

A Post-War Story  
A Marine And A Map  
by  
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After Viet Nam I returned to Quantico. While living at the Air Station BOQ, I met Captain Leonard F. (Larry) Llewellyn, a Marine aviator flying Marine One. To say that Larry was a unique and colorful character would be an understatement as anyone who knew him would testify to including our fellow classmate, Jack Cassidy, who also was living at the Air Station BOQ at the time. Larry opened the door to my career as a commercial real estate developer and investor after leaving the Corps.

We would often gather for happy hour at the bar in the BOQ to commiserate and tell lies. Several of us were serving our final days of active duty and planning our lives going forward. To be honest, I didn't have a clue about what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. My service as a Marine gave me many valuable insights, one being that I did not want to spend my life in a large bureaucratic organization. As much as I love the Corps, it was both both large and bureaucratic, as were the IBMs, GMs, etc. of the world.

Enter Captain Llewellyn. Larry kept an apartment at the Prospect House in Arlington, directly behind the Iwo Jima Memorial with a killer view of the monuments across the river in DC. This was a great asset while chasing skirts. As you all will remember the trip back to Quantico after a night on the town could be challenging. We were at his apartment one Friday evening talking about life after the USMC. As I wrestled with the uncertainty, Larry told me he had someone he wanted me to meet. He picked up the phone and made a lunch appointment for the following day.

Larry knew his way around town, but nowhere near as well as the 80 year old WWI veteran we had lunch with the next day. He was wrapping up a very successful career as a commercial real estate investor in the Washington Metro area. This was one of those classic 3 hour lunches during which this very wise old gentleman laid out the stepping stones and rationale for a career that truly excited me then and continues to do so to this day. I was destined to stay in the Washington area where I met my wife Judy, an Arlington native.

Several years passed and one day I was saying good by to Larry as he had decided to move to Florida. He handed me an old folded up map of the Washington area as it existed in 1755 before the founding of our country and our Corps. He found it in an antique store in Holland while visiting his wife's family. He meant to have it framed, but never got around to it. He said since it was obvious that I was camping out in the area for the foreseeable future that I should have it. Like Larry, I kept it in a drawer for a few more years. One day a decorator that Judy and I were working with as we built a new house saw it and after studying it for a few minutes said it could very well be of considerable value. He had a friend that was a curator of such things at the Smithsonian and suggested we have him look at it. It was concluded that it was an

original map created by Pierre Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson's father who was a surveyor, and indeed it was of considerable value; so much so that the Smithsonian wanted to purchase it for their collection. We declined. They insisted, at the very least, we have it properly framed in a curatorial manner to protect it. We did that.

When I learned of the provenance of the map and its value I called Larry in Florida and told him that I had to return it to him because I was very uncomfortable with the situation since he had been unaware of its value when he gave it to me. In characteristic Llewellyn fashion, he burst out in laughter and yelled "no way, you keep it and every time you look at it think about me and feel guilty".

Larry recently passed away back in Montana where he began his life's journey, not far from our ranch in northwest Wyoming, a long ways from where I began. Every day when I walk into my office and look at that map on the wall, I do think about Larry and smile. I don't feel guilty, but I do miss him. Like all you aviators, he had a carefree manner about him. He just made me laugh. He showed me the door to a career that I love and he remained a true friend over the years. Maybe I share this story with you as a tribute to Larry, or maybe because, as an O3, I am eternally grateful to you aviators who took us into and out of those hot LZs time and time again so many years ago.