

# A Touch of History

*Lest we forget what they did here!*

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**Special points of interest:**

THE BATTALION NEWSLETTER  
WILL BE SENT OUT QUARTERLY.

THE REPRINT JOURNAL ON PAGE 2  
IS TAKEN FROM THE WAR DE-  
PARTMENT AAR'S THAT WERE  
GIFTED TO US BY JERRY STYLES.

CHECK OUT THE SONS & DAUGH-  
TERS @ HTTP://  
WWW.RANGERFAMILY.ORG

2006 RANGER REUNION JUNE 9-11  
IN LAWRENCE , KANSAS.

## History of the 5th Ranger Battalion

### IRSCH-ZERF OPERATIONS / Part one

Taken from "Lead the Way, Rangers" by Henry S. Glassman (passed away in 2003)

February 23rd at 1630 hours in the town of Weiten Germany. The men were as restive as yearlings and indeed they should be. But a few hours previous, the six Ranger companies had been spread over an area of 11,000 yards when, bingo, the Battalion less "B" Company, received orders to assemble in Weiten as rapidly as possible. Immediately after orienting the relieving units, Companies "A, E, and F" struck out on foot while "C and D" had to be motored. The rumors of the impending job were numerous and varied, yet, despite their difference, all possessed one constant theme, "The job was to be a real Ranger one."

The men's doubts and wonderment were short-lived, for soon the mission was unraveled to all. In true Ranger conformity, the lowest private possessed as equal a knowledge as Col. Sullivan, The Battalion Commander. It was to be a 48 hour job, to cross the Saar, infiltrate the enemy lines and cut the Irsch-Zerf road. Its importance was determined by the fact is represented the nucleus for any German reinforcements and must be accomplished to any and all costs. The companies were to set off individually to "B" Company's position in the town of Rodt and were to be there by 1815 hours. Immediately, extra machine gun ammu-

munition, AT mines, and one "K" and one "D" ration per man were issued. The men were advised to grab some hot chow and to travel as light as possible. The ensuing hustle and bustle of preparation was orderly and rapid and, shortly thereafter, the 5th Ranger Battalion shoved off-on the go again. Confidence and cockiness clothed and beamed on the face of each man, yet the grimness of their eyes acutely testified to their savvy that the job would be no picnic: and, subsequent events proved that the hilt.

The latter soon bore evidence at Rodt which was under heavy artillery fire. All companies came through OK but Company "A" which suffered many casualties of which two were officers. Captain Parker of Big Stone City, SD, "A" Company placed Tech Sgts Rooney of Fairfax , VT, and Thomas of Kansas City, KS, in charge of the two platoons, and throughout, He never had a chance to regret his selection. At Rodt the Battalion was held up for an initiating two hours due to the artillery, and the fact that the other friendly units were utilizing the sole foot bridge. Finally at 2000 hours, the Battalion departed for the Saar, and, using the jitter-bugging footbridge, all Companies crossed under harassing artillery fire. To this day, the

men often thank their lucky stars that the foot-bridge held up, for with that current, and the load of each man, anyone falling in would have as much chance of safety as the proverbial "snowball in hell". Once across the river, the damnable, spirit breaking, and seemingly endless hill had to be climbed. Halts were occasionally in order to check our course, but mostly to give the men a chance to regain their breath. Despite the coolness of the evening, every man was drenched with his own sweat, and at length, after what seemed an endless climb and grind, all the companies were assembled at the top of the hill. It was then exactly 2245 hours. Here it became necessary to abandon our original plan due to the fact that the adjacent infantry had not advanced as rapidly as anticipated. No time could be wasted, however, and after a brief period of deliberation and of casualties amongst the company commanders, the Battalion moved off. A formation of two columns abreast was taken up, "C, F and A" from front to rear on the left column and "D, E, and B" constituting a column on the right. Passing through elements of the 302nd Infantry Regiment and advancing on a 10 azimuth for nine consecutive hours there after.

## Conneaut D Day 2006

Conneaut 2006 will be a very exciting year for us. We have partnered with the 83rd Infantry Division to Coordinate the event.

Last year was a very difficult year for the planners. On the day of the event the Senior planners did not have radio's or if they did they turned them down.

Mike Felmlee and I ran the battle with help from Barry (German) on the hill. We were

constantly in contact with the Higgins boats and the pyrotechnics to insure everyone's safety. We will be maintaining all the rules for safety that was implemented last year.

We need all the assistance we can get with this event for 2006. We will be requesting donations to help fund the event. I know that I can count on each and everyone of you to give all the assistance that you can.

I am looking forward to involving as many of you in the planning process that want to be involved.

Mike Owen has already volunteered to assist. Tom and Jack have been asked to make staff bands, so that we (planners) are easily recognizable.

I do want to take this time to thank each of you in advance for your patience and help.

*“Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others!”*  
—Winston Churchill

### Journal 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion, Flamingville, France 0001 1 June 1944

1 June—VOCG First Inf Div; left Dorchester England by vehicle 0700, Arrived Weymouth, England 0939, went aboard LCA's, left Weymouth Harbor arrived at and boarded HMS Leopold, Boudouin, and Prince Charles at 1045.

3 June—VOCG First Inf Div; D-Day announced, 5 June 1944, H-Hour 0610.

4 June—CO talked to Bn re-D-Day, what to expect etc. VOCG, D-Day postponed to 6 June 1944, H-Hour 0630.

5 June—1000 VOCO; get packs and all equipment set. 1300 VOCO; prime all charges. Load all crew served wps and individual equipment on LCA's. 1630 ships hoisted anchor. Joined Convoy in Channel.

6 June—0530 Embarking from HMS ships in transport area.

0545 lowered to Channel and shoved off.

0700 We are approximately 5km from the coast of France. VOC

0750 Landing on Omaha Beach, Vierville-Sur-Mer approximately 1/2 km S D-I exit.

This is the initial assault on German occupied coast of France. Enemy fire was heavy as we struggled across the beach. Casualties seemed to be heavy but this is no time for check—awaiting orders hugging beach wall.

0753 VOCG 29th Inf Div; (Lead the Way Rangers) VOCO (Co B led way—cleared path

through barbed entanglements. Co's A and F take the flanks knock out the pillboxes to our left and right. Co's C, D, E, and CP Groups “let's go get those MG's and Snipers to our front” (two hours later near Vierville-Sur-Mer) and we went over the wall and on over the burning hill at the beaches edge and pushed inward towards Vierville, under constant enemy fire machine guns, automatic pistols, sniper rifles, mortars and self propelled 88's.

1043 reaching outskirts village Vierville-Sur-Mer. Sniper fire is heavy. Two MG nests located in a building, knocked out. Infiltrating through town, snipers are thinning out rapidly: several patrols are searching building to building while the battalion is moving on cautiously.

1400 CO can't contact anyone by radio.

1935 have reached westerly outskirts of town. VOCO all around defense. No perimeter defense of the town can be established. 116th Inf has not moved up to our left. No contact can be made. CP set up in shed at town's edge. 2300 twenty three US Tanks are moving up through town and into their pre-arranged transport area, which is inside our defense.

7 June—0630 reinforced Bn assembled on road to move to Pointe Du Hoe. 0635 Heavy MG and sniper fire on col rec from left flank. CO's “E & B” and elements of “A & F with four tanks left to clear Vierville and area south; remainder of BN proceeds toward Pointe Du Hoe.

8 June—0700 MAJ Richard P Sullivan with Co's C, D, reached Pointe Du Hoe to assist

2nd Rangers.

0800 VOCG 29th Inf Div; 5th Rangers to proceed to and take Grande Camp Les Bains.

1000 Radio to VOCG; met heavy resistance, one kill south of Grand Camp, being held up by heavy mortar barrage, request support.

Radio VOCG 29th: hold present location till relieved by 116 Reg.

1730 Relieved by 116 Reg.

1920 VOCG: Grand Camp cleared of all resistance.

1930 VOCO: Co's D & E set up defense around Sleuce Gate Bridge. Remainder Bn, set up all around defense.

2400—enemy planes bombed area light 1/4 km S Grand De Camp. CP set up in abandoned German tunnel.

9 June—0500 VOCO; Co E patrols to town along beach to get stranded snipers and to get previous unlocated enemy mortar positions.

1400 Co E mission completed.

1620 VOCG; 29th Div; move through Grand Camp along road and proceed to Osmannville.

2000 arrived 1/2 kill Osmannville—set up all around defense.

2100 VOCO—Co E sent night patrol to river Vire check foot bridge leading to Cherbourg Peninsula.

2400 Mission completed. Area bombed by enemy.



## New Partnership

*Earlier this year the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion (RS) Inc. chose the DBA name of The Military History Preservation Association or MHPA.*

*We also gained our new invasion powerboard for our forums which houses both public and private areas. The cool thing about our new board is we can better control things that get out of control much quicker.*

*But the biggest news of the year is our partnership with the Sons & Daughters WWII Rangers Association. As many of you know Jerry Styles has been an invaluable asset to our organization. With his election to President of the S&D our organization gained a new educational and historical partnership with the Sons & Daughters. We are truly honored to have them on our side. We have been invited to the 2006 Ranger Reunion in Kansas City and also the 2007 in Atlantic City. We look forward to our future with brilliant anticipation.*

Welcome to the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion (RS) Inc./MHPA

C Company  
Jim Grieco  
Jim Bellaire  
Casey Jones

HQ Company  
Chris Mills  
Brent Phelan

Michael Collinworth

On behalf of all the members and the Board of Directors I would like to say welcome.

We hope you enjoy being a part of our family. We, as any family, have our quirks but we get through them fine.

Please feel free to contact any member of the organization with questions, or concerns.

We are glad to have you, and "Rangers Lead the Way!"

## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year everyone. Where does the time go? Seems like a week or so ago and we were wading through the surf at Conneaut assaulting the Germans. Now we are deep in planning for Conneaut 2006. More will be coming from Lisa as those plans develop, but look forward to a bigger and better Conneaut this year as 5th Rangers take a more active role in the planning and sponsorship of that event.

If you haven't checked out the new forum site please do so at your first opportunity. The new site is fantastic and much of the credit goes to Lisa, Tim, Mike Owen and Jerry Styles for their hard work. One of the best features of the site is that

we have future events posted so that we can all do a little advanced planning and make more events.

Jerry Styles is the President of the Ranger Sons & Daughters organization. Jerry and his group have joined us on our site with the result of a direct link between Rangers, their survivors and those of us who portray that great group. We look forward to a long and close working relationship with Jerry and his group.

Arnold Dutcher is the son of the late Ranger Sergeant Donald Dutcher. Arnold sent me a picture of his dad, taken at the end of the war; and in that picture is Chaplain (CPT) Joseph Lacy! What a

find! Previously I only had some copies of faded newspaper pictures to work with. Thanks again Arnold.

The big news recently for us living near to and working on Fort Knox is that not only will Knox stay an active Army post but the Patton Museum will be staying on Knox even after the armor element leaves. I have been working closely with the Friends of the Patton Museum with an eye toward 5th Rangers taking on a more active role during the annual Memorial Day weekend event. I'll keep you posted as that develops.

Have a great 2006. Safety first and remember, "Rangers, lead the way!"

*"Anyone can become angry—that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is*

*not easy!"*

*—Aristotle*

## Tidbits

I was bored the other night and was glancing through my husband's The Officer's Guide dated 9th Edition 1943 and I found the following statement on page 353 Military Courtesy:

"STATUS OF NURSES AND WAC OFFICERS"

"Members of the Army Nurses Corps and officers of the Women's Army Corps are officers in the fullest sense and thus should be extended all courtesies due their positions."



Boy how times have changed!

Okay Guys, you knew I was going to place this in the newsletter eventually!! CPL Robeson's 5th meets SPR!!

*"They never fail  
who die in a  
great cause!"*

*Marino Faliero,  
Act ii, Sc 2*

## FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Well guys, another year of re-enacting is upon us. There are a lot of new things to look forward to and a lot of new members to welcome to the unit! First of all, we have the upcoming events this spring. For HQ Co., Rockwood TN will be the next tactical after FIG for the group. Details on the event and others that follow are on the Battalion website here:

<http://www.5thrib.com/events.htm> Keep in mind that Rockwood is only about 8 weeks away. Between now and Rockwood we will be trying to schedule a weekend training exercise at the farm in Mt. Sterling KY. More details on that will be e-mailed out as we get a date nailed down. Expect it sometime in late February or early March.

Just a reminder for our newer members: Do not feel that if you are lacking bits of gear, weapons or uniform items that you have to sit out the next event. We can easily outfit you with what you need to get you in the field. If you can get time off to make an event; by all means please attend. HQ members please give me a call if you have any needs prior to the event.

Expect a few new things this year also, such as new public displays at the local air show and possibly a display and volunteer day at the National D-day Memorial in Bedford VA that's in the works. Conneaut OH and the D-Day landing battle they have will be another big one for us in September as usual; but we'll have a bigger hand in planning this year. If you would like to contribute anything from beach obstacles to just a few hours of your time; let Lisa Torey know ASAP.

For anyone who doesn't already know; the 5<sup>th</sup> Rangers website

[www.5thrib.com](http://www.5thrib.com) has been converted over to HTML format so anyone with any internet browser should now be able to view it online. (Not just Internet Explorer.) There are tons of useful information, current events info, and much more on there so please check it out. Got a question about something on the site or something you might like to suggest; give me a call!

Some of you need your biography info updated in the "Members" section. I will be sending out an e-mail shortly to get

that from you and fill out the "first person" aspect of your impression. This basically gives you something of a short back-story as to how you ended up in the Rangers; portraying your particular impression.

I look forward to returning from FIG after hanging out with Charlie Co. and getting to meet all our new HQ members at our training day and/or Rockwood hopefully. Lets all try to show up in force and have a great time! Take care and be safe.

Mike Owen, Vice President  
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