



# **Bundschu Ridge: at the tip of the spear during the liberation of Guam**

*Scott W. Carmichael*

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Geary Bundschu's maternal grandfather introduced discriminatory immigration legislation into the United States Congress near the turn of the 19th century which prevented Chinese, and eventually all Asians - including the Chamorro people of Guam, who were already recognized by Congress as American nationals - from attaining American citizenship through the naturalization process. Some 50 years later, Cpt. Geary R. Bundschu, USMC, the grandson, served at the very tip of the American spear to free the Chamorro people of Guam from captivity at the hands of the Japanese empire. He lost his life in that effort on a heavily defended ridge located just inland from the northern landing zone which now bears his name: Bundschu Ridge. His grandfather was denounced for decades as the very bane of the Chamorro people. Geary R. Bundschu, the grandson, redeemed his family's honor and became the Chamorro's unsung hero. Few know his story. His blood stains their soil.


Bundschu Ridge documents the failed assault by Able company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment (A/1/3) against a ridge which dominated the northern landing zone during the WWII amphibious operation to liberate Guam. Cpt. Geary R. Bundschu, a veteran of the Bougainville campaign, volunteered for the assignment. Approximately 60% of his company was killed or wounded during three frontal assaults conducted on near-vertical terrain against a vastly superior enemy force before dusk on W-Day. Bundschu was killed in action during the final assault. Veteran UP war correspondent Charles P. Arnot documented the courage exhibited by Bundschu and his men in a dispatch submitted days later. But details of the battle were lost to history until now.

The author interviewed more than a dozen members of A/1/3 who fought on Bundschu Ridge, including the only surviving company officers, and collected additional anecdotal information about the company and the battle from family members of A/1/3 veterans. Research findings are well documented in over 600 footnotes. The author placed the battle into an historical context for readers who lack background on Guam's place in American history and Japan's march toward empire and expansion in the Pacific.

Geary R. Bundschu was a remarkable young man who volunteered to serve in the uniformed service of his country – months before the Japanese assault against Pearl Harbor. He was a patriot. And he was a Marine, through and through. One of his best friends, Gen. Louis H. Wilson, Jr., who received the Medal of Honor for valor exhibited during the operation to liberate Guam, and who later served as Commandant of the Marine Corps, honored him in 1994, on the 50th anniversary of the Liberation of Guam, by placing a bronze plaque in Nimitz House to commemorate the valor of the men of A/1/3 who attempted to seize Bundschu Ridge.

The author served for a period of 26 years as a Special Agent of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and for 4 years prior to that service as a Special Agent of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). He served as a Chinese-Mandarin linguist while on active-duty with the U.S. Navy, and received a bachelor of arts degree in East Asian Studies from the University of Washington. He is the author of three additional non-fiction books, all of which are available on Amazon.com.

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