on company property. Indeed, their standard was that of "having nothing to do with veterans, at all." When I asked why, I was told matter-of-factly, "If you don't leave now, we will have the police remove you."

*(Continued on page 2, column 1)*

## One Bullet Away: The Making of a United States Marine Corps Officer

In 2003 a journalist named Evan Wright punched out a series of articles for *Rolling Stone* about a stint he'd done with elements of First Recon, as they led the way for Marine forces into Iraq. He wrote from the perspective of enlisted men and, thus, came close to vilifying virtually the entire officer corps. He later turned that effort into a book wherein he frequently references — as if the man were an anomaly — a young, thinking as opposed to merely intelligent and, above all else, compassionate officer who put his men first and

sympathized with Iraqi civilians, whose unfortunate lot had been to find themselves caught up in a war.



Well, that Marine officer was Nathaniel Fick, a graduate of Dartmouth College and the author of "One Bullet Away" published by Houghton Mifflin Company in 2005.

At the end of his 1998 junior year at Dartmouth, at a time when class-

mates were considering medical and law schools and/or fielding graduate school scholarship offers, Fick found himself wishing to do "something that [would] leave me better, stronger, more capable. I wanted to be a warrior." Or, die trying. He believed in things such as *duty* and *honor*. Words not commonly uttered at Dartmouth, sans cynicism.

His father, a Vietnam era Army enlisted-to-OCS candidate and later lawyer, told him that the Marines "provide everything I love you too much to teach you."

*(Continued on page, column 2)*

## 2ndMarDiv Association—Cont.

This was said to us in front of many, many customers. Whiskey and I left but not without a parting shot, loudly and proudly proclaiming them a bunch of flaming rec-tums. Once outside and in front of a package store within the mall, the owner of the store asked us what was going on and we told him. Right then and there, he gave us permission to set up a Toys-for-Tots detail in front of his liquor store. We were on our way to fund raising success and, after ten years, that store owner still supports Toys for Tots.

However, after detailing the store for three successful fund raising Christmas seasons, I ran into an old high school buddy who suggested we go to the Hanover Mall and talk to his daughter. She was its director of marketing. We did. Whiskey and I met with the lady and explained to her what the 2nd Marine Division Association and the Toys-for-Tots foundation were all about. She was wonderful, and promptly asked how soon we could start. We've been there, in addition to the liquor store, ever since.

It was recently estimated that in the time we have been associated with the Hanover Mall alone, we have accumulated cash and toys valued at greater than \$470,000. The liquor store donations added still more.

### Trivia Question 3: Who said

"A Marine should be sworn to the patient endurance of hardships, like the ancient knights; and it is not the least of these necessary hardships to have to serve with sailors?" (See answer on page 4.)

Pleased as I am at having been part of the Toys-for-Tots program these many years, I recognize it as having been a team effort and would be remiss in not giving recognition to the many other Marines of the 2nd Marine Division Association helping to achieve our goal. They are: Bob (Whiskey) Wuschke, John (Willy) Williams, Francis (Hap) Donoghue, Bud Vargus, Dave MacDonald and Matt Carr. Without them, the Toys-for-Tots endeavor would not have succeeded to the extent it has. To which, I have to say:

**"WELL DONE, MARINES. CARRY ON!"**

## "One Bullet Away"—Cont.

So it came to pass, the would-be warrior spent the summer at OCS, Quantico. Then, after graduating Dartmouth in Jun99, he raised his right hand to grab four very active duty years in the Corps. At The Basic School [TBS], where one learns of the elements making for the "fog and friction" of combat, his instructor raises the question "What differs you from your platoon sergeant?" Pausing for affect he continued, "One bullet." [Hence the book title] "Too often," came the elaboration, "platoon commanders focus on the mission while sergeants focus on troop welfare." Again he paused. "Each of you has to do both." A compelling point, so much the essence of the book, which ultimately drives Fick to leave the Corps however great his military talents.

He's told knowledge required of *officer-warriors* is ten percent learned at OCS, sixty percent at TBS and the ten week Infantry Officer Course [IOC], perhaps twenty more in ones first platoons and the last ten percent in combat. Assigned to the 1st Marines and later to the First Recon Battalion and seeing duty in both Afghanistan and Iraq, he deservedly achieves *warrior* status while, perhaps better still, remaining a "good man."

Our Baltimore radio *"talkshowman,"* Ron Smith, interviewed Captain Fick last year and admits to having been "bowed over by his obvious high character" and being "the kind of person one would want as a son." This is extraordinary praise from a man with decades of interviewing experience and acquired...necessary...cynicism.

As for the book, it's wonderful. Over five decades of reading perhaps too much military history, Fick's presentation ranks among my top favorable three. He manages to breathe life into material, such as his more than a year of schooling [OCS, TBS, IOC, SERE and Recon], with a measure of talent common to novelists yet without exaggeration, without apparent pretense at bravado.

He writes with great clarity about "combat mindset" and the need to function as a predator with a moral imperative of knowing where to draw the line. And, then late in the book, he explains, with the sincerity I believe Ron Smith perceived: "Great Marine commanders are able to kill that which they love most – their men." Unable to assume that mantle, Nathaniel Fick left the Corps.

Buy, borrow, read "One Bullet Away." You WILL love it.

## Invasion Force: Tripolitania

It was not the shirt-and-tie clan of OPEC or the ragamuffin likes of al-Qaeda that provided the first Islamic world attempt to coerce America. Indeed, two hundred years ago, middle-east leaders of various North African regions of Algiers, Morocco, Tunisia and Tripolitania [now Libya] had already acquired a reputation for terrorizing international commerce. Collectively, this motley collection of martinets belonged to what was called the Barbary States and their pirating fleets had been plundering Mediterranean shipping, exacting "protectionist" tribute, taking crew as well as passengers for slaves and ransom as far back as the mid-1600s.



Fighting the Barbary Pirates

One 19th century journalist summarized the history of the circumstances as follows: "...civilized Europe not only tolerated the robbery, the murder, and the carrying into captivity of her own people, but actually recognized this triple atrocity as a privilege inherent to certain persons of Turkish descent and Islamic religion inhabiting the northern coast of Africa. England or France might have put them down by a word long before; but, as the corsairs chiefly ravaged the defenseless coasts of Sardinia, Sicily, and Naples, the two great powers had no particular interest in crushing them....The English, with large fleets and naval stations in

the Mediterranean, had nothing to fear from them, and were, probably, not much displeased with the contributions levied upon the commerce of other nations. Barbary piracy was a protective tax in favor of British bottoms. French merchantmen kept at home. Spain, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland tried to outbid one another for the favor of [one titled middle-east martinet or another],

**Trivia Question 4** All Marines know of Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller's exploits. What did the "B" stand for? (Answer on Page 4)

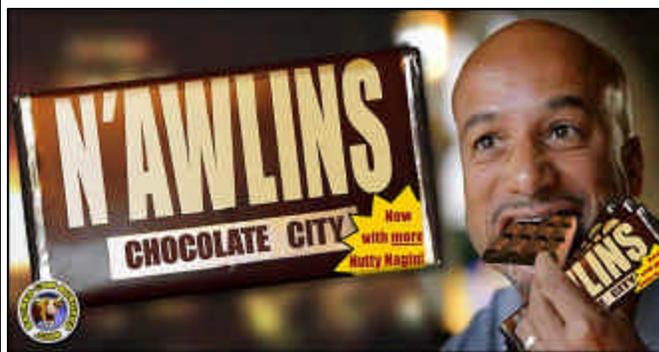
and were robbed and enslaved whenever it suited the interests of their Highnesses. The Portuguese kept out of the Mediterranean, and protected their coast by guarding the Straits of Gibraltar." All of which suggests that European attitude hasn't changed in 200 years.

The United States of America, a relatively "new kid on the block," was to prove less tolerant. For and finally, around 1801, a process began that was to take nearly fifteen years to obtain some measure of control if not an end to the extortion.

Back in *your* 1950s, recruit training lectures on the "History and Traditions of the United States Marine Corps" dealt with this subject in a much abbreviated form. You were provided but "meat and potatoes" of what was a seven course meal and likely as not, to this day, you remember little more about the events of the time than words like Derne, phrases such as Mameluke sword and "to the shores of Tripoli" or the name of one Marine officer: Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon.

However, there was so much more about the First Barbary

**"We have to rebuild the South...again, but better."**



"Can you hear me now???"



Ed Shea with "PRC in hand", while in the boonies of Camp Lejeune, during Operation Trailix 1960

Pirate War of real interest. It was to be the first war in which America and its Marine Corps - long before its Army - would fight on foreign soil. It also provided the background for America's first foray into covert operations, wherein the use of insurgent forces in conjunction with our military was to attempt a coup d'ete. And, almost unbelievably, the successful assault on the northwestern Tripolitan city of Derne — now Derna, Libya — was accomplished, discounting insurgents, with an American force of but ten men including: a ne'er do well former United States Consul to Tripoli and court-martialed Army officer, William Eaton; Midshipman George Mann USN; First Lieutenant Presley Neville O'Bannon USMC and seven historically short-shrifted enlisted Marines.<sup>2</sup> And, finally, the episode provides an extraordinary example for never, EVER, trusting politicians.

In 1800, the ruler of Tripoli, Yusuf Karamanli, seeing what he thought to be American weakness, decided to up the ante for what the mafia would call *protection*. This was a man that had killed one brother, overthrew and exiled another in assuming power. He demanded of President Adams a gift of ten thousand dollars when George Washington died, insisting that it was "customary for tributary states to make a gift to the crown of Tripoli, when a great man has passed away." Then, when getting no response, he raised the demand to a quarter of a million dollars.

The following year, America's newest President, Thomas Jefferson, seeing that twenty percent of the

nation's annual income was being paid in tribute and ransom to the rascals, decided it was time for change. Though not inclined to military adventures — *it cost too much money* — he ordered half of America's naval fleet to the Mediterranean as something of a police force and a brazen "showing of the flag."

Over time and overall, the effort had little effect, spread as it was over 1200 miles of seacoast. Indeed, naval presence provided but still more targets for the pirates. And, on 31Oct03, when the USS Philadelphia ran aground, its Captain unconscionably surrendered the ship. Its crew of 307 were forthwith shackled and enslaved into building Tripoli's fortifications over the next two years.

**Trivia Question 5:** Established by an act of Congress in July 1798, the Marine Band, because of its traditional privilege of performing at the White House, is referred to as what? (See answer on page 4.)

Thus it was with fire, brimstone, buckshot and bluster filling the air on both sides that, in 1804, there entered into the equation a 19th century *Jack Bauer*, namely William Eaton, with a proposal for President Jefferson. Simply put: *replace the kleptocratic despot with one of America's own choosing*. Hence, "the die was cast" and by June, with twenty-five thousand dollars, verbal orders and the *unwritten* approval of the Secretary of State James Madison, the now *General* Eaton sailed for the Mediterranean to find the exiled former ruling Pasha of Tripoli, Hamet Karamanli.

Over the next several months, Eaton and his entourage ranged from Al-

exandria to Cairo seeking an audience with the understandably paranoid man he would make *king*. It was December before secret contact was made at the Fayyum Oasis some two hundred miles inland at the edge of the Barca desert. Eaton laid out his plans for taking the northeastern city of Derne, moving on to the taking of the 700 mile distant *city* of Tripoli on the northwest coast and ensconcing Hamet upon the throne.

Though more than a little suspicious of both Eaton's and America's intentions, Hamet Karamanli agreed to the attempt and the two men began to put together a force of perhaps six-hundred. And, a more *democratic* lot never existed: a formidable mix of Arabs, Levantine brigands, 38 Greek and other European mercenaries, sheiks, Christians and Muslims, rogues and scoundrels all. It wasn't until 8Mar05 that this *Extraordinary Expeditionary Unit* [EEU] set off from Alexandria, Egypt on an exhaustive six week five hundred mile trek across the deserts of the northern coastline.

Despite interference from Turkish cavalry and the French Consul; sandstorms of the khamsin wind bringing noontime darkness; two near mutinies born of Christian-Muslim distrust; various intra-group rivalries as well as a shortage of rations, money and patience; they finally encamped atop a hill overlooking Derne on 25Apr1805. Eaton ordered a reconnaissance and learned that the garrison contained "800 defenders, one 10 inch Howitzer and eight nine-pounders" facing seaward and useless against a land attack. On the 26<sup>th</sup>, he asked Derne's Governor to surrender, was threatened

with death for his overture and, then, prepared for the attack.

At 0600 of the 27<sup>th</sup>, three American vessels [Argus, Nautilus and Hornet] anchored within one-hundred yards of the nine-pounders and swiftly put them to rest. At the same time, Hamet with his insurgent *stew* attacked the town and Eaton, with his smaller force, the fortress. As part of the latter's endeavor, Lieutenant O'Bannon with his Marines, a few Greeks and cannoniers passed through a shower of musketry, took the stronghold, raised the

(Continued on page 4, column 3)

### You'll Never Guess Who?



As an alternative to learning about the cretin media mogul to the "far left," who by the way *flunked out* of boot camp on 11May54, I offer a

more reasonable challenge. Who is it that belongs to the following biography?

Born 23May58 in Cleveland, his father died when he was eight.

Attending Kent State University, after five years, he left without a degree.

In 1980, he joined the USMC Reserve to pay his rent. Completing boot camp, rifle/mortar man and communications training during six months of active duty in '81, he exited the Corps in 1985.

He credits Marine discipline for getting his life back in order. "The things I learned in the Marines have stayed with me. I hate being late, I'm very organized and I'm not afraid to take responsibility for my actions. And you could scream at me at the top of your lungs and call me all the names you want. It wouldn't even faze me."

The Marines also helped provide his comedy persona. Still a reservist when he began doing stand-up, he had to keep his hair close-cropped. Too poor to afford a second pair of glasses, he wore a pair of the standard frame government issue, and the resulting "look" became comedy gold. He left the reserves as an E2 and began doing comedy full time.

**Trivia Question 6:** Who was this guy? (Answer on page 4.)



Christmas '05 Toys-for-Tots effort of, from left to right, Pfc Matt Carr; GSgt Bob (Whiskey) Wuschke, (Ret.); LCpl Dave MacDonald, our former G-2-6 member Cpl Trevor Davies, Sgt Bud Vargus and Sgt John (Willy) Williams.

## Solant Amity I — G-2 6 Association

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See the whole story at  
[SolantAmity.com](http://SolantAmity.com)

### The First Marines to *Land* in Monrovia

#### Marine Corps Joins the Special Operations World

On 23Feb06 the Marine Corps entered the world of military special operations by establishing a separate command devoted to small-unit tactics and stealthy reconnaissance. It's work done by Marines as far back as World War



II, but never as part of the Special Operations Command. Whole battalions will now focus on SOC work, like that of the SEALs, Green Berets and Rangers.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, at the initiation ceremony, said that special ops Marines will help "seek new and innovative ways to take the fight to the en-

emy."

The Marines plan to establish their first special operations company in May and be fully staffed with around 2,500 troops by 2010. The command will recruit corporals, sergeants and officers with reconnaissance experience and language training.

As part of the change, the anti-terrorism brigade headquartered at Lejeune will go out of business and shift some of its troops to the special operations command. The command will have combat battalions on both U.S. coasts, along with support units and schools to teach special operations skills to U.S. and foreign troops.

Analyst John Pike of Washington-based Global Security remarked that "The struggle against evil doers is a growth industry and, well, the Marines want a chunk of it."

#### Enlightening Odds and Ends for your reading pleasure:

**Jeffrey Port:** My Father is W.E. Port from your duty roster of Nov60 and I've heard him tell tales of the Solant Amity cruise for the last 44 years.

Finally, I've gotten to see some pictures of the participants in action!

Thanks so much for the website.

**Ed Hart,** our inveterate circum-navigating Marine, is recovering from surgery, prompted by a bout with cancer. Ed is now...off meds and pain-killers...resting aboard his boat, Hooligan, in Jacksonville, Florida where both will remain until mid-to-late May.

Doctors insist they've gotten all the cancer out and that NO chemo-or-radiation therapy will be necessary. OooooRAH!!!

The man continues to amaze me.

**Dick and Diana McGibbeny** are still adjusting to their semi-retirement and new environs in southwest Florida.

Had you known that **Ken Kollai**, one of 3-G-2-6's finest of yesteryear, was twice "meritoriously" promoted to Lance Corporal in the 6th Marines?

Christ, I barely made it "without merit" one time in four years!

But, as was the case with so many, including myself, the Corps had a tough time "trying to keep good men up." Personally, I think our frequent demotions were necessary to help keep salary costs down.

**Trevor and Ruth Davies** are glad to see another Massachusetts winter bite the dust, even if a comparatively mild one.

And, thank you Trevor for furnishing the history of New England's 2ndMarDiv Association and its Toys

#### Tripoli (Continued from page 3)

U.S. flag above its ramparts and directed concentrated fire on the enemy below. After two hours of hand-to-hand, Derne had fallen at the cost of fourteen lives, two of them Marines. Eaton had taken a round in the wrist.

Over the next few weeks various counterattacks failed and by 28May the joint task force had driven all resistance from the city. It was all over, except for the anticipated seven hundred mile march to the city of Tripoli and the hoped for defeat of Yusuf. Or, so it was thought.

To Eaton's chagrin, there had been a bit of duplicity afoot. All the while he and all had risked life and limb on behalf of what he thought was U.S. policy, Secretary of State James Madison had been directing one Tobias Lear, as Consul-General, to negotiate with the waffling flotsam and potentially near vanquished Yusuf in Tripoli. On 11Jun05, Eaton learned that "peace had been reached." Yusuf was to



Answer to Trivia Question 6

for Tots efforts. To paraphrase your own comment: "Well done, Marine. Carry on!"

And, of course, thank you **Ron Smith** for your insights into the man that is Nathaniel Fick.

#### Trivia Answers:

1. Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.
2. The Mythical Marine Gunnery Sergeant Hartman, portrayed by Gunnery Sergeant R. Lee Ermey, a Marine Corps Drill Instructor using his own choice of words in Full Metal Jacket, 1987.
3. Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery
4. The "B" stands for Burwell.
5. The "President's Own."
6. Drew Carey
7. Belleau Wood

**Trivia Question 7:** What forested region in France was re-named "Bois de la Brigade de Marine" (Wood of the Marine Brigade) following a dramatic WWI battle? (See answer below.)

remain in power, Hamet was forever OUT. Except for the threat value provided at the bargaining table, all efforts and deaths had been for nothing.

Hamet was now but a *beggar* swept off to Malta, with a piddling State Department pension. Even his family was denied to him for a period of four years thereafter, as specifically required in the pathetic *peace* agreement. His paranoia had proven well founded. Taken up as a convenience, he'd been discarded with prejudice.

Eaton returned to the United States and died 11 years later, still angry and quite broke. O'Bannon, with the his acclaimed blade of Damascus, the now renowned Mameluke sword provided as a gift from Hamet, resigned from the Corps on 12Sep07 and spent the rest of his days in Kentucky, dying at the age of 74 on 12Sep50. His remains and a memorial are to be found in Frankfurt, Kentucky in commemoration of his service on the "shores of Tripoli" and establishing standards reflecting "the best traditions of the Marine Corps" with an invasion force a far cry from one of today. *Written by Ed Shea*

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> The Atlantic Monthly, Volume VI, December 1860, number XXXVI.

<sup>2</sup> After much research, the identity of only one was obtained, an NCO with the wonderfully sounding name of Pascal Paoli Peck.

For further reading about this subject, I direct your attention to: "The Pirate Coast: Thomas Jefferson, The First Marines and the Secret Mission of 1805," by Richard Zacks. Published by Hyperion; copyright May 2005.

Mailed as a black on white copy, a fully colorized version can be found at our website, where on page one you'll find a link to a downloadable version.

I hope you've enjoyed this latest effort. Send in your stories by e-or-snail mail to make for an even better next issue.

Semper Fi; *Ed Shea*