

Raider Patch

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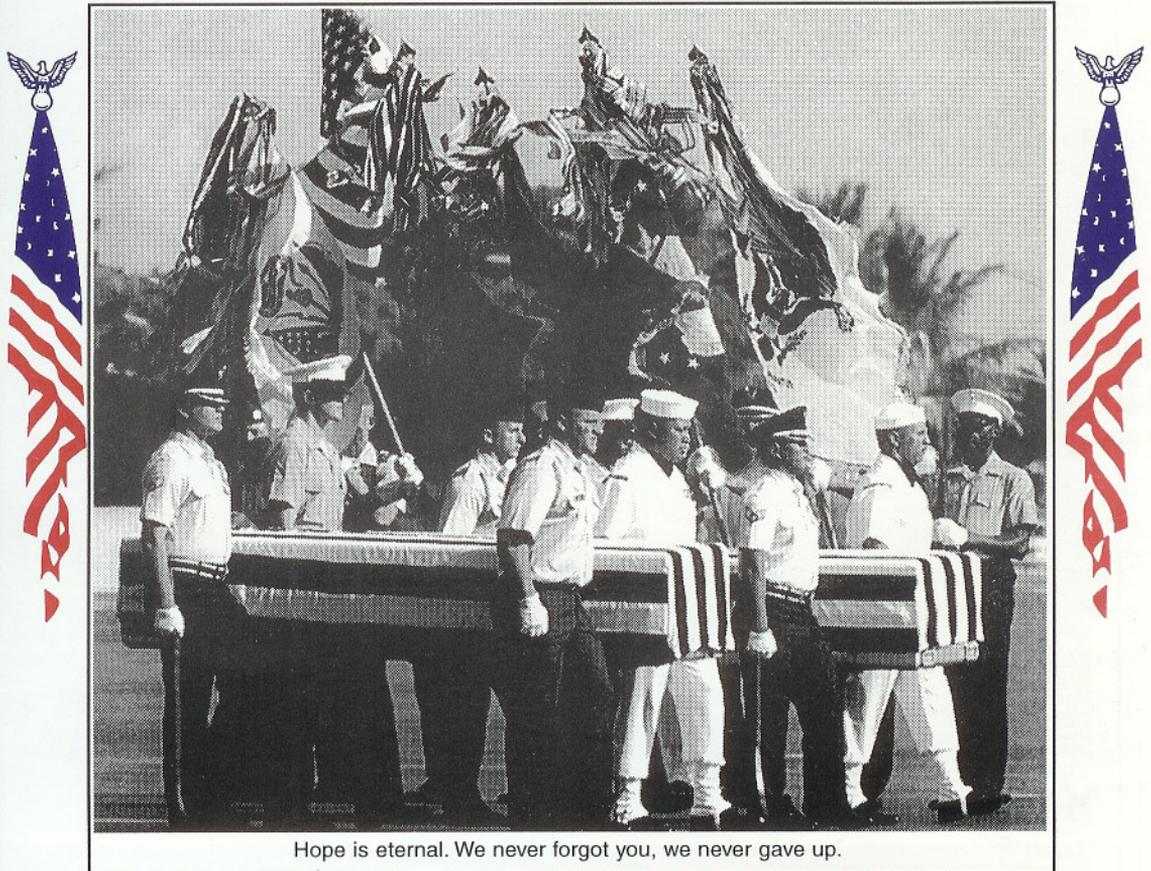


Bull Sheet
Letters
and
Much, Much More!



IN HONORED GLORY...

Remains of Twenty Makin Raiders Return Home After 57 Years



Hope is eternal. We never forgot you, we never gave up.

Special exclusive report to the Raider Patch. Text & Photos by Lt. Col. Jack Lewis, USMCR.

What is thought to be the remains of 20 Marine Raiders who died in combat during the Makin Atoll raid of August 17-18, 1942 have been returned to American soil after more than 57 years. They arrived at

Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Dec. 17. The deceased were members of the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion.

One of the Raiders killed in action was Sgt. Clyde Thomason, the first enlisted Marine awarded the Medal of Honor during World War 2. The medal was presented posthumously for his actions during

this raid, one of the first offensive strikes by United States forces following the Pearl Harbor attack.

The remains were located by a team from the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii (CILHI). Discovery was made in a small village some 300 yards off the

(Continued on page 13)



U. S. MARINE RAIDER ASSOCIATION

A NATIONAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION



SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS IN THE
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EDITOR'S NOTES

GUNG HO RAIDERS! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

By John McCarthy

Incredibly, just days after the feature, "A Search for Shadows" by Lt. Col. Jack Lewis (USMC, Ret.), appeared in the December, 1999 edition of *Leatherneck* magazine, a miracle happened. "A Search for Shadows," for those who haven't read it, is the story of a very recent attempt to locate the remains of the Makin Raiders killed in action during the 17-18 August '42 raid on that atoll's Butaritari Island.

Lt. Col. Lewis' fine narrative details every aspect of the thorough search that utilized metal detectors along with just about every modern recovery equipment available. However, after excavating many promising sites, the team came up empty-handed and were extremely disappointed.

I had been mailed a copy of that issue of *Leatherneck* by our own Howard "Buck" Stidham (who carried the monstrous .55 cal. Boys Gun on the raid) and who was quoted several times by the author.

Lt. Col. Lewis' narrative of the recovery teams efforts was fascinating reading but we were saddened that yet another recovery attempt had produced another goose egg.

Within days of reading the story, I received a phone call from Graydon "Don" Harn (2H&S) who gave me the incredible news: The Raider KIA's had been found!

This may be one of the most significant news items since the U. S. Marine Raider Association was chartered. The fact that the 18 Raiders were known dead but seemingly unrecoverable, understandably upset all Raiders, especially those who were in the 2nd Battalion and particularly those who served in A and B companies that made the Makin raid.

In a way, the price those gallant young men paid on that August day in 1942, has been collecting "interest" for almost six decades.

With their mission successfully completed and with the certainty that within hours, the enemy would send reinforcements from their central Pacific headquarters at Kwajalein, the Raiders had little or no time to bury their dead, which amounted to 18 killed in action. It was tough enough just getting themselves

(Continued on page 19)





**THE
RAIDER PATCH**

United States Marine Raider Association

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Harry Reynolds, Al Kropff

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United States Marine Raider Association

Please send all dues, donations, change of address, new member applications and Association-related correspondence, all editorial copy, photos, "Bull Sheet" letters and other Patch-related material to:

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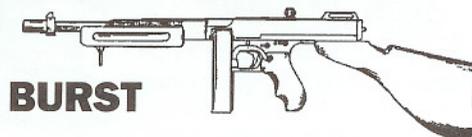
PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Material submitted for publication in the Raider Patch must be received by the deadline dates shown below for each issue:

FEBRUARY	MAY	AUGUST	NOVEMBER
Jan 5	April 5	July 5	October 5



SHORT



BURST

NOTES & THOUGHTS FROM PRESIDENT JACK FREELING

Good Year Ahead

Our Raider Association is going to have a great year in 2000 partly because of the successful efforts of our members of the MIA committee, Ben Carson and Graydon Harn with the aid of others. Remains of our missing 2nd Battalion Raiders that have been recovered during the December search of the island known as Little Makin, (or more correctly known as Butaritari) have been returned to the Graves Registration center at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

We have been advised that it may well take from a year to a year and a half to complete the identification process. Part of the identification efforts will include attempted DNA sample matching. One other item that may help to identify the remains as Marines is the discovery of an M-1 rifle in the grave. (See photo this page). This item will be put on display at the Richmond Museum after it has been properly cleaned and encased.

Makin Recovery Big News Worldwide

The great news of the recent discovery of the remains has received much well-deserved coverage from the media.

Association members have sent clippings to the Patch and to membership chairman, Jack Dornan's offices, from all over. As you can imagine, our fax, e-mail and telephones have been bouncing off the walls.

If you see or have seen any coverage of the recovery in your local newspapers, please send us a copy for our archives.

To mention a few who were interviewed by reporters: Ben Carson (2BE) by the Portland Oregonian; Jack Dornan (2G) by an Arlington, Texas daily newspaper, and Brian Quirk (2BE) by the Chicago Tribune and others.

NBC News also contacted Jack Dornan. There is a possibility that the History Channel and/or the Discovery Channel may be interested in producing programming for this event. At least it is a point of interest that will enlighten the public that the Raiders were among the first American ground forces to carry the war effort to the enemy in World War II.

We held our 2000 executive board meeting on Saturday, January 8th in Chicago. Minutes of that meeting appear elsewhere in this edition of the Patch.

I think the Raider Association is in pretty good shape except for the fact that we have members falling by the wayside. I urge anyone who hears of a member passing away to notify our Membership Chairman & Patch Editor so that the names may be properly listed in the Patch. This is very important information to be communicated to the membership. We are getting into the September of our years, and it is important to accurately keep track of all of us.

For example, I erroneously notified that our Sam Marsh had passed away. However I am pleased to say, like Mark Twain, that his death has been greatly exaggerated.

Our convention chairman, with some assistance from the area, has a good program lined up for the Chicago Reunion and I do hope that all will make an effort to attend.

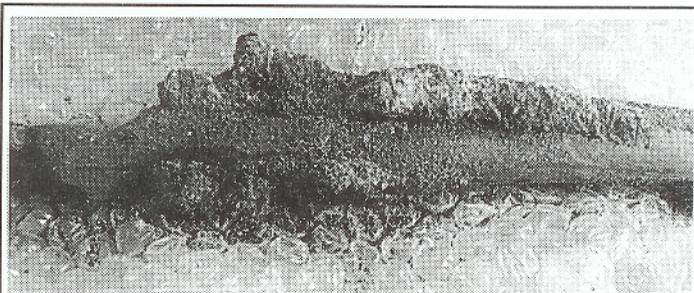
As mentioned in the last Patch, I was able to attend a meeting with our new Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Jim Jones at the Press Club in October. I was privileged to visit with General Jones, his aid, his personal secretary and his mother and his aunt. Very enjoyable and, to say the least, very

memorable. General Jones assured me that our September reunion is on his calendar, and barring a national emergency, he will attend.

I sincerely hope that all our members are holding on to their Gung Ho spirit. I wish you good health and happiness for the new year.

— Semper Fi and Gung Ho!

— Jack Freeling, President



MAKIN M-1

This photo, rushed to the Patch by George McRea, assistant curator of our Richmond Raider Museum, of an M-1 recovered at grave site clearly shows what time and exposure can do to a rugged piece of weaponry. George told us that when he opened the package (flown to Virginia from Hawaii), the stock was still quite wet. It is clearly identifiable as an M-1, although heavily encrusted with sand and corrosion. So far, we are not certain where this weapon was found: with the remains or at some other Makin locale. This weapon was carried by a member of the Raider assault team. Perhaps somehow a serial number may be obtained and the name of the Raider it was issued to. We'll be doing a great deal more on this subject in our next Patch. Thanks very much to you guys at Richmond.



Jack Freeling, president of the Marine Raider Association with U. S. Marine Corps Commandant, General Jim L. Jones.

“OPERATION DUE REGARD” — RAIDERS COME HOME

— By Cpl. Abigail B. LaBin

BUTARITARI ISLAND, Republic of Kiribata

Marines never leave their dead comrades behind. No fallen Marine is abandoned on the battlefield. Whether a buddy pulls his wounded comrade to safety or a search and rescue team goes after a lost pilot, the Marines consider bringing every man home one of the most sacred obligations of *Semper Fidelis*.

Some Okinawa-based Marines recently helped fulfill that obligation to bring fallen comrades home.

These Marines recently made the journey to the South Pacific to retrieve 20 fallen comrades for their journey home. They called the mission “Operation Due Regard.”

Fifty-seven years have passed since the 2nd Raider Battalion’s attack on Butaritari, an island in the Makin Atoll on 17-18 August, 1942. Thanks to a native of Butaritari, the Marines from Okinawa, and Joint Task Force Full Accounting, the Marine Raiders killed in action during that attack were located and prepared for their return to the U.S.

“I’ve done a lot of different things,” said Maj. James C. King, Marine Aerial Refueling Transport Squadron 152, KC-130 aircraft commander for Due Regard. “This is the most important. I did the Gulf thing and it seemed important at the time, but it was nothing compared to this.”

In true Marine Corps fashion, the mission came suddenly and the team assembled with less than 48 hours notice. Sergeant Robert J. Snoddy, color sergeant, Materiel Readiness Battalion, 3rd Force Service Support Group, was notified of the mission and told to muster a color guard the morning before departure. None of the Marines knew the specifics of their mission, but showed up at the flightline with gear in hand, ready for anything. After flying to Kwajalein for a night, the color guard boarded the plane in their dress uniforms for the two-hour flight to Butaritari, which lies south of Kwajalein. When the plane landed on December 17, the island’s entire population arrived to watch the aircraft come in. Standing in a group by the thatched huts and open-air airport, the islanders stared as Marines in full dress blues stepped off the plane’s ramp, U.S. and Marine Corps colors flying high in the wind under the blazing sun. As the truck carrying the remains of the Marine Raiders crept toward the KC-130’s open ramp, the color guard slowly walked ahead. Once it was close to the plane, the four Marines quickly cased the colors and took up positions as an honor guard. While the two rifle bearers presented arms at the foot of the ramp, and Gunnery Sgt. Daniel Joy, detail Staff NCOIC, saluted, Snoddy and Cpl. Kenneth G. Lyons Jr. carried the fallen Raid-

ers aboard the plane. “There’s so much history that happened here,” said Lyons. “This is definitely the biggest honor I’ve had since I’ve been in the Marine Corps.” On the ground before the ceremony, the Marines had the opportunity to meet the men responsible for the location and recovery of the Makin Island Raiders. Although the remains were exhumed and identified by JTF Full Accounting personnel from the Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI), the most important single link in the recovery was a civilian living on Butaritari. “Mr. Baramoa was actually part of the detail the Japanese put together to collect the dead after the battle,” explained Army Capt. Mark Hollingsworth, recovery team leader. “We had a team here in June that looked and dug in what we thought were likely

places, but they didn’t find anything. With his help, we managed to have a lot of success very quickly.” Success isn’t a cold matter of numbers and statistics to the men of CILHI, who, according to Hollingsworth, never lose sight of the importance of their mission. “The mission at CILHI is to go worldwide and collect our brave soldiers who have died so we can take them back for identification and return to their loved ones,” he explained. The recovery team exhumed and packaged the remains after doing preliminary identification in the field. Although their anthropologist was able



United States Marine Corps Color Guard honors the departing remains of the Makin Raider KIA's at Butaritari International Airport.

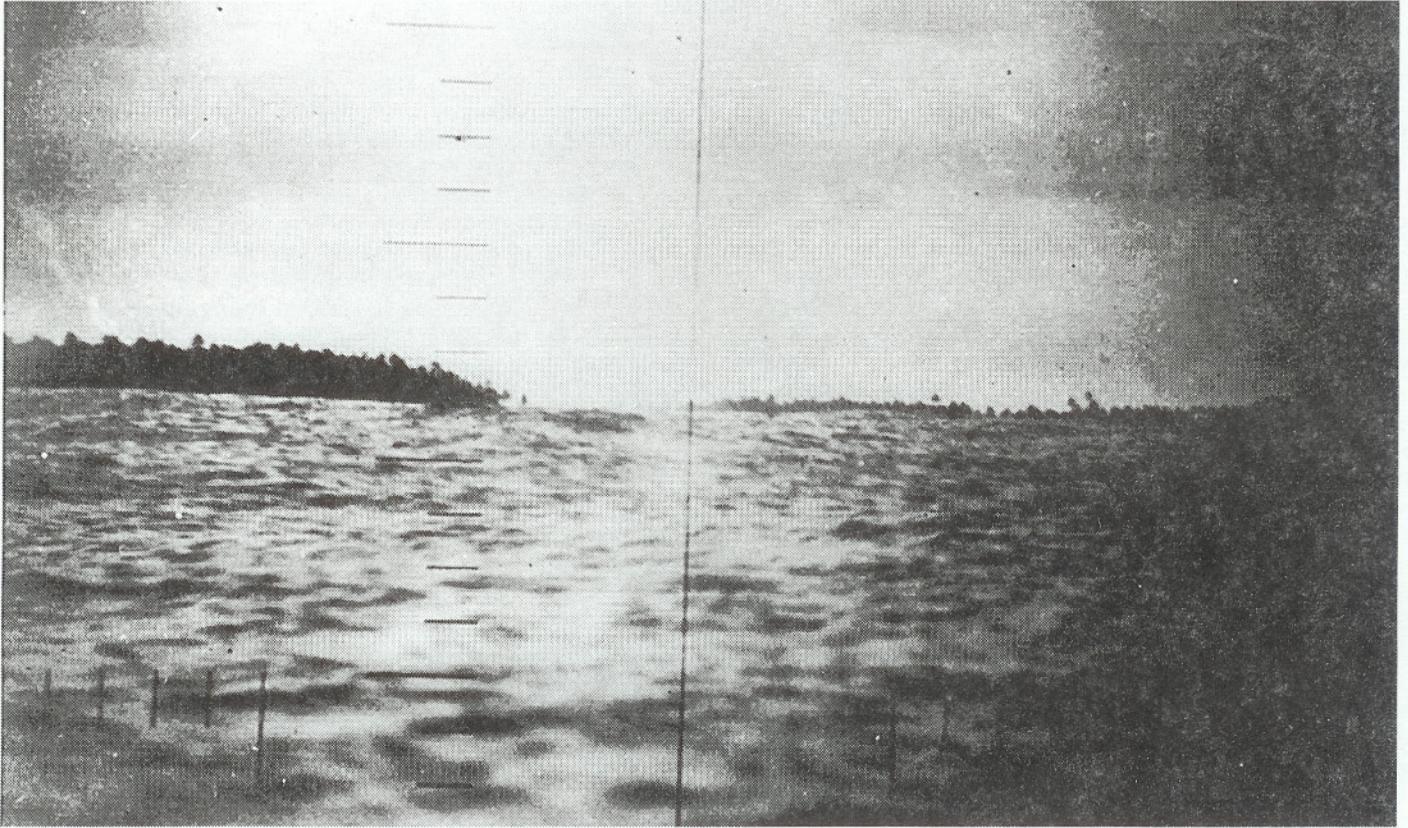
(Official USMC photo by Cpl. Abigail LaBin)

to discern the information on six sets of dog tags, further work will be done with dental records and DNA samples from next of kin, Hollingsworth said.

Although the work of identifying the 20 Raiders has only just begun, the recovery of the remains and the effort expended to bring them back to American soil was the most important thing to many members of Due Regard. “This let young Marines see the government spares no expense to bring these guys home 57 years after the fact,” King said. “It makes them have faith that if something happened to them, the government would do the same.” For some of the members of the color guard, just being picked to participate in the ceremony was an honor. “Of all the Marines who could have come out here, it was my buddies and me from Okinawa who were picked,” said rifle bearer for the color guard, Lance Cpl. Jonathan E. Rosenberg, Materiel Readiness Bn., 3rd Force Service Support Group. “This is a big part of Marine Corps history, and it was amazing to be a part of it.”

The Okinawa Marines carried their fallen brothers to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii for a formal repatriation ceremony, bringing them back to American soil after 57 years.

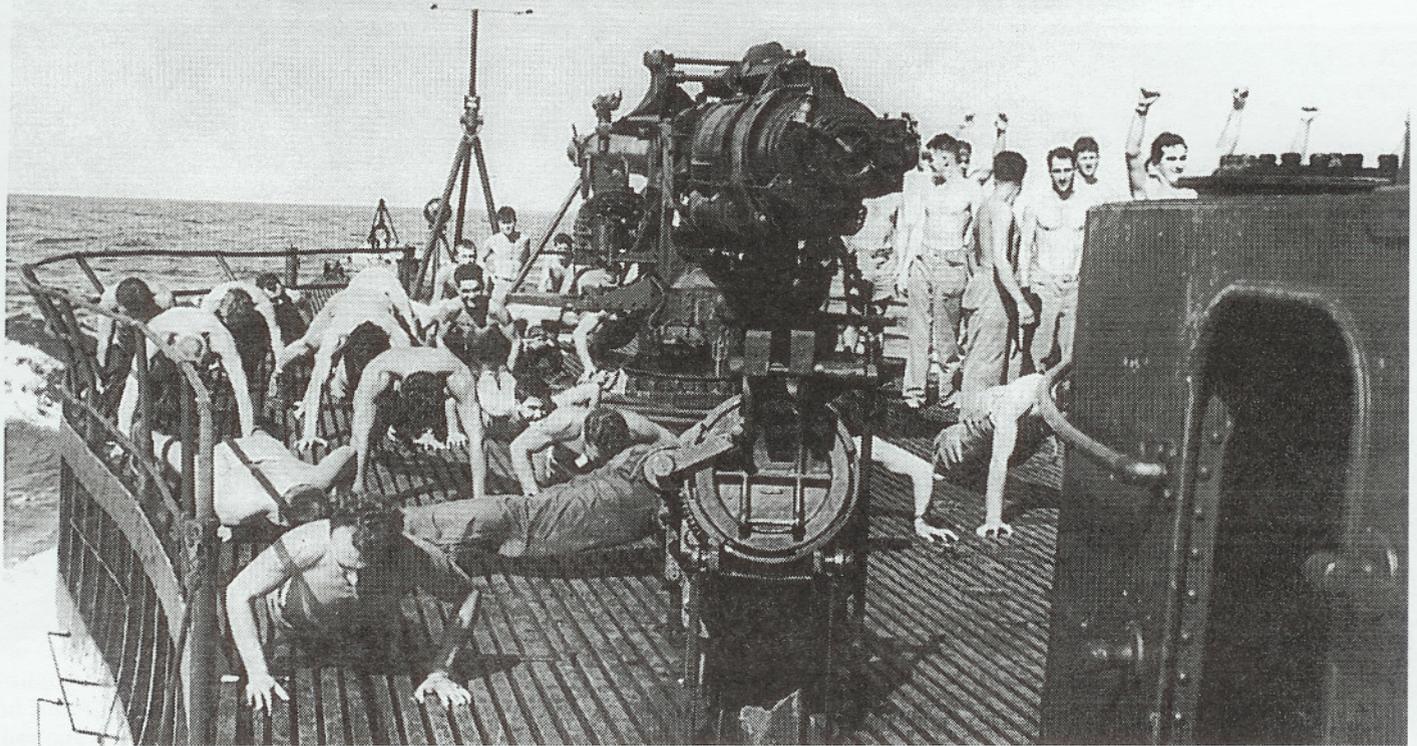
“AHOY RAIDERS — LAND HO!”



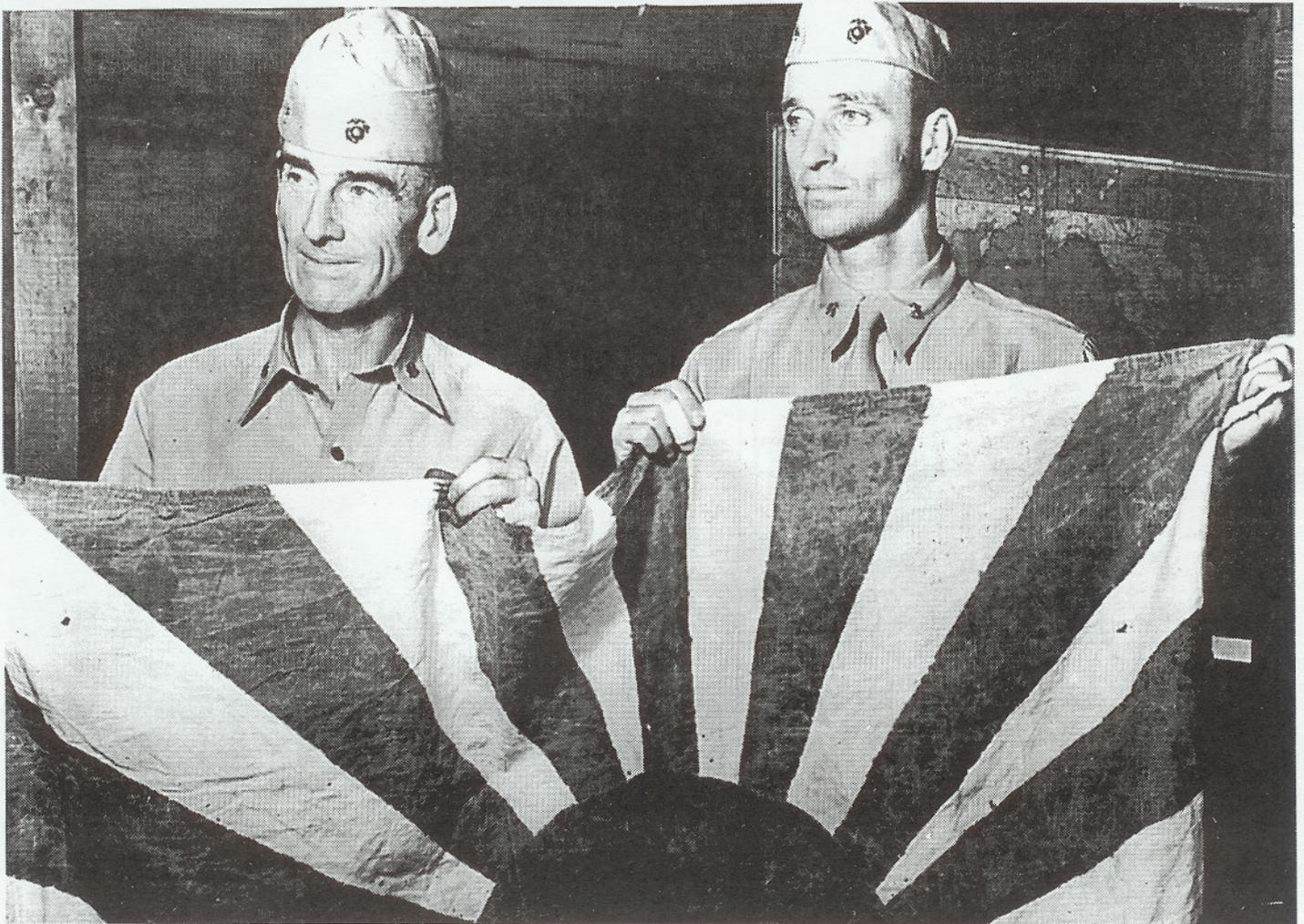
Marine Raiders first view of tiny Butaritari, Makin Atoll, was this view through the periscope of the USS Nautilus (SS-168). The submarine, along with her sister boat, USS Argonaught, set loose 222 officers and men of the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion in rubber boats to launch one of the first U.S. offensive actions of World War II.



This photo was taken during a lull in the fighting on Butaritari by 2A Raider, Ray Bauml, the only person to get any photos off the island. This photo was used to try and find if any of the above kids survived and could help locate the remains. Although the results were negative, the Makin Raiders remains were successfully located.

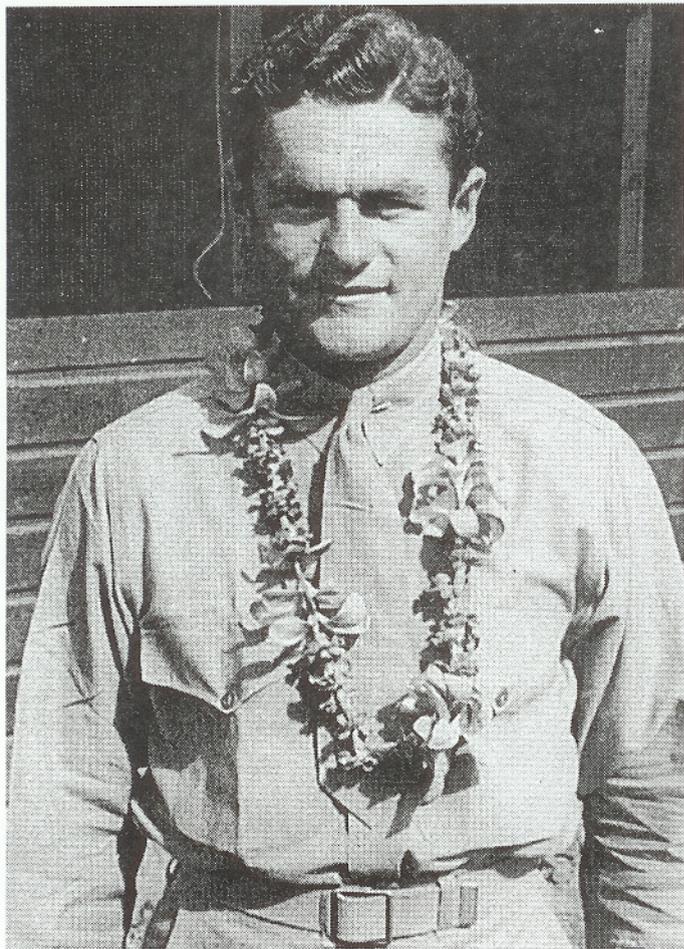


Getting a chance to stretch their legs on board U.S.S. Nautilus, members of the 2nd Raider Battalion put the boat's deck to good use. A short time later they hit the beach at Makin Atoll's Butaritari Island. Note the submarine's 6-inch deck gun and ammunition hoist in the foreground.



Col. Evans F. Carlson (left) and his executive officer, James Roosevelt, display a captured Japanese flag from the Raider raid on Makin. At the time of this photo (late August, 1942), it has just been learned that there were other missing Raiders in addition to those known killed.

MORE RECOVERED RAIDERS FROM MAKIN



Daniel A. Gaston

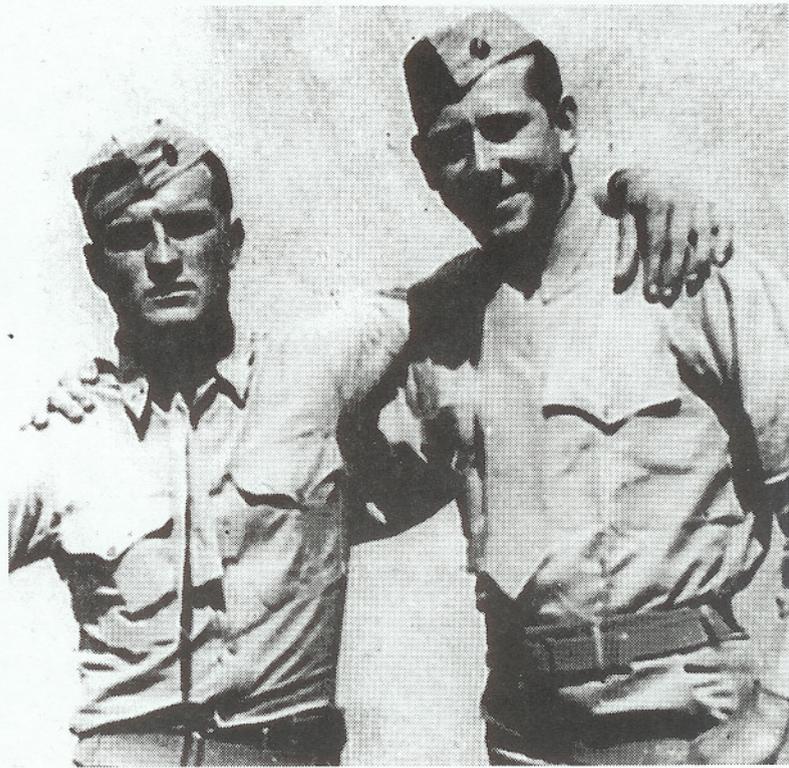


Harris J. Johnson

Both of these 2A Raiders were killed in action on Butaritari and their remains are believed to be among those recovered.



Franklin M. Nodland was one of the first Raiders killed during the raid. He was only 17 years old.



Robert Pearson (left) and Robert Maulding were both killed during the same early firefight

HONORED GLORY (From front cover)

end of the runway on Butaritari, an island that makes up part of the atoll. This was the third trip to the atoll complex by the CILHI team. The first was in 1998, the second earlier this year. This third segment of the search came about when floods in Vietnam made it impractical to search, as scheduled, for missing U.S. servicemen there.

The team was assigned once again to this 30-day search and recovery effort on Butaritari. According to the team leader, Army Capt. Mark A. Hollingsworth, they were into their 10th day of the mission and were finishing the unsuccessful excavation of one plot. SFC Mason E. Fail had started digging on a second plot when he began to uncover remains.

The entire team started digging and sifting each shovelful of the island soil. "The bodies apparently had been buried one on top of the other, three deep," Sgt. First Class Fail told me. "We had to move carefully. For all practical purposes, it was a mass grave." During the excavation, military dog tags of some of the deceased were found and one rusty rifle was unearthed.

Personnel of the CILHI search and recovery team are reluctant to discuss the number of remains recovered at this point. Earlier unclassified message traffic mentioned 17, but 20 coffins were escorted from the KC-130R aircraft of Marine Transport Squadron 152 to the blue carriers lined up on the runway.

Initially, 18 Marines were killed and 12 more were declared missing in the Makin action. Other personnel of the two Raider companies managed to make their way through the heavy surf in rubber boats, reaching the two submarines waiting to remove them. In the confusion, the 12 MIA Marines were not identified until both submarines returned to Pearl Harbor.

It is known that nine of the missing Raiders later were executed by the Japanese. A Japanese pilot reported seeing three bodies on the island beach the day after the attack. Conjecture is that these men drowned when their rubber boat capsized. CILHI scientists already are conducting tests to properly identify each sent of remains, but they say identification can take up to a year to complete.

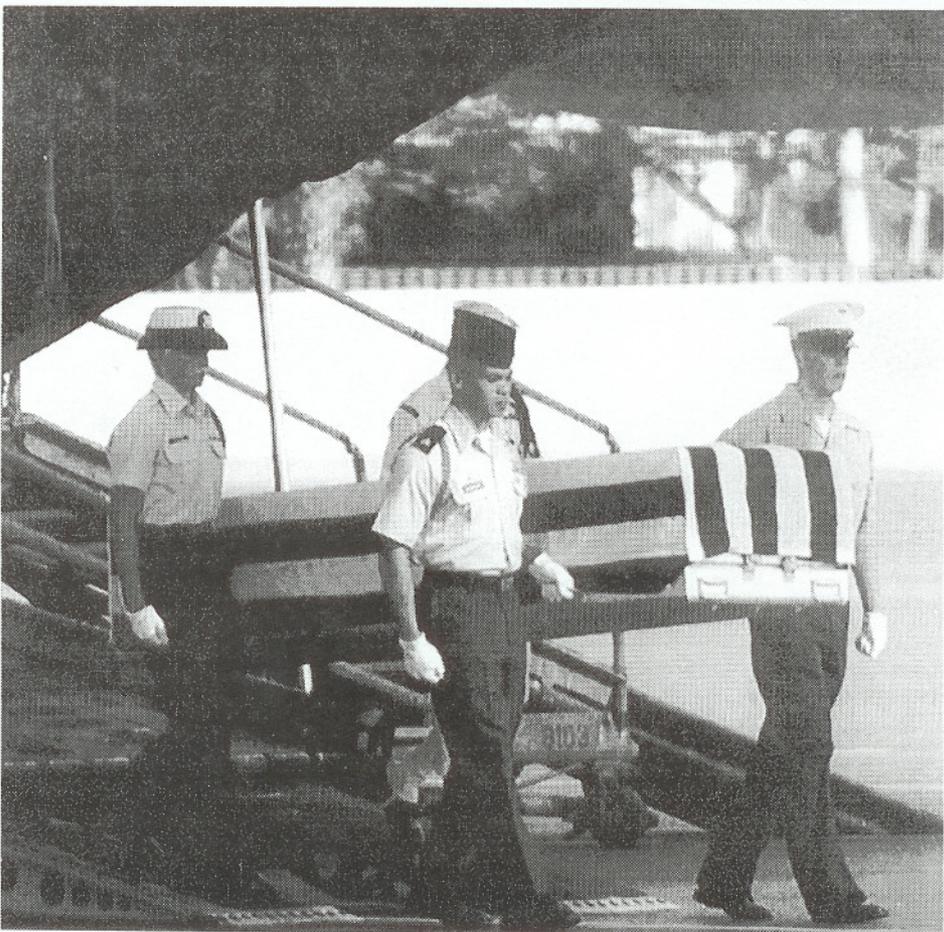
Two squadrons of Air Force personnel as well as ranking officers and a color guard of personnel from all services including the Coast Guard participated in the solemn repatriation ceremonies.

Senior Marine present was Maj. Gen. Robert Magnus, deputy commander of Marine Forces Pacific, headquartered at Camp Smith. Adding to personnel of the

participating squadrons were Marines and dependents as well as a number of civilians, bringing the number of observers to an estimated 600 persons.

HOME AT LAST

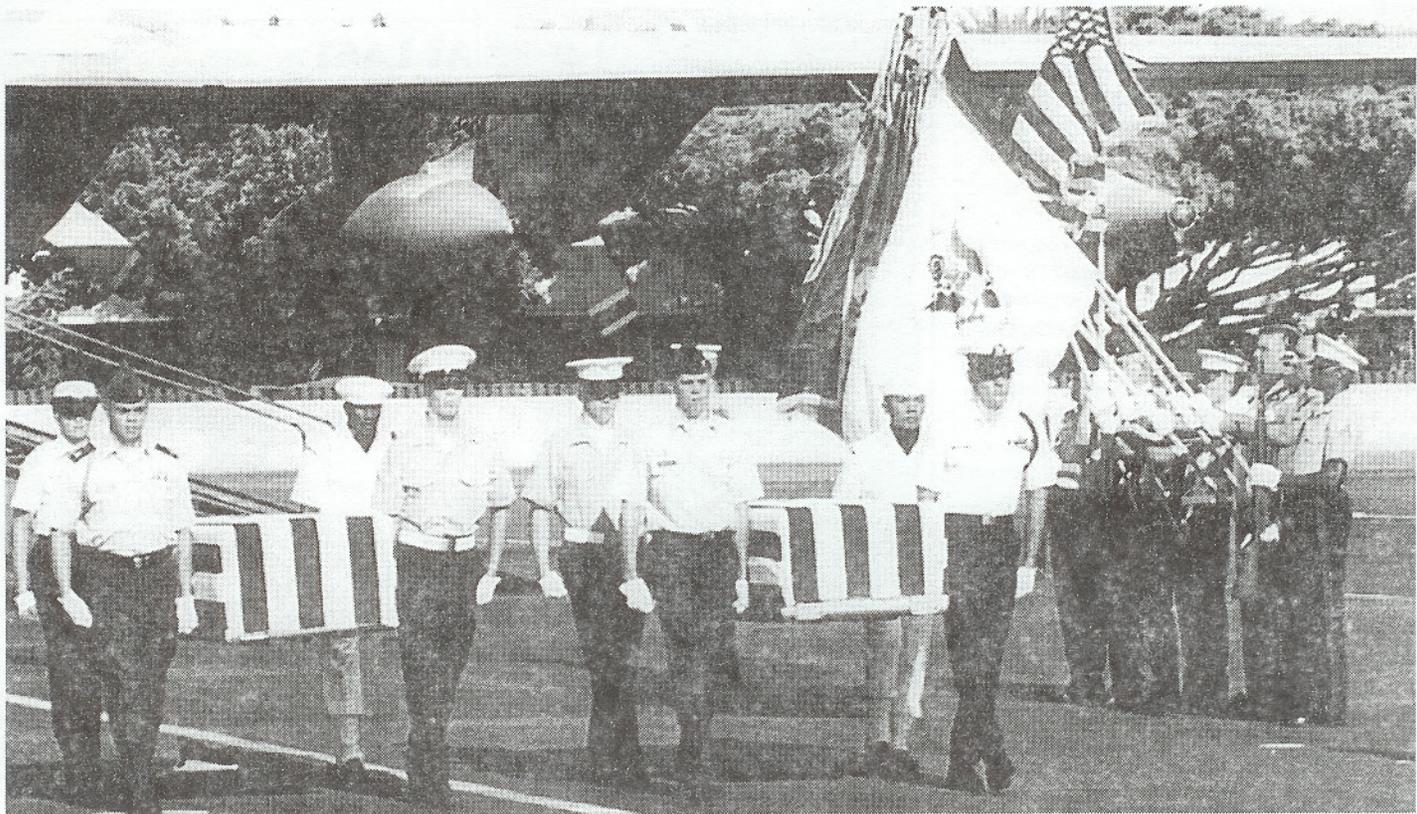
KC-130R from VMGR-152 taxis into position at Hickam Air Force Base, December 17, 1999 to offload the remains of 20 Marines killed in action at the Makin Atoll raid in August, 1942



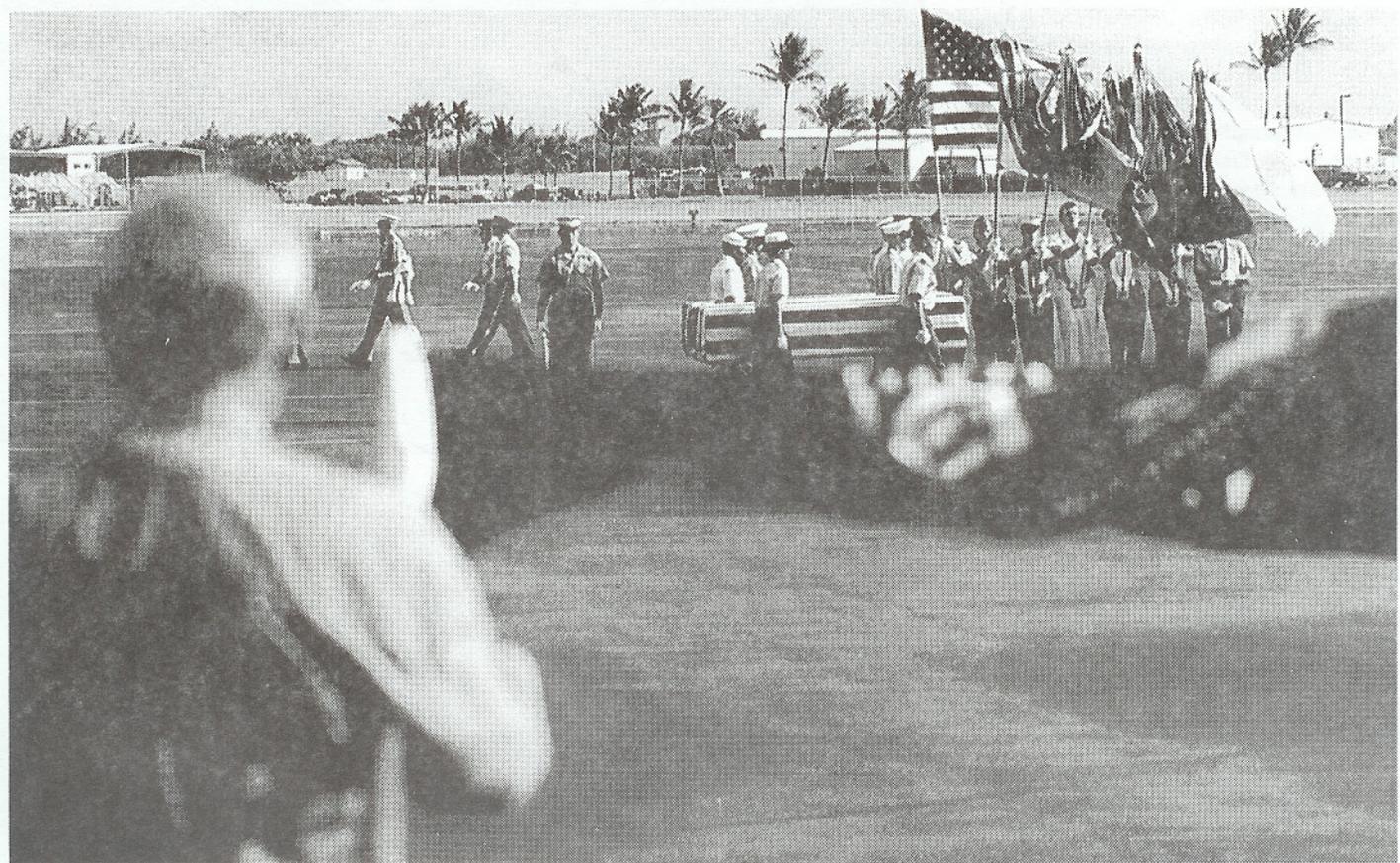
The remains of a Marine killed at Makin Atoll in August, 1942 are offloaded from the VMGR-152 KC-130R that carried them to the repatriation ceremony held Dec. 17 at Hickam AFB.

(Photographs by Lt. Col. Jack Lewis, USMCR)

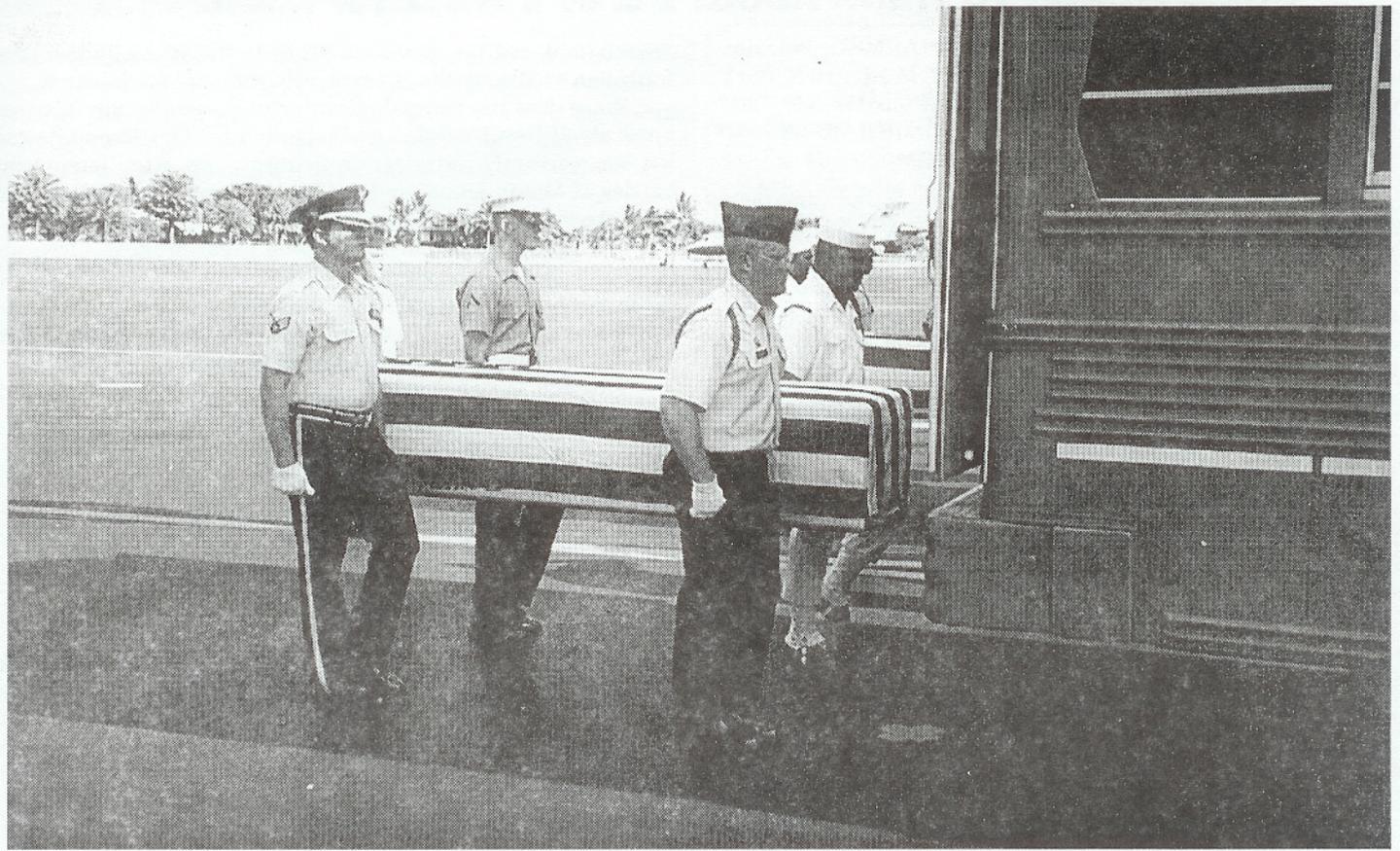
LONG-LOST MAKIN RAIDERS FINALLY HOME



Nearing the end of their last journey, two Makin Raider KIA's are saluted by a generation of service personnel who are nearly six decades apart in age but in "duty, honor, country," they are very close comrades.



A veteran holds the POW/MIA flag at present arms as the remains of two United States Marine Raiders from the Makin Atoll raid are repatriated at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Friday, December 17, 1999.

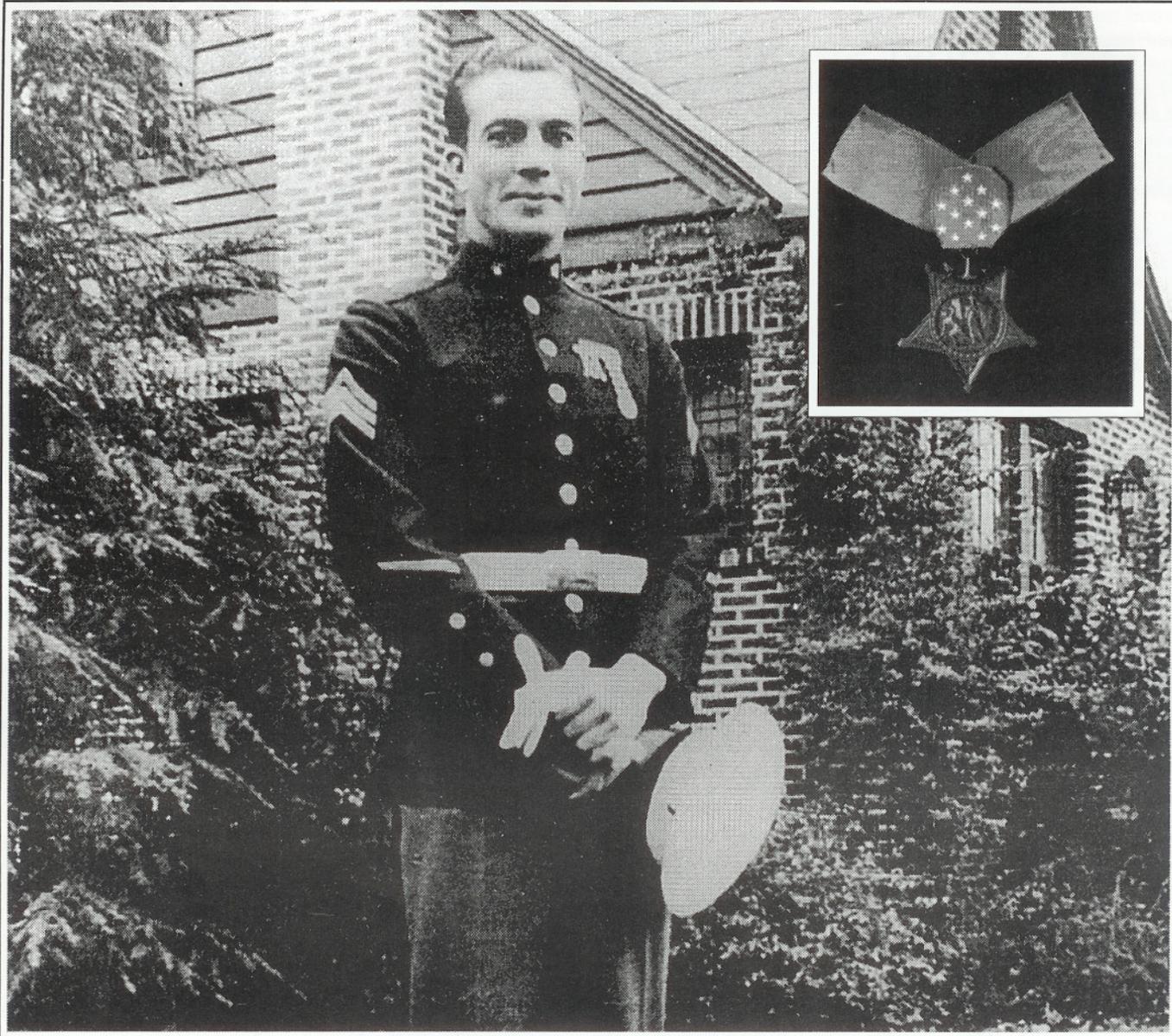


Two caskets are loaded aboard Air Force vans for transport to lab hangar where forensic and other tests for positive Identification will be performed. The process could take up to a year or more.



Military and civilian onlookers were filled with emotion and pride as 20 caskets of the Makin Raiders deplane at Hickam AFB, Hawaii

WELCOME HOME!



SGT. CLYDE THOMASON, MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT (POSTHUMOUSLY)

Among the recently recovered Raider remains on Butaritari is thought to be those of Sgt. Clyde Thomason (above). Sgt. Thomason was the first enlisted Marine to receive the Medal of Honor in World War II.



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2nd Battalion

United States Marine Raider Association

A non-profit National Organization

3rd Battalion

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Russell Islands ● Wickham Anchorage (Vangunu) ● New Georgia: Segi Point-Viru Harbor, Enogi Inlet, Bairoko Harbor ● Bougainville: Puruata Island, Piva Trail, Koiairi Raid

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