

## Jungle Joe – A Hero Pigeon

Always in search of information on Army communications programs, CECOM Historians recently discovered an article reprinted in the 1 December 1998 edition of *The Racing Pigeon Digest* (originally published January 1946 in the *Racing Pigeon Review* under the title “Army Pigeons: Hall of Fame”) that provides biographical information for some pigeon hero’s of WWII, including a pigeon named “Jungle Joe.” The Army’s Signal Corps used pigeons for communications from WWI, and into the Korean War; to this end, the Pigeon Service was active at Fort Monmouth until its discontinuance in 1957.

"Jungle Joe" a black check cock carried Serial Number USA 44 SC 19008. Joe’s claim to fame was that he carried some of the most important news carried by a pigeon in the Burma campaign.

At four months of age, he was dropped as part of an airborne patrol in a parachute container, far behind the Japanese lines. Unfortunately, the radio operator had gotten lost during the jump. Not found by a search party, it was assumed that he had been captured. Without the radio operator, the patrol could not come on the air, and was unable to make contact with rear headquarters.

For seven days, the patrol gathered information on the Japanese troops (locations, positions, and so on). During that time, “Jungle Joe” had been confined to a 14” x 4” x 4” bamboo jump container. On the eighth day, “Jungle Joe” was released carrying a very urgent and secret message. Despite being confined for seven days, he covered 225 miles over some of the highest mountains in Burma in good time.

Because “Jungle Joe” was able to deliver this information, a large section of Burma was opened up to occupation by the Allied troops.