

A Korean War PHOTO MEMOIR

This photo collection of retired First Sergeant (1SG) James Carlo 'Joe' Pagnella (deceased) was furnished by James M. Pagnella, one of his twin sons (the other is James Christopher). Quotes in the captions come from a 28 February 1995 Pagnella letter to John B. 'Barry' Dwyer, the author of *Commandos From The Sea: The History of Amphibious Special Warfare in World War II and The*

Korean War (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1998). These old pictures provide 'identity' to the CIA and JACK paramilitary advisors and reality to the Yong-do training areas used by the SMG (Special Mission Group) raiders and the U.S. Navy support, as well as humanity displayed by the American fighting man worldwide. Many thanks to the Pagnellas for sharing the family treasure.

Getting the CIA Guerrillas and Special Mission Group 'Off the Ground'



ROK Army CPT Han Chul-min and the initial guerilla training cadre were trained by USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer at the CIA facility on Atsugi Airbase, Japan.



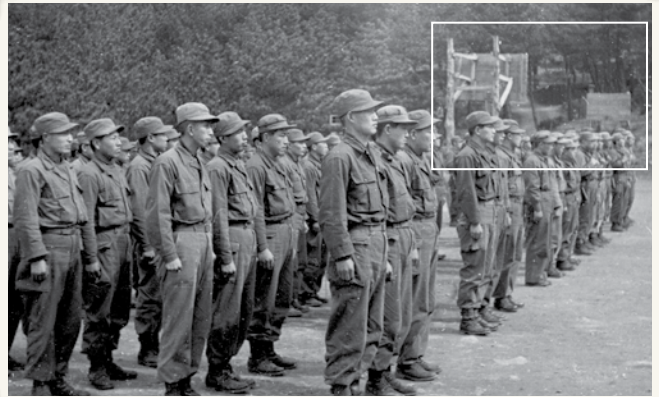
Most CIA civilian case officers overseas in Japan and Korea were recent college graduates who had been given two months of paramilitary training at Fort Benning, GA, before being shipped off to the Far East. Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields (above & right), who supported the Yong-do advisors, was called 'Hap Arnold' by the Koreans.



US Navy UDT-3 LT George C. Atcheson, III (L) was recruited by MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer to teach rubber assault boat handling, navigation, scout swimming, and coastal maritime raiding to the Special Mission Group (SMG). He became the senior American advisor for the SMG. Sitting in the back of the jeep is Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' the primary SMG interpreter, who was killed in action.

ROK Minister of Defense Visits Yong-do Guerrilla Training Facility

The wooden structure in the right rear of the left side of the formation is a makeshift jump platform built by SFC James C. Pagnella for ground training. Twenty-five SMG raiders were qualified as parachutists after two jumps, one day and one at night, done at 750 feet without reserves. MAJ John K. Singlaub jumped with them on the Han River drop zone.



The American cadre present when the ROK MOD came to Yong-do were: 3rd from L, USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis and 4th from L, SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella in Class 'A' uniforms, and 5th from L, Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields in a modified field uniform.



The South Korean Minister of Defense addressed and reviewed the 300-man CIA guerrilla force and Special Mission Group (45 personnel) during a visit to the island in late spring 1952. Both national flags were appropriately flown. Heavily-vegetated mountainous terrain dominates the backdrop.

The Yong-do Guerrilla Training Camp

A causeway built by the Japanese connected Yong-do to the southern landfall of Pusan. This effectively turned the hilly, heavily-vegetated, sparsely-populated island into a peninsula. SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella said the trip by jeep was a "complete kidney buster of a ride."



"The initial American 'advisors' on Yong-do were: L to R: SFC Pagnella, CPT Hilary H. 'Hunt' Crawford, civilian James O'Brien, and 1LT Tom Curtis (absent from photo)."



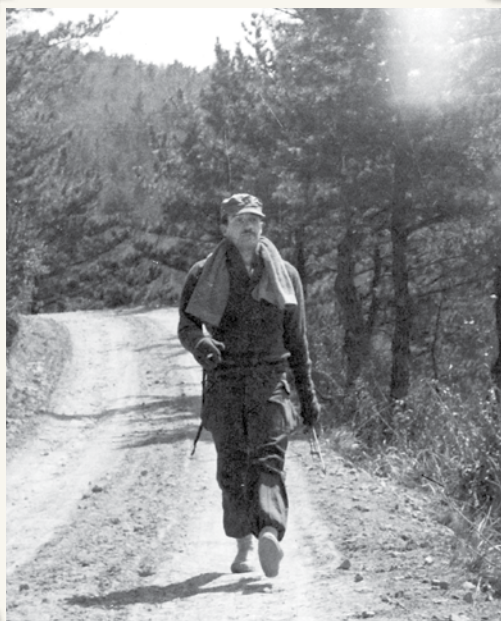
"Yong-do was very remote, rugged, and strikingly impressive. Covered with trees, it had steep rocky cliffs down to the water and the few 'pebble' beaches were covered with rocks," recalled SFC Pagnella.



USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer was in charge of the Yong-do guerrilla and SMG training. 1LT Tom Curtis and MAJ Kramer were glad to have an Army doctor, MAJ Thomas McChesney, conduct physical examinations of guerrilla and SMG candidates (L to R: unknown helicopter pilot, 1LT Thomas L. Curtis, MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, and MAJ Thomas McChesney).



"In the Yong-do camp we had a tent reserved for mission briefings. Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields, a civilian case officer, is giving a mission brief to Special Mission Group leaders."



Paratrooper SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella walks back to camp after a chilling bath in Pusan harbor.



Dirt roads connected the training and cantonment areas of the former Japanese Army facility on thickly-forested Yong-do.



"Rocky 'low tide' islands served as targets for 57mm antitank recoilless rifle training given to US Navy UDT LT George C. Atcheson, III," remarked SFC Pagnella. "He was very impressed. I proudly proved my point. The 57 recoilless rifle would be carried by the SMG."



(Above & Right) "CPT Hilary H. 'Hunt' Crawford, a WWII OSS veteran, approved the construction of a 1,000 inch 'zero range' and a 250 yard rifle range with double sandbagged backstops. USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis and I taught .45 cal. pistol marksmanship on Point #3 of the 1,000 inch range."



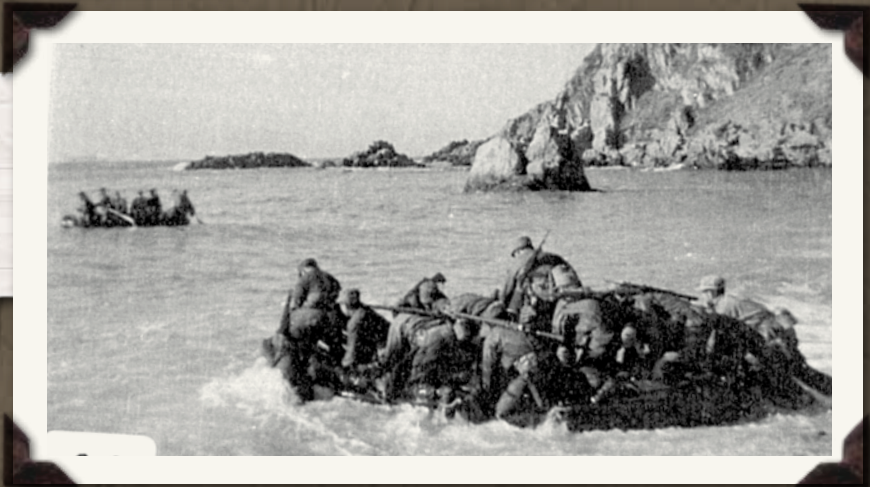
Coastal Raiding Preparations

SMG Raids from the USS Wantuck, APD-125



The USS *Wantuck*, APD-125 anchored off Yong-do awaiting a JACK SMG mission.

The SMG raiders launch RB-10 rubber assault boats from the Yong-do beach for a mission with the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.



JACK paramilitary advisors (foreground) and the JACK guerrilla force lined up along the Yong-do shore watch the SMG paddle RB-10s out to the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.



It was traditional for the JACK guerrilla force to salute the departure and return of the SMG with loud cheering.



Instead of being towed by an LCVF the SMG raiders had to paddle the RB-10s nearly a mile to the waiting USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.

As the SMG approached the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125, an LCVF prepared to practice towing the RB-10s in a 'daisy chain' to rehearse the coming raid operation, mid-March 1952. *Wantuck* crewmen are 'standing by' to recover the boats.



Wantuck LCVF hooked up to practice tow the SMG RB-10s.

While the JACK guerrillas watch the SMG raiders disappear into a cloud bank that regularly enveloped the Yong-do coast in winter.



Coastal Raiding Preparations (Continued)



USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, center foreground observes the practice tow of the RB-10s.



With LCVP tow training completed the RB-10s come alongside the *Wantuck* for boat recovery. The SMG soldiers climb rope ladders to come aboard.



Enroute to their drop site the SMG raiders test fire their small arms (M-1 rifles & carbines, Thompson sub-machineguns, BARs, and .45 cal. pistols) from the bow of the *Wantuck*.



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella test fires the 57mm antitank recoilless rifle off the bow of the *Wantuck*. His assistant gunner was Chou.



A group of SMG raiders wanted their picture taken with SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella while aboard the *Wantuck*.



The SMG is assembled on the aft deck of the *Wantuck* for a final mission briefing on Iwon. "We were to ambush a supply convoy, capture some drivers, and determine their cargo. Our secondary mission was to destroy transportation means (roads, railroad, bridges)," said SFC Pagnella.



The SMG raiders enjoy the sunshine on the aft deck of the *Wantuck* amongst their RB-10s.

Mr. Oh Pak, the nominal SMG first sergeant, has a last minute talk with Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields, one of the CIA case officers, aboard the *Wantuck*. "Oh Pak was a stately, middle-aged man with a light build. He had a stringy mustache and beard, and his hair curled out from under his USMC utility cap. Pak wore a .38 pistol with a belt full of bullets strapped to his waist. Though he had the piercing eyes of a predatory panther, he was gentle, but audacious like a pirate," said SFC Pagnella who occasionally sparred with him in Korean *Kindo*.



James C. 'Joe' Pagnella

Private to First Sergeant, 1948-1969



Private First Class (PFC) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella and Corporal (CPL) Raymond Norton, 187th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 11th Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, KY, attended the sixteen week Infantry Weapons NCO Course at Fort Benning, GA, 1949-1950.



Staff Sergeant (SSG) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, F Company, 2nd Battalion, 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT), walks away from his first combat jump at Suncheon, North Korea, on 20 October 1950 (D+10 minutes).



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, JACK SMG advisor, and Mr. Oh Pak, nominal SMG first sergeant at the base of the cliffs on Yong-do, 1951.



First Sergeant (1SG) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, C Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry (Golden Dragons), 25th Infantry Division takes a break in Vietnam, 1966-1967.

Kids Warm a Soldier's Heart



Another 'treat' for the orphans was seeing up close the WWII-vintage twin-engine Beechcraft C-45 *Expeditor* that brought the food and clothing. Air Force pilot LT John W. MacDonald, SFC 'Joe' Pagnella, and SMG interpreter Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' joined the children and orphanage staff for a photo.

Obviously missing his twin sons back home SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella has perched his overseas cap on a little Korean boy more interested in his pack of *Necco Jells*.



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella and SMG interpreter Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' deliver food and clothes to a nearby orphanage.