



Freedom's Voice

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Military History Center

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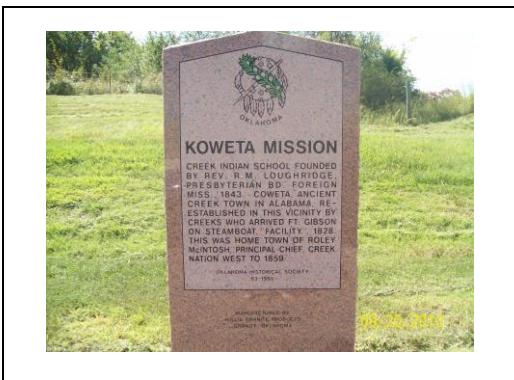
"Promoting Patriotism through the Preservation of Military History"

Volume 4, Number 8

August 2016

United States Armed Services Day of Observance

Coast Guard Birthday – August 4



The ninth annual Wagoner County Coweta Mission Civil War Weekend will be held on October 28-30 at the farm of Mr. Arthur Street, located southeast of Coweta. Mr. Street is a Civil War reenactor and an expert on Civil War Era Artillery.

This is an event you won't want to miss. So, mark your calendars now. The September newsletter will contain detailed information about the event.

All net proceeds from the Civil War Weekend are for the benefit of the MHC.



Reenactors from a past Civil War Weekend

August MHC Events

August was a busy month for the Military History Center. Two important patriotic events were held at the Museum and a fundraiser, Military Trivia Evening, was held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Broken Arrow.

On Saturday, August 6, the MHC hosted Purple Heart Recognition Day. Because of a morning rainstorm, the event was held inside the Museum rather than on the Flag Plaza as planned. Even with the rain, about 125 or so local patriots attended the event, including a large contingent of Union High School ROTC cadets.

The Ernest Childers Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart presented the event. Ms. Elaine Childers, daughter of Medal of Honor and Purple Heart Recipient, Lt. Col. Ernest Childers was the special guest.



Ms. Elaine Childers



MSGT Charles Scott, US Army, (Ret.) and member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, was the principal speaker.



Union High School ROTC cadets

By the time the Purple Heart Recognition Day ceremonies ended, the rain had passed and everyone was able to go outside for the dedication of the MHC's memorial to Oklahoma's Medal of Honor recipients.



The Medal of Honor Memorial consists of a headstone of the same black granite as the flag dedication stones and thirty-three memorial bricks, one for each MOH recipient. Each brick has the serviceman's name, rank, branch of service, the war in which his heroic action gained him the Medal, and the date his Medal of Honor was awarded. The bricks of the men who received the Medal posthumously are marked with an AP after the date. The memorial was placed next to the Medal of Honor flag pole and dedication stone (left in the photograph).

Medal of Honor Memorial Dedication Address

Amos Chapman was the first Oklahoman to receive the Medal of Honor, in 1874. He was a civilian scout for the U.S. Army, living at Fort Supply in western Oklahoma. While scouting in the Texas Panhandle during what would become known as the Red River War, Chapman, another scout and four cavalrymen were trapped by more than one hundred hostile Comanche and Kiowa. They held off their attackers for most of the day until relief arrived. At age thirty-seven, he was also the oldest of Oklahoma's Medal of Honor recipients. The most recent Oklahoma Medal of Honor recipient was PFC Donald Paul Sloat of Coweta. He served as a machine gunner in the Army's Americal Division in Vietnam. He was twenty years old when he unhesitatingly sacrificed his life to save those of his brothers in arms, on January 17, 1970.

Between the first and last recipient, thirty-one other Oklahomans have received the nation's highest award for heroism above and beyond the call of duty expected of an American serviceman or woman in combat with an armed enemy. Fifteen of them were killed during the action that gained them the Medal of Honor. Two others were killed in combat within a few weeks of their heroic actions and one was lost at sea while returning to the United States for further treatment of his wounds.

These thirty-three men are a microcosm of Oklahoma's combat servicemen. Most were born and raised in Oklahoma. They came from cities, small towns and rural areas. Several moved from Oklahoma at a young age and entered the military from other states. A few had moved to Oklahoma from other states before entering the military. They were a mix of draftees and volunteers. They were all young, predominately in their early to mid-twenties. Some were college educated; most were not. Several were, or would become, career military men. Some were married with children; most were not. They were soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen. Some were graduates of the Military and Navy academies. They were white, black, Latino, American Indian. They are buried in Arlington and other national cemeteries in the United States, in American military cemeteries in Europe and in non-military cemeteries in the United States. Two were lost at sea. Many are well-remembered, with monuments, ships or military installations named for them. Most are unknown outside their local communities or families. A few are likely forgotten.

The common thread that binds these thirty-three extraordinary men is that without hesitation or regard for their personal safety, they risked their lives to do what they believed was necessary at the time. They represent the highest standard of duty and sacrifice that we can expect from our military men and women. The Military History Center is honored to dedicate this memorial to the memory of such exceptional American and Oklahoma heroes.

MHC President, BG Tom Mancino (Ret.), dedicated the Medal of Honor Memorial.

On Saturday evening, August 13, a large crowd of local patriots gathered on the MHC Memorial Flag Plaza to commemorate the end of World War II, which occurred seventy-one years ago on August 14, 1945. The event was organized by World War II veteran, Frank Riesinger, and sponsored by AVB Bank.

The event began with members of Boy Scout Troop 945 raising the American flag and leading the attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. Clarence Oliver gave the invocation.



Ms. Michelle McAfee, along with Mr. Riesinger, led everyone in singing the first and fourth stanzas of *The Star Spangled Banner*.



Dr. Clarence Oliver introduced special guest, Ms. Elaine Childers, daughter of World War II Medal of Honor recipient, then Lt. Ernest Childers of Broken Arrow. Mr. Riesinger intro-

duced two other special guests – the nieces of Marine Corps PFC Albert Schwab of Tulsa, also a World War II Medal of Honor recipient.



Ms. Elaine Childers reading her father's Medal of Honor Citation and some of his World War II reminiscences.



Nieces of PFC Albert Schwab, USMC, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for actions on Okinawa. Dr. Oliver read his Medal of Honor Citation.

The featured speaker for the commemoration was Mr. Leo Haas, a World War II Navy veteran, who flew Navy PB4Y Privateer patrol bombers, a modified version of the B-24 Liberator, as a member of Navy Bombing Squadron VPB-109. When the war ended, Haas was a lieutenant and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross, as well as other decorations.



At age ninety-two, Mr. Haas delegated the task of delivering his address to his daughters, Ms. Suzanne Adair (left) and Ms. Charlotte Lazar.

Musical entertainment was provided by Tulsa's SilverTop Brass. As the finale of the Commemoration, three of the band members played a unique and beautiful version of *Taps* to honor the fallen.



Four members of Tulsa's SilverTop Brass – three others were positioning themselves around the Flag Plaza in preparation for *Taps*.

On Saturday, August 20, the Military History Center held its second annual Military History Trivia Evening. It was a highly competitive event, which everyone enjoyed. Mr. Phil Goldberg moderated the event again this year.



2016 Military History Trivia champions: Oscar Davis, Chris Nuff, Tony Miller, Jonathan Colburn, Jeff Hudson and Stan Warrington (not necessarily in the order shown in the photo) with a score of sixty-nine out of a possible eighty.



Lt. Leo Haas at an unknown date and location during his World War II service in the Pacific Theater. His squadron bombed Japanese naval targets around Iwo Jima, the Philippines and Okinawa.

Leo Haas's War Story

Editor: The following story of Lt. Haas's World War II experiences is written in his own words and was delivered by his daughters as his address at the Commemoration of the End of World War II event.

"On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor from the air without warning. I was a senior at Holy Family High School in Tulsa. I graduated first and then enlisted in the Navy for pilot training. Nine months later I received my wings and married my High School Sweetheart, Vivian; she still is my sweetheart.

I was assigned to Navy Squadron VB-109. We fought over most of the South Pacific Ocean. We lost forty-nine young men who now peacefully rest in the Pacific Ocean. I will forever remember them and their bravery. Our squadron destroyed 309 Japanese ships. We shot down about 100 Japanese fighter planes. We flew our planes at twenty feet above the water when attacking the ships, because the Japanese ships could lay down a fire curtain about three to four miles out. It took our planes about fifteen to twenty seconds to get through the fire curtain of the big guns. After that we could see smaller guns with their wobbling tracers coming, and in a minute or so, we climbed up to 200 feet, dropped our bombs, and then tried to get away by dropping back down to twenty feet. I hate to tell you I was scared, but I must tell you!! We made many runs just like that.

VB-109 received the highest honor available from the Philippine government for 109's help in liberating them from Japanese occupation. VB-109 fought at Iwo Jima, an island where we lost about 6000 brave Marines. Japanese losses ranged around 30,000. Our Marines were the greatest! They did the impossible on Iwo. God bless them.

On Okinawa, VB-109 fought in the air and on the ground. Japan was becoming desperate. Just before dark, a Japanese Kamikaze plane with about fifteen Japanese Kamikaze soldiers landed on our airstrip, jumped out of their plane, destroyed three of our planes, and shot several 109 men. At that point, all men in 109 and other Americans near the landing strip joined the fight, and in about thirty minutes killed all of the Kamikazes. For that ground gunfight, 109 receive the Ground Combat Ribbon.

Our Commander was recommended for the Medal of Honor. He died before he received it. He was a fabulous, fearless pilot. I consider myself so fortunate to have been a member of his squadron and chosen to fly his wing. He was a hero.

VB-109 received numerous awards and medals and ribbons. At the end of the war, 109 escorted the Japanese planes carrying officials involved in signing the Peace Treaty. The Japanese planes were painted white to signify surrender. When the planes landed in Okinawa, with the 109 as their escorts, the Japanese officials came out of their planes wearing swords and all sorts of distinguished war weapons. They were ordered by the American Base Commander to immediately drop all of their weapons and swords, which they did. The Japanese officials and General Douglas McArthur later signed the End of the War Treaty on a battleship. The war was over."

WAC Quilt



The WAC Quilt was created by World War II veteran, Ms. Ruth Theobald Costilow, during her retirement years. It is entirely hand-stitched. Ms. Costilow, who died in 1987, was a teletype operator during World War II. She presented the quilt to the veterans of the 169th WAC Company at their 1984 Reunion in Corpus Christi, Texas. The 169th WAC Company was organized in 1942 and later combined with three other WAC companies to form the 1st WAC Separate Battalion. The Battalion arrived in the European Theater of Operations, in England, for duty with the Eighth Air Force, on July 16, 1943.

The quilt includes symbols familiar to all 169th veterans: the large and detailed American eagle at the top, Pallas Athene (a goddess of Greek mythology seen as a protector of cities, a prophetess, and invincible in battle), Marks Hall (an English manor house) where the 169th was billeted, with the flag flying over it and Chartres Cathedral (Chartres, France). The quilt also has reproductions of the Eighth and Ninth Air Force shoulder sleeve patches and another Air Force patch. Many words and phrases on the quilt, all of which remind the 169th veterans of their years of service, include helmet liner, staging area, bedroll, haversack, dog tags, Namur (a city in Belgium) Marks Hall, and many others.

The quilt is an extraordinary artifact for all IX Bomb Division WACs. The WAC Quilt is one of the MHC's newest, and one of its most unique, exhibits.



Joseph James "Jocko" Clark was born on November 12, 1893, in a log cabin on a creek near Pryor in Indian Territory. He was of Cherokee heritage and was the first American Indian to graduate from the Navy Academy, in 1917, where he was christened with the name, "Jocko". During World War II, he commanded the aircraft carriers, *Suwannee* and *Yorktown* (the second *Yorktown*, not the one sunk during the Battle of Midway). In 1944, he was promoted to Rear Admiral and given command of Task Group 58.1, which he commanded during the Marianas Campaign. During the battle of the Philippine Sea, his flagship was the aircraft carrier, *Hornet*, (also the second such named aircraft carrier, not the more famous *Hornet* of the Doolittle Raid, which was sunk during the Solomon Islands Campaign). Clark commanded the Fast Carrier Task Force (TF 77) during the Korean War. On May 20, 1952, as a Vice Admiral, he assumed command of Seventh Fleet. He held that position until his retirement, on December 1, 1953. On the basis of his combat awards, he retired as a full Admiral.

On Memorial Day, 1946, Admiral Clark presented Steven Albert Schwab, the three-year-old son of Marine Corps PFC Albert Schwab, killed on Okinawa, his father's Medal of Honor at a ceremony in Tulsa's Boulder – now Veterans – Park.

Admiral Clark died at St. Albans, New York, on July 13, 1971. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Among his many awards are the Navy Cross, Navy Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Navy Commendation Medal and Korean Order of Military Merit.

In 1979, the Navy named a guided-missile frigate, *USS Clark*, in his honor. The ship was in service 1979-2000.



This Month's Featured Exhibit



During World War II, the Office of War Information's Bureau of Graphics oversaw the production of over 200,000 different designs of propaganda posters. Unlike most other nations at war, American propaganda posters carried mostly positive themes to encourage support for the war. These themes included conservation, production, recruiting, home efforts and secrecy. The posters were usually placed in areas without paid advertisements, such as post offices, railroad stations, schools, restaurants and retail stores.

The OWI held design competitions among artists, which allowed for an increased number of designs from which to choose. The artists designed the posters at no cost to the government.

Of the three posters shown above, the two on the right reminded Americans of the need for caution in their conversations, suggesting that loose talk about matters concerning the war effort could cost another soldier his life or even the loss of a ship. ("Loose lips sink ships.") The poster on the far left shows the arm of an enemy soldier thrusting a bayonet through a Bible, meant to show Americans that they were fighting for their civilization and freedoms.

Stephen Adelson donated these three posters to the MHC.

Support the Military History Center

Do you want to join the many patriotic Oklahomans who are already supporting the Military History Center's mission of "Promoting Patriotism by Preserving Military History"? If so, contact the Military History Center at (918) 794-2712 to learn how you can be a supporter, or click on the link below to go to the MHC website, <http://www.okmhc.org/donate/>.

There's something to accommodate everyone's budget. Monetary donations, as well as gifts in kind, are tax deductible, subject to IRS regulations.

We invite you to be a part of this unique opportunity to support a first-class military museum and history center in Oklahoma.

The American Volunteer Group

The American Volunteer Group (AVG) was a group of adventure seeking, undisciplined, hell-raising, former American military pilots, flight instructors, ground crewmen, and assorted civilian medical and headquarters types recruited to serve in the Chinese Air Force in 1941, before the U.S. entered World War II.

They were hired by an American agent of the Chinese government to form a special air combat unit in the service of China. Military men were granted special discharges from U.S. military service and given passports. They made their way to Burma in small groups, over several weeks. The military men were induced by salaries up to three times their U.S. military pay and a bonus of \$500 for every Japanese plane they destroyed. Once in China, they were organized into the First American Volunteer Group, and would subsequently gain a degree of immortality as the Flying Tigers.

The 1st AVG was commanded by a retired Army captain named Claire Lee Chennault. Chennault had been an advisor to the Chinese Air Force (CAF) since 1937 and had convinced himself and Chinese President Chiang Kai-shek that a well-trained, well-equipped force of fighters and bombers could gain control of the air over China and take the air war to the Japanese home islands. The First American Volunteer Group was formally authorized by the CAF on August 1, 1941, with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's signature stamped on the orders.

Chennault organized the AVG into three squadrons: 1st Squadron was dubbed the Adam & Eves, 2nd Squadron, the Panda Bears and 3rd Squadron, Hells Angels. Squadron names were a play off each squadron's aircraft nose art. The idea for the shark's face on the aircraft nose came when one of the pilots was thumbing through a magazine and saw a picture of British fighters in North Africa painted with faces of tiger sharks. He went out to his fighter and chalked an outline of the face, and when Chennault saw it, he liked it so much, that he commandeered the idea for the entire 1st AVG. The large air scoop on the front of the P-40 Tomahawk gives the appearance of a mouth for the shark. Since the AGV was legally part of the Chinese Air Force, the men also painted the Chinese twelve-point sun symbol on their planes as national identification.



3rd Squadron "Hell's Angels" over China, photographed in 1942 by AVG pilot, Robert T. Smith

The personnel of the AVG wore nothing to indicate they were Americans. In fact, their uniforms were haphazard to non-existent. They also didn't use American rank designations. For example, the rank designated for pilot was pilot. A lead pilot's wingman was designated as pilot or wingman. Chennault, himself, was a colonel in the CAF, and was recognized as such by Chinese officials, even though the rank was entirely invented and never made official by orders. He signed reports, orders, etc. simply as commanding officer.

The AVG's mission was to protect the Burma Road, China's lifeline, since all its coastal cities were occupied by the Japanese. The Burma Road began at the Burmese port of Rangoon and extended north to Lashio as a railroad. North of Lashio, it was a dirt and gravel road that twisted and turned across the most southern, and lowest, part of the Himalayas to Kunming in China's Yunnan Province.

When the Japanese initiated war with the United States, they also attacked British possessions in Southeast Asia, which then included Burma. The AVG squadrons were first based in Burma, and most of their combat was over Burma and Thailand. Their first combat, however, was over Kunming, China, on December 20, 1941. Henry Luce, publisher of *Time*, picked up the story, and the following week published it as "Blood for the Tigers", thus was born the "Flying Tigers". It confused many, as they didn't make the connection with the tiger shark.

By May 1942, the Japanese had driven the Americans and British out of Burma, and all AVG operations were moved to China. At the same time, negotiations were underway to induct AVG personnel into the U.S. Army Air Force. The termination date for the AVG was midnight, July 4, 1942. By then many of the pilots and other personnel had already departed, not wanting to be inducted into the Army Air Force.

Two Oklahomans served in the AVG. One was Pilot Instructor Arnold "Red" Shamblin, born at Commerce, Oklahoma about 1919. Almost nothing is known publicly about Shamblin. A surviving letter he wrote to his girlfriend (or fiancée) on March 16, 1942, informs us that he was at Yunnan-yi in the Chinese province of Yunnan, located next to the border with Burma, where Chennault had established a training base.



Pilot Arnold Shamblin

Chennault had asked some of the pilots to remain past July 4, until their Air Force replacements arrived. Shamblin, who had converted from instructor to pilot, was one who did. By then all AVG operations had moved to eastern China, and on July 10, he and three other pilots were sent on a mission to Linchuan in Japanese occupied China. Shamblin's P-40E Kit-

tyhawk was hit by antiaircraft fire, and he was forced to bail out. He was captured by the Japanese, who reported it, but that was the last heard of Shamblin. They most likely killed him, as there is no further record of him as a POW.

The other Oklahoman was Merlyn D. Kemph, born at Ringwood, Oklahoma, on November 17, 1913. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1934 and was trained in aircraft engineering (mechanics). In 1941, he was stationed at Selfridge Field, Michigan, when he was recruited for the AVG. He probably accepted the offer for the better pay, and maybe some adventure.

He was a crew chief in the Adam & Eves and would have been stationed with the squadron at various bases in Burma and later China. After the war, he worked for aircraft companies in Kansas and Alaska. While he lived in Alaska, he was known as a serious fisherman and Alaskan big game hunter. After his retirement, he returned to Oklahoma, settling in Enid. He died there on November 10, 1998. (No photograph of him could be found.)

After the AVG was disbanded on July 4, 1942, the China Air Task Force of the United States Army Air Force, commanded by Brigadier General Chennault, officially took over air operations in China. In early March 1943, Fourteenth Air Force was activated under the command of Chennault and replaced the China Air Task Force. Chennault remained in command of Fourteenth Air Force until the end of July, 1945. General Chennault formally retired from the military for the second time, in October 1945. Lt. General Claire L. Chennault died on July 24, 1958. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Chennault said of the AVG: "The group that the military experts predicted would not last three weeks in combat had fought for seven months over Burma, China, Thailand, and French Indo-China, destroying 299 Japanese planes with another 153 probably destroyed. All of this with a loss of twelve P-40s in combat and sixty-one on the ground, including the twenty-two burned at Loi-Wing [China]. Four pilots were killed in air combat; six were killed by anti-aircraft fire; three by enemy bombs on the ground; and three were taken prisoner. Ten more died as a result of flying accidents"¹.

Chennault's claim for the number of enemy planes the AVG destroyed included planes destroyed on the ground. Historian Daniel Ford, who has intensively researched both U.S. and Japanese records, has concluded that AVG pilots destroyed between 110 and 120 Japanese planes in aerial combat. Throughout the existence of the AVG, both sides routinely exaggerated their enemy's losses.

Ford may have written the best epitaph for the Flying Tigers of the AVG: "... for a few months, half a century ago, in their incandescent youth, they were heroes to a nation who needed heroes as never before and never since."²

Because AVG personnel were civilians, and technically served in a foreign air force, the U.S. government ignored them for decades. Their service in the AVG was not counted as time in grade. They were not recognized as veterans until 1993. They were not awarded well-earned decorations until 1996,

when all the pilots were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses, and the ground crews were awarded Bronze Stars.

To the great unhappiness of the original AGV men, their replacements, encouraged by Chennault, also referred to themselves as Flying Tigers. They also continued to paint shark's faces on their aircraft. Today, when anyone, or his family, says he was a Flying Tiger, it doesn't mean he was a member of the First American Volunteer Group, the original Flying Tigers.



AGV Flying Tiger insignia, designed by the Walt Disney Company



Chennault (second from left) at his headquarters at Kunming, China in early 1942 – The photograph was taken by Pilot Robert T. Smith.



Chinese twelve-pointed sun symbol

¹ <http://www.flyingtigersavg.22web.org/tiger1.htm>, quoted from Chennault, Claire L., *Way of a Fighter*

² Ford, Daniel, *Flying Tigers*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC, 1991



During the invasion of Tulagi, a small, but strategically important island north of Guadalcanal, on August 7, 1942, Major Kenneth Dillon Bailey led a successful assault against a Japanese machine gun nest. He was awarded a Silver Star for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity." After Tulagi was secured, Bailey's unit was moved over to Guadalcanal. As commanding officer of Company C, 1st Marine Raider Battalion, Major Bailey led his men in repulsing a Japanese attack, which had penetrated American lines during the Battle of Edson's Ridge, on September 12-14, 1942. Despite a severe head wound, he directed his men for more than ten hours of fierce hand-to-hand combat. Major Bailey was killed in action twelve days later, on September 26, 1942, while leading his men in an attack on the Japanese at the Matanikau River. (Related stories are on pages ten and eleven.) During the Battle of Edson's Ridge in recognition of "his great personal valor while exposed to constant and merciless enemy fire, and his indomitable fighting spirit inspired his troops to heights of heroic endeavor which enabled them to repulse the enemy and hold Henderson Field", Major Bailey was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, on March 24, 1943, accredited to Illinois.

Kenneth Bailey was born at Pawnee, Oklahoma, on October 21, 1910. He later moved to Danville, Illinois, with his parents. He served three years with the 130th Infantry Regiment, Illinois National Guard. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1935 and was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in the Marine Corps, on July 1, 1935. At Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia in June 1941, Bailey joined the 5th Marine Regiment as a company commander. In February 1942, his unit was re-designated the 1st Marine Raider Battalion.

Major Bailey's final resting place is in Spring Hill Cemetery, Danville, Illinois, where he was interred in June 1948.



USS *Kenneth D. Bailey* – in service 1945-1970

Museum Hours and Admission Fee

Tuesday – Friday: 10:00 – 4:00; Saturday: 10:00 – 2:00
Closed Sunday and Monday and major Federal holidays

Adults – \$5.00

Members and Children under 18 – Free

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Bernard D'Andrea's painting, *Douglas A. Munro Covers the Withdrawal of the 7th Marines at Guadalcanal*, depicts Coast Guard Signalman First Class Munro providing covering fire for Marines as they evacuate the beach. The story is on page ten.



The United States Coast Guard Academy was established in 1876 at New London, Connecticut. It is the smallest of the five federal service academies. The academy provides education for future Coast Guard officers in one of eight major fields of study.



United States Coast Guard



The United States Coast Guard is a maritime, military, multi-mission service unique among the U.S. military branches for having a maritime law enforcement mission with jurisdiction in both domestic and international waters and a federal regulatory agency mission as part of its mission set. It operates under the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime and can be transferred to the Department of the Navy by the President at any time or by Congress during time of war.

The agency that evolved into the Coast Guard was created by Congress on August 4, 1790, at the request of Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, as the "Revenue Marine". Its earliest responsibilities included actions against smugglers and pirates and as a collector of customs duties. It is the United States' oldest continuous seagoing service (The United States Navy lists its founding as 1775, by the formation of the Continental Navy; however, the navy was disbanded in 1785. The modern U.S. Navy was founded in 1794.). By the 1860s, the Revenue Marine was called the Revenue Cutter Service.

The modern Coast Guard was formed with the merger of the Revenue Cutter Service and the United States Life-Saving Service on January 28, 1915. In 1967, the Coast Guard was moved from the Department of the Treasury to the newly formed Department of Transportation. On February 25, 2002, the Coast Guard was placed under the Department of Homeland Security. As one of the nation's five armed services, the Coast Guard has been involved in every war from 1790 to Iraq. The last time the Coast Guard operated as a whole within the Navy was during World War II. More often, military and combat units within the Coast Guard operate under Navy or joint operational control while other Coast Guard units remain under the Department of Homeland Security. The Coast Guard not only has inland waterway and sea-going capabilities, but has an air arm with both fixed-wing and rotary aircraft.

During World War II, the Coast Guard was instrumental in defeating the German submarine, or U-boat, fleet. It is credited with sinking or assisting in the sinking of thirteen U-boats, although the number was probably only eleven. In the Pacific Theatre, the Navy credited Coast Guard warships with sinking one Japanese submarine but it probably sank two. Coast Guardsmen also captured two German surface vessels. Coast Guardsmen can take pride in knowing that they were the only United States service to do so during World War II. Additionally, two U-boats surrendered to Coast Guard-manned warships at the end of hostilities, including the *U-234*, which was bound for Japan transporting a cargo of uranium and the latest German rocket and jet technology.

In addition to anti-submarine actions, Coast Guard cutters provided convoy escort services. Cutters and their crews gained international recognition during a number of combat actions in the North Atlantic and in the waters off Greenland and Iceland. The Coast Guard cutter, *USS Spencer*, attacked and sank the *U-175* in the open Atlantic after the U-boat attempted to attack the convoy that *Spencer* was escorting. This action was unique in that two combat photographers caught the battle on film, providing an unmatched visual record of the destruction of a U-boat and the rescue of its crew. Some of *Spencer*'s crew actually boarded the stricken submarine, becoming the first U.S. servicemen to board an enemy warship under way at sea since the War of 1812.

Coast Guard Signalman First Class Douglas Albert Munro was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions as officer-in-charge of a group of landing craft on September 27, 1942, during action at the Matanikau River, Guadalcanal. He is the only Coast Guardsman ever to receive the Medal of Honor. To date, fifty-five Coast Guardsmen have been awarded the Navy Cross and numerous Coast Guard men and women have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.



Signalman First Class Douglas Albert Munro was born to United States citizens in Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada, on October 11, 1919. He joined the coast Guard in 1939. On September 27, 1942, he was in charge of a detachment of landing craft evacuating a battalion of marines trapped by Japanese forces at Point Cruz, Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, when he was mortally wounded. Signalman Munro's last words were "Did they get off?" Among those he helped save that day was the 7th Battalion's Commander, Lt. Colonel (later General) Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.

“Lest We Forget”



A U.S. Marine patrol crossing the Matanikau River – September 1942

(Note the thick tropical jungle of Guadalcanal.)

The Guadalcanal Campaign, also known as the Battle of Guadalcanal, was fought between August 7, 1942 and February 9, 1943, on and around the island of Guadalcanal and smaller islands in the lower Solomon Islands group. It was the first major land offensive by Allied forces against the Empire of Japan. It was also the first American land offensive of the war, preceding the landings in North Africa by three months. For the first four months, the brutal fighting was undertaken by the 1st Marine Division. By December, the marines were worn down by casualties, battle weariness, disease and the tropical climate. The 1st Marine Division was relieved by the XIV Corps, consisting of the 25th Infantry “Tropic Lightening” Division, 23rd Infantry “Americus” Division and the 2nd Marine Division. Fighting continued until the Japanese evacuated the island, and it was declared secure.

Of about 60,000 deployed, the Marine Corps and Army lost less than 2,000 killed on Guadalcanal and the neighboring small islands. Thousands more were wounded or incapacitated by disease. Additionally, thousands of soldiers, marines sailors, airmen and coast guardsmen were killed and wounded in the naval and air battles fought around and over Guadalcanal and neighboring islands.

Freedom is not free.

