

Philip E. Wade

U.S. Marines Wounded Iwo Jima



Phillip E. Wade
U.S. Marine Corps

I was born in Meredosia, Illinois on June 9, 1924 and grew up there. In May, 1943, I went to work in the Kaiser Shipyards at Richman, California building Liberty Ships. I was drafted into the U. S. Navy, but chose the U. S. Marine Corps as my choice of service. At San Francisco, California, I was inducted into the Corps on November 26, 1943 and received basic training at San Diego, California in Platoon # 1092. The 5th Marine Division had been formed on November 11, 1943 and I was assigned to the 1 Battery, 3rd Battalion, 13th Regiment (Artillery), 5th Marine Division. I was trained at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California and also at Camp Tarawa on the Parker Ranch on the big island of Hawaii as a Wireman, Communication Section.

My unit was bobbing around the harbor in Higgins boats for hours before hitting the beach at Iwo Jima on D-day, February 19, 1945. Iwo Jima was a 7 mile long, 1 1/2 mile wide volcanic island in the Pacific Theater of Operations. During the 26 day

battle, more than 20,000 Japanese were killed in action. Americans wounded and killed in action there totaled 26,000

On the 24th day of the assault, I was hit by a knee mortar and was evacuated to a hospital ship and back to the U. S. where I spent the next 10 months at Great Lakes, Illinois U. S. Naval Hospital. I was hospitalized again for more surgery for 4 more months. On March 14, 1945, I was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received as a result of enemy action in the Asiatic-Pacific area. I was discharged on January 11, 1946 from the hospital and from the United States Marine Corps.

For several years, I have attended two USMC reunions; the all Iwo Jima Veterans reunion and the 5th Marine Division Association reunion. At these reunions I have made many new friends and met many old buddies. It is great to be with old buddies that I have worked with, trained with, gone to battle with and partied with for over sixty years. I have belonged to the Springfield Disabled American Veterans since 1954. I retired after 34 years at Allis Chalmers in 1985 and was proud to attend the dedication of the World War II Illinois Veterans Memorial on December 4, 2004.

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