



**Roy
Howell**

Marine Corps

Roy Howell

Oct 16, 1925 -

BIRTHPLACE: Elkhart, Kansas

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Marine Corps, Signal Battaliion VAC
(Fifth Amphibious Corp)

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Jan 19, 1944 - May 8, 1946

HONORED BY: The Howell Family

BIOGRAPHY

Roy Everett Howell was born in Elkart, KS, but grew up in the Felt, Oklahoma and went by his middle name, Everett. He graduated from Felt Oklahoma High School and was drafted when he turned 18. He decided he wanted to be in the Army, taking specialized tests for access to additional military benefits, however when he arrived at the draft office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma he was put into the Marines. They listed him officially as drafted, discharged and then enlisted, all on the same day of January 19, 1944 so he would be enlisted, not drafted. He was sent to boot camp in San Diego for 6 weeks and then his unit was assigned to stay another month for mess duty. He then went to communication school, afterwards was send to Camp Pendleton for combat training and then got sent back to San Diego and was shipped out to Hawaii shortly after. While in boot camp, he qualified as a Marksman on the M1 rifle, which earned him \$5 more per month in pay. After boot camp he was stationed at Camp Caitlin in Oahu, Hawaii in a temporary tent city between Honolulu and Pearl Harbor. On December 25th, 1944 he boarded a troopship and arrived on February 19th, 1945 to begin his first tour of duty and start the invasion of Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands. He was wounded in action on February 23rd, 1945 when a mortar shell landed 10 feet from the fox hole he was in and went underground and burned him in the face, right arm and hands. He was transported to the hospital and was told to stay inside for a week due to the visibility of his white bandages, which caused him to work on the field telephone switchboard and manned the ship to shore radio teletype. There were two American flags raised on Iwo Jima, and Everett helped the infantry man put the flag in his backpack who raised the first flag. He told Everett that he was going to put the flag on top of the hill (Mount Suribachi). After two to three weeks, he made it to the top, and tied the flag to the butt of his rifle and put the bayonet end in the sand, however, just as he did that a Japanese soldier crawled out of his cave with a hand grenade and that was the end of the infantry man and his flag. Later, Everett witnessed the second famous raising of the American flag on Mount Suribachi. He was about 200 yards down below it and he looked and said 'look there that d*** fool is putting up a flag.' When he looked back he could see a little more clearly that there were five men instead of one. He later learned

one of those five men was a Navajo when he met that Navajo's grandson. On March 16, 1945 he left Iwo Jima and travelled by troopship back to Maui, Hawaii until after the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan and boarded troopships back to Japan. He went ashore Japan on September 22, 1945 and served again stringing telephone wire until January 4th, 1946. He then was sent to China from January 7th, 1946 until April 8th, 1946 to prepare it for occupation. He stayed in former Japanese barracks the six months he was in Japan and in China. His job was still to string telephone wire during both of these times on Japan and China. His battalion job's was disarmament to get the Japanese out and prepare the islands for occupation by Army troops which would arrive later. On April 8th he boarded another troopship to bring him home. He was awarded the Purple Heart and was Honorably Discharged on May 8th, 1946. On the day he was discharged he was awarded his Corporal status. In the total of the 20 months he served, 6 months of it was spent on the troopships on the sea traveling. To this day he does not like the water. He was married to Carol Jean Borden on May 18, 1950 two days after graduating from Panhandle State University. They had 4 children; Everly, Danny, Larry and Debbie. His brother T. J. (Thomas John) Howell served in the Army in the Korean War from 1952 ' 1953. Another brother, Cecil Howell served in the Army in WW II from 1943 ' 1945.