

Marine Corps 'Devil Dogs' lore explained at featured WWI exhibit

Today is the last day of special presentation

One hundred years ago, U.S. Marines faced overwhelming German troops at the Battle of Belleau Wood. It was there, from their "hold where we stand" positions, the Marines earned the moniker of "Devil Dogs" ... the hard way!

Honoring the 100-year anniversary of that battle, which has become a key component of the lore of Marines, Sharlot Hall Museum hosts an expanded World War One exhibition in cooperation with Marine Corps League, Copper State Detachment.

Through today, June 17, the current "Arizona and the Great War" exhibit will expand with artifacts, collection pieces and memorabilia made available by the local Marine detachment.

They will be on-hand to share tales of this battle described as "the most considerable engagement American troops had ever had with a foreign enemy," according to General George Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces in WWI.

The nickname "Devil Dogs" had its origins at Belleau Wood. It's reported that a dispatch — from German front lines to their headquarters explaining current battle conditions — described the fighting abilities and ferocity of the Marines as being likened to "Teufelshunde" ("dogs/hounds from Hell").

Allied forces suddenly found itself facing 50 additional German divisions freed by the recent Russian surrender on the Eastern Front. In the Spring 1918, the German offensive launched, advancing to the Marne River ...



At the "Devil Dogs" display honoring 100 years since the Battle of Belleau Woods in World War One, Na Rains and Bob Wallace inspect an officer's cover, part of the added memorabilia presented by the Marine Corps League, Copper State Detachment. The addition is showcased with the "Arizona and the Great War" exhibit at Sharlot Hall Museum, and runs through Sunday, June 17. (Sharlot Hall Museum/Courtesy)

and into Belleau Wood on June 1, 1918. Twenty-six grueling days of continuous German assaults and heavy hand-to-hand fighting ensued.

The first U.S. Marine to be awarded the Medal of Honor, Gunnery Sergeant Ernest Janson, single-handedly repelled an advance of 12 German soldiers, killing two with his bayonet.

Marine Gunnery Sergeant Dan Daly was awarded two Medals of Honor (the only individual in history to receive the dual distinction) and is credited with one of the most famous quotations in Marine Corps history. At the Bel-

leau Wood battle, Daly prompted his men forward with, "Come on, you sons of bitches, do you want to live forever?"

By the time the German advance had been stymied, United States forces suffered 9,777 casualties, including 1,811 killed.

To learn more about the battle and to view memorabilia from the war, visit Sharlot Hall Museum this weekend to view the expanded "Great War" exhibit featuring the Marines. For more information, call 928-445-3122 ext. 0, or visit www.sharlot.org/devil-dogs.

Information provided by Sharlot Hall Museum.

