

**BETT-TOOMEY DETACHMENT**  
**35<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**DINNER DANCE**



**NOVEMBER 3, 1984**



# History

OVER 35 YEARS AGO — on a little island of 8 square miles, and with a population of 1051, the Marine Corps, in the 26 days necessary to secure the island, lost 4590 men killed in action — enemy deaths were estimated at over 20,000. The name of the island was Iwo Jima where at Mr. Suribachi, on February 23, 1945 the Marines raised the American flag. The picture taken by the Associated Press Photographer has now been reproduced with a 100-ton, \$850,000 statue, as the Marine Corps Memorial in Arlington, Va. and as a symbol of the courage and valor of the Marines during World War II.

IN FEBRUARY OF 1945 — Lackawanna lost two of its citizens on that remote island in the Pacific. One was PVT. EDWARD L. BETT, USMCR, the other, PFC. WILLIAM J. TOOMEY, USMC.

EDWARD would have been 61 years of age on December 5th had he survived the war, but he was hit by a mortar shell, taken aboard a hospital ship where he died of his wounds. He was buried at sea. He was a young man, just 21 years old, but he had already participated in the invasion of the Marshall Islands and later in the invasion of Saipan and Tinian. As a boy he attended St. Barbara's School and Lackawanna High School. He later enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps and after being discharged worked in the Bar Mill and later the Storage Beds at the Bethlehem Steel Co. He was a member of 2603, United Steelworkers of America.

WILLIAM would have been 64 years old last March had he survived, but he was killed in action and his body rests in Holy Cross Cemetery. He attended Our Lady of Victory Grammar and High School and later took a post-graduate course at Lackawanna High School. He also worked at Bethlehem Steel Co. Bill participated in the invasion of Guam and was wounded on July 21, 1944 and awarded the Purple Heart. In February of 1945, he too, lost his life on Iwo Jima at the young age of 24.

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO — thirteen Marines from Lackawanna organized the Lackawanna Detachment of the Marine Corps League, with the purpose of perpetuating the history of the U.S. Marine Corps and by fitting acts, observe the anniversaries and historical occasions of interest to Marines; to hold sacred the memory and history of Marines who have given their lives to our nation; to band those who are or who have served in the United States Marine Corps in fellowship that they may promote the ideals of American freedom and democracy; and to create a bond of comradeship between those Marines who have returned to civil life. The detachment first met in the Executive rooms of Post 63, American Legion in Memorial Hall. Later they met in two rooms behind a flower shop. Through the cooperation of our city fathers, a small clubroom was built for the detachment over the stage in Memorial Hall. The Marines soon changed the name of the detachment to Bett-Toomey, honoring the two Marines from Lackawanna lost in action during World War II.

24 YEARS AGO — on May 12th, 1960 the detachment purchased our present clubhouse from the Lackawanna Lodge, IOOF. The building was one step from being condemned, but members set to work and began cleaning, painting and fixing and today we can truly say that we have one of the finest Marine Corps League clubhouses in the nation. Our "Memorial to Marines" which was first dedicated in 1963 on the front lawn of the Lackawanna City Hall was rededicated on this date 15 years ago in front of our parking lot and is dedicated to all Marines from Lackawanna who have given their life for their country.

FOR 25 YEARS — the Bett-Toomey Detachment has contributed to the best interests of our city, community and our nation. Our present program includes an Annual Essay Contest for the 6th Grade Students of Lackawanna. Science awards are made at each grammar school in the city. We sponsor an Annual Boy Scout Rifle Shoot dedicated to the memory of Pfc. John A. Lewchuck, USMC — the first Marine from Lackawanna to lose his life in Korea. The Robert Carroll Rifle and Pistol Match is held annually for detachment members and their guests to honor our late Judge Advocate and Family Court Judge. We annually sponsor the Marine Corps Physical Fitness Competition for the Western New York Area. Over the years we have sponsored a Cub Pack and an Explorer Post as well as the District Boy Scout Basketball League. A trophy is awarded annually at the Lackawanna High School for excellence in Cross-Country. We have cooperated with the Marine Corps Reserve and their "Toys for Tots" campaign and at one time sent hundreds of dollars of books and building kits to one of our Naval Hospitals in Da Nang, South Vietnam. We have helped to sponsor the summer Carnival and Christmas Party at the V.A. Hospital in Buffalo.

TODAY — as we look back over 35 years, we can think of many great Commandants, but to single out one or more at this point would be unfair, for each one in his own way contributed so much to the success and growth of this detachment.



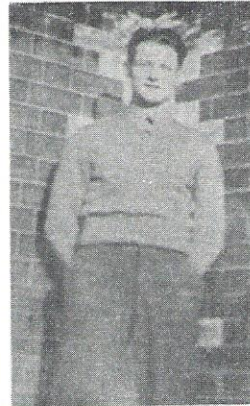


Pvt. Edward Bett



Pfc. William Toomey

PHOTO OF  
JOHN CYWINSKI  
NOT AVAILABLE



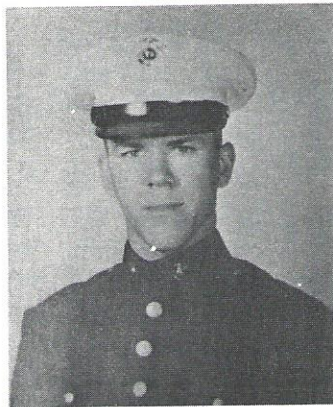
Cpl. Kenneth Barnes



Carl A. Lohr



Pfc. Joseph Mendy



Pfc. John Lewchuk



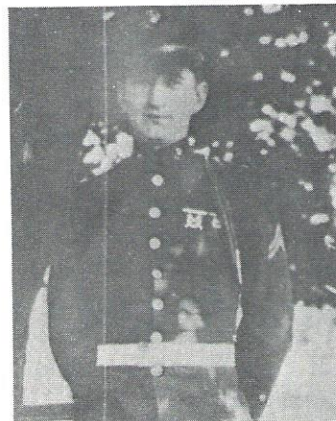
Andrew J. Kozak



Walter Blake



Stanley Szalkowski



Joseph Lark



Robert J. Carroll



Charles H. Reynolds



Raymond Carroll



Leo Myzel, Jr.



Leonard Pasnik



Donald Maw