

**CAMPAIGNS\***

Algiers-Tunisian  
 Sicily-Naples  
 Foggia-Rome  
 Arno-Normandy  
 Northern France  
 Rhineland-Central  
 Europe-Ardenne  
 Alsace  
 New Guinea  
 Luzon

**INVASIONS\***

North Africa  
 Sicily Landings  
 Salerno Beachhead  
 Anzio Beachhead  
 Normandy Beachhead  
 Philippine Landings  
 Arzew-Oran  
 El Guettar  
 Gela-Licata  
 Pursuit to Messina  
 Chiunzi Pass

**DESCENDANTS OF WWII RANGERS****BATTLES\***

Venafro-San Pietro  
 Cisterna  
 Pointe duHoc  
 Vermilliers-Brest  
 LeConquet Peninsula  
 Huertgen Forest  
 Castle Hill '400'  
 Saar, Roer & Rhine River  
 Battle of the Bulge  
 Leyte Landings

**RAIDS\***

Dieppe  
 Sened Station  
 Cabanatuan  
 Aparri  
 Carbruan Hills  
 Homobon

To Ranger Family & Friends:

Spring 2018

Last June, we celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion. For the next three years the Descendants will be fully engaged in celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of other WW II Ranger actions, a number of which are highlighted herein on a Timeline of Ranger events as we honor the accomplishments and sacrifices of our World War II Rangers.

There were roughly 5,800 WW II Rangers, so thousands of persons now living are eligible for membership in the Descendants. Therefore, with 125 current members, we have set a goal of 200 members for 2018. We ask each member to bring in other family members so we can reach that goal. Please also share your ideas for growing our membership as we honor our Rangers.

Inside is an update on the Congressional Gold Medal which our Rangers rightly deserve, a paramount goal of your Board. Another major focus is setting upcoming reunions in hopes that a few of our Rangers are able to attend. We are also recognizing two major contributions which help lay the groundwork for new WW II Ranger Library, a digital searchable data base of records and memorabilia. Previously, we announced the family of Ranger Phil Stern donated over 100 of his photos for us to sell as a fundraiser, now a work in progress. Renee' Lomell, daughter of Ranger Len Lomell, is sending archival documents from her father's files with a stamp that reads "Ranger Len Lomell 2D Collection." What a wonderful way to honor her father and preserve his files for all to see.

You can also honor your Ranger with a new Ranger Highlight section of the Newsletter. On a first come, first served basis, submit a one page story about your Ranger to Laura Moore, address inside. The History Committee will review these, and we will publish some stories in each Newsletter.

Our Rangers were volunteers, and we need a Descendant volunteer with website experience to do some initial footwork including evaluation of design and cost alternatives for development of a new website. Please email David Williams, address inside, if you are qualified and willing to help.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, put together by our new Editor, Leland Williams, nephew of Ranger Col. James B. Lyle and also my brother. Leland, now retired, is a resident of Williamsburg, Va. He was a journalism major at LSU, and editor of the yearbook, the Gumbo. He served as an Infantry Officer, including a year in Korea. He spent most of his career with the S.D. Warren Paper Company, where his last position was Director of Sales Operations at the corporate office in Boston.

RLTW !

David Williams, President  
 Honoring Col. James B. Lyle, 1/E,C,A,B

***RANGERS LEAD THE WAY***

## **GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

FRANK MATTIVI - 1D/F



Frank Mattivi Sr., age 99, Excelsior Springs, Mo., passed away on February 2, 2018. Frank married Lorena June Clevenger, on March 29, 1946. This union was blessed with four children, James who precedes his parents in death; John, Nancy and Frank. Out of these children Frank has eight grandchildren, Debbie, Shaun, Staci, Travis, Joe, James, Jennifer and Erin; 12 great grandchildren, Richard, Megan, Amanda, Sean, Trevor, Elissa, Tyler, Jessica, Hailey, Cade, Cody, Cameron; 12 great-great grandchildren, Macie, Madison, Cooper, Lucas, Jace, Dominic, Bryant, Slater, Rylee, Ryan, Reagan, and a new baby due in March. Frank signed up for the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) in 1938. He served in Idaho, Minnesota, and Iowa. On January 16, 1941 Frank went to Des Moines, Iowa, and enlisted in the 34th Division of the Iowa National Guard. It wasn't long before

he was sent to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana for basic training. After going overseas Frank volunteered to join a new American commando outfit that was being formed. Frank was assigned to D Company, 1st Ranger Battalion known as Darby Rangers, which were trained by British Commanders in Scotland. This group was one of the original first 500 United States Army Rangers. Frank was handpicked by Col. William Darby. He participated in the North African Campaign (NAC). Rangers spearheaded the landing at Arzew, Algeria (they invaded Algeria on his birthday), and moved into Tunisia for a successful mission at Sened Station and El Guettar. After those campaigns were concluded Darby's Rangers were expanded from one battalion to three. Frank transferred to the 1st Battalion Company F, serving as Cadre to the new volunteers. Frank was awarded the following medals as a result of his service: Good Conduct medal, 1st Ranger Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Infantry Badge, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with 5 Bronze Stars (Algeria-French-Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Naples-Foggia, Anzio), American Defense Service Medal, 6 Overseas bars, Service Stripes and P.O.W. Medal. Our grandfather was an Army First Sergeant during W.W.II. Frank was inducted in The Ranger Hall of Fame on July 12, 2012. His induction in the Hall of Fame was for outstanding leadership, heroism and service. He saved numerous Rangers, with complete disregard for his own life by dropping a grenade in an enemy tank. In Venafro he was wounded in action, refusing treatment being afraid he wouldn't return to his unit. Frank was a P.O.W. captured in 1944, spending 16 months in a Stalag P.O.W. camp. Frank was a member of W.W.II Ranger Assoc., life member of The Excelsior Springs VFW, member of American Legion and of the US Army Ranger Association.

RICHARD SNARSKI – 1D



Richard C. Snarski, of Roseville, MI., passed away on Wednesday, December 27, 2017 at the age of 93. He was born in Detroit, MI to Edward and Celia Snarski on July 28, 1924. Beloved husband of the late Mary E. Snarski. Dearest father of Richard (the late Clara), Bernard (Barbara), Carol (Thomas) Ziemczyk, Mark (Florence), Paulette Snarski and Kathleen Luna. Loving grandfather of 23 and great-grandfather of many. Also survived by his adored friend Carmella Wade. Richard was predeceased by his brothers Thaddeus and Eugene. Also survived by many loving nieces and nephews. Richard was a WWII Ranger and part of the First Special Services Team, aka "Devils Brigade".

### ALVIN D. EZZELL – 1/3HQ



Alvin D. "Pop" Ezzell, Retired U.S. Army "Rangers Lead the Way" 95, of Round Rock, Texas, passed away May 17, 2017. He was born in Taylor, Texas, on June 6, 1921, to Edna Mae Wood and Ralph Taylor Ezzell. After high school, he joined the Texas National Guard, 141st infantry, 36th division, where he began a decorated 22 year career in the U.S. Army. On October 18, 1941, he married Virginia Adams, the love of his life. They were blessed with nearly 73 wonderful years together in marriage. In May of 1942, he volunteered for overseas service and he was stationed in London, England, in the Inspector General's Office. In June of 1942, he became restless with his office job and once again volunteered to further serve our great country and applied for Army Ranger training in Dundee, Scotland which was vigorous training by the British Commandos. After graduation from Ranger training, he became a member of the elite fighting force known as the Darby's Rangers, commanded by Colonel William Orlando Darby. He was a proud member of both the 1st and 3rd Ranger Battalions of WWII. From August of 1942 January of 1944, he participated in numerous battles, invasions and raids throughout North Africa, France, and Italy. On January 30, 1944, after the invasion at Anzio, Italy, he was captured by German forces and was a prisoner of war for nearly seventeen months. He returned to the "Good Ole USA" in 1945 after being liberated. In 1950, he volunteered for the U.S. Army's first helicopter pilot training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. In November of 1951, he once again volunteered for service and went overseas to Korea as a cargo helicopter pilot flying numerous missions over his sixteen months tour of duty in Korea. In July of 1963, Alvin retired from active service as a Chief Warrant Officer III. He was a proud recipient of many decorations, medals, citations and ribbons, including the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Distinguished Unit Badge, 7 overseas bars, army aviation badges, Air Medal with Cluster, and Senior Army Aviation Badge, to name just a few. He was proud of his service to our country and was equally proud to be a member of the Darby's Rangers. "Rangers Lead the Way" was the motto by which he lived his long and blessed servient life. He is preceded in death by his wife Virginia Ezzell, his daughter Bonnie Jehl and his son-in-law Carl Jehl, Sr. He is survived by his grandchildren, Carl Jehl, Jr. and Robin Branham, Chuck and Marilyn Jehl, Rick and Tina Jehl, his great-grandchildren, Jake, Jared, Hunter, Taylor, Jason and Jaxon Jehl; his sisters Peggy Massey and Joy Welsh, and his extended family, Jack and Susan Stone.

### JAMES E. MERRYMAN – 3A



James Edward Merryman, age 92 of Tuscumbia, AL, went home April 18, 2017. Mr. Merryman was born January 25, 1925 in Walnut, Mississippi. He was a veteran of WWII, and served in Darby's Rangers. He was captured and spent seventeen months in a POW camp; he came home, met and married the love of his life, Mamie Hill Merryman in 1946. He was retired from TVA and a member of IBEW Local #558, American Legion, VFW and First Baptist Church, Tuscumbia. He was a 32 degree Mason and past commander of the POW chapter of North Alabama. He loved hunting and fishing. He is survived by his wife of seventy-one years, Mamie Merryman; son, Bobby Merryman (Wayna) of Tuscumbia; daughter, Linda Hannon (Ray) of Nashville, TN, five grandchildren; Allen Smith (Tina) of Nashville, James Hannon of Tuscumbia, Vallarie Hernandez (Josue') of Mobile, Monty Merryman (Jennifer) of Florence and David Merryman(Erin) of Nashville, and nine great-grandchildren. Mr. Merryman was preceded in death by his son, William David Merryman.

#### ROBERT F. ROENNA – 3HQ



Robert F. Roenna April 13, 2017 age 92 of Medinah, IL; Beloved husband of Marianne (nee Scheunert Chittenden) and the late Juanita (nee Reily); Father of Faith (Mark) Reed; Dear uncle of Donald (Ramona) Lachata and the late Carole Gunderson. Robert was a veteran of the United States Army serving during World War II, he was an Army Ranger and former P.O.W.

#### GLEN JACKSON – 4A

Glen Edward Jackson, 93, passed away May 11, 2017 at his home in Jerseyville, IL. He was born on March 12, 1924 in Carrollton, one of thirteen children born to the late Jake & Edna (Perry) Jackson. At the age of 17, he enlisted with the United States Army where he served our country with honor and valor during World War II on the front lines as a Darby Ranger as well as the with the unit's transition to the Special Forces and was honorably discharged in 1945. He married the former Herberta "Berta" Schroeder on September 5, 1999 and together they have shared the past 17 years together. he took tremendous pride in the enjoyment and company of his children and their families, and his door was always open to each and every one of them. Surviving are his wife, Berta Jackson of Jerseyville; four sons, Glen & Lou Jackson of Moore, OK; Robert Jackson, and his companion, Toni Woolsey of Jerseyville; Jim Jackson of Dow; and Jake Jackson, and his companion, Krista Fry of Jerseyville; as well as a daughter, Jody Hayes and her companion, Paul Devening of Jerseyville; 13 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren; six sisters and their spouses, Joann & John Crafton of Godfrey; Carolyn Salto of Springfield; Wilma & Glen Edison of Louisiana; Rose & John Hadsall of Pekin; Sandra & George Leone of Godfrey; and Joyce Votaw of Kentucky; three brothers and their spouses, Guy Jackson; Donald & Mary Jackson, of Jerseyville and Clyde & Kate Jackson of Carrollton. Glen was preceded in death by two daughters, Patricia Owens and Barbara Chappi; two sisters, Opal Crafton and Mary Adams; as well as a brother, Perry Jackson.

#### PHILLIP A. WENTWORTH – 4A

Phillip A. Wentworth, 93, a resident of Alton, NH, an American Patriot and WWII hero died November 2, 2017. He was a premier marksman for the elite fighting force, Darby's Rangers, who were among the first in at the Battle of Anzio, Italy. Phillip who was in the 4th Battalion and the Ranger survivors joined with Frederick's First Special Service Force at Anzio which was later called the Devil's Brigade. Their nighttime raids repeatedly struck the Germans without warning. The force began leaving a calling card with a red arrow on German corpses with the words, "The Worst Is Yet To Come", written in German. Phillip was wounded once and spent two weeks in an Army field hospital and then went back into battle. He carried the shrapnel in his body all his life, but refused the Purple Heart. His unit was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal on February 3rd, 2015 at a ceremony which Phillip attended. Speaker of the House Boehner remarked, "They jumped out of airplanes and parachuted behind enemy lines. Under cover of night they scaled mountains and engaged in hand to hand combat. They could storm a beach in an amphibious landing or ski across a rugged mountain with guns strapped to their backs. Every mission was impossible and a potential suicide mission, but they accomplished it". Phillip was awarded The Bronze Star, Good Conduct Medal, The Europe African Campaign Medal, a Bronze Service Star with Arrowhead medal, WWII Victory Combat Infantryman Badge and 1st Award Honorable Service Lapel Badge. In later years he was awarded numerous medals from the Canadian Government including an Honorary Canadian citizenship.

He is survived by his three children, Lawrence Wentworth, Santa Fe Springs, CA; Stanton Wentworth, Errol, NH; Jeanette Countrymen, Las Vegas, NV and his sister Jeannette Varney of Gatlinburg, TN. He was predeceased by his wife of 67 years Gladys Willis Wentworth and his son Brian Wentworth. He leaves his grandchildren Michael, Phillip, Leon, Keith, Alexander Wentworth, Gina Countrymen, Rhonda Frost, Melanie Carroll, Melia Haida and Carrie Meltcher; 13 great-grandchildren; several nieces, and many local friends who were there for him in his old age.

#### DANIEL FARLEY – 5A



Daniel D. Farley, Jr., 91, passed away December 30, 2017. He was born May 6, 1926, in Kayford, District of Cabin Creek, West Virginia. Mr. Farley was one of the "Greatest Generation," a decorated WWII Army Ranger, 5th Battalion, Company A, and a D-Day survivor of landing on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France; Battle of Zerf, the Battle of the Bulge and numerous others. He was a long-time resident of Dallas, Texas, and Gaithersburg, Maryland. He retired and moved to Baton Rouge and lived there until he became a resident of Louisiana War Veterans Home in Jackson, Louisiana. He is survived by his daughter, Colleen "Kali" Farley Soulier Marionneaux, and her husband, Robert; four grandchildren, Cheri Baddock and her husband, Jace, of Tomball, Texas; Shawn Soulier and his wife, Tess, of New Roads; Brian Bowman and his wife, Leisha, of Birmingham, Alabama; and Yvette Soulier Rushing and her husband, Jeffrey, of Magnolia, Texas; son-in-law, Charles Bowman, of Mobile, Alabama; nine great-grandchildren: Hailey and Britton Baddock; Reid, Beau, Blaire, and Brooks Soulier; Emma and Quinn Bowman, and Sydney Rushing; and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Daniel D. Farley, Sr., and Clara Grant Farley Brackenridge, of Charleston, West Virginia; his daughter, Linda Farley Bowman, of Mobile, Alabama; four wives, Vera Cecile Lockwood Farley Viles, Arline Malone Farley, Debbie Blake Farley, and Molly Richards Farley; and three brothers, David, Robert, and George Edwin Farley.

#### RICHARD FELIX – 5HQ

Richard "Doc" Felix, of Ardskey, NY, a decorated WWII Veteran, loving husband and kind, positive role model for his sons and grandchildren, died peacefully on March 4, 2017 at 91 years. He now joins the love of his life and wife of 68 years, the late Mary Galligan Felix. Born in 1925 and raised on the Upper West Side of New York City, Richard was a lifelong member of the 1937 Century Athletic Club, a good-natured, boys' sports club that sustained its community with friendship and joy during the last years of the Great Depression and beyond. Corporal Felix volunteered as a medic in the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion, D Company and served in Europe. "I entered the Army July 1943 as a nineteen year old boy," he once reflected, "and emerged one year, nine months and six days later, a grown man." He is survived by his son John and daughter-in-law Heddi of Cambridge, MA.; his son Jim and daughter-in-law Jane of Scarsdale, NY, and six loving grandchildren.

#### MARTIN R. GRUBANOWITCH – 5C



Martin R. Grubanowitch, Age 92 years, of Brookfield, WI, passed away December 15, 2016. Beloved husband of the late Evelyn "Evie". Dear father of Martin J. "Skip" (the late Jane) and Richard (Mary) Grubanowitch. Loving grandfather of Carrie, Marty (Sarah), Kelly (Jeff) Bashaw and Kristin (Jacob) La Fontain. Proud great-grandfather of Mitchell Karstedt; Emma, M.J., and Hannah Grubanowitch; Jack, Olivia, Ella, and Evelyn "Evie" Bashaw; Kayla and T.J. La Fontain. Further survived by his dear friend and companion Louise Carsen, other relatives and friends. Marty was an Assistant Vice President at American Appraisal, being employed there for 43 years. He was an Army Ranger and Purple Heart recipient during WWII, participating in the Normandy Invasion landing at Omaha Beach.

## **Congressional Gold Medal – an update**

The Congressional Gold Medal ( CGM) has been awarded to several military units for outstanding service, but our WW II Rangers have not yet been so recognized. Just prior to print time of this newsletter, we received word that a United States Senator has agreed to write a bill to award the CGM to our Rangers. The Senator also offered to try to get a member of the House of Representatives to write a companion bill. This is not an easy process. To receive the CGM, bills have to be introduced into both houses of Congress and approved by 2/3 of the members of each house. To get that many Senators and Congressmen to endorse a bill is a lengthy process, and as soon as bills are introduced, we will be asking each of you to urge your representatives in Washington to support this effort. RLW !

The current Board accepted this project challenge, and we are pleased with the Congressional response. We are hopeful that all Senators and members of Congress waste no time introducing and approving these bills and awarding the CGM to our WW II Rangers.

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### **Ranger History Tunisia, March 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion Seizes the Pass at Djbel el Ank , Opening the Battle of El Guettar Written with excerpts from an address by Lt. Col. James B. Lyle to a Ranger Graduation Class in 1959 at Fort Benning, Georgia**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion received orders to destroy an Italian position overlooking a critical road junction on the road from Gafsa to Gabes. The enemy was dug in deep on either side of a valley with the only way in being through a narrow gap with steep cliffs on each side. "Several American units had been shot to pieces trying to open the pass. Lt. Walter Wojcik of C Company led a squad of Rangers to find a way to get behind and above the enemy without being observed."

The next night in total darkness the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, led by Wojcik's squad, moved all night long over the almost impassable route in single file. Huge boulders to get around and over. Crevices to slide through as they bounced from foothold to foothold. No smoking, no talking, only the sound of boots hitting rocks until the Rangers were in place on a rocky plateau atop the enemy position.

At 0600 hours the perfect V-shaped valley came awake as two companies of Rangers with fixed bayonets raced down the side of the valley. A bugler sounded "charge" as Ranger riflemen and snipers opened up on the unsuspecting enemy. Darby managed the assault from his position high on the hill, advising his attacking Rangers of what spot to hit next. Ranger mortars fired on Italian positions whose large guns, now helpless against the Rangers, were pointed toward the road junction. In a few hours it was over with the Rangers capturing over 700 Italian prisoners. "The Germans escaped as soon as the firing started and ordered the Italians to stay. Ranger casualties were two men wounded."

In addressing the Ranger Graduation Class LTC Lyle, commander of C Company for this mission, asked, "What sort of man would volunteer for such a job as this? Were Rangers supermen ? No, just ordinary men, well-trained with lots of guts and determination. Rangers all of them !"

Note : Lt. Walter Wojcik received a Battlefield Commission in North Africa. As a Company Commander in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion, he was killed in the beach assault on Gela, Sicily, four months after this mission.

## **WORLD WAR II RANGER TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

Beginning 1 January 1943

30 January 1943      New arrivals for the First Ranger Battalion in Algeria, North Africa

While refitting and rebuilding the battalion at Arzew, Algeria, the Rangers served as demonstration troops for the Fifth Army Invasion Training Center. On 30 January 1943, Special Order #23 was issued that resulted in 100 enlisted soldiers--all volunteers from the infantry-- Captain Jack Street, and five other officers being added to the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion. Some replacements were assigned to existing companies, and the remainder became G Company, commanded by Street. Training began immediately, but was cut short when orders came to move out. The Rangers were on their way to Tunisia; specifically, Sened Station.

12 February 1943      Sened Raid

Enemy soldiers from this outpost in North Africa had been hitting allied units for some time. First Battalion Rangers from Companies A, E & F assaulted Sened in the middle of the night with devastating success, using knives and bayonets to strike fear into the heart of the enemy.

20 March 1943      Djbel el Ank, Tunisia.

In early March 1943, General Patton ordered the First Division, to which the Rangers were attached, to "take the commanding ground east of El Guettar." El Guettar, Tunisia, was a key junction with a road that led to Gabes and behind the German defenses. Whoever controlled the mountain passes controlled the roads. Italian and German troops manned this pass, and many American units had been shot to pieces trying to get through. In an all-night infiltration, the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion humped over terrain that the enemy thought impassable, getting above and behind the enemy. At daylight, the enemy realized they had visitors as the Rangers assaulted and cut the enemy to pieces, opening the pass and taking hundreds of prisoners.

23 March 1943      El Guettar – The final battle in North Africa

On 23 March, while the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Btn was filling a gap east of El Guettar, German General Rommel's 10<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division attacked the American position with two armored battalions boasting 60 tanks, two infantry battalions and two artillery battalions. The Rangers were on line with a battalion of the American 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Despite a furious assault by the enemy, the Rangers held their position while American artillery destroyed the German tanks and infantry. The 1<sup>st</sup> Rangers received a Presidential Unit Citation for their brave and successful actions.

1 April 1943      Activation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion was activated on 1 April 1943 at Camp Forrest, TN. Major James L. Rudder assumed command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rangers on 30 June 1943.

22 April 1943                      Formation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions

Lt.Col. Darby received permission to form two new Ranger Battalions and began selecting men to fill out the two new battalions. On 5 May, the new recruits began arriving at Nemours, Algeria, and training began for the invasion of Sicily. On 3 June, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions were formed, each receiving a complement of experienced Ranger veterans from the original companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion.

1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion : Lt. Colonel William O. Darby, Commanding

3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion: Major Herman Dammer, Commanding

4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion: Captain Roy A. Murray, Commanding

11 July 1943                                      Invasion of Sicily

Early on the morning of 11 July, the three Ranger Battalions, part of a group now known as Force X, invaded Sicily in what at the time was the largest seaborne invasion by allied troops with over 4,000 vessels of all kinds involved. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Battalions landed at Gela, Sicily, and for three days fought off furious enemy counterattacks as the Germans tried to throw the Americans back into the sea. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion landed at Licata, Sicily. All three battalions fought through Sicily and converged on Messina in early August, ending that operation.

1 September 1943                                      Activation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

The 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion was activated at Camp Forrest, TN, and at the time of the Normandy invasion it was commanded by Lt. Col. Max Schneider, formerly with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

9 September 1943                                      Invasion of Italy

The 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions, now known as the Ranger Force, invaded Italy on a small beach of Maiori, near Salerno, and headed inland to capture the heights of a critical mountain known as Chuinzi Pass. From these heights the Rangers commanded the terrain, and combining their own artillery with naval artillery, the Rangers all but totally stopped the Germans from reinforcing their defensive position at Salerno, where the bulk of the allied armies had landed. The Rangers were outnumbered eight to one in this action and repulsed 18 German counterattacks during this action, and they were again awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.

3 November 1943                                      Venafro – San Pietro Campaign, Italy

The 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Battalions were used as infantry in a mountain campaign aimed at pushing the Germans north and out of Italy. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Battalions were ordered to capture high ground overlooking Highway 6 and the Venafro Road. It was a series of attacks and counterattacks by both the Rangers and the Germans during the wet cold winter over this bitterly-contested ground. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was order to take Hill 950, a long jagged



mountain crest overlooking San Pietro. Fighting was again fierce, even hand to hand, as both sides fought for control of the mountain. Casualties among all three battalions were heavy, and the Rangers were eventually relieved by American paratroopers.

22 January 1944                      Operation Shingle, the Invasion at Anzio, Italy

Early on the morning of 22 January, the Ranger Force invaded Italy at Anzio and by day's end had secured the port and neighboring Nettuno. Their assault mission completed, the Ranger Force manned the front lines until the evening of 28 January 1944 when they were transported to an assembly area 8 miles southwest of Cisterna. The beachhead was hemmed in by German forces in numbers far superior to the allies. To initiate the breakout from the beachhead the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalions were to infiltrate the German lines at night and seize and hold Cisterna, a key road junction. A follow up attack on the German lines by the 4<sup>th</sup> battalion and other front line units was to link up with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Early on the morning of 30 January, due to faulty intelligence, the Rangers found themselves outnumbered almost 80 to one, far behind enemy lines with no hope of being rescued. The 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion, running into heavy resistance and incurring 50 percent casualties, was unable to break through to their 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> brothers. Running out of ammunition, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Rangers were forced to surrender. Except for a handful who escaped, those not killed were captured and would remain POW's to the end of the war. The Battle of Cisterna effectively destroyed Darby's Rangers, with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions ceasing to exist.

6 June 1944                      D-Day Invasion of Normandy – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion was at both Pointe Du Hoc (Companies D, E, and F) and Omaha Beach (Companies A, B, and C). They accomplished their primary mission of destroying the large caliber coastal guns on Point de Hoc shortly after daylight and set up a blocking position on the coast road as ordered. Casualties were very heavy over the next three days. By the end of the day on 6 June, elements of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion A Company had reached the Pointe. Among the Rangers assaulting Omaha Beach the casualties were horrendous, with the survivors being gathered together to form one company and continue the fight.

6 June 1944                      D-Day Invasion of Normandy – 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

As the landing craft carrying the 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion neared Omaha Beach, Lt. Col. Max Schneider realized that landing at the planned Vierville exit would result in the battalion being wiped out. In a move that saved his men, he directed the boats to move east up the beach 900 meters where the Rangers. As the Rangers were fighting on the beach, General Norman Cota walked calmly by and asked who the men were. "Sir, We are Rangers came the reply." "Well, Rangers, then Lead the Way off this beach," retorted the general, an order that has become gospel in Ranger history-- Rangers Lead the Way. Fighting inland, on D+3 the 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger captured the German artillery and strong points around Maisy.

19 August 1944            The Brittany Campaign – 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions

In late August, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rangers were involved in the assault on the city of Brest, a heavily fortified port on the Western Front. In one of the great bluffs of the war, a four man patrol forced the surrender of a major installation, with Lt. Col. Rudder accepting the surrender of 814 Germans. The 5<sup>th</sup> Rangers were also attacking forts in the Brest area with great success, and when the smoke cleared, the 5<sup>th</sup> Rangers had taken over 300 Germans prisoner. After the battle for Brest, and through December, the 5<sup>th</sup> Rangers were used as regular infantry, long range patrolling and security by the 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group.

25 September 1944            Activation of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

In March 1944, Lt. Col. Henry “Hank” Mucci arrived in New Guinea as the new battalion commander. His mission was to turn men in the 98<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion into a Ranger unit. After grueling training in long road marches, climbing mountains and going through jungles, crossing rivers, personal combat tactics on each other, and small arms courses, they were officially redesignated as the 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Infantry Battalion.

20 October 1944            Leyte Landing, the Philippines – 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been selected to be the first troops to land back in the Philippines since the Japanese had taken the islands over the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Leaving Finschhafen, New Guinea, three days in advance of the main invasion, HQ, A, C, E, and F Companies sailed to Dinagat Island at the entrance of the Leyte Gulf. B Company was to land on Homonhon Island, and D Company headed for Suluan Island. Their mission was to take the islands and destroy the enemy so the Sixth Army would not be hindered in any way when they invaded on 20 October.

6 December 1944            Belgium / Huertgen, Germany / Hill 400 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

In October, men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion began a move that would involve them in a variety of combat actions as they entered Germany itself, and on the evening of 6 December they were given the mission of capturing Castle Hill, known as Hill 400. Companies D,E and F charged across 150 yards of open ground in the face of four German machine guns, swarming over the Germans and taking the hill and pillbox. For the next 44 hours the Rangers faced counterattacks and artillery barrages as the Germans fought to regain the hill. Many Rangers who fought this battle say it was the worst of the war. By the time they were relieved on the night of 8 December, only a handful of men were left in each company, a casualty rate worse than that of D-Day.

16 December 1944            Battle of the Bulge – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

Battered remnants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rangers were rushed into defensive position to defend the left flank of the Bulge. By holding its ground, the Rangers were able to halt the German advance.

January 1945

### German POW Death March

Most of the Rangers captured by the Germans were held in POW camps in Poland. In early January, the Russian Army began closing in on Poland, and the Germans were determined not to let their POW's fall into Russian hands. Thus began a forced march, as the Germans began emptying their POW camps. It was an opportunity for numerous Rangers to escape, and their stories are widely known and published. Eventually, most of the Rangers made it back to friendly lines and home to the U.S.

28 January 1945

### Cabanatuan POW Rescue – 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

Japanese were known to be executing their prisoners as the war wound down. Generals MacArthur and Krueger ordered the 6<sup>th</sup> Bn to rescue 511 POWs at the Cabanatuan Prison Camp. The POWs were survivors of the Bataan Death March and Corregidor. Lt. Col. Mucci commanded the 6<sup>th</sup> Bn, and Capt. Robert Prince, Commander of C Company, led the rescue mission along with the 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon of F Company. A few Alamo Scouts helped by gathering information, and Filipino guerillas were used for flank protection and security. They moved on foot for 30 miles behind Japanese lines to successfully rescue all 511 POWs while two Rangers lost their lives.

22 February 1945

### The Saar Campaign – 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion

The objective was to clear a path to cross the Rhine River and dive deep into the heart of Germany. The 5<sup>th</sup> was ordered to infiltrate across the Saar River near Taben and interdict the German supply route from the Irsch-Zerf roadways. Crossing the Saar River on a footbridge, the 5<sup>th</sup> Rangers moved behind the German front lines. In a nine-day battle, the Germans unsuccessfully counterattacked with artillery, rockets and infantry. On 3 March, the Ranger mission was accomplished but with battalion strength reduced by 50 percent.

## World War II Concludes for the Rangers

30 January 1944      A significant date that marked the end of the 1st and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions as fighting units, when most of those men were either killed or captured in the Battle of Cisterna. However, for those captured Rangers and for those who eluded capture, their war was not over until after 8 May 1945.

27 March 1944      Rangers with enough points to return to the U.S. did so from remnants of the 1st and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns and Lt. Col. Roy Murray's 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Rangers without enough points to return to the U.S. were transferred to the First Special Service Force, and their war ended on 8 May 1945.

8 May 1945          VE Day -- Reid, Austria -- 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion concluded its time in WW II

15 August 1945      VJ Day -- 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion concluded its time in WW II

## Membership

We are pleased to report that we have 125 current members. We thank all of our members for their support. It is through the dues and support of our members that we are able to fulfill our annual functions, i.e. newsletters, placing wreaths on the memorials of WWII Rangers, making donations to honor the passing of our WWII Rangers, scholarships, upgrade and support of our website, etc. The board has set a goal of 200 current members for 2018. The Board is committed to providing education on the history of WWII Rangers to all Ranger Descendants. We are contacted by many who know nothing about their Ranger's history and are interested in learning. To be able to meet this need we have some exciting projects in mind which will require additional funds. We ask and encourage all our members to consider supporting our efforts by paying their 2018 dues and encouraging other family members to join our organization. Of the 125 current members, 22 are new members to our organization. We are very excited to welcome them. Those members who joined after the Newsletter went to press will be recognized in the next Newsletter.

John Belanger	Nep of Rgr John Foley	1D/4	Jennifer Mattivi	Gd of Rgr Frank Mattivi	1
Doak Bendix	S of Rgr Richard Bendix	5D	Edward Miller	Nep of Rgr Leonard Lomell	2E
Elizabeth Bucsek	D of Rgr Nicholas Bucsek Jr.	2HQ	Jeff Moran	Nep of Rgr Joe Renfro	3C
Julian Cavazos	S of Rgr Julian Cavazos	1B/3C	Brian Rice	S of Rgr Herbert Rice	1C
Michael Dineen	S of Rgr Kelly Dineen	1E	Michael Schneider	Gds of Rgr Max Schneider	1/4/5
Irene Earle-Rice	D of Ranger John Earle	2E	Barry Shead	Gdnep of Rgr Jodie Morris	1
Emanuel Gordon	Bro of Rgr Craig Gordon	1	Conrad Solf	S of Rgr Conrad Solf	6C
Jonathon King	Gds of Rgr Robert King	2A	David Sparks	Nep of Rgr Martin Sparks	3
John Krall Jr.	S of Rgr John Krall	1	Charlotte Tromblin	D of Rgr Charles Sorrell	1HQ
Dr. Richard Loesch	S of Rgr Simon Loesch	5E	Doris Warren	Rgr William Warren	5D
Morgan Markham	S of Rgr Kenneth Markham	1F	Jeffrey Williams	Gdnep of Rgr Jim Lyle	1A,B,C,E

Legend: Rgr = Ranger; Nep = Nephew; S = Son; D = Daughter; Bro = Brother; Gds = Grandson; Gd = Granddaughter; Gdnep = Grandnephew.

## Future Reunions

Fall of 2018. The Descendants will host a Mini-Reunion at Fort Benning, Georgia, October 25 – 28, 2018, to tie in with a Ranger School Graduation Ceremony on Friday the 26<sup>th</sup>. We are calling it “mini” because of the short time. We are hopeful that a few WW II Rangers can attend where they will be recognized and honored by the active Rangers. Men and women who graduate from Ranger School are entitled to wear the “Ranger Tab” on their left shoulder. For anyone who has not attended Ranger graduation this is an experience not to be forgotten. As soon as we select a hotel in Columbus, Georgia, we will let everyone know.

June 6, 2019. The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Normandy invasion by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions, known as D-Day, is June 6, 2019. The Deputy Commander of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment has advised that they are putting a task force together for this event and will include the Descendants in the planning. U.S. Army Europe will have overall responsibility for the celebration, and, in addition to our Rangers, will include airborne and regular infantry units. As plans develop, more information will be forthcoming. If you are interested in attending, it is not too early to get your passport up-to-date.

Fall 2019. Sites being considered for the next Biennial Reunion and Business Meeting of the Descendants are Carlisle, PA, New Orleans, LA, and Fort Benning.

## The WW II Ranger Library Update

We are proud to announce a major gift to The Descendants of World War II Rangers, Inc, for use on their website & future WWII Ranger Library, our first large gift, valued at \$12,000. To The Memory of WW II Ranger S/Sgt John J. Foley, 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion Co D, represented by his niece, Descendant Julie Foley Belanger of Albion, Maine, is donating all Morning Reports and Rosters for all six battalions. Morning Reports are daily reports produced for each company showing personnel changes, casualties, illnesses, when wounded, return to duty, location of Company, including a statement of the action taking place. This enables tracing each individual Ranger thru WWII.

The Foley Family has hired Golden Arrow Research to secure these documents from the National Archives. The Descendants of WWII Rangers will receive the entire Collection in digital format, organized by Battalion when the project is complete. A conservative estimate is that we will receive over 50,000 pages of scanned files. If we had tried to locate, copy and scan these files on our own, it would have taken many months and cost thousands of dollars. A huge thank you to the entire Foley Family for this donation. The Descendants is a 501(c)3 tax exempt foundation, and as such, donations to the Descendants are deductible on federal income tax returns.

Descendant Ron Hudnell, representing the World WW II Rangers and Descendants Facebook Page, has generously agreed to allow us to capture files off the Facebook page as long as the files are in the public domain, and there are many such files on the Facebook page. Other files that are personal, contributed by Ranger family members, can be copied for our Library with permission of the donor.

These two contributions are significant in that they will jump start our collection of reports, orders, awards, and other records of our WW II Rangers. We are in debt to Julie Belanger and Ron Hudnell for their foresight, recognizing that the digital, searchable library will be the way we can best honor our Rangers down through the ages by collecting, organizing and preserving their records in such a way that they can be accessed easily by family members and interested friends. RLTW !

### **Board of Directors 2017 – 2019**

President	David Williams	david.williams@cypresswood.net	337.654.2337
Vice President	Nancy Taube	nancymwt@yahoo.com	586.726.4951
Secretary	Andrea Buchanan	abuch2002@gmail.com	217.822.8609
Treasurer	Terry Toler	toler1948@gmail.com	573.636.4065
Member at Large	Laura Moore	tiajuana_43@hotmail.com	913.707.1459

## Commando Hall of Honor

The Commando Hall of Honor has announced Col. James Rudder will be inducted into its membership 18 April at MacDill AFB Florida. The Hall of Honor was established by the Commander to recognize those who served with great distinction within the Special Operations Forces and who demonstrated extraordinary service with the SOF community. General Thomas will be the presiding official. Descendants Bud Rudder and his sisters Anne and Linda will attend. We share their excitement and pride in this recognition.

### Ranger Store



AUTO DECAL MAGNETIC - EASY STICK – EASY REMOVE \$7.00 EACH



WWII RANGER COINS. These are 1 ½ inch challenge coins which commemorate the major battles of the WWII Ranger Battalions. Challenge Coins are \$12.00 each.

PLEASE CONTACT NANCY TAUBE - 586-726-4951 or via email [nancymwt@yahoo.com](mailto:nancymwt@yahoo.com)

Postage will be calculated based on each order. Please provide the address the items are being shipped to.



# Membership

Descendants of WWII Rangers, Inc.

**ALL MEMBERS' DUES ARE \$35.00 YEARLY:  
JANUARY – DECEMBER\***

The purpose of this organization is to perpetuate the history of the men who served with the United States Army Rangers during World War II; maintain and upkeep all memorials created in their honor; arrange for reunions at the pleasure of its membership; memorialize and perpetuate the memory of all Battalion Rangers; and educate and inform those seeking information and history of the Rangers.

A Membership Roster is created from this information and is only shared among the Board of Directors and Members of this organization. Newsletters and updates are sent via PDF to those with email. The information is not shared with other organizations, or anyone not a member of the organization. We ask that all members respect this, and not share with others.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are a WWII Ranger or the Widow or a descendant of a WWII Ranger:**

Ranger's Name \_\_\_\_\_ BN and CO \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are a Descendant of a WWII Ranger (includes legal adoptions)**

Your relationship to the WWII Ranger: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are requesting Honorary Membership:** On the back of this form, please list your contributions (non-monetary) to the Descendants of WWII Rangers and explain how you are furthering the purposes of the Descendants of WWII Rangers organization (per article I, paragraph 3 of the By-Laws)

**Please enclose a \$35.00 check, payable to "Descendants of WWII Rangers, Inc.", and mail to:**

**Nancy Taube – Membership  
2500 Sandycreek  
Shelby Twp, MI 48316**

- **If joining after 30 June for any given calendar year, dues are \$17.50. For example, if joining in July 2018 for year 2018, the dues are \$17.50.**

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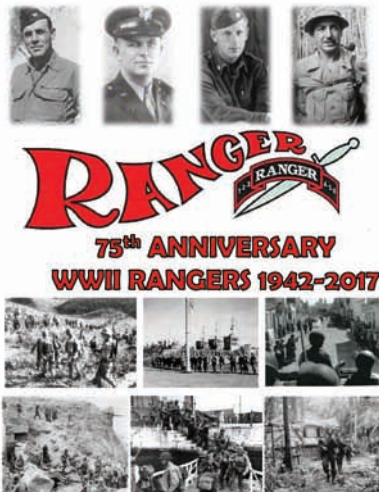
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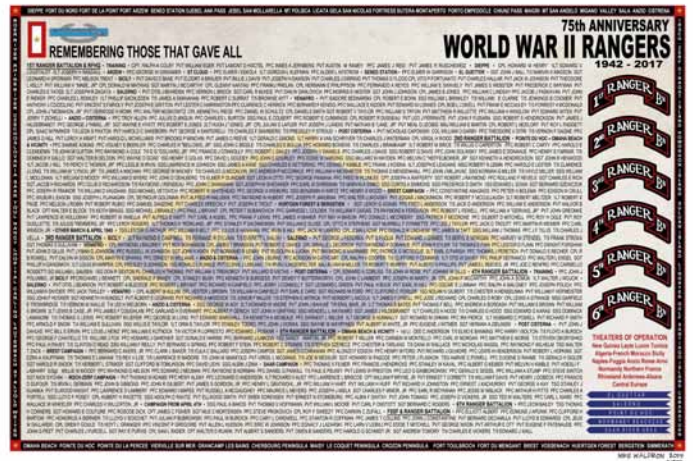
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