



PATRIOTISM RUNS IN THE FAMILY



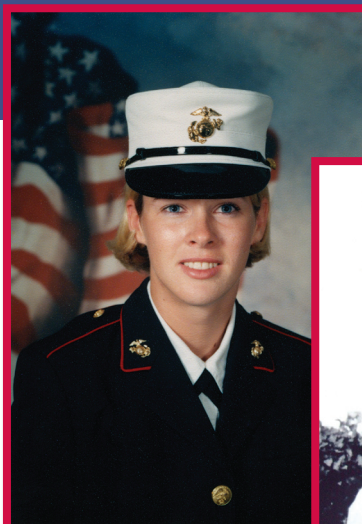
U.S. MARINE CORPS

THE USMC: IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

When young Tana Lewis told her father that she wanted to join the military, the reaction she got was worlds apart from her own when her daughter made the same announcement 40 years later.

After growing up in a small Colorado mining town, Tana wasn't interested in marriage or college, two popular choices for young women of her day. Instead, she told her father that she wanted to join the military—she wanted to be a Marine. He was hesitant to give his approval. He worried about his daughter's safety and reputation if she were to leave Leadville, with its population of just 10,000. In the end, her father's strong sense of patriotism and love of country prevailed. The World War II veteran signed his daughter's enlistment papers and, in April 1964, 18-year-old Tana left home to follow her dream.

Even though she shared her father's patriotism, she was also armed with a desire to learn a new skill and gain some job experience. Tana reported to Parris Island, SC, where Women Marines were given basic indoctrination into the service. During boot camp she chose her occupational specialty.



SSgt Tana K. Maxwell, USMC, 1964-1982



Col Dorthea F. (Maxwell) Daniels, USMC, 2003-Present

"There were only three fields women could go into at the time and I chose 'Admin,'" she recalls. Her choice paid off sooner than she imagined when the assistant chief of staff comptroller needed an administrative assistant and Tana got the job, keeping her at Parris Island.

Everything seemed to be falling into place for her. She now had new skills and job experience, but something else happened to Tana while she was at the Marine Recruit Depot—something she hadn't planned for and never expected. She fell in love with LCpl Gary Maxwell. The couple soon wed—holding their ceremony in the chapel and their reception in the Women Marine Barracks lounge on base. Tana left the service in 1966 and focused her attention on raising a family.

Although her life was very fulfilling as a wife and mother, she says she missed the military despite working as a civil servant in the quality-assurance field. So, just as she had done 10 years before when she wanted something more for her life, Tana joined the Marines—this time as a reservist. The Reserve offered her a way to serve her country while balancing a federal career and the care of her growing family. It also brought Tana an unexpected gift—a new job in career planning, which she remained in until her discharge in 1982.

Two years after Tana's discharge, she and Gary welcomed their fifth daughter, Dorthea, into the world and what a small world it turned out to be. They didn't know then that their last child would be the one to follow them into military service.

When she was just a year older than her mother had been in 1964, Dorthea made a surprise announcement one Sunday morning in 2003, when she and her parents were on their way to breakfast. She wanted to be a Marine.

Unlike her own father's reaction in 1964, Tana and her husband had no hesitation about their daughter joining the Marines. In fact, they turned out to be a great resource for her; something Dorthea says helped her to make an informed decision. Although old photos of her parents hung on the walls of the family home, Dorthea says she didn't really pay much attention to the



Former USMC SSgt Tana (Lewis) Maxwell, 1965. Photo courtesy of Tana Maxwell.

fact that her mom was wearing a uniform. Once she realized that her mom had “gone before her,” it changed her outlook on entering the Marines.

“Knowing she did it, made me want to do it,” Dorthea says. “I even wanted to go to the same boot camp.” Dorthea never considered any other service. She knew that by choosing the same service as her parents they could help ease the transition to military life and it was a bond they would share forever.

She was right. From the moment she made her announcement, Tana and Gary, now a retired master gunnery sergeant, helped their daughter gather all the information they could so she could weight the options, both good and bad.

“There were 40 years between my service in 1964 and Dorthea’s in 2003,” Tana recalls. “We wanted her to have all the information and be on hand to answer questions.”

The support of her Marine parents not only helped Dorthea make the decision to join and helped her get through boot camp in 2003, it also became one of her lifelines when she got orders to Iraq.

After completing basic training, Marine Combat Training and Postal School, Dorthea found herself serving at the Headquarters and Headquarters Support Battalion at Camp Lejeune, NC. She was newly married to Chris Daniels and the couple had welcomed their first daughter, Emily Jean, eight months before Dorthea’s unit was deployed to Iraq in 2005.

In the blazing 115-degree heat, amidst sandstorms and the sounds of gunfire, Dorthea, now a lance corporal, busied herself with her postal clerk duties. She missed her family terribly, but the strong connection with her husband and daughter and with her parents helped her get through.

“I missed a lot while being in Iraq,” she remembers. “I missed my husband’s birthday ... and my daughter’s first Easter. I cried the first time I heard my child say ‘mommy.’ It hurt knowing I left my husband back in the real world to continue without me. ... What helped were the letters that my husband, and especially my mom, wrote to me.”



Cpl Dorthea Daniels aboard a military aircraft in February 2005, enroute to Iraq where she was assigned as a postal clerk with the Headquarters and Headquarters Support Battalion out of Camp Lejeune, NC. *Photo courtesy of Tana Maxwell.*



(From left) USMC retired MGySgt Gary Maxwell, USMC Cpl Dorthea (Maxwell) Daniels and former USMC SSgt Tana Maxwell gather at Camp Lejeune, NC, in February 2005, before Dorthea deployed to Iraq. *Photo courtesy of Tana Maxwell.*

From her own experience 40 years before, Tana knew how difficult it is to leave your family behind. Dorthea says her mom sent everything from care packages of food and bath goodies to comics and monthly calendars. It all kept her going in the desert of Iraq.

Since her return in 2006, Dorthea was promoted to corporal, reenlisted and made a permanent change of station move to her new unit, Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, CA. The couple also had their second daughter, Amy Christine, in 2006. Dorthea, who attended college in North Carolina before enlisting, continues with her studies on a part-time basis.

Although their enlistments were 40 years apart and their parents’ reactions were worlds apart, Tana Maxwell and her daughter Dorthea Daniels couldn’t be closer—thanks in part to their shared service in the US Marine Corps and the Women’s Memorial.