

Torii Teller



Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan

Vol. 29 No. 8 November 25, 1983



Japan's loyal samurai

Most countries have had a group of warriors who have today emerged as heroes of a sort because of their colorful exploits. France its musketeers, England its knights and Japan had the "samurai."

However, unlike their chivalrous counterparts in other countries, the samurai were less likely to do battle for the smile of a lady. Their deeds and battles were performed solely for their lords, the emperor and country, while each adhered to a code called the "Bushido." The code stressed rectitude, courage, benevolence, sincerity, loyalty to their feudal lords, and self-control in the face of physical or mental suffering.

The samurai emerged from a select group of palace guards called "samurau" who were tasked with guarding the "Mikado" or Emperor.

When feudalism brought an end to centralized power in Japan, these warriors rose above being common soldiers and established themselves as the "gentry" or upper class.

Changing their titles to "samurai," members of this new warrior breed distinguished themselves from common soldiers by carrying two swords and by shaving the crowns of their heads.

Between 900 and 1192 A.D., two samurai clans from Taira and Minamoto, seeing the inability of the ruling Fujiwara clan to control the rebellious peasants, overthrew the government and set up a shogunate regime.

The samurai remained powerful until 1338 when the Ashikaga clan overthrew the shogunate regime and established the feudal system, which brought Japan a century of war. For their service, the samurai class was given the power of life and death over the common people.

During the Edo era (1603-1867) a rigid class system was established in Japan; a unique cast system arose, spawning four classes of people with the samurai emerging as the most powerful. Strong devotion and loyalty were inevitable elements to become samurai.

A story, Forty-seven Ronin, describes that an important feudal lord insulted a lesser lord who, in a fit of anger, drew his sword and attacked his agitator. Since it was forbidden to draw one's sword in the castle of Edo, the lesser lord was ordered to kill himself and give up all his possessions. His samurai also lost its standing in society and became "ronin" or masterless samurai.

Vowing vengeance, the 47 ronin waited two years to avenge their lord, so as not to alert anyone to their intentions. On Dec. 14, 1702 they decided to strike. They rushed the castle and beheaded their lord's antagonist along with several of his samurai. For their actions, the ronin were ordered to kill themselves, which they did out of loyalty to their lord. A monument still stands in Tokyo honoring those 47 devoted warriors who embodied the heart and soul of the samurai.



National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Torii Teller

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Chaplain's Call



Catholic Mass:

Sat, 5 p.m.; Sun, 9 a.m.;
Mon-Fri, 11:45 a.m.

Confession - One half hour
before Mass Sat & Sun

CCD Classes - Sun, 10:15
a.m. at M.C. Perry School

Jewish Services:

3rd Saturday of each month,
10 a.m. at the Chapel

Protestant Services:

Sun, 7:45 & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School - 9-10 a.m.
at M.C. Perry School

Spiritual Gospel - 1st & 3rd
Sunday, 5 p.m.

Gospel Choir rehearsal -
Tue & Thu, 6:30 p.m. at the
Chapel

Spirit-Life Fellowship - Sat,
7 p.m. at the Chapel Annex

L.D.S.:

Sun, 1 p.m. at M.C. Perry
School

Church of Christ:

Sun, 8:30 a.m. & 6 p.m. at
M.C. Perry School; Wed
7 p.m. at the Chapel

Orthodox; Muslims; (Islamic)
Buddhist; Contact the Station
Chaplain's Office at ext. 4001

Date to remember:

Advent is a time of pre-
paration to receive God's gift
given to us at Christmas. In
order for us to better under-
stand the gift God gives, there
will be Advent services con-
ducted each Sunday night, Nov.
27-Dec. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Chap-
el.

our cover

Reggie Grayson, field service rep
for Beech Aerospace, checks the
aileron of one of the Station's
two UC-12B, the Super King Air.
The aircraft is used here pri-
marily for passenger and small
cargo trips. For more, see pages
6&7. Photo by Sgt Chuck DeMar.

LCpl Dan Scalise works on
changing the tail markings on
an A-4M Skyhawk from VMA-
311's to VMA-211's. The change
was required when '211 replaced
'311 under the Marine Corps'
Unit Rotation Program recently,
and '211 took over '311's aircraft.



SSgt Dave McGinty



SSgt Vicki Conkel

Recently, Marines and sailors assigned to H&HS
began moving into the three newly completed bar-
racks on Mainside. The three, four-story barracks
will accommodate H&HS enlisted and Staff NCOs.
According to Rick Kagimoto, Corps of Engineers,
the barracks were built in conjunction with the Ja-
panese Facilities Improvement Program at a cost
of approximately \$3.5 million each. Bob Miller,
bachelor housing manager stated that the U.S. gov-
ernment spent approximately \$1 million on the room
furniture. Miller also mentioned that barracks 320,
321, 322 and 329 between the new ones will be torn
down before Christmas. "Within the next five years,
another 109-room barracks will be built in their
place," stated Cmdr Pete Gunn, facilities officer
here.



SSgt Dave McGinty

Cpl Floyd Davis hangs the Dining Facility of the
Quarter plaque over the chow line in Dining Fa-
cility 222. LtCol R.S. Alvarez presented the award
to the facility Wednesday for permanent reten-
tion. The facility has been the recipient of the
Dining Facility of the Quarter six out of eight
times in the last two years.

H&MS-12 Masuda clean-up

9 units/individuals awarded commendations for their efforts

Working with handicapped children, civil clean-up and assisting the PS-1 crash, earned nine 1983 Nippon Zenkokai Association Good Deed Commendations for units and individuals here.

Representatives will attend commendation ceremonies tomorrow at the Sanshu-Den Hall of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo.

The majority of the awards will be received for assistance rendered to JMSDF, when a PS-1 crashed and burst into flames April 26.

Det. C, Operations, Branch Clinic, PMO, Maj Brian McMullen and Capt Skip Samad were cited for their actions during the PS-1 accident.

"On behalf of the department, I feel very appreciative and proud," said Maj Steve Bennett, provost marshal here. "Receiving a commendation for not only the PS-1 crash but for the annual Futashika ("water hole") clean-up represents our effort to support the Iwakuni area both internally and externally."

H&MS-12 also received a commendation for their assistance in helping clean-up Masuda City after it was seriously damaged by torrential rains July 23.

"We are delighted to receive the commendation

but, we didn't go to Masuda to receive any recognition," said LtCol Gary Roser, commanding officer of H&MS-12. "The Marines involved responded to a call for help from our mamasan, Machiko Hamamoto because it was the Christian and neighborly thing to do."

MAG-12 was recognized for its Christmas party for the children of the Jonan-Gakuen, a home for physically and mentally handicapped children in Tabsue Town.

MABS-12 also received a good deed commendation for their picnic and cookout held Aug. 31 at the Jonan-Gakuen.

—SSgt Dave McGinty

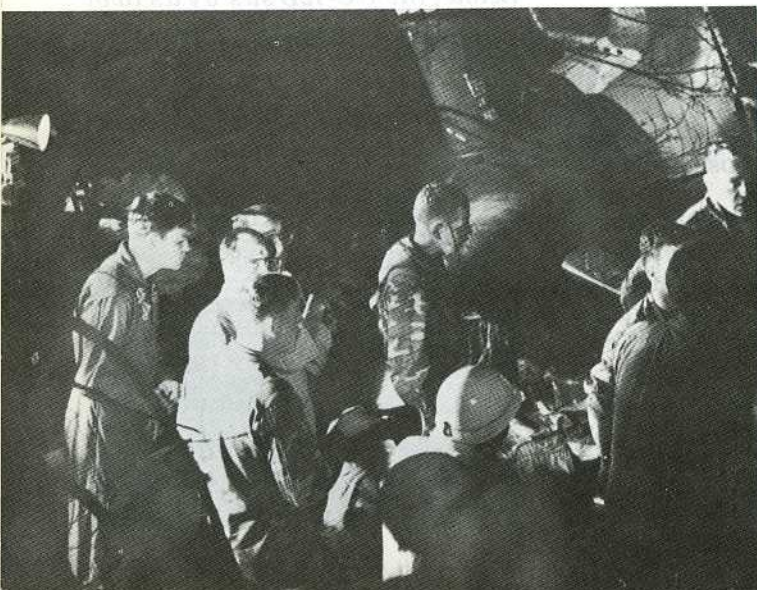


Cpl Thomas J. Dick

MABS-12 Jonan-Gakuen visit PS-1 crash, April 26



SSgt Dave McGinty



SSgt V.L. Brindley

Wear the Good Conduct Medal with pride

"Having conducted yourself in a creditable manner, you are, by the direction of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, awarded a Good Conduct Medal..." The Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal was established by Secretary of the Navy, Herbert on July 20, 1896, to recognize good behavior and faithful service to the Marine Corps.

The first Good Conduct Medal was issued to Sergeant Friedrich Barchewitz, U.S. Marine Corps. He enlisted Jan. 6, 1885 and had one medal and one bar at the time of his death in 1904.

The Good Conduct Medal is suspended from a red ribbon with a narrow, vertical blue stripe in the center. In the center of the medal, encircled by a rope, is a Marine gunner, in the uniform of the Civil War period, serving a naval gun. Below is a scroll bearing the Marine Corps motto, *Semper Fidelis*. Encircling the rope are the words *United States Marine Corps*. The whole rests upon a fowl anchor with the crown tilted to the right. The encircling anchor chain is within the raised rim of the medal. The medal is suspended from a bolt-action rifle.

In 1896 when the medal was designed, the Marines were using the newly issued Lee Navy rifle, a high-velocity, clip-fed, bolt action .236 caliber rifle using smokeless powder.

The ribbon, in turn, was initially suspended from a clasp with rounded ends bearing the words *U.S. Marine Corps*. The reverse of the medal bears the raised legend "Fidelity Zeal Obedience" about the blank area for the recipients' name. The reverse of the Navy and Coast Guard Good Conduct medals and the Organized Marine Corps Reserve Medal.

Subsequent enlistments of five years each were shown on bars attached to the medal ribbon and by numerals on the service ribbon.

An excellent example of this early medal is far left. Recently former Sergeant Louis Bartos of Brightwaters, N.Y., donated his medal and a dress blue uniform to the MCRD Parris Island museum. His first enlistment was 1916-1920.



Sgt Ben Alter Jr., photos



He was twice wounded during World War I and later served in World War II as a Chief Petty Officer in the "Seabees."

Through the years numerous revisions have been made in the regulation governing eligibility requirements. For example, bars indicative of a second and subsequent awards of the medal have been discontinued and stars are now authorized. The elongated clasp has also been removed in order to facilitate mounting with other medals.

The Good Conduct Medal was also authorized for Marines who enlisted after April 6, 1917 and served until Nov. 11, 1918 or were medically discharged by line of duty accidents or wounds from World War I. Later in 1921, the secretary of the Navy authorized the Good Conduct Medal to members of the Marine Corps Reserve, including the 269 women reservists, of "Marinettes." During the years the length of service and average proficiency and conduct marks required to be eligible for the medal have been changed or reduced, but the design of the medal remains unchanged.

Today's eligibility requirements were set in 1953. However, the medal, designed by MajGen Charles Haywood, ninth Commandant of the Marine Corps (1891-1903) remains so that Sergeants Barchewitz or Bartos would recognize and respect it.

To the thousands of Marines during the last 87 years, this recognition denotes superb conduct, "honest and faithful service in keeping with the highest tradition of the Marine Corps." Wear your Good Conduct Medal with pride!

—Col D. Gardner