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U.S. Coast Guard History Program

THE U. S. COAST GUARD AT CAMP LEJEUNE, A BRIEF HISTORY

By
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North Carolina had witnessed the weathered cutters of the U.S. Revenue Marine and Revenue Cutter Service beating along its storied coast for almost twelve decades before the Coast Guard and its predecessors first established a presence near Onslow County, North Carolina. First were the life saving stations at Fort Macon and Bogue Inlet in 1904 and 1905, respectively; then came the air station at Morehead City in 1920, which, converted from the abandoned Camp Glenn Naval Air Station, was to last only two years. World War II brought a unique Coast Guard presence to the county itself and Camp Lejeune, the service's only school for landing craft, which, although generally forgotten and overlooked within the history of our Nation's oldest armed service, played a major role in the Allied victory and began the history of the Coast Guard at Camp Lejeune.¹

In 1998, after an absence of fifty-three years, the U.S. Coast Guard returned to Camp Lejeune. Coast Guardsmen had first come to Onslow County and Camp Lejeune, then known as Marine Barracks, New River, in 1941 as one of the first elements to reinforce the vastly under strength and still forming 1st Marine Division, the Marine Corps' first division, as it hurriedly prepared to meet a challenging series of possible contingencies that would require the division to conduct amphibious assaults in areas as geographically diverse as the French Caribbean, Brazil, Iceland, the Azores, Cape Verde Islands, and North Africa.²

The Marine Corps had pioneered the amphibious warfare doctrine that would take Allied forces victoriously over every beachhead in WW II, and which was to be considered the greatest

¹ Lt Malcolm F. Willoughby, USCGR(T), *The US Coast Guard in WW II* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute, 1957), pp. 38 and 146, hereafter *US Coast Guard in WW II*. "Marking a Century of Progress," [Jacksonville] *Daily News (DN)*, 9Oct04. "History of Service," *DN*, 8Aug97. Marine Barracks, New River, was renamed Camp Lejeune, New River, on 20 December 1942.

² LtCol Frank O. Hough, USMCR, et al, *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal-History of US Marine Operations in WW II*, vol 1 (Washington: HistBr, G-Div, HQMC, n.d.), pp. 54-56, hereafter *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal*. Col Victor J. Croizat, USMC (Ret), *Across the Reef: The Amphibious Tracked Vehicle at War* (Quantico: Marine Corps Association, 1992), p. 40, hereafter *Across the Reef*. Col Allan R. Millet, USMCR (Ret), *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), pp. 349-350, hereafter *History of the USMC*.

tactical innovation of the war. In 1941, during joint exercises in Puerto Rican waters and later across Onslow's beaches, as this doctrine was being refined and the equipment and techniques developed for the successful execution of the most difficult and dangerous phase of the assault, the actual projection of the landing force onto a hostile shore, it became apparent that specialized crews would be required to handle the daunting task of successfully inserting and extracting landing craft from the beach.³

At this point, particularly following Fleet Exercise Seven in Puerto Rico early in 1941, during which Navy crews proved frustratingly inept in maneuvering the newly designed landing craft in the surf, the expertise of the Coast Guard's surfmen was recalled. Coast Guardsmen had been expertly manning small craft in the surf zone since before the establishment of the U.S. Life Saving Service in 1871 and were the most seasoned small boat handlers in government service. The Navy and the Army, the latter of which was still operating civilian-manned, Army-owned attack transports at the time, asked the Coast Guard to assist in what would become its most important role of the war, that of getting the landing force to the beach. In May 1941, the Coast Guard undertook that mission. Coast Guardsmen would now additionally serve by adding their numbers and expertise to the crews required to man the flood of landing craft being produced and by mentoring the Navy and Army crews who would man them by the thousands. A particular skill would be needed to maneuver landing craft through strong currents, reefs, sand bars and heavy surf that typically complicated landing operations.⁴

Camp Lejeune had been acquired by the Navy Department as a training base for the 1st Marine Division beginning in February 1941, with the initial Congressional approval for the survey and purchase of the land. The 1st Marine Division, whose units were still dispersed between Parris Island, South Carolina, and Quantico, Virginia, began landing operations across Onslow Beach in June. Since the contingencies for which the 1st Marine Division was training involved a corps-sized joint command, the Marines were shortly joined by the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division ("The Big Red One"), from Fort Devens, Massachusetts, embarked on former Army-owned transports.⁵

³ Gen Holland M. Smith, USMC, "The Development of Amphibious Tactics in the US Navy," *Marine Corps Gazette (MCG)*, Sep46, pp. 43-48. Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl, *The US Marines and Amphibious War: Its Theory, and Its Practice in the Pacific* (Princeton: Princeton Univ Press, 1951), pp. 4 and 6, hereafter *US Marines and Amphibious War*.

⁴ Col Allan R. Millett, USMCR (Ret), *In Many A Strife: General Gerald C. Thomas and the U.S. Marine Corps 1917-1956* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1993), p. 153, hereafter *In Many A Strife*. RAdm Julius Augustus Furer, USN (Ret), *Administration of the Navy Department in WW II* (Washington: US Navy Dept, 1959), p. 605, hereafter *Admin of Navy Dept*. Dr Robert M. Browning, Jr., "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War," official Coast Guard historical publication found at www.uscg.mil/history/articles/h_pacwar.html, hereafter "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War." Capt Walter C. Capron, USCG (Ret), *U.S. Coast Guard* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1965), pp. 152-153. Charles Dana Gibson, "Ships and Men of the Army Transport Service," found at www.usmm.org/atshistory.html, 1999. Clifford P. Morehouse, "New Landing Craft," *MCG*, Dec43. During the period 1 July 1940 through 1 July 1943 alone, 12,964 landing craft were produced.

⁵ "The Marines Have Landed and All's Well at New River," *The Jacksonville Record*, 18Sep41. *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal*, p. 52. Dr Norman V. Cooper, *A Fighting General: The Biography of Gen Holland M. "Howling' Mad" Smith* (Quantico: Marine Corps Association, 1987), pp. 79-80.

The earlier landing exercises that had established the Navy's inadequacies in handling landing craft had also established that civilian crews could not effectively operate attack transports in a wartime environment. This dilemma was further heightened by the burgeoning requirement to man and operate the expanding number of amphibious warfare and other type ships now coming relentlessly off the ways. In May of 1941, in addition to acquiring the mission of manning landing craft and instructing their operation, the Coast Guard also took over the manning of the initial Army-owned attack transports that had been transferred to the Navy, a wartime total of twenty-two including those subsequently acquired and assigned from other sources.⁶

The amphibious flotilla that appeared regularly off Onslow's Camp Lejeune beaches during June, July and August of 1941 thus included the former Army transports USS Hunter Liggett, Leonard Wood and Wakefield, with their Coast Guard crew and Coast Guard manned landing craft. One of the landing craft coxswains aboard the Liggett, who had pressed at length to be transferred from the cutter USCGC Spencer to the amphibious forces, was Douglas A. Munro. Coast Guardsman Munro repeatedly practiced at Camp Lejeune during the summer of 1941 the skills he would again employ one year later during our Nation's first WW II offensive, the amphibious assault of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands by the 1st Marine Division in August 1942. There Munro would gain a place atop the pantheon of Coast Guard heroes.⁷

Beginning during the summer of 1940, the Marine Corps had actively searched the east and Gulf coasts for a division training area. A selection board, headed by Colonel Julian C. Smith, who would later command the 2nd Marine Division during the epic battle for Tarawa, eventually settled on the New River area of Onslow County. One of the more desirable features of this area was the sheltered cove known as Courthouse Bay, so-called because on its shores at Jarrett's Point was established Onslow County's first courthouse. The Major General Commandant, Thomas Holcomb, defined a scope of twenty-one activities that were to be conducted in the training area; nine of these could be associated with and would eventually influence the development of the Courthouse Bay area. Those activities associated with the employment of

⁶ Capron, op.cit, pp. 152-153. *Admin of the Navy Dept*, p. 605. Robert Erwin Johnson, "Coast Guard-Manned Naval vessels in WW II" (Washington: Office of the Coast Guard Historian, Feb 1993), p. 3, hereafter "Coast Guard-Manned Naval Vessels." *US Coast Guard in WW II*, pp. 9 and 169. In addition to the number of ships partially manned by the Coast Guard, the service fully manned 1,441 vessels longer than 65' during the war. Including landing craft, at its peak strength, the Coast Guard fleet of smaller craft totaled 7,960.

⁷ NHD, OpNav, NavDept, *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ship*, vol 3 (Washington: 1968), p. 401. Service Record of Douglas Albert Munro, Signalman First Class, USCG, found at www.uscg.mil/history/MunroBio.html, March 2000. Cdr Raymond J. Evans, USCG (Ret), intvw, 1999 (USCG Oral HistColl), found at www.uscg.mil/history/WEBORALHISTORY/Ray_Evans_Video_Interview.html, pp. 3-4, hereafter Cdr Raymond J. Evans intw. USS Hunter Liggett, official ship's history found at www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Hunter_Liggett.pdf. USS Leonard Wood, official ship's history found at www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Leonard_Wood.pdf. "America Bares Its Weapons Of Attack As Time For Action Draws Near," *Life*, 4Aug41.

landing craft would result in the Bay being home to a detachment of Coast Guardsmen for more than three of the four years of the Coast Guard's tenancy at Camp Lejeune.⁸

Courthouse Bay's appeal to the Marines was much the same as that of the settlers who for generations had built their homes, farms, landings, stores and small industries around the Bay's periphery. The Bay would provide a protected anchorage and staging area for the landing craft that would train the Marines in their ship-to-shore movement along with the necessary repair and maintenance facilities, administrative support buildings and barracks. The Bay likewise allowed easy access to the New River; which in turn provided access to the other Base enclaves along the river; the New River Inlet; the landing beaches stretching northeastward toward Brown's Inlet; the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway with its landward maneuver areas and, by 1942, the amphibious transport mockup; and the training areas afforded by the expanse of the river itself and its shores.⁹

In one of the more remarkable historical coincidences in the naming of geographic places, there existed for more than ninety years before the creation of Camp Lejeune a community at Courthouse Bay, which was in fact the largest and last community that would be eradicated by the Base, and possibly the most progressive community in the County, named "Marines." Established by the family patriarch Zorababel Marine sometime prior to 1850, by 1941 Marines had an extensive history as a thriving river port and a center of commercial activity in the area. Its inhabitants could point with pride to having had four general mercantile stores, two lumber mills, a grist mill, cotton gin, turpentine distillery, cooper's shop, and several post offices, schools, churches, boathouses and piers. By the fall of 1941, however, the last Marines' post office was closed forever and its inhabitants dispersed to the winds, the unfortunate and regrettable consequence of a world situation and national emergency over which they had no control.¹⁰

⁸ LtCol L.J. Kimball, USMC (Ret), Consulting Historian, *Semper Fidelis: A Brief History of Onslow County, NC, and Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune*. Prepared under US Dept of the Army, Wilmington Dist, Corps of Engineers, Contract DACW54-99-C-0004 (Richmond: LBG, 2002), pp. 7, 18-19, hereafter *Semper Fidelis*. MajGen Commandant Thomas Holcomb ltr to The President of the Board to submit plans for establishment of Division Training Center, vicinity of New River, NC, dtd 24Feb41, as found in G.W. Carr, Architect, and J.E. Greiner Co, Engineers, *Completion Report Covering the Design of Camp Lejeune, Marine Barracks, New River, NC, for the US Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks, Contract NOy 4751 April 15, 1941-September 30, 1942* (Durham and Baltimore: 17 Jul 1943), pp. 4-5, hereafter *Completion Report NOy 4751*; Letter hereafter Gen Thomas Holcomb letter, 1941.

⁹ Report of Board to submit plans for establishment of Division Training Center, New River Area, NC, dtd 21Feb41 as found in *Completion Report Contract NOy 4751*, pp. 7-9. Ibid, p. 163. Frank X. Tolbert, "River of Marines," *Leatherneck*, Nov42. The amphibious transport mockup, informally christened the "U.S.S. Mockup," was an early wartime expedient that permitted wet-net training while not exposing assault transports that otherwise would be vulnerably anchored off Onslow Beach to the German U-boats that patrolled unhampered along the Atlantic coast. Built to replicate the cargo decks and sides of a transport, the 362-foot mockup lay, festooned with cargo nets, against the western, or northern, bank of the Intracoastal Waterway, easily accessible to landing craft.

¹⁰ A complete history of the community of Marines and subsequent Marine Corps development of the Courthouse Bay area is found in LtCol L.J. Kimball, USMC (Ret), "A Brief History of Courthouse Bay and the Community and Family of Marines, NC" (ms, HistColl, Museum of the Marine, Jacksonville, NC, 2 Oct 2002), hereafter "A Brief History of CHB." Thomas C. Loftfield, Principal Investigator, and Tucker Littleton, Compiler, *Archaeological and Historical Survey of USMC Base Camp Lejeune*, vol. 2 (Part 2), *The Historical Record*. Prepared under US Dept of the

One other unique feature of Courthouse Bay was that more pre-existing structures were left standing at Marines after the area was cleared for construction than in any other locale aboard the Base. Col Julian C. Smith, in reporting for the selection board to Gen Holcomb, had stated that another desirable attribute of Courthouse Bay was that some of the buildings could be used for their purposes. Indeed, six structures were spared and subsequently used. One structure, the boathouse belonging to Dr C.I. Carlson on Harvey's Point and designated BB-46, was used by the Marine Corps for the same recreational purpose until it was finally replaced in 2002, the last of Courthouse Bay's pre-existing structures. Dr Carlson's summer house, designated as BB-35, became the Officers' Club. When the officers' quarters fronting the New River were built in 1942, the existence of BB-35 created a gap between quarters BB-20 and 21, a gap that still exists today resulting from the removal of BB-35 as a final reminder of Courthouse Bay's past history.¹¹

The forward echelon of the 1st Marine Division, still at only one-half of its ordained strength, began its arrival at the tent city known as "Tent Camp" on 15 September 1941, lacking many of its organic elements and facing the onerous task of molding the influx of reservists and newly graduated recruits into combat formations capable of conducting an amphibious assault. Landing craft were in short supply as were their crews, but on 8 December the first Coast Guardsmen, twenty-two in number, arrived at Tent Camp and began their four-year association with the Marines at Camp Lejeune, establishing the Coast Guard's first and only landing craft school. With the completion of the permanent facilities at Courthouse Bay still nine months in the future, a temporary base camp for the school had to be established on the river near the encamped division.¹²

While a temporary camp was being prepared at Peterfield Point, which was located opposite Tent Camp on the western side of the New River, the Coast Guardsmen joined with the Marines of Company A, 1st Amphibian Tractor (Amtrac) Battalion, to form a mixed detachment on Onslow Beach. Company A was the Corps' first amphibian tractor unit. Company A's Marines had arrived at Tent Camp from the training facility at Dunedin, Florida, at the same time as the Coast Guardsmen and were awaiting the arrival of their tractors. Operating from this make-shift facility, the mixed detachment ran a short-lived boat gun familiarization course for the 1st

Navy, Naval facilities Command, Norfolk, Contract N62470-79-C-4273 (Wilmington: UNC at Wilmington, 1981), p. 160.

¹¹ *Completion Report NOy 4751*, p. 8. "A Brief History of CHB," p. 90.

¹² Col Allan R. Millett, USMCR (Ret), *Semper Fidelis: The History of the US Marine Corps* (New York: The Free Press, 2nd ed., rev., 1991), pp. 349-350. *In Many A Strife*, pp. 152-158. *Across the Reef*, pp. 40-42. "Coastguardsmen to Reduce Forces Here," [Camp Lejeune] *Globe*, 7Mar45. *Admin of the Navy Dept*, pp. 597, 609 and 625. Since, by Act of Congress on 1 Nov 41, the Coast Guard became a "Service in the Navy Dept," a status analogous to that of the Marine Corps, its training and administration were under the direction of the Navy Dept. The only mention of a landing craft school under Coast Guard Training Programs in this reference was the school located at Camp Lejeune. Per 12Aug08 e-mail from Ms Nora L. Chidlow, Archivist, USCG Historian's Office, there is no record of any other Coast Guard landing craft school although the US Navy was known to have operated several. Following the June-August amphibious exercises at Camp Lejeune, the 1st Marine Division's units returned to Parris Is. and Quantico. The "Tent Camp" was renamed Camp Geiger in January 1952.

Marine Division, providing instruction in the firing of landing-craft mounted machine guns against beach targets.¹³

During January 1942, the Coast Guard Detachment relocated to the newly constructed hut camp at Peterfield Point, where "Camp Lejeune's Airport," the future Marine Corps Air Station New River, was under construction. Their mission was both the emergency training of new Coast Guard landing-craft crews and the training of the 1st Marine Division Marines in landing operations. By 2 February, when the first commanding officer, Lieutenant Spencer F. Hewins, USCG, arrived, the Detachment consisted of twenty-four Coast Guardsmen and five over-worked landing craft. Lt Hewins, a 1930 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy at New London and a Washington, D.C., native, had eleven rigorous years of sea-going experience behind him in Coast Guard cutters and destroyers before taking this command.¹⁴

By the following month, eight Homosote Huts had been made available to the Detachment at Peterfield Point for their billeting and that of the crewmen under instruction; a number subsequently increased to seventy-one. Homosote Huts, a war-time expedient consisting of wood framing overlaid with paraffin-impregnated composition board, had replaced canvas tents for temporary housing throughout the Base and were designed for sixteen men, suggesting the population of Coast Guardsmen-instructors, staff and under instruction-may have eventually approached several hundred. While the Detachment was encamped at Peterfield Point, a 175-foot floating dock was constructed in Southwest Creek along with a fueling facility within the Intracoastal Waterway to support the landing craft and their training activities.¹⁵

Peterfield Point, however, was located eighteen miles from the mouth of the New River and access to the ocean beaches, and sixteen miles from the Intracoastal Waterway. To reduce transit time to these training areas, the Coast Guard Detachment frequently found themselves bivouacked back on Onslow Beach Monday through Friday, returning to the relative comforts of Peterfield Point only over weekends.¹⁶

May saw the departure of the 1st Marine Division for the South Pacific and its rendezvous with destiny at Guadalcanal on 7 August. With it, embarked on transports, some manned to varying degrees by Coast Guard crews, were also many of the landing craft crews that had trained and been trained at Camp Lejeune. Eighteen of the twenty-two transports attached to the campaign's task force carried Coast Guardsmen. The Hunter Liggett, carrying thirty-five landing

¹³ *Across the Reef*, pp. 40-42. Col Victor J. Croizat, USMC (Ret), Review of *Andrew Jackson Higgins and the Boats That Won WW II*, by Jerry E. Strahan, MCG, Sep94.

¹⁴ US Navy Dept, *Building the Navy's Bases in WW II: History of the Bureau of Yards and docks and the Civil Engineer Corps 1940-1946*, vol. 1 (Washington: Dept of the Navy, 1947), pp. 285 and 287. "Camp Lejeune Coast Guards Uphold Fine Tradition of Service," *Globe*, 15Mar44. "O'Neill Succeeds Hewins As Coast Guard CO," *Globe*, 19Jul44.

¹⁵ "Anniversary Observed by Guardsmen," *Globe*, 9Aug44. ROIC, Contract NOY 4751, ltr dtd 7Mar42, Subj: Facilities for Coast Guard Training (Temporary) (Archival Materials, T&O Dept, MCB, Camp Lejeune).

¹⁶ "O'Neill Succeeds Hewins As Coast Guard CO," *Globe*, 19Jul44.

boats and two tank lighters (later designated LCMs-Landing Craft, Medium), was completely manned by Coast Guardsmen.¹⁷

But, the training role of the Marines and Coast Guardsmen at Camp Lejeune wasn't limited to just the sea services. The 1st Infantry Division continued amphibious training there until its departure on 15 February 1942. Other Army divisions initially programmed for amphibious operations likewise required training in that warfare specialty at the Marine bases on both coasts. Following the embarkation of the 1st Marine Division, the next and last complete division to be trained for amphibious warfare at Camp Lejeune was the Army's 9th Infantry Division, from Fort Bragg, North Carolina.¹⁸

As the Coast Guard was with the Marines at Guadalcanal, Coast Guard-manned transports and Camp Lejeune-trained Coast Guard landing craft crews were with the Army in the North African landings at Morocco and Algeria on 8 November 1942. The 1st and the 9th Infantry Divisions, the 9th having trained two months at Camp Lejeune, constituted the majority of the assault landing force in that operation. Sailing with the task force was the Camp Lejeune veteran Leonard Wood, now under the command of then Commander Merlin O'Neill, USCG. And, dispersed throughout the remainder of the assault transports was the Coast Guard's contribution to the 3000 embarked landing craft crewmen.¹⁹

In the Pacific, Signalman First Class Douglas Munro had remained in the lower Solomon Islands to support the Guadalcanal Campaign since the initial landings on 7 August 1942. On 27 September, Munro, just two weeks shy of his 23rd birthday, was in charge of ten landing craft tasked with inserting three companies of LtCol Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller's 1st Battalion, 7th Marines behind Japanese lines in an action known as the Third Battle of the Mantanikou River. This envelopment, however, encountered overwhelming resistance and Puller ordered his Marines to withdraw to the beach and be evacuated. Despite intense enemy fire, Munro fearlessly led his boats repeatedly to the beach to retrieve the Marines, used his boat as a shield to the Japanese fire, and covered the withdrawal with his machine gun. Munro gave his life in this heroic effort and became the Coast Guard's only Medal of Honor recipient. In the same action, Petty Officer Raymond Evans, who was Munro's shipmate aboard the Leggett and had also trained with the 1st Marine Division and 1st Infantry Division at Camp Lejeune, and Coxswain Samuel B. Roberts, were awarded the Navy Cross, Roberts posthumously.²⁰

During September 1942 the five million dollar amphibious complex at Courthouse Bay and the former site of the community of Marines was completed. The facility consisted of an Amphibian Base, located within the Bay itself, for the harboring, repair and servicing of "landing boats, tank

¹⁷ "Coast Guard-Manned Naval Vessels," p. 4. *US Coast Guard in WW II*, p. 259.

¹⁸ Gen H.M. Smith, USMC, "The Development of Amphibious Tactics in the US Navy," *MCG*, Oct46.

¹⁹ *US Marines and Amphibious War*, pp. 62, 63 and 67. Dr Alfred Vagts, *Landing Operations: Strategy, Psychology, Tactics, Politics, From Antiquity to 1945* (Harrisburg: Military Service Publishing Co, 1952), p. 639. *US Coast Guard in WW II*, p. 206.

²⁰ Dr Robert M. Browning, Jr., "Douglas Munro at Guadalcanal," found at www.uscg.mil/history/Munro.html, September 1999. Cdr Raymond J. Evans intvw, pp. 5-6. *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal*, pp. 316-317.

lighters, amphibian tanks, etc.,” and the Balloon Barrage Area, for the housing of the Barrage Balloon Training School (BBTS), the Coast Guard Detachment, and the other detachments associated with the Amphibian Base. The BBTS moved into their new quarters at the end of September from Parris Island, where five Barrage Balloon squadrons had been organized, and opened on 1 October.²¹

One more squadron was organized at Camp Lejeune but the Marine Corps soon lost interest as the barrage balloons proved relatively ineffective for their intended air defense mission and by 15 December of the following year the school had been discontinued and the Corps’ Balloon Barrage organization abandoned, the prefix “BB” on their former buildings the only visible reminder of their earlier presence.²²

The BBTS fell under the Training Center’s Barrage Balloon Group. The Training Center (TTC) had been formed after the departure of the 1st Marine Division to conduct infantry replacement training and formal schools for the training of technical specialists. In addition to the Barrage Balloon Group at Courthouse Bay, and under the TTC’s Amphibian Base Battalion, was the Coast Guard Detachment, which had been reorganized on 15 June 1942 with the formation of the TTC, and an Amphibious Tractor Detachment, which had previously been collocated with the Coast Guard Detachment at Peterfield Point. The Coast Guard Detachment boasted a complement of instructors and staff of approximately two hundred at the time of their 25 September 1942 move to the new area. There, augmented now with greatly enhanced training facilities, they resumed training the thousands of Coast Guardsmen assigned to Camp Lejeune that were to constitute landing craft crews and support personnel and the tens of thousands of Marines that were to receive their training in the ship-to-shore phase of an amphibious assault.²³

²¹ *Completion Report NOy 4751*, pp. 17, 22, 34 and 131. Gertrude S. Carraway, *Camp Lejeune Leathernecks: US Marine Corps Training Center, Camp Lejeune, NC* (New Bern, Owen G. Dunn Co, 1946), p. 26. Gertrude S. Carraway, “Hail to the Marines,” [Raleigh] *News and Observer (N&O)*, 10Nov42. *Semper Fidelis*, p. 37.

²² *A Brief History of CHB*, p. 87. Other evidence of the Coast Guard’s presence and activities at Camp Lejeune can be found at “Specialists in Sudden Death,” *Saturday Evening Post*, 1Aug42; “River of Marines,” *Leatherneck*, Nov42; “Semper Paratus,” *Leatherneck*, Nov43; “Beach Raids Show Marine Strength,” *New York Times*, 8Nov42; and “New River Marine Post Offers Complete Training,” *N&O*, 10Nov42. These articles describe in detail the training experiences of both the Coast Guardsmen and Marines in riding the LCPs, LCVs, LCVPs and LCMs of the Coast Guard Det into the Atlantic and onto Onslow Beach. Also provided is an informative description of the amphibious mockup and its role in amphibious training.

²³ *Semper Fidelis*, pp. 32 and 34. “Coastguardsmen to Reduce Forces Here,” *Globe*, 7Mar45. CG, Camp Lejeune, New River ltr 2385-30LJR/rkm dtd 12Feb43, Subj: Organizations (Archival Materials, T&O Dept, MCB, Camp Lejeune). The TTC was reorganized as the Marine Training Command on 14 July 1944. CMC ltr AO-273-Ash, 2385/70-5000 dtd 22Apr43, Subj: Organization of Camp Lejeune, New River, NC (Archival Materials, T&O Dept, MCB, Camp Lejeune). Marty Bowers, Principal Architectural Historian. “WW II Construction at MCB Camp Lejeune, 1941—1945.” Part C, Delivery Order 0005, Contract No. DACW54-93-D-0033. (Richmond: LBA, July 1997), pp. E-55 - E-57. The Amtrac Det that was subsequently collocated with the Coast Guard Det at Peterfield Point and Courthouse Bay belonged to the TTC and was not related to the mixed det formed on Onslow Beach in December 1941. “Movie Men Here Taking Scenes of Coast Guard,” *NRP*, 22Apr43. A Coast Guard publicity team visited Courthouse Bay during April 1943 and took motion picture footage of ongoing training for inclusion in a color film: “Coast Guard Convoy.” Regrettably, no record of this film is known to the Coast Guard Historian’s Office.

An abbreviated list of those units whose Marines and sailors (and in the case of the 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions, soldiers) would be trained by the Coast Guard Detachment would include the 1st Marine Division, East Coast Echelon of the 4th Marine Division, 3rd Marine Brigade, four reinforced infantry regiments, four other regiments, three defense battalions, two airdrome battalions, twenty-one replacement or training battalions, seven war dog platoons, forty-nine depot companies, twelve ammunition companies, thirty replacement drafts, the 1st Brigade Royal Netherlands Marines, and three Naval Construction (SeaBee) Battalions.²⁴

Additionally, Courthouse Bay's Coast Guardsmen would man the landing craft that formed the river transportation system that was inaugurated on 6 July 1943 to convey troops and cargo along New River's twenty miles of navigable waters as part of a conservation program to save gasoline, tires and general wear and tear on the vehicles that would otherwise bear this transportation burden. They designed, built and towed conventional and radar targets for the artillery units training at the Base. And, they provided crash boats for aircraft operating out of Peterfield Point.²⁵

One other training program initiated during the summer of 1943 reflected the repute and importance given by the Coast Guard to their training program at Camp Lejeune. The ongoing Battle of the Atlantic provided too great a risk for the summer training cruises normally undertaken annually by two classes of cadets at the Coast Guard Academy. In place of the cruises, both classes were dispatched to Courthouse Bay for one month of intensive training to instill in the cadets an appreciation for the complexities of amphibious warfare.²⁶

The Academy's Class of 1945 left a record of their experiences and impressions at Courthouse Bay for posterity in their annual yearbook Tide Rips: "Architecture as uninspiring as the scenery, damp and smelly barracks, and ubiquitous 'Keep off the Grass' signs where there was no grass." Their liberty-less month consisted of "running landing barges, inspecting landing boat engines and learning how to shoot an '03," in addition to schooling and bivouacking in the "boondocks," i.e., participating in TTC's infantry combat training, while enduring "wind, sand flies as big as robins, mosquitoes, snakes, spider webs the size of cargo nets, swamps" and no sleep. "If cleanliness was next to godliness," they protested, "we were pretty close to purgatory." Impressions, no doubt, shared by many of the Coast Guardsmen that trained at Courthouse Bay.²⁷

²⁴ Paolo E. Coletta, Editor, and K. Jack Bauer, Associate Editor, *US Navy and Marine Corps Bases, Domestic* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 70. *Semper Fidelis*, pp. 32 and 34. Gordon L. Rottman, *US Marine Corps WW II Order of Battle: Ground and Air Units in the Pacific War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), pp. 30, 32 and 223-224, hereafter *USMC OOB in WWII*.

²⁵ "Camp Lejeune Coast Guards Uphold Fine Tradition of Service," *Globe*, 15Mar44. Camp Lejeune Public Relations Office, "Camp Lejeune Marines On Land-On Sea-In the Air, 1775 Semper Fidelis 1943" (Camp Lejeune: 1943), n.p.

²⁶ "Propose Summer Training Coast Guard Cadets Here," [Camp Lejeune] *New River Pioneer (NRP)*, 27May43.

"Coast Guard Cadets Learn Coordination With Shore Troops, Training Here," *NRP*, 26Aug43.

²⁷ *Tide Rips (1945)* (New London: Class of 1945, US Coast Guard Academy, 1945).

As 1943 passed into 1944, the size of the Coast Guard Detachment increased proportionately with the increased scope of amphibious operations in both hemispheres. By the summer of 1944, when Captain Merlin O'Neill, USCG, relieved Cdr Hewins as the commanding officer on 8 July, the Detachment numbered 310, with approximately 1500 personnel under instruction, and had over forty first-class landing craft at their disposal in the Amphibian Base boat basin and shops. The Coast Guard had served in an important mentoring role in teaching landing craft operations to the Army and Navy, and expanding its own cadre of operators, but the vast number of landing craft requiring crews greatly exceeded, even at the initial stages of the war, the Coast Guard's ability to meet manning requirements.²⁸

Capt O'Neill, an Ohio native, 23-year Coast Guard veteran, and 1921 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, had commanded the attack transport Leonard Wood during amphibious landings at North Africa, Sicily, the Gilberts and the Marshalls. His performance at Sicily had garnered him a Legion of Merit for successfully landing his embarked troops and equipment under severe bombing attacks while bringing his ship away unscathed. Capt O'Neill had first come to Courthouse Bay during the latter part of May 1944 as part of an inspection party and remained to incorporate the lessons learned from his recent amphibious experience, particularly as it related to the Coast Guard's beach party role.²⁹

By now the Coast Guard, which had been transferred to the Department of the Navy on 1 November 1941, found itself fully integrated into naval operations, with little to differentiate itself from Navy counterparts except for the Coast Guard shield on its uniforms and the Coast Guard ribbon on its "flat hats." This integration included participation in Beach Parties, the Navy's contribution to the Marine's Shore Party units, and necessarily required that the participating elements be able to defend themselves in a combat environment.³⁰

²⁸ Dr Robert L. Scheina, Coast Guard Historian, "Coast Guard at War," *Commandant's Bulletin* 4-87, Feb87, p. 32, hereafter "Coast Guard at War." "O'Neill Succeeds Hewins As Coast Guard Commander," *Globe*, 19Jul44. This was the third time their paths had crossed. O'Neill was one of Hewins' instructors at the Academy in 1930 and in 1933 O'Neil was Hewins' CO aboard the Coast Guard destroyer U.S.S. Cassin. "Coastguardsmen to Reduce Forces Here," *Globe*, 7Mar45. Ken Wiley, *Lucky Thirteen: D-Days in the Pacific with the US Coast Guard in WW II* (Drexel Hill: Casemate, 2007), pp. xi, 45-56. Marvin J. Perrett, USCG Veteran, intvw, 18Jun03 (USCG oral HistColl), pp. 4-7, found at www.uscg.mil/history/WEBORALHISTORY/Marvin_Perrett_Oral_History.html. Both former Coast Guardsmen Wiley and Perrett left records of their training at Courthouse Bay's "Landing Barge School", which they attended in late 1943. Wiley subsequently served as an LCVP coxswain aboard the Coast Guard-manned USS Cambria (APA-36) and Perrett as an LCVP coxswain aboard the Coast Guard-manned USS Bayfield (APA-33).

²⁹ "Inspects Coast Guards," *Globe*, 31May44. Adm Merlin O'Neill, USCG (Ret), Transcript of Interview by History Div, US Naval Institute, dtd 11Jul85. Oral History Program, US Naval Institute, Annapolis, MD, pp. 1 and 92, hereafter "Reminiscences." Capt O'Neill undoubtedly benefitted from having the Leonard Wood and his command experiences favorably portrayed from North Africa to the Marshalls in a dedicated 24 June 1944 *Saturday Evening Post* article by Richard English entitled "Seagoing Taxi No. 1."

³⁰ *Admin of the Navy Dept*, p. 596-597. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-1943-History of US Naval Operations in WW II*, vol. 1 (Edison: Castle Books, 2001), p. xiv, hereafter *History of US Naval Operations. USMC OOB in WW II*, pp. 222-223. Al Schreiber, USCG Veteran, "Coast Guard Recognition in WW II," Coast Guard historical vignette found at www.jackspoint.com/coast_guard_recognition_in_wwii.htm.

Shore Parties were an integral part of the ship-to-shore movement that landed following the initial assault waves to facilitate the subsequent waterborne landing and movement of troops, equipment and supplies across the beach. Additionally, there had been numerous instances where Coast Guard crewmen from disabled boats had found themselves fighting shoulder-to-shoulder on the beach alongside their former passengers. The majority of instruction at the Detachment continued to be directed toward landing craft crews, but, by the summer of 1944 Coast Guard infantry companies were being organized at Courthouse Bay under the direction of Capt O'Neill for training in basic tactical skills, field craft and weaponry by the TTC's Infantry Battalion, specifically, the Individual Combat School.³¹

With the elimination of the Balloon Barrage Group, the Coast Guard Detachment became the principal occupant of Courthouse Bay, the remainder being the Amphibious Tractor Detachment and selected subordinate components of the TTC's Infantry Battalion, particularly the Individual Combat School. At the Amphibian Base, the two large, well equipped repair facilities, the Carpenter Shop, building A-1, and the Machine Shop, building A-2, maintained the fleet of landing craft at an optimum state of mechanical readiness. Boats were brought into the shops by use of a boat crane that lifted the craft from the basin onto cradles mounted on six-foot gauge railroad tracks. The tracks led into the shops where overhead beam cranes maneuvered the boats to any desired work space. In the Barrage Balloon Area's classrooms, the theoretical aspects of landing craft operations were taught to the novice crewmen using at the appropriate point a training aid that was described as the "most unique landing-operation sand table in existence."³²

The unexpected transfer of Capt O'Neill later in July resulted in the Detachment Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Eugene Kiernan, USCG, a former LST (Landing Ship, Tank) captain, taking temporary command. (The Coast Guard manned 76 LSTs during the war.) He was relieved in October by Commander Nathaniel S. Fulford, USCG, who commanded the Detachment until the major draw-down in March 1945. Cdr Fulford, a North Carolina native from Asheville and 20-year Coast Guard veteran, had served as Capt O'Neill's executive officer aboard the Leonard Wood and had been awarded a Bronze Star for his combat performance.³³

With the Marine Corps' last major unit, the 6th Marine Division's 29th Marines, having been activated at Camp Lejeune in May of 1944; the Japanese homeland effectively encircled after the capture of the Philippines and Iwo Jima; the Okinawa expeditionary force already organized;

³¹ "New Beach Parties Now Train Here," *Globe*, 12Jul44. "Anniversary Observed By Coastguardsmen," *Globe*, 9Aug44. "Semper Paratus," *Leatherneck*, Nov43.

³² "Four Major Groups Here Encompass All Units In Reorganization Of Camp," *NRP*, 13May43. "Coastguardsmen Prove Versatility As Train Here For Wartime Tasks," *NRP*, 22Apr43. "Camp Lejeune Coast Guards Uphold Fine Tradition of Service," *Globe*, 15Mar44. "Anniversary Observed By Coastguardsmen," *Globe*, 9Aug44. "Combat Conditioning Course Set Up at CHB is Plenty Rugged," *NRP*, 22Apr43.

³³ "Reminiscences," pp. 2-3. Capt O'Neill has to count as Courthouse Bay's most distinguished alumnus. Following five more years of exemplary service, O'Neill succeeded to the post of Commandant of the Coast Guard as a vice admiral on 1 January 1950, the "Commander Fulford Takes Over As Coast Guard CO," *Globe*, 8Nov44. *US Coast Guard in WW II*, p. 315. Coast Guard's seventh Commandant. He retired as a full admiral 1 June 1954.

and with the Allies firmly ensconced on the European mainland; the need for new landing craft crews in the combat theaters was greatly diminished. Replacement drafts still required amphibious training, but in much lesser numbers.³⁴

On 15 March 1945 the Coast Guard Detachment was reorganized and reduced to somewhat less than one-half its previous strength, with a new manning level of only 150 offices and men. Lieutenant W.M. Prentiss, USCG, relieved Cdr Fulford and the Balloon Barrage Area except for the Detachment's remaining billeting requirements was surrendered to the Engineer School Battalion, the distant predecessor to the Marine Corps Engineer School (MCES). The Detachment's operations and offices moved to the Carpenter Shop at the Amphibian Base. Boats surplus to the training mission were taken out of the water, cleaned, overhauled and painted, and placed in dry storage pending any future contingency. By October, with the war won, and Camp Lejeune's focus redirected from training to demobilization, the Coast guard Detachment was disbanded, its mission having been successfully accomplished.³⁵

Courthouse Bay's Coast Guard Detachment could take justifiable pride in its contributions to the success of the amphibious operations conducted by the United States throughout the globe, in Europe, Africa and the Pacific. At Camp Lejeune, the Detachment trained the 1st Marine Division, the Army's 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions, and elements of three other Marine divisions, the 3rd, 4th and 6th, in the proper conduct of assault landings, along with innumerable landing craft crews. These crews manned landing craft carrying Marines and soldiers in every major amphibious operation of the war, beginning with Guadalcanal and North Africa, and including such storied campaigns as Tarawa, Sicily, Bougainville, Salerno, Saipan, Anzio, New Guinea, Guam, Normandy, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.³⁶

In addition to its traditional, statutory missions and while assigned to serve under the U.S. Navy, the Coast Guard operated close to 639 Navy and Army ships, besides its own cutters, and well over 2000 landing craft. Although the exact total may never be established, undoubtedly a significant number of those Coast Guard-manned boats were crewed by the well-trained alumni of the Coast Guard Detachment at Courthouse Bay.³⁷

The Coast Guard's tenure at Camp Lejeune was also highlighted in other fields of endeavor in addition to providing one of the favorite recreational diversions for the Base's population of

³⁴ "Anniversary Observed By Guardsmen," *Globe*, 9Aug44. Bevan G. Cass, ed., *History of the Sixth Marine Division* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), p. 11.

³⁵ "Coast Guard To Reduce Forces Here," *Globe*, 7Mar45. *USMC OOB in WWII*, p. 52. Camp Lejeune ComdC, 1Sep45-1Oct46 (Archival Materials, T&O Dept, MCB, Camp Lejeune), Command Narrative, p. (4), hereafter Camp Lejeune ComdC, 1945-46. "Engineers Take Over Courthouse Bay," *Globe*, 14Mar45.

³⁶ "Camp Lejeune Coast Guards Uphold Fine Tradition Of Service," *Globe*, 15Mar44. "Coast Guard: Bay-Trained Mates Back With Honor," *Globe*, 19Apr44. "Anniversary Observed By Guardsmen," *Globe*, 9Aug44.

³⁷ James C. Fahey, *The Ships and Aircraft of the US Fleet*, Victory Edition (New York: Ships and Aircraft, 1945), p. 80. "The Coast Guard and the Pacific War," p. 2. "Coast Guard at War," p. 32. *US Coast Guard in WW II*, p. 9. Although there are several sources that provide various numbers for Coast Guard-manned vessels during WW II, none unambiguously state how many "landing craft" were so manned. The figures provided here are considered the best interpolation between the available data.

Women's Reserves, that is, landing craft demonstrations and excursions. It was alleged that the universal answer given when the women were queried as to what phase of their training they enjoyed most was "the ride the Coast Guard gave us." A contest for the best plan and drawing for a structure to mark the entrance to the Base was held in March 1944 and won by two Coast Guard petty officers. And, in one of the more remarkable performances by any service athletic team, the Coast Guard Detachment's softball team won the Base-wide league championship every year the Coast Guard was at Courthouse Bay, from 1942 to 1945, even despite their reduced numbers in 1945.³⁸

With the Coast Guard gone, no operators remained to crew the landing craft stored at Courthouse Bay for the training of the small number of Marines still being processed at Camp Lejeune for the Fleet Marine Force. (The Coast Guard, which had reached a peak, war-time personnel strength of 172,000, had been reduced to 35,000 by the date of its return to the Treasury Department on 1 January 1946.)³⁹

The Base Commander established a Boat Section of Marines at Courthouse Bay in November 1945 to handle this requirement but demobilization soon eliminated the unit along with the boats and the Navy was requested to provide a replacement capability. The Amphibious Training Command at Little Creek, VA, responded with a boat group, which represented the only occasion when a Navy unit was stationed at Courthouse Bay, where it shared the barracks with the Engineer School Battalion until June 1946 when the 2nd Amtrac Battalion arrived from Camp Pendleton and July when the unit was recalled to Little Creek.⁴⁰

These were extraordinarily difficult times for the Marine Corps, which was fighting for its very existence against a hostile Truman administration and advocates of defense unification. This was reflected in a plethora of deactivations, reactivations and realignments of units as the Corps sought to reapportion its decreasing resources into an unchanging mission structure. During the troubled period before the Korean War, Courthouse Bay saw the appearance and subsequent extinction of the 1st and 2nd Antiaircraft Artillery Battalions, the deactivation of the Engineer School Battalion on 31 July 1947, and the deactivation of the 2nd Amtrac Battalion on 1 October 1949.⁴¹

The Engineer School Company, the immediate successor to the Battalion, was resurrected on 1 January 1949 and, as part of the precipitous, Joint Chiefs of Staff directed mobilization of the 2nd

³⁸ "Coast Guard Det: WR's Given Ride On LCP's By C.G. Hosts," *Globe*, 25Apr45. "Coast Guard Pair Wins Contest For Best Camp Entrance Design," *Globe*, 22Feb44. The talented pair were PO3 Lester R. Stevers and Leonard Solomon. "Coast Guard's Softball Team Is Setting Record," *Globe*, 31May44. "Coast Guardsmen Capture Camp Softball Loop Title," *Globe*, 30Oct45.

³⁹ Camp Lejeune ComdC, 1945-46. p. (4). Cpl Vernon Langille, "Home James," *Leatherneck*, Dec46. *History of US Naval Operations*, p. xiv.

⁴⁰ Camp Lejeune ComdC, 1945-1946. pp. (4), (6) and (8).

⁴¹ Col Robert Debs. Heintz, Jr., USMC (Ret), *Soldiers of the Sea: The US Marine Corps, 1775-1962* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute, 1962), p. 510. *USMC OOB in WWII*, pp. 216,217 and 228. Camp Lejeune Administrative Summary, 1Apr47-1Jun47 (Archival Material, T&O Dept, MCB, Camp Lejeune), p. 4.

Marine Division, the 2nd Amtrac Battalion likewise on 10 August 1950. Thus, the 2nd Amtrac Battalion, subsequently renamed the 2nd Assault Amphibian (AA) Battalion 1 January 1977, lost by nineteen months the bragging rights as the longest permanent resident of Courthouse Bay to the MCES. However, given that the 1st Marine Division settled at Camp Pendleton following WW II, and that Barrage Balloons exist as only a historical footnote, the current Coast Guard “detachment” at Courthouse Bay has a rightful claim to being the first resident at the Bay, predating the MCES by almost three years.⁴²

In the intervening fifty-three years before the reappearance of the Coast Guard, Courthouse Bay would see other tenants rotate through its facilities and secluded harbor in response to evolving missions. By 28 November 1998, when the Coast Guard’s Port Security Unit Training Detachment (PSU TRADET) displaced from Camp Perry, Ohio, the Bay was home to the MCES, the 2nd AA Battalion, the II Marine Expeditionary Force’s Special Operations Training Group (SOTG) and Riverine Training Center (RTC). Other units, to include the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, the 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company, the 2nd Marine Division’s Small Craft Company and the 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion subsequently appeared, some to occupy the area briefly before moving on, being deactivated, reassigned or displaced to other locations.⁴³

Camp Lejeune and Courthouse Bay were an obvious choice for the PSU TRADET and subsequently for an expanded maritime training role involving all three sea services, the Coast Guard, Marine Corps and U.S. Navy. Attributes that initially brought settlers during the Colonial Period and Marine Corps during WW II, brought what would become Nation’s premier center for certain aspects of maritime training.⁴⁴

The qualifications enunciated in 1941 for an east coast division training center and the intended activities to be undertaken there were echoed six decades later. Camp Lejeune’s moderate weather permitted training twelve months a year; its New River and ocean frontage, bays, sounds and wet lands boasted every conceivable land-water interface; and its size and terrain facilitated the live-firing of all foreseeable weapon to be employed. Courthouse Bay also possessed the harbor and water access for small boat training, access to land-based training areas and water training ranges, suitable existing facilities, and space for further development.⁴⁵

⁴² “First Engineering Class Is Recently Graduated At Bay,” *Globe*, 16Jun49. “2d Assault Amphibian Bn Celebrates Years of Tradition, History,” *Globe*, 31Mar00.

⁴³ “Marines Activate Company,” *DN*, 25Apr93. “Coast Guard Establishes Presence Here,” *Globe*, 24Nov98. “Training Center’s Value Celebrated,” *Globe*, 21Jan99. “Stone Bay [Courthouse Bay],” *Globe*, 22Feb01. “Small Craft Company Sails to CHB,” *Globe*, 31Jul03. “Courthouse Bay Celebrates Storied History,” *Globe*, 31Jul03. “Corps Hosts Maritime Training Hotbed,” *Leatherneck*, Feb04, pp. 42 and 45. “US Marine, SOF Units Key to Future War Success,” *Globe*, 12Feb04. “Small Craft Company Decommissioned After 14 Years of Faithful Service,” 2nMarDiv PAO press release #20056141373, 6Jun05. “2d MSOB Activates, Force Recon Evolves,” *Globe*, 17Aug06. “Riverine Training Center Course Catalog” (II MEF SOTG RTC, n.d.), pp. 3 and 95.

⁴⁴ Joseph R. Chenelly, “Corps Hosts Maritime Training Hotbed,” *Leatherneck*, Feb04, p. 42.

⁴⁵ “Corps Hosts Maritime Training Hotbed,” *Leatherneck*, pp. 42 and 45. “Military Takes First Step Toward Joint Training Site,” *DN*, 13Apr04. “Coast Guard Receives New Facility On Base,” *Globe*, 12Aug04.

General Holcomb envisioned in 1941 that boat gun firing at beach targets, anti-boat gun firing, maneuvering and training in rubber boats, maneuvering and training landing boat crews, training in beach defense, troop landing operations in surf zones, etc., and combat practice firing, were some of the activities to be undertaken at the new division training area, and that could be associated with Courthouse Bay. This was a list strikingly similar to the syllabuses of many courses currently offered at Courthouse Bay's joint maritime training complex after twelve years of growth from the initial PSU TRADET.⁴⁶

The PSU TRADET's move to Camp Lejeune was a joint Coast Guard-SOTG conceived initiative to consolidate common maritime training functions to the mutual benefit of both services. These benefits would include enhanced training opportunities for the Marine Corps' only Small Craft Company and other small boat assets requiring special mission training while allowing the TRADET to leverage Camp Lejeune's land and waterborne ranges. This commonality of interest in expeditionary small boat operations and port security would significantly increase in response to a worsening world situation and the clearly expanding threat of irregular warfare against the national security interests of the United States.⁴⁷

With the tragic events of the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000 and the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in 2001, the increased demand for the unique and multifaceted training opportunities offered at the Courthouse Bay complex had by 2002 resulted in a ten-fold increase in assigned personnel and a redesignation as a Special Missions Training Center (SMTC), which was commissioned as such on 29 July 2003. The paramount importance of interoperability between the sea services in a real-world environment and further mission growth brought augmentation by a Navy training detachment in 2003 and a training detachment likewise from the Marine Corps in 2004.⁴⁸

Assigned personnel, curriculum and student thru-put growth accompanied this requirement for standardizing doctrinal approaches, establishing communications protocols and streamlining operational techniques in support of the Global War on Terror. A larger complex was clearly needed and construction began in 2005 on a \$38 million project that would add six new buildings to this growing joint facility.⁴⁹

By 2008, with an appropriate redesignation as a Joint Maritime Training Facility (JMTC), and with the new construction completed and the new buildings occupied, the Center now offered 16 resident courses and boasted a complement of over 230 personnel. It was a unique facility with a unique capability. Only here, the historical successor to the 1940s' Detachment, could its

⁴⁶ Gen Thomas Holcomb ltr, 1941.

⁴⁷ "Coast Guard Establishes Presence Here," *Globe*, 24Nov98. SMTC "Update for Installation Advisory Board," Briefing (SMTC, MCB, Camp Lejeune, 2006).

⁴⁸ "Coast Guard Has Help With New Role," *DN*, 26Feb02. "Special Missions Unit Finds New Home," *Globe*, 8Aug02. "Navy, Coast Guard Train In Joint Operations," *Globe*, 3Apr03. US Dept of HLS, USCG, SMTC, "SMTC History," found at http://uscg.mil/smtc/command_history.asp. SMTC Command Briefing (SMTC, MCB, Camp Lejeune, Jun08).

⁴⁹ "Military Takes First Step Toward Joint Training Site," *DN*, 13Apr04. SMTC Command Briefing (SMTC, MCB, Camp Lejeune, Jun08).

mission-to provide relevant and credible training, doctrine and testing/evaluation in support of the mission requirements of U.S. Coast Guard, Navy and Marine Corps operational forces-be achieved.⁵⁰

The sea-service team of the Coast Guard, Navy and Marine Corps that had successfully developed and employed the amphibious doctrine that brought victory in World War II, now trained together again at Courthouse Bay under the Coast Guard's direction to create the maritime-related capabilities that would facilitate victory in the Global War on Terror in support of the sea services' overarching direction: *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*.⁵¹



⁵⁰ SMTC "Headquarters Brief" (SMTC, MCB, Camp Lejeune, 2Aug02). US Dept of HLS, USCG, SMTC "Welcome," found at <http://www.uscg.mil/smtc/>. JMTC Command Briefing (JMTC, MCB Camp Lejeune, Aug08). US Dept of HLS, USCG, JMTC "JMTC History" found at http://www.uscg.mil/smtc/JMTC_History.asp.

⁵¹ *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* (Washington: CMC, CNO, Cmdnt-USCG, Oct07)