

CAROLINA MUSEUM OF THE MARINE

Sergeant Major Thomas J. McHugh



Thomas J. McHugh was born in New York City on 23 December 1919 to Peter and Bridget Porter McHugh. SgtMaj McHugh grew up in Philadelphia and enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve on 3 October 1938, entering the regular Marine Corps in May 1943. The early assignments of SgtMaj McHugh included the Training Center New River (later to become Camp Lejeune) and MCAS Cherry Point in North Carolina. In June 1942, Sgt McHugh sailed on the USS Barnett from San Francisco to the Pacific where he took part in combat at Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu, receiving the Purple Heart for wounds suffered at Peleliu. He returned to the United States in November 1944 as a gunnery sergeant, serving as Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge of the rifle range at MCAS Cherry Point. In June 1945 Gunnery Sergeant McHugh returned to Camp Lejeune as Company Gunnery Sergeant with the Infantry Training Regiment and later with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines until September 1948.

In 1950, Gunnery Sergeant McHugh served as Company First Sergeant in Company H, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines during fighting at Inchon and Chosin Reservoir. He returned to

the United States as a master sergeant in March 1951. For three years, Master Sergeant McHugh served in various assignments including Assistant Battalion Sergeant Major of the Officer Candidate Battalion, Special Training Regiment at Parris Island, South Carolina. In August 1954 McHugh returned to Camp Lejeune becoming Division Field Sergeant Major of the 2nd Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, and was promoted to sergeant major on 31 December 1955.

In July 1960, SgtMaj McHugh was assigned as Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Landing Force Development Center, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, later becoming Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Air Station, Quantico. From 29 June 1962 until 16 July 1965, SgtMaj McHugh served as the third Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. He retired from the Corps on 1 December 1970.

SgtMaj Thomas J. McHugh died at age 80 on 21 February 2000 in Onslow Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville, North Carolina. He is buried in the Coastal Carolina Veterans Cemetery, in Jacksonville.