

GHQ Raider Monument

by Eugene G. Piasecki

Sixty years after its creation, twelve veterans of the Korean War's GHQ Raiders, once again closed ranks on 14 July 2010 at the U. S. Army Special Operations Command Memorial Plaza at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. However, instead of facing a hostile enemy, they gathered to donate a monument to the 1st Raider Company, and to commemorate one of the Korean War's early Special Operations legacy units. Comprised of soldiers assigned to post-war occupation duty in Japan, the Raiders' mission was to conduct raiding, commando, and intelligence gathering operations against the Communist forces. Although over eight-hundred men volunteered, only one-hundred were selected and trained at Camp McGill, Japan to perform small boat infiltrations from surface ships and submarines, act as scout swimmers, perform beach reconnaissance and demolitions.

Employed to stage the last major feint to distract North Korean attention before the Inch'on invasion, the Raiders launched rubber boats from the British Royal Navy Frigate HMS *Whitesand Bay* and landed at four separate beach sites at Kunsan one-hundred miles

south of Inch'on on 13 September 1950. The success of this operation led Far East Command to assign them to Major General Edward N. "Ned" Almond's X Corps for the amphibious landings at Inch'on and Wonsan. They later conducted anti-guerrilla operations against Communist aggressors at the Chosin Reservoir and Chang-to. Also known as the "X Corps Special Operations Company," the Raiders supported other U. S. services, the ROK Army, South Korean intelligence agents, and the X Corps Special Activities Group's Special Attack Battalion during combat actions. These joint and combined operations typified the Raider's combat activities from their creation on 15 July 1950 until their inactivation on 1 April 1951. Despite their brief existence, the Raiders proved their mettle. Each man in the unit was awarded the Combat Infantryman's Badge. For its role as part of the Inch'on invasion force, the unit received the Presidential Unit Citation (Navy) and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation while attached to the 1st Marine Division. ▲

