Camp Pendleton Historical Society

GROUNDBREAKER

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Nominating the 1st Marine Division Headquarters' Building to the National Register of Historic Places



The Division Headquarters building on Camp Joseph H. Pendleton, Calif., Sept. 1942. Photo courtesy of the Camp Pendleton Archives.

By Kelli S. Brasket, Cultural Resources Program Manager, Camp Pendleton

Introduction

Historic preservation is an important aspect of recognizing our heritage and for educating future generations. Being able to observe a historical building or place connects us to the past in a way that reading about just can't convey. It gives us a sense of place for a time since past and serves to remind of our collective heritage. In recognition of this importance, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act aimed at helping federal agencies determine the effects of their actions on historic properties, identify which are historically significant, and guidance for preservation.

The Camp Pendleton Cultural Resource Management Program is responsible for the identification, management, and preservation of the installation's historic properties. The program manages over 800 archaeological sites and has listed two historic buildings on the National Register including the Las Flores Adobe National Historic Landmark and the Santa Margarita Ranch House. Two other buildings, the 1st Marine Division Headquarters Building 1133 and San Onofre Beach Club are eligible for listing on the National Register and both will be nominated to the National Register in the near future.

Background

The National Historic Preservation Act and the National Register came into existence as a result of a massive growth after World War II (WWII) and the recognizable loss of architectural resources. In 1933, the National Park Service commissioned the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) to document America's architectural history which was rapidly disappearing. After documenting 12,000 historic properties, the HABS effort was placed on hold in 1941 for the duration of WWII and its post-war period, however an effort to complete the program re-intensified in 1956 when it became apparent that America's architectural resources were disappearing. After WWII, America went through an era of urban renewal, expanding neighborhoods and cities, replacing older buildings with new, constructing highways and widening city and neighborhood roads (Price and Jacobs 2008), causing the loss of many of these properties. In response to this massive growth, it's estimated that fifty percent of the resources documented in the HABS were destroyed or damaged during the push for urban renewal (Price and Jacobs 2008).

In response to the survey and grassroot organization efforts, President Lyndon B. Johnson developed a special committee for historic preservation

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National Register, Cont.

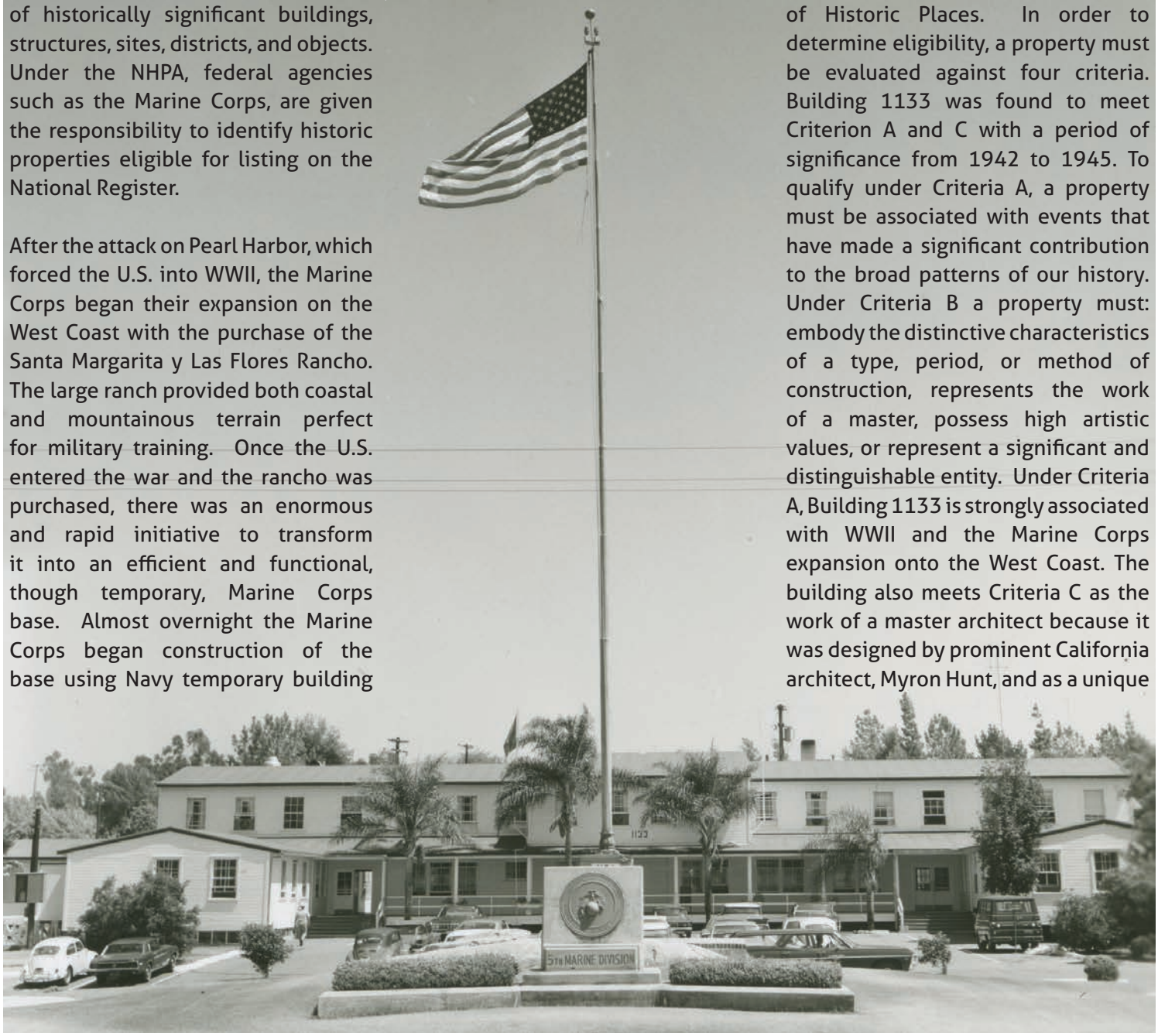
in 1965. The committee produced a report called With Heritage So Rich, presented to congress with recommendations for a federal program of historic preservation, which went on to become the foundation of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), passed in 1966, and came none too soon for America's architectural treasures.

Created and authorized by the NHPA, the National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's list of historically significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, and objects. Under the NHPA, federal agencies such as the Marine Corps, are given the responsibility to identify historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, which forced the U.S. into WWII, the Marine Corps began their expansion on the West Coast with the purchase of the Santa Margarita y Las Flores Rancho. The large ranch provided both coastal and mountainous terrain perfect for military training. Once the U.S. entered the war and the rancho was purchased, there was an enormous and rapid initiative to transform it into an efficient and functional, though temporary, Marine Corps base. Almost overnight the Marine Corps began construction of the base using Navy temporary building designs. In 1942, the architectural firm, Hunt, Chambers, and Ellingwood, was brought aboard to design a headquarters building to serve all the divisions on Camp Pendleton. Myron Hunt, a founding member of the firm was a well-known architect having already built some of California's architectural landmarks including the Huntington Library (1910, 1920), Berylwood (1910), First Congressional Church, Riverside (1913), and Rose Bowl (1920) among others. Although built as a temporary building, on a military base conceived as temporary, the building has endured for almost eighty years. Originally housing the headquarters for all divisions aboard the base, the building has a long history with the 1st Marine Division having continuously served as its headquarters since 1942.

National Register Eligibility

In 2009, Building 1133 was evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. In order to determine eligibility, a property must be evaluated against four criteria. Building 1133 was found to meet Criterion A and C with a period of significance from 1942 to 1945. To qualify under Criteria A, a property must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Under Criteria B a property must: embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity. Under Criteria A, Building 1133 is strongly associated with WWII and the Marine Corps expansion onto the West Coast. The building also meets Criteria C as the work of a master architect because it was designed by prominent California architect, Myron Hunt, and as a unique



The former 5th Marine Division Headquarters. Photo courtesy of the Camp Pendleton Archives

National Register, Cont.

example of WWII temporary buildings. Most WWII temporary buildings were constructed by a standard set of designs, however since building 1133 was planned to be a headquarters, the building had to be large enough to house all Division's headquarters staff and so a standard barracks design was adapted by Hunt. The character defining features include the buildings mass, at over 7,000 square feet, the linear and geometric shape of the building, proportional spacing of the windows, and the long veranda uniting east and west wings and anchoring the front entrance.

Listing on the National Register

The NHPA directs agencies to not only evaluate properties for listing on the National Register, but to go through the formal process to have it officially listed. The formal process is designed to include more rigorous documentation and explanation of a property's significance than the process of evaluation. Nomination packages typically include detailed historic context, a statement of significance, photographic documentation, construction designs, and maps. Once the nomination package is complete it must first be submitted to the California State Historic Preservation Officer for concurrence, then staffed for signature by the Department of Navy Federal Preservation Officer via the USMC Deputy Federal Preservation Officer for approval and finally is sent to the Keeper of the National Register for review, concurrence, and listing. Listing a historic property on the National Register elevates its status and formally recognizes its important place in history.

Citations:

2008 Price, Virginia B. and James A. Jacobs A Framework to Build Upon, HABS and the Impact of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 in American Place: The Historic American Buildings Survey at Seventy-five Years. 47-65



1st Marine Division Headquarters, undated. Photo courtesy of Camp Pendleton Archives

President's Message

Richard B. Rothwell



CPHS's first annual "Old Corps" Marine Corps Birthday celebration was a tremendous success. Over 90 members and guests gathered on November 10 at the beautiful Omni La Costa Resort & Spa (Carlsbad, Calif.) to commemorate the 244th birthday of the United States Marine Corps. Major General Anthony Jackson, USMC (Ret), our guest of honor, gave a very well received address. A smartly turned out color guard from the 11th Marine Regiment added to the pageantry.

I want to thank Board member Charlie Kershaw, who served as the lead planner for the event, and the members of his team: Mike Lewis, Mike O'Neil, and Jim Towney for their hard work to make the evening so memorable. A special thanks goes out to our major corporate sponsors, Frontwave Credit Union and the Rancho Mission Viejo Corporation and to CPHS members Scott and Kathy McEldowney who traveled from Garden Grove, Calif. to help with event registration.

As a way of expressing our appreciation for the support of our members and sponsors, CPHS hosted an afternoon gathering at the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores Ranch House aboard Camp Pendleton on Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019.

Mark your calendar as CPHS will hold our annual "Golf with a Hero" golf tournament on April 23, 2020 at the Omni La Costa Hotel and Spa. It is a beautiful course and will be more easily accessible for golfers without a Department of Defense issued identification card.

Our project to place a monument to Major General Joseph H. Pendleton aboard Camp Pendleton is progressing slowly, but surely. We are in the final stages of reaching agreement with the Marine Corps on placement of the monument on the base. Once there is an accord and we receive a formal, favorable endorsement by the Base Commanding General of our donation offer, will begin an official fundraising campaign.

Thank you for your continuing support of CPHS. Your generosity is vital to our efforts to help the Marine Corps preserve and tell the history of Camp Pendleton.

Richard B. Rothwell

Historic Structures on Camp Pendleton

By Faye Jonason, Director, Camp Pendleton History and Museum Division

Camp Pendleton's veterans proudly trace their own histories and show their families the old Quonset huts, the former Commanding General's home and the Division Command Post. Here is a sample of places that bring the Base's storied past to life.

1. Camp Talega World War II Quonset Huts: Situated in the northern-most portion of Camp Pendleton, the only part of the base located in Orange County, Camp Talega was first established as Tent Camp 3 during World War II; early references also identify this camp as "Tent Camp 3-1/2." The tents were subsequently replaced during the war by versatile, multi-use Quonset huts.

2. Hand of Hope: Designed by artist Nguyen Luu Dat and built by two Marines, the piece includes an inscription that reads, "This statue commemorates the warm reception given by the American people to thousands of Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees during 'Operation New Arrival' in 1975."



Hand of Hope monument dedication, July 11, 1975; L to R: Pfc R. Salazar, Pfc E. Garner, Phung Thi Ranh, Luu Nguyen Dat (monument designer) & Brig. Gen. Paul Graham, USMC. Photo courtesy of the Camp Pendleton Archives

3. Los Cristianitos Baptism Site: In 1769, two dying Indian infants were baptized by Padre Francisco Gómez, a member of the Portolá Expedition, marking the first baptisms in Alta California. The site was officially named a California State Historical Landmark in December 1956.

4. Las Flores Estancia National Historic Landmark: Located near the coast at the mouth of Las Flores Creek, the Las Flores Estancia is a Mission Period compound built on a pre-historic Indian midden, which served as a Mission San Luis Rey cattle ranch under the jurisdiction of Fr. Antonio Peyri. The site later became a Native American pueblo during secularization, and finally was absorbed into the property of Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores.

5. Las Flores Adobe National Historic Landmark: Located 14 miles north of the Ranch House, the two-story adobe dates



Las Flores Adobe, Camp Pendleton, undated. Photo courtesy of the Camp Pendleton Archives

from 1868 when Marco Forster, son of Don Juan Forster, built this home for his family. After Juan Forster died in 1882, his sons sold Las Flores Adobe as part of Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores to Richard O'Neill and James L. Flood. The Magee family moved onto the Las Flores ranch in 1888 and remained there until the 1968 passing of Ruth Magee. Designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1968, Las Flores Adobe is one of a small number of surviving 19th century Monterey-Colonial style residences, typified by a mix of New England and Southwestern building techniques.

6. Santa Margarita Ranch House National Historic Site: Widely known simply as the "Ranch House," the 30-acre property complex includes the Ranch House Chapel, the Bunk House Museum and the Ranch House. This site was the headquarters of the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, largest Mexican land-grant in California and served as home to the base's commanding generals and their families from 1947 until 2007. The Santa Margarita Ranch House National Historic Site was registered on the National Register of Historic Places in May 1971.

7. Camp Pendleton Veteran's Memorial Garden: Established in 2002 by the Base Commanding General, Maj. Gen. William Bowdon, as a native plant garden for monuments honoring veteran units, it provides meandering walkways lined with cottonwood trees, blue palms and Western sycamores for relaxing and reflective strolls past monuments and tributes.



Entrance to the Veteran's Memorial Garden, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Sept. 12, 2016. Photo by Nancy Camp; courtesy of the Camp Pendleton Archives

Historic Structures on Camp Pendleton, Cont.

8. El Camino Real Bell: This bell is one of a series which marks the original El Camino Real or "King's Highway" linking all of the California missions; this site is located on Ysidora Flats, an area used by Marines for helicopter landing and training.

9. SSgt Reckless Monument: Dedicated by the Base Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Kevin Killea, on Oct. 26, 2016, this life-sized bronze statue of the famous Korean War pack horse is located in front of the Pacific Views Event Center. Reckless was a Korean racehorse purchased and adopted by the 5th Marines during the Korean war to carry heavy loads of 75mm recoilless rifle ammunition; she was named "Reckless" after the nickname for the recoilless rifle.

10. Division Headquarters Building (Bldg 1133): Known as the "White House", this two-story wood structure, designed by famous American architect Myron Hunt, served as the command post to three Marine Divisions that deployed to the Pacific during World War II. In 1946, Marine Commandant Alexander A. Vandegrift designated Camp Pendleton as the permanent home of the 1st Marine Division, which became reality in 1947 when the 1st Marine Division returned to the United States from overseas wartime duty and was permanently assigned to Camp Pendleton.

11. San Onofre Beach Club: Home to the world-famous Trestles surfing break, this original 1946 Myron Hunt designed structure is significant to Southern California beach culture for its beach activities, camping, and social functions. This National Register



San Onofre Beach Club Building, West Main Entrance. Photo courtesy of Camp Pendleton Cultural Resources Dept.

of Historic Places eligible structure underwent a two-year, $3.5 million dollar stabilization, earthquake structural retrofit, and renovation as its building elements were custom fabricated to replicate what was originally constructed in 1946. In late 2015, restoration work was completed and the facility was re-dedicated and re-opened in 2016.

12. Marine Corps Mechanized Museum: One of many of Myron Hunt's World War II temporary wood structures built for the then-new Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in 1942, this building boasts the world's largest collection of vintage U. S. Marine Corps vehicles and artillery pieces. Originally a hospital warehouse building, thousands of troops were processed through this building on their way to and from World War II. The 120-piece museum collection dates from 1942 to the present, reflecting the conflicts in which Camp Pendleton Marines have served.

CPHS "Afternoon at the Ranch House" Thank You Event - Dec. 8

CPHS held a "thank you" event for its members at the Santa Margarita Ranch House National Historic Site aboard Camp Pendleton on Sunday, Dec. 8. Board members and several CPHS members attended the event which included a fiesta-style tour of the Ranch House (led by the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores Docents) and a recognition of volunteers along with guests partaking in light food and refreshments.

Members Scott and Kathy McEldowney were recognized by CPHS President Dick Rothwell for their exceptional volunteer efforts of numerous CPHS events throughout the year and presented with an etched glass plaque noting their contributions. Departing Board Member Cal Frantz and Deb Hellman were also recognized for their support of CPHS.

A special thanks to the Docents for generously giving of their time and talents in supporting the event.



Docent Richard Leste shares information on the Ranch House to the members.



Kathy and Scott McEldowney after the plaque presentation.



Cal Frantz after receiving his glass plaque.



Docent Gudrun Warrick explaining the composition of the "Living Emblem" photograph to CPHS members.

CPHS "Old Corps" Birthday Celebration - Nov. 10

CPHS hosted an inaugural "Old Corps" Marine Corps Birthday celebration on Nov. 10, 2019 at the Omni La Costa Resort and Spa (Carlsbad, Calif.). The objective of this event was to commemorate 244 years of service to the Nation by the United States Marine Corps and to afford retired, veteran, active duty, and Reserve Marines and their spouses and friends of the Corps an opportunity to gather and celebrate the Marine Corps' birthday.

Adhering to the Marine Corps' time-honored tradition, the oldest and youngest Marines were recognized. CPHS Board member and Acting Secretary Cal Frantz was recognized as the oldest Marine present; Cal entered the Marine Corps on Oct. 29, 1958. The youngest Marine was PFC Eduardo Lara, who recently completed recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego on Oct. 25, 2019.

CPHS President Col. Dick Rothwell, USMC (Ret) provided the assembled guests with a brief background of and introduced our guest of honor, Maj. Gen. Anthony Jackson, USMC (Ret). A member of the CPHS Council of Advisors, General Jackson provided an inspiring narrative, reflecting on his 36 years of experience as a U.S. Marine.

The 11th Marine Regiment, based at Camp Pendleton, supported the ceremonial portion of the event by providing a first-class Color Guard detail to ensure that the required U.S. flag and unit colors (flag) were present and properly displayed, according to tradition. Led by Sgt. Dexton Plummer, the Color Guard was comprised of Marines Cpl. Tracy Butler, Lance Cpl. Triston Williams, and Pfc. Alan Aguilar. We're grateful for the support provided by 11th Marines.

The celebration also included reading Marine General John A. Lejeune's traditional birthday message (Marine Corps Order 47 of November 1921) and watching the birthday message video from the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Special thanks to Gabriella Jackson from the Omni La Costa Hotel and Spa as she and her staff collectively went the extra mile to ensure that the venue was befitting of an exceptional Marine Corps birthday celebration; they noticeably left no detail overlooked.

Clearly, a good time was had by all at this inaugural event. CPHS plans to host another "Old Corps" Marine Corps Birthday celebration in 2020. Please make plans to join us and celebrate the birthday of the Corps!



Maj. Gen. Jackson addresses the guests.



Color Guard from 11th Marine Regiment

More event photos can be found at the CPHS website
https://camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/past-events



Above: The Color Guard presents the colors facing Maj. Gen. Jackson and Col. Dick Rothwell during the ceremony. **Below:** Col. Dick Rothwell passes a piece of the birthday cake to the oldest Marine present, Maj. Cal Frantz, USMC (Ret) as Pfc Eduardo Lara, USMC looks on. Photos by Deb Hellman



"Save the Date" Events - 2020



The Camp Pendleton Historical Society has organized a full schedule of events for the upcoming year. Here's a snapshot of the major events planned in 2020:

4th Military Children's Golf Clinic. In a recurring partnership between CPHS and Pro Kids / First Tee of San Diego, this free clinic for children of Camp Pendleton military families will take place on March 18, 2020 at the Pro Kids / First Tee Oceanside Campus (821 Douglas Drive, Oceanside). The clinic is designed to facilitate a better appreciation of golf as a life sport while learning about the history of Camp Pendleton. All golf equipment will be provided to clinic participants.

4th Annual "Golf With A Hero" Charity Golf Tournament. Planned for April 23, 2020, the event will take place at the golf course at the Omni La Costa Spa and Resort (Carlsbad, Calif.). Each foursome will be comprised of one (1) active duty Marine and three (3) other golfers, providing an excellent opportunity for golfers to converse with Marines who have recent worldwide experience carrying out the mission of the Marine Corps.

2d Annual "Old Corps" Marine Corps Birthday Celebration. This event celebrates the 245th birthday of the United States Marine Corps and is open to retired, veteran, active duty and/or Reserve Marines and their spouses and friends of the Marine Corps. The event date has not yet been determined but will occur in the October/November 2020 timeframe.

CPHS Member Holiday Event. This holiday event will occur in early December 2020 and is designed to share the holiday spirit and our appreciation with our members and recognize their many contributions.

Further detailed information for the above events (and others not yet planned) will be communicated via the CPHS Facebook page, CPHS web page, Eventbrite, and separate digital communication.

Iwo Jima 75th Anniversary - Feb. 15

The Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee (https://www.iwojimareunion.com/) cordially invites you to attend the Iwo Jima Memorial Service & Banquet on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020 at the Camp Pendleton Pacific Views Event Center Ballroom and adjacent area.

Banquet tickets for this semi-formal event are $40.00 per person Ticket registration forms can be found on iwojimareunion.com or downloaded at: https://bit.ly/38u9dJl .

Requests for banquet tickets must be received by Jan. 29, 2020. A table seats eight (8) and seats will be assigned on a first received basis; recommend making reservations early for seating placement.

This will be the last formal gathering on the West Coast of Iwo Jima veterans; we hope you will be able to join us for this special anniversary commemoration.

Questions? Contact Gail Chatfield at (858) 792-8897



Iwo Jima veterans at the 73rd Anniversary at Camp Pendleton, 2018. Photo by Deb Hellman

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Maj Gerald File, USMC (Ret)
Michael Kelley
MG Thomas Lightner, USA (Ret)
Bruce Orner

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

Daniel Beach
Marilee Cherry
Charles and Victoria Crawford
Lillian Cross
Rick Darnall
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