

# THE GULF WAR

On 2 August 1990 Iraqi president Saddam Hussein invaded and overran the oil-rich emirate of Kuwait and appeared to be capable of carrying his advance into Saudi Arabia. Hussein controlled 20 percent of the world's oil supply and stood to double that figure easily if allowed to continue his offensive. In response to the Iraqi aggression, President Bush assembled an allied coalition of 37 nations, with the two-phased mission of defending Saudi Arabia and of liberating Kuwait and restoring stability to the Persian Gulf region. Operation Desert Shield, executed from 7 August 1990 to 15 January 1991, accomplished the first phase of the mission, the defense and strategic positioning of forces. Operation Desert Storm, executed from 16 January to 28 February 1991, completed the mission's second phase, the liberation of Kuwait. The coalition's offensive air campaign was unleashed on 16 January, followed by the ground campaign on 24 February. One hundred hours later, on 28 February, the war was over, with the world's fourth largest army decisively defeated and fleeing in disorder.

## The Marines' Mission

The Marines were ready when the call came. Within six weeks 45,000 FMF Marines were ashore in Saudi Arabia or afloat offshore in amphibious shipping. Peak Marine strength rose in February 1991 to 92,000 in action. Lieutenant General Walter E. Boomer's I MEF, from Camp Pendleton, California, was the senior Marine Corps headquarters and consisted of 84,515 Marines, which included nearly 2,500 women and accounted for almost one-half of the active-duty strength of the Corps. Desert Storm was the largest Marine Corps operation in history.

The 1st and 2nd MarDivs constituted the I MEF's ground combat element, the 1st and 2nd FSSGs constituted the combat service support element, and the 2nd MAW reinforced the 3rd MAW to form the air combat element. The 2nd SRIG reinforced the 1st SRIG in the command element. Camp Lejeune's contribution was the 2nd MarDiv, 2nd FSSG, 2nd SRIG, and 2nd MAW's MAGs-26 and -29 from the air station. II MEF's elements (minus those assigned to the 4th MEB, which had already deployed on 17 August 1990) formed for review on W.P.T. Hill Field on 10 December 1990 prior to their deployment to the Persian Gulf and service with I MEF. At 24,000 strong, this was the largest formation in Corps history.

Camp Lejeune also played another role during the conflict, serving as the station of initial assignment for the 24,703 SMCR who had been called to active duty and processing, equipping, and training them for integration into their gaining commands. It was the first call-up of Marine Corps Reserves since the Korean War.

On 24 February 1991 General Boomer launched the 1st and 2nd MarDivs through the "impenetrable" Iraqi defensive lines and into Kuwait, beginning the ground offensive and, along with the amphibious divisions, fixing the Iraqis in place. Further to the west, the allied main effort, a deep turning movement, swung around the right flank of the distracted Iraqis and deep into their rear. It was a rout. By the fourth day the Iraqis in Kuwait had been crushed and the Marines

controlled their objective of Kuwait City. During the entire Persian Gulf War the Marines knocked out 1,040 Iraqi tanks, 608 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), 432 artillery pieces, and 5 Free Rocket Over Ground (FROG) sites. About 1,500 enemy troops were killed and 23,308 prisoners taken. The cost to the Marine Corps was 24 Marines killed in action or died of wounds (regrettably 14 by friendly fire) and 92 wounded.

Corps aviation had provided close air support (CAS) to ground operations with Cobra helicopters and Harrier and F/A-18 aircraft, meeting its various mission requirements, such as providing general fire support, establishing and maintaining air superiority, and executing deep strike and reconnaissance missions.

While amphibious landings were not completed in the coalition's attack plans, this fact was not known to the Iraqis. The presence of the 4th MEB and the 13th MEU in amphibious shipping off the Kuwaiti coast distracted the Iraqis and caused them to deploy many of their units in a defensive posture along the coast and away from the main assault.

### After the War

Camp Lejeune's Marines returned to well-deserved accolades, with the last Corps ground unit in Kuwait, the 8th Marines, withdrawing on 7 May 1991. On 2 July Jacksonville warmly welcomed the Desert Storm veterans back with a "Home Again Parade" down Western Boulevard. To honor the Marines' efforts further, State Route 24 and U.S. Routes 17 and 70 were designated "Freedom Way," and a "Freedom Fountain" was dedicated in downtown Jacksonville.

A curious thing happened in Jacksonville while Camp Lejeune's Marines were deployed in the Gulf. The military and civilian communities had been brought closer together by the Beirut bombing in 1983, but now there was a growing realization that the Marines and their families were no longer "them," they were in fact a part of "us." They were no longer nameless faces. With their departure went next-door neighbors, soccer coaches, Sunday school teachers, and fellow PTA members. The economic devastation resulting from the deployment reinforced the lesson: 20 percent of Jacksonville's population had disappeared, with many dependents of deployed Marines returning to their original homes. The unemployment rate doubled and shops and businesses in the area reported buying slowdowns of at least 50 percent.

Defense budget reductions deferred by the Gulf War came due at the end of the conflict and restarted the transition of the Armed Forces from the Cold War to the new world security environment. The Marine Corps was faced with a proposed end strength of 159,000 by the fiscal year 1997, which would be the lowest number since the dark days of the unification crisis preceding the Korean War. A painfully contemplated reduction of the personnel strength of the 2nd MarDiv would take it from 18,000 to 14,000 under the pending fiscal constraints.

It became apparent, however, that the new security environment was ideally suited for naval expeditionary forces, which was precisely what the MAGTFs offered. It also became apparent to Congress and the administration that the Corps remained a bargain as it delivered 12 percent of the nation's active, general purpose divisions and 11 percent of its tactical fixed-wing aircraft at a cost of only 4.8 percent of the defense budget. In 1993 the Department of



A Marine stands guard during the Gulf War—the largest U.S. combat deployment since the Vietnam War.

Defense's "Bottom-Up review" and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review revalidated the statutory role of the Marine Corps as the nation's expeditionary force in readiness and basically established a manning level of 174,000, a level the Corps found suitable for carrying out its operational and training missions. In 1998 the Marine Corps active-duty strength dropped to 172,635. In 2000 Corps strength was 173,195 with an SMRC strength of 39,667.

The present-day Marine Corps reflects the integration of women and African-American Marines into its ranks. By 1977 the Director of Women Marines position at HQMC had been eliminated and the WM Company, H&S Battalion, MCB Camp Lejeune was deactivated. Women were no longer a special category within the Corps; they now became Women Marines. By 2000 there were 10,457 female Marines on active duty, 932 of whom were officers. Women deployed with MEUs and received formal combat training at Camp Geiger's SOI. They were serving as flight officers on EA-6B Prowlers and as pilots on CH-53E helicopters. One woman, Carol A. Mutter, was appointed to command a major combat service support group and was selected for promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General. In essentially all respects, women have become equal partners in the Corps.

The Marine Corps has had three decades to dampen the flames of racial tension that earlier plagued Camp Lejeune and the Corps, and has continued to work toward a solution. As long as racial problems exist in the U.S., however, they will be transmitted in some degree to the Corps despite unflagging command attention, extensive human relations training, comprehensive equal opportunity programs, and the high quality of recruits. Institutional discriminatory practices have long ceased to exist but, like drug and alcohol abuse, personal prejudice is a problem that defies complete eradication. Even if prejudice is absent, a perception of prejudice can have the same dysfunctional impact on operational readiness.

One solution consistently pursued by the Corps is to elevate the percentage of minority officers to a level proportionate to the percentage of minorities in the enlisted grades. For example, the percentage of African-American officers rose from 4.4 percent in 1984 to 5.1 percent in 1991, which included 1,009 officers. By 2000 the percentage of minority officers had risen to 16.2 percent, of which 7.5 percent or 1,338 were African-American. At the same time, the Corps had a minority enlisted population of 34.4 percent, of which 16.2 percent or 25,160 were African-American, a clear-cut improvement.

Camp Lejeune, once a powder keg of racial friction, has a unique advantage in assimilating African-American Marines into the Marine Corps culture and offering other Marines an appreciation of their struggle for equality. Specifically, it has Camp Johnson, which stands as a legacy of the Montford Point Marines and has been recognized as a historic district for its historical significance. Building M-100, in 1942 the original Montford Point Camp Administration Building, was reopened on 8 February 2001 after renovation to return it to its original appearance. Restoration of M-101 and M-102 followed. At least one of these buildings will be used for a Montford Point Reading Room and Museum and for MPM Association offices. The history of African-American Marines is an eradicable part of the history of the Corps.

## Changes to Camp Lejeune

Quality of life initiatives characterized construction at Camp Lejeune during the 1990s as a result of budgetary decisions both by the Marine Corps and Department of Defense. One significant reason quality of life initiatives received exceptional attention, beyond the traditional "Marines take care of their own," was that for the first time in history the number of active-duty Marines was less than the number of dependents. Commandant General Carl E. Mundy announced the Family and Bachelor Housing Campaign during July 1994, expressing his concern that 30 percent of the BEQs Corps-wide were inadequate, 36 percent of family housing required revitalization or replacement since 60 percent was more than 30 years old, and there was a shortage of 6,900 family quarters. The planned solution entailed the revitalization of BEQs and major improvements to existing family housing in addition to planned new construction. At the beginning of the housing campaign, MCB's Housing Division was able to provide quarters for only 23 percent of the families that desired to live on base.

The plan called for the renovation of 1,185 homes at Camp Lejeune between the fiscal years 1996 and 2001. Refurbishing of quarters began at Midway Park, Tarawa Terrace II, and 385 units of Capehart housing, including those at the air station, and was followed by renovations to units in Berkeley Manor (1997) and Paradise Point (2000). Funding constraints, however, did not permit the construction of all the required family housing.

Under the Personnel Support Equipment Enhancement Plan, or the "Whole Room Concept," 13 barracks at Camp Lejeune, approximately 1,200 rooms, were redone by the fiscal year 1996. By 2000 over 2,400 rooms in 25 barracks had been refurnished, which contributed to the base's winning of the Commander-in-Chief's Award for Installation Excellence for that year. Still, as a testament to the desirability of the bachelor quarters and the amount of expendable income resulting from continuing pay raises, only 55 percent of single service members elected to live on base.

A "Set-aside Program" was started in 1996 as a partial solution to family housing. Under this program, MCB coordinated with local realtors to have them set aside selected civilian rental units specifically for military occupancy with the landlords to be paid automatically by allotment. An initial target of 140 homes was established.

A more ample solution was provided by the fiscal year 1996 Defense Authorization Act, which permitted the privatization of base housing, including construction and management by private contractors. Adjacent municipalities were concerned that Camp Lejeune's \$120 million plan with respect to new construction at Midway Park and the Tarawa Terrace complex would adversely affect local construction companies and rental markets. Based on these concerns, Camp Lejeune withdrew its plans in 1999 for further study. In late 2000 an acceptable two-part plan proposed the demolition of 314 units in the Tarawa Terrace complex, which were to be replaced by 335 new homes and townhouses. The second part of this unique plan was an innovative Public/Private Venture, in that the demolition, construction, and subsequent management of the units would be the responsibility of a civilian concern at no cost to the government.

During the 1990s the Modular Unit Design Project, which had begun with the first motel-style BEQs at French Creek in 1968, was concluded. After



the project, new barracks were constructed for the air station and at Courthouse Bay for 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, whose previous site on Onslow Beach was destroyed by Hurricanes Bertha and Fran in 1996.

On 12 May 1993 Camp Lejeune's impressive \$9.1 million, 75,000-square-foot commissary opened on Holcomb Boulevard, followed on 30 September 1993 by the adjacent new Marine Corps Exchange complex, the largest in the Corps.

On 15 September 1997 Camp Lejeune commuters had their longest-standing wish granted with the paving of the three-mile Piney Green Road ("Extension") from the Sneads Ferry Road to State Route 24, with a gate opened at that end, thus alleviating the mass of traffic flowing through the main gate. And, as a fitting tribute to the greatest Commandant of the Corps, a life-size statue of General John A. Lejeune, the base's namesake, was unveiled in the Holcomb Boulevard traffic circle adjacent to Building 1, also dedicated as Lejeune Hall, on 9 November 2000, marking service over three centuries by the United States Marines to an appreciative nation.

## New Missions

In 1998 alone the Marines were called upon to respond to an average of one crisis or expeditionary mission every five weeks and participated in more than 55 exercises hosted by 25 countries. Over the decade units from the 2nd MarDiv, which averaged a strength of approximately 16,000 over that period, participated in an imposing array of operational missions from the Americas to Europe, Asia Minor, the Middle East, and Africa, including humanitarian assistance, noncombatant evacuation operations, peacekeeping, and others. Many of these missions were executed in a hostile environment. The division was supported in these exercises by the 2nd FSSG and 2nd MAW, usually represented by MAGs-26 and -29 from the air station.

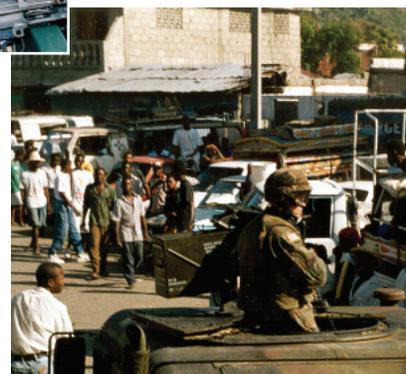
One typical example involved a Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP) mission in an active combat environment by the 24th MEU (SOC) while it was operating in support of Operations Deny Flight and Provide Promise during June 1995. On 8 June BLT 1/8's TRAP team, assisted by MAG-29's HMM-263, successfully extracted Air Force Captain Scott O'Grady, who had evaded capture since he was shot down on 2 June, from Bosnian-Serb territory during the bloody civil war in the Balkans. This rescue demonstrated once again the capability and flexibility of a MAGTF from the world's premier expeditionary force in readiness.

## Changes of the 1990s

Throughout the 1990s fiscal and operational considerations resulted in the deactivation, reorganization, and realignment of many of Camp Lejeune's tenant commands and their supporting elements. In 1992 the 2nd MarDiv's 2nd Light Armored Infantry Battalion was reorganized and became the 2nd Light



Marines on duty in Haiti providing humanitarian assistance, peace keeping, and riot control during Operation New Horizon (1988).



Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. Then, in 1995, II MEF saw the deactivation of the 2nd, 4th and 6th MEB CEs, a decision based on fiscal constraints. A reserve presence was not lost, however, since in 1995 the reserve MAGTF CE was restructured and subsequently named the II MEF Augmentation Command Element (II MACE). The Combat Element, 2nd MEB, was reactivated at Camp Lejeune on 16 March 2000, but this time without a reserve affiliation.

In 1995 the MCSSS lost its Food Service School, and the Marine Corps Engineer School lost its Engineer Equipment Instruction Company, as both elements were relocated to Army school commands as a result of a Department of Defense program to eliminate unnecessary training duplication and redundancy among the Armed Services. Camp Johnson subsequently gained a new school under MCSSS, the Logistics Operations School, which was formed on 11 September 1998 when the old Motor Transportation School combined with the Logistics Instructional Section from Little Creek, Virginia, to become the home of the 0400 mobility occupational field. On 27 October 1998 MCSSS added another C to its name, for "Combat," and officially became MCCSSS.

In January 1996 the Rifle Range Detachment at Stones Bay changed names and became the Weapons Training Battalion. At Christmastime that year President Bill Clinton became the fourth President to visit Camp Lejeune.

A Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force was activated at Camp Lejeune on 4 April 1996 as a strategic national asset that was manned, trained, and equipped to provide consequence management in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction. This 373- member unit, while remaining under the operational control of II MEF, moved to Indian Head, Maryland, over the last half of 2000 to be closer to the nation's capital.

In March 2000 two battalions from the 2nd FSSG, the veteran 8th Motor Transport Battalion and the 2nd Landing Support Battalion, successor to the old Pioneer and Shore Party Battalions, were deactivated and reformed as the new 2nd Transportation Support Battalion, 2nd FSSG's largest battalion. Another of 2nd FSSG's battalions, 2nd Dental, merged with one of Camp Lejeune's tenants, the Naval Dental Center, under one command element on 19 July 1994 to form the Consolidated Dental Command.

In October 2000 the Marine Corps Schools (MCS) at Camp Lejeune, which was activated under the command of the Base CG on 24 May 1991, was deactivated and returned to Quantico. The move allowed the alignment of all training, both East and West Coast, under one headquarters.

Headquarters, Marine Forces, U.S. Atlantic Command (MARFORLANT), the Marine Corps service component for the Atlantic theater, moved to Camp Lejeune from Norfolk, Virginia, in 1994. The Command remained three years with the CG, II MEF, then returned to Norfolk on 30 June 1997 when the Defense Authorization Act of 1997 provided an additional general officer for that billet.

## Natural and Legal Events

### *Hurricanes*

Chosen for its coastal location, Camp Lejeune both enjoys its ocean front and suffers the disadvantage of being along one of the most traveled hurricane paths in North America. During the period 1996 to 1998 the North Carolina coast



was hit directly by four hurricanes of Category 2 or 3 intensity. The major threat of such storm landfalls is the storm surge and flooding that accompanies them, but winds in excess of 100 miles per hour also take their toll.

In 1996 two hurricanes, Bertha (Category 2) and Fran (Category 3), hit Camp Lejeune within months of each other. Bertha struck the base July 12-13, with sustained winds of 70 knots and peak gusts of 96 knots. Base housing was hardest hit, with estimated damage at \$6.4 million, and 74 of the 273 Bradford pear trees planted along Lejeune Boulevard as part of the Beirut Memorial were damaged or destroyed.

As repairs were nearing completion, however, the North Carolina coast was hit again when Hurricane Fran struck. This hurricane, which made landfall on 5 September 1996, caused \$9 million in wind and flood damage in base housing alone. Forty-six additional Bradford pear trees of the Beirut Memorial were damaged. Damages also were reported at Camp Lejeune's new commissary and at flight hangars at MCAS New River. MCAS reported around \$4.2 million in damage.

In 1998 the third hurricane to hit the North Carolina coast directly, Bonnie, made landfall near Wilmington as a borderline Category 2/3 storm. Cherry Point recorded sustained winds at 41 knots with peak gusts of 61 knots, and a rainfall of 10.93 inches.

In 1999 two hurricanes affected the base within weeks of each other. Hurricane Dennis, which passed through the area during late August and early September, was a larger-than-average western Atlantic hurricane that was erratic in both track and intensity. Although it never made landfall as a hurricane, it affected the North Carolina coast with hurricane force winds, heavy rains, prolonged high surf, and beach erosion. On 4 September MCAS Cherry Point recorded sustained winds of 41 knots with peak gusts of 53 knots and 9 inches of rainfall. The storm caused significant property and agricultural damage. A couple of weeks later Hurricane Floyd made landfall on 16 September 1999 as a large and intense hurricane that had reached near Category 5 wind speeds during its development in the Caribbean. By the time Floyd swept over North Carolina, the wind speeds were down to Category 2 level. Winds were not as strong at Cherry Point, which recorded sustained winds of 56 knots and peak winds of 71 knots as the storm passed over. Heavy rain and flooding resulted in 35 deaths in North Carolina. Floyd was determined to be the deadliest storm to hit the U.S. since Hurricane Agnes in 1972.

### *Significant Trials at Camp Lejeune*

In 1981 the base witnessed the longest and most expensive trial in Corps history, which concluded on 5 February with a General Court-Martial convicting Private First Class Robert Garwood, "the last POW" from Vietnam, of collaborating with the enemy. Garwood had been captured on 28 September 1965 as he was driving a Jeep in Quang Nam Province. Garwood made international headlines when he smuggled out a note revealing his existence. The note resulted in his release in March 1979, after having been a prisoner of war for 14 years. As a result of the court-martial, Garwood was dishonorably discharged.



Located on North Carolina's eastern coast, Camp Lejeune has been hit by hurricanes several times throughout the years. During the past five years, four hurricanes have hit the base causing extensive property damage.

On 4 March 1999 Camp Lejeune was in the worldwide spotlight as the location of a U.S. Marine Corps court-martial for Marine Captain Richard J. Ashby and his navigator, Captain Joseph Schweitzer. The pair, who were permanently assigned to Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 2, MCAS Cherry Point, had been stationed at Aviano Air Force Base as part of the 31st Air Expeditionary Wing in support of NATO air operations over Bosnia. On 3 February 1998 they were on a low-level training mission near Cavalese, Italy, when their EA-6B Prowler jet severed cables of a ski resort gondola, killing the 20 passengers in the gondola car. The court-martial found the two not guilty of involuntary manslaughter and homicide.

The acquittal drew harsh reaction from the Italian government and other foreign countries that feared American military personnel would assume an immunity from the finding. Additional review of the accident and the circumstances surrounding it, however, found both pilot and navigator guilty of obstruction of justice for destroying a videotape of the flight. Both were discharged from the Corps and Ashby was sentenced to six months in the brig at Camp Lejeune. A year after the accident Italy and the United States reached an accord for tightening restrictions of the low flights.

### Jacksonville and Onslow County: 1990s and Beyond

During the 1990s Jacksonville and Onslow County continued to prosper and benefited from their close personal ties and thriving economic relationship with Camp Lejeune. Marines remained inextricably woven into the social fabric of the surrounding communities, as evidenced by the fact that in 1997, 15,000 of Camp Lejeune's 19,000 families lived off base. The amenities offered by the community and the pro-business economic environment have garnered recognition and awards for both the city and the county. In 1996 Onslow County was placed at the top of a country-wide list for counties with the highest market potential for businesses, with Jacksonville placing in the "top ten" growth markets in 1995 as potential opportunities for retail development. Jacksonville was recognized in 1997 as the least segregated city in the nation and also twenty-fourth of 301 surveyed areas in the U.S. as a best place to raise a family. By 2000 it was the state's fastest growing city and, with a population of 66,715, the state's eleventh largest city. Onslow County, with a population of 150,355, was the state's tenth largest county.



Sniper training in the field and at the Rifle Range remains a basic Marine skill.

(4) 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division organization during year 2000.  
 (Marine divisions no longer have a standardized T/O)

