

❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

Volume 2 Issue 4

D-Day Special Edition

May 1994



REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR

TELL US IT ISN'T SO

The April 27, 1994, Washington Post, Federal Page, carried an interesting article entitled "Sinking the Arizona's Visitors." Seems that the the National Park Service lost a battle with the Navy over the closing of the USS Arizona Memorial for a distinguished foreign dignity from 2:25 PM to 3:30 PM on 28 April 1994.

Now the National Park Service argued that the Memorial should only be closed down for a head of state and requested that the Navy delay the visit until 4:00 PM when the exhibit normally closes. The Park Service argued that by closing the Memorial during that time it would deprive "about 800 people, many of them World War II veterans, from visiting the ship." But the Navy rejected that proposal.

And who is this distinguished foreign dignity? None other than the Japanese Defense Minister Kazuo Aichi. Talk about adding insult to injury. Though the sneak attack is now over 52 years ago, it is still sacred and hallowed ground and though he should be welcomed as any guest, he should come as any other guest. It will be interesting to see if in his official capacity that he comes to atone for the supreme sacrifices made by those servicemen still entombed below the Memorial. The Navy should be ashamed. As the Post says, "And now, from the folks who brought you Tailhook, another public relations triumph." The understatement, by the Park Service, was "Closing the memorial for the Japanese defense minister would be viewed 'poorly' by many visitors and vets, especially the survivors of Pearl Harbor.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

This newsletter is based on the research of John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331 in the National Archives in the World War II Unit Records. Where noted the information provided is from the actual After/Action Reports, G-2 and S-2 Intelligence Reports and Journals. These are reports as they happened. The information may have been found to be different with fifty years of history. It is presented here as it actually was written. Comments are welcomed. This information is in the Public Domain. Credit should be given to the National Archives Military Branch. It is distributed for the benefit of VBOB Chapter



D-DAY

We salute all those who made that initial landing and gained the foothold that allowed the Allies to crush the Germans.

We salute those who manned the boats and the landing craft and particularly those who never made the beach.

We salute those who flew the planes, softened up the enemy and provided cover.

We salute those that scaled the cliffs to gain the high ground.

We salute those that dropped from the sky especially those who gave their lives before they landed.

We especially salute and pay tribute to those who never made it off the beach, many who gave up their youth so that the others behind them could gain that extra inch, another foot, a few yards.

And we salute all those that came after, through these beaches.

On this 50th Anniversary of the landing on D-Day may we all pause on the 6th of June and give thanks for those who went before us and pray that the good Lord grants them eternal rest for their job is done. God bless the Allies and God Bless America.



D-DAY REENACTMENT

A good response has been received of veterans planning to attend the D-Day commemoration at Virginia Beach, 1-5 June 1994. VBOBers will be marching, as a unit, in the parade to be held on Saturday, 4 June at Virginia Beach. Put your marching shows on and join us at 8:30AM, to line up, on Atlantic Ave at 16th Street. Be sure to break out your overseas cap, dust it off and be ready to march. If your overseas cap won't fit then get your Legion, VFW or VBOB cap ready. VBOB caps can be ordered through the Association. Be sure that someone is bringing your Chapter flag. Whether you were part of D-Day or D-day + you won't want to miss this 50th anniversary event.

If you did not register by 1 May 1994 to stay in the Barracks you can still attend the activities and stay in the local motels. Please call 1-800-VA BEACH and they will provide you with details. There are motels and hotels in all price ranges. This is a summer resort as you may know so it is important to make reservations as early as possible. Schools will be beginning to let out and families with early vacation thoughts may be in competition for rooms. For those wanting to stay as a group, in a motel/hotel please call Dick Kingsley, at 1-800-700-7702. He will arrange for a block of rooms at a more favorable group rate. There is no special rate for veterans, per se, other than through the group block of rooms that Dick Kingsley will arrange.

Layout

Some have asked about Camp Pendleton and Fort Story. Camp Pendleton is not to be confused with the Marine Corp complex with the same name. Camp Pendleton, VA is

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D-Day Reenactment

(Continued from front page)

now a National Guard Camp and sits at the lower end of the peninsular. It is where the reenactors and veterans staying in the barracks will be housed. Fort Story VA is about five miles on the other end of the peninsular and is where the actual reenactment will be performed. In between the two military installations is Virginia Beach.

Activities

For veterans staying in the barracks, they should proceed to Camp Pendleton and report to the Registration office, when they arrive. A list of activities is listed with the registration form. As with the Bulge reenactments the veterans will be providing their own entertainment and comradery, taking part in the announced activities, taking in the sights of Virginia Beach as well as sharing with the reenactors. For those staying in motel/hotels they should take advantage of Virginia Beach and are welcome to visit the veteran's barracks and say hello. The veterans barracks will be AIR-CONDITIONED. They should also plan to take part in the Friday activities at Camp Pendleton.

On Saturday after the parade in Virginia Beach you should plan to get to Fort Story early for the Reenactment. The Reenactment starts at 1:30PM however it is limited to 10,000 people. Once that number is reached or the event begins, the gates will be closed. Upon arriving at Fort Story for the Reenactment be sure to identify yourself as a veteran. You will be given a special identifying tag that will allow you to park and sit in the veterans section that is being set aside for veterans. On Saturday Evening there will be entertainment. It is part of the Barracks package. Make your plans now. Info or forms can be secured from John Bowen, 303-384-6533, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, 301-384-6533 or you may call Eric L.

D-DAY REENACTMENT & COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM

Wed 1 Jun 10AM+ Arrival of Reenactors & Veterans-Camp Pendleton
 Thu 2 Jun Training & Tactical for Reenactors
 Fri 3 Jun 10AM+ Historical Displays-Camp Pendleton VA
 10AM-2PM Landing Rehearsal
 8PM-1AM Commemorative Dance (Black-tie or Era Costume)
 Sat 4 Jun 10-11:30AM Parade-Atlantic Ave/ Virginia Beach Oceanfront
 2PM Commemorative Ceremony-Fort Story
 Guest Speakers: Senator John Warner
 Dr. Brooks Kleber
 Dr G. William Whitehurst
 Re-Enactment begins following the ceremony
 Sun 5 Jun 10AM Wreath laying-Cape Henry Monument-Fort Story

Gibson, President and event coordinator of the D-Day Normandy Commemorative Celebration on 804-455-8400 days or 804-431-9339 evenings.

Veterans staying in the barracks should bring the following items: sleeping bag or sheets & blanket (Barracks are Air-Conditioned), pillow, light clothing, sweater in case of evening cold snap, lock for wall locker, flashlight if you need to get up at night, lawnchair or card table chair (remember how tiring it got sitting on the army bunks), towel and wash cloth, toiletries, snacks or whatever.

SEE YOU THERE

291st INF REGT 75th INF

The Regiment received its first experience with enemy posing as American Soldiers, - a situation prevalent in the 1st Army Sector - On the 2nd of Jan at 1230, S/Sgt Pazzolo, Co B, was forced at pistol point into a jeep at Vaux Chavanue. He was taken north to the vicinity of Champ de Harre, being questioned during that time concerning armor and guns passing through the area. S/Sgt Pazzolo pretended he was a green replacement and did not give any information of value to the enemy. At 1445, Pazzolo fell of the jeep and escaped as it skidded making a left turn at Champ de Haire, and the jeep proceeded towards Fague. No further trace was found of either the jeep or its occupants.

MG Ridgeway visited 291st CP @ 1300
 16 Jan 45

OTHER EVENTS

May 21, 1994 Armed Forces Day
 Fort Indiantown Gap PA WWII Commemoration, Parade & static displays.

Aberdeen Proving Grounds MD,
 Static displays

Andrews Air Force Base MD

May 26-29 1994 Ft Bragg, NC

All-American Week Living History Display. Division museum displays, Division review, and Airborne jumps.

Jun 1-5 1994 Ft Story VA, Cp Pendleton VA and Virginia Beach VA. 50th Anniversary of D-Day (see front page).

June 4-5 1994 World War II Commemorative Weekend Reading PA Regional Airport. Special guest, Bob Morgan, pilot of the Memphis Belle. Sponsored by Mid-Atlantic Air Museum, 215-372-7333.

June 4-5 1994 D-Day Commemoration at Eisenhower National Historic Site, Gettysburg PA, 717-334-1124

June 6, 1994 D-Day Commemoration ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery. D-Day presentation of music of the period at Wolf Trap, VA during the evening, free.

BULGE MONUMENT

The Delaware Valley Chapter of VBOB is on the road to success (70%) in spearheading the Battle of the Bulge monument to be placed at Valley Forge Military Academy, Penna. Your donations are still needed to put this, your monument, over the top. Send your donations to George Linthicum, Chmn, 2605 Orchard Dr, Broomall PA 19008.

SUMMARY of the REGIMENTAL SITUATION on D-DAY, 6 JUNE 1944

The 16th Infantry landed on Beach OMAHA, FOX GREEN and EASY RED with two BLTs abreast; the 2nd BLT on the right (EASY RED) and the 3rd BLT on the left (FOX GREEN). The 1st BLT, initially in reserve, landed on beach EASY RED behind the 2nd BLT. (For boundaries between Battalions, Zones of Action, Objectives and BLT troops, see F.O. #5, Hqs, 16th CT dated May 1944.)

The 2nd BLT was landed at 0630 hours on 6 June 1944 with Companies E and F abreast; Company E on the right on the beach EASY RED, between Colleville Sur Mer and St Laurent Sr Mer. The failure of LCT (R)'s (Naval Rocket Craft) prearranged Naval and Air missions to hit their assigned targets, coupled with the failure of "DD" tanks to function as planned, caused the 2nd BLT to land under the most adverse circumstances.

About 300 yards off the beach, the landing craft came under withering artillery, MG and mortar fire. The companies were not landed in an organized manner but were landed to the left of their assigned sectors in a disorganized condition. This was due mainly to the loss of key officers and enlisted personnel from enemy fire while trying to reach the beach. The assault companies were pinned down on the beach and the reserve company, Company G, 16th Infantry, having landed at H+30 minutes under intense fire, was able to penetrate to the high ground overlooking the beach.

The 3rd BLT with Companies I and L abreast, Co L on the right was scheduled to land at 0630 hours on beach FOX GREEN which was south and to the east of Colleville Sur Mer. However, the touchdown was delayed one half hour due to weather conditions.

Co K was forced to take over the mission of Co I as the Navy had taken CO I off course and had nearly landed them in the vicinity of

PORT EN BESSEN. The 3rd BLT was disorganized after reaching the beach due to the loss of key officers and enlisted men from the withering enemy artillery, mortar and MG fire. The battalion was forced to fight piecemeal action during the morning and it was not until late afternoon that the battalion was able to be organized as such in the vicinity of LE GD HAMEAU.

The 1st BLT started landing at H+70 minutes on beach EASY RED under intense enemy artillery and MG fire from the high ground to their front and right flank. They were able, however, to follow through the gap made by Co G, and gradually to clean the high ground overlooking the beach of enemy. They were then given the mission originally assigned to the 2nd BLT.

Cannon Co lost all six of its 105 Howitzers (M-3), which were loaded in DUKWs, through sinking and fought as infantrymen with the 1st BLT.

Anti-Tank Co 16th Inf was unable to get any of its guns from the beach before late afternoon of D-Day due to the fact that the beach exits were still being covered by enemy artillery and MG fire.

The 7th FA Bn did not get their guns to shore according to plan until about 1400 hours D-Day, and lost seven out of 12 guns when their DUKWs sank.

The 62nd FA Bn did not arrive on the beach until about 1800 hours D-Day as they were loaded on LCTs and were unable to beach due to heavy artillery fire which covered the beach continually.

The Advance CP CT 16th which landed at H+50 minutes was unable to function as all communication equipment was either lost or destroyed by enemy action and key personnel killed, including the Regimental Executive Officer.

The Regimental CP CT 16 landed at H+110 minutes and was immediately subjected to enemy artillery, MG and small arms fire.

Reorganization was instigated immediately by the Regt Commander and the beaches were rapidly cleaned of personnel through the one gap available on EASY RED>

By late afternoon of D-Day the 2nd BLT 16th Inf had organized a defensive position to the south and west of Colleville Sur Mer. The 1st BLT was tied in on the right flank and held the high ground about 1000 yds just south and west of Courville Sur Mer.

The 3rd BLT held positions to the east and south of LE GD HAMEAU. In the meantime, the 18th Inf had been assigned the original objective of the 1st Bn, 16th Inf and had pushed south of Colleville Sur Mer, but left snipers and isolated groups of enemy in their wake which had to be cleaned out.

The 26th Inf CT, having landed at about 1830 hours, the 1st Bn was attached to the 16th CT and was assigned the mission of securing the high ground about 1000 yds to the south of Le GD Hameau and to gain and maintain contact with the 3rd Bn 16th Inf at Le GD Hameau and with the 2nd Bn 16th Inf south of Colleville Sur Mer. This was done and the regimental sector was tied in for the night of 6-7 June 1944.

The enemy situation on the regimental front on D-Day was as follows:

During the first two days of the landing it became apparent that the advance intelligence information relative to the enemy's disposition and defensive installations was highly accurate. The 1st Bn of the 726th Infantry was in position with the 3rd Co in the Colleville-St Honorine area, and the 4th CO at Prot En Bessin. The two other companies of the Bn were in position east of Port En Bessin.

The most discouraging feature of the landing was the fact that the 352nd German Inf Div was

D-DAY 16th INF REGT

(Continued from Page 3)

on the day of the landing. Thus, instead of having just two companies to face the regiment, it was faced with two additional Bns.

Prisoners were taken by the regt during D-Day from the 1st and 3rd Bns of the 726th Inf Regt, the 2nd Bn 915th Inf Regt and from the 2nd Bn 916th Inf Regt. Many of these troops were rushed to Colleville early in D-Day on bicycles and hundred of bicycles were found in the area south of Colleville.

Prisoners from the 352nd Arty Regt were also captured. A map found in a pillbox at Exit E-3 on D-Day disclosed locations of all guns of the 352nd Inf Div, observation posts, Bn Regt and Div command posts. This map was rushed to HQs, Div Arty and fire was placed on all installations noted on the map early on D+1. As a result of the Naval and arty fire on these positions, enemy arty fire on D+1 became inaccurate and was apparently fired from maps, the OP's having been knocked out. In addition, a bombing mission was placed on the 352nd Div's CP shown on the captured map and direct hits were observed in the midst of an area in which numerous staff cars were located.

During the day approximately 120 prisoners were taken and a like number on D+1. All prisoners talked freely and gave such information as they had.

Casualties suffered by the 16th Infantry on D-Day are as listed below:

	Off	EM
Killed In Action	05	45
Believed KIA	10	26
Missing in Action		
	03	354
Wounded in Action	18	510
Total Regt Casualties	36	935

For the Regimental Comdr:

Carl W Plitt
Maj 16th Inf
S-3

(The above Report was found in the unit records of the 16th Inf Regt, 1st Inf Div, at the National Archives, Suitland MD)

CIVILIAN REACTION TO THE ATOMIC BOMB

Reactions of civilians in the Division Area to the Atomic Bomb:

1. A Burgermeister, age 54, was of the opinion that it is a very destructive force, inhuman and should not be used against soldiers who are fighting for idealistic reasons. He was willing to make exceptions of course in the case of nations which play power politics but as one might expect he did not classify the members of the former Axis as being nations which played power politics. He did not believe that the intervention of this weapon would be a factor in the preservation of peace, but claimed that the possessing powers would be almost certain of victory.

2. A housewife, age 32, said that there had been talk of such a bomb being developed in Germany, but lack of Uranium had made research on the matter impractical. She regarded possession of the atom bomb by the US and Britain exclusively as being most desirable since they could more easily keep Russia "in line."

3. A steward, age 25, regarded it as a decisive factor in the winning of any future war, though he felt eventually some counteracting agent would be discovered.

4. A Doctor and his wife regretted that Atomic force is being used for destructive rather than constructive purposes. They claim that there is tremendous responsibility resting on the Allies that the bomb is not abused. they hoped that future aggression by Russia would be impeded by Anglo-American possession of the bomb.

5. A former weapons engineer in the Wehrmacht, age 36, thought it would be a powerful weapon for future peace, that no aggressor nation would dare to rearm. "I am glad that a country as the United States is the one that discovered it."

6. A mechanic and ex-soldier, age 21

V FOR VICTORY

A PW, former newspaper reporter and member of the German Propaganda bureau, tells the following interesting story.

In the spring of 1941, Allied Propaganda initiated the "V" for Victory campaign in German occupied France - a brilliant idea, the success of which, however, was nullified by a cunning counter blow of German propaganda. Suddenly one saw and heard people in Paris restaurants, on the boulevards, etc., tapping on table tops, etc. the word "Victorie" and also making the Victory sign with the middle and forefinger of their right hands. German propaganda recognized the danger of this Allied V-campaign and acted speedily. The next day, V-signs glittered in every French City and village, on German private military vehicles, and in other occupied territories. The "Victoria Song" (Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten) was broadcast from every radio station; pamphlet propaganda, the press, etc. were all called in. As a result, German propaganda was able to shatter the Allied V-campaign within a few days and was even successful in getting across to the people of occupied countries that the whole "V-business" had been a German idea from the very beginning. (Source: Hq Com Z, G-2 Per Rpt dated 29 June 1945 taken from Hq OISE Intermediate Section, Com Zone, USFET, 16 Jul 1945 from Seventh US Army Bulletin No 73, 3 Aug 45.)

said: "The most powerful weapon of destruction yet devised by man. It is my fervent hope that it will be used only as a threat to keep warlike nations in line. I am glad that it was not Germany that discovered it."

7. An office girl, age 18, said that from news she had learned the description of this bomb, that it is hard to believe that such a powerful weapon could exist. She thought it could be propaganda; that such a bomb might make for peace. (Source: Intelligence Summary No 30, Hq 78th Inf Div, 23 Aug 45)

D-DAY

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave allies you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world. Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely. But the free men of the world are marching together to Victory. Good Luck! And let us beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking. (General Dwight David Eisenhower's message to Allied forces just prior to D-

On the morning of 6 June 1944 the 16th Infantry Regiment, under the most adverse conditions, assaulted the coast of France near Colleville Sur-Mer against a long prepared, determined and powerfully emplaced enemy. While moving inshore in assault craft, violent seas swamped the regiment's supporting weapons and hurled men and boats into the intricate and almost impenetrable xxxgiers of mine-capped underwater obstacles. From commanding and numerous reinforced concrete pill boxes, machine gun emplacements and sniper's nests imbedded in cliffsides impregnable to the violent air and naval bombardments preceding the assault came a withering hail of artillery and small arms fire that struck down hundreds as they struggled through shoulder deep water towards the beach.

Within a few hours almost a third of the assault strength were casualties. Men dragged themselves shoreward leaderless and scattered by the loss of key personnel. Blocked from advancing by minefields, pinned down by annihilating fire, wave after wave piled up on a seven yard beachhead until thousands of men lay huddled on the fire swept shore.

In the face of an apparently hopeless situation, the 16th Infantry began its reorganization. Officers and men gathered the remnants of their units together, and slowly, with groups being cut down almost as soon as formed, began to develop from a confused, hurt mass into a cohesive, determined fighting force. Innumerable acts of gallantry were performed in the face of superior enemy fire. Men lay in the flat, mine-strewn meadows in plain view of the enemy and returned the direct fire of protected enemy artillery and machine guns with rifle and rocket launcher fire. Leaderless men attached themselves to the forming groups. A breach was blown in the wire and the Regiment advanced. Human mine markers lay in the mine fields guiding the passage of the battling troops. With grim determination, suffering terrible casualties, the Regiment forced its way forward in a frontal assault on five principal enemy strong points. They engaged the enemy and, in a magnificent display of courage and will to win, destroyed them.

The beach opened by the 16th Infantry Regiment was the main personnel exit for the V Corps for forty eight hours. Battered to a terrible degree the Regiment continued in its advance toward its initial objective. They drove back a fanatically resisting enemy and repulsed five separate counterattacks by numerically superior forces until the 1st

Division and V Corps beachhead was secured.

With complete devotion to duty, and recognition of an obligation to its traditions, the 16th Infantry Regiment added a glowing page to military annals. Individually and collectively the members of the 16th Infantry Regiment turned threatened catastrophe into a glorious victory for the American Army.

PRELUDE TO THE INVASION OF FRANCE

The big picture was the invasion of France. The British 2nd Army on the left, the American V Corps in the center and the American VII Corps on the right would land simultaneously at H-Hour, D-Day on the coast of France with the mission of establishing a beachhead on the continent from which further offensive operations could be developed.

The 11th Amphibious Force would provide escort, clear underwater mine fields and obstacles off shore, protect the transport area, and would assist landing with gunfire, both prearranged and on call.

The 9th Air Force would support the attack by prearranged bombing missions prior to H-Hour and by missions on call after H-Hour.

The 1st US Inf Div (less 26th CT) (plus 116th CT), reinforced, would land on Beach OMAHA at H-Hour on D-Day with two RCTS's abreast, 116th CT on the right; 16th CT on the left; reduce the beach defenses in its Zone of Action and proceed with all possible speed to D-Day phase line, seize and secure it prior to two hours before dark on D-Day; cover the landing of the remainder of V Corps landing on Beach OMAHA, and be prepared to participate in the extension of the beachhead to the South and Southwest.

The general plan of artillery support would be the 7 FA Bn supporting advance of 2nd and 1st Bns, 16th Inf and would be prepared to fire in the sector of the 3rd Bn.

The 62nd Armd FA Bn S/P, initially in direct support of the 3rd Bn, would be prepared to reinforce the fires of the 7th FA Bn. The 62nd Armd FA Bn S/P would take position in boat lanes about 3000 yards in rear of leading wave; it would commence firing at about H minus 30 (H-30), lift fire at H-5 to targets on high ground. Forward observers were to land with assault companies and obtain suitable observation to fulfill their missions. The 7th FA Bn would be in the vicinity of the 16th Inf CP.

Forward observers were to land with assault companies and obtain suitable observation to fulfill their missions. The 7th FA Bn would be in the vicinity of the 16th Inf CP.

The tentative Naval gunfire support of the initial assault and the subsequent advance inland of the 1st US Inf Div would consist of the protection of shipping from enemy aircraft, surface forces and submarines, and the support by bombardment of the initial assault. During the approach to the beaches the Navy would furnish area fire on and in rear of beaches; direct fire on the strong points and beach defense; and after landing would fire on flanks and rear area.

Tentative number of Naval support strength would be the Battleship Ravilies, three cruisers, the Bellona, Black Prince and Glasgow; ten destroyers (8 fleet type, 2 hunt type); and fire support craft consisting of 5 LCG (L); 9 LCT (R); 24 LCS (S); 16 LCT (A&HE); 2 LCT (CB) and 9 LCT (5)....

The 9th Air Force, according to the air support plan, would give continuous cover over beaches and shipping, escort to airborne forces, bombers, fighter-bombers, reconnaissance aircraft, smoke -laying aircraft; delay of enemy reserves and close support for landings....

The prime beach and underwater obstacles that would confront us: German steel hedgehogs, about 5 ft in ht. German steel tetrahedra, about 5 ft in ht. Upright anti-vehicle obstacles topped with Teller mines. Belgian "Element C" obstacles, ht 7'7"-width 8'5". Anti-personnel mines....

The Signal Communication plan for the advance CP was: CT 16 to hand carry two SCR 284's, one for use in Regimental Command Net, one for use in Division Command Net....The advance CP would be accompanied by a small Signal detachment of the Amphibious Engineer Battalion which would set up a Bn switchboard, connect inf regt telephone lines and immediately start laying lateral lines to adjacent engineer battalion and lines to its companies.

The rear CP CT 16 would operate two SCR 609's, one in the Regimental R/T Command Net, and one in the Division R/T Command Net. It would operate one SCR 300 in the Regimental Command Net. The set would be in operation, receiving, tuned in and ready to transmit from the time the assault wave reached the beach. Operation would then be continuous whether the radio was on the move or not.

Every unit of the Bns and Special Units would hand carry ashore all its essential communication equipment. No equipment needed initially on shore would be left loaded on vehicles. This applied to Amphibious Engineer Bn, Inf Bn and Inf Regimental switchboards, radios telephones, wire, message center, cipher devices, reel units, etc....For visual communication blinker and flag signals would be used to identify beaches and for boat control by joint assault signal companies. The general plan was for the 16th CT, (Reinforced) to land on Omaha; at FOX GREEN and EASY RED, at H-Hour, D-Day with the 2nd & 3rd Bns abreast; the 2nd Bn on the right, the 1st Bn in reserve. Objective of the 16th Combat Team would be to reduce the beach defenses in the Regimental Zone of Action, and move with all possible speed to secure and occupy objectives; to gain and maintain contact with the 116th Combat Team on the right and the British 50th Division on the left; to cover the landing of the remainder of the 1st US Inf Div; to patrol to HUPPAIN, TOUR EN BESSIN, and TREVIERES; and to be prepared to

continue the attack to the D+1 Phase line on the morning of D+1.....

The massive preparation for invasion thundered into a solid pattern. Each of the three Bn Landing Teams had a definite objective, and each objective would be hotly defended.

The plan for the 2nd Bn of the 16th CT was to land on Omaha Beach, EASY RED at H Hour on D-Day and to reduce the beach defenses in its Zone of Action; capture COLLEVILLE-SUR-MER, seize and hold objectives; dig in and establish all around defensive positions and be prepared to augment the defense by use of DD Tanks and elements of the Eng Spec Brigade moving into semi-prepared positions between company strongpoints; be prepared to repel enemy counterattacks; cover landing of remainder of 1st US Inf Div...establish road blocks as indicated and to patrol to TREVIERES

The plan for the 3rd Bn was to land on Beach Omaha, FOX GREEN at H Hour on D-Day and reduce beach defenses in its Zone of Action, yurn east and reduce beach defenses between Eastern limit of Beach Omaha, FOX GREEN and the 1st US Inf Div boundary; to capture LE GRANDE MAMEAU < LA VAILEE and STE HONORINE-DES-PERTES and to seize and hold objectives as indicated; to dig in and establish all around defensive positions; be prepared to repel enemy counterattacks; to neutralize and be prepared on orders from Hqs to assist in the capture of PORT-EN-BESSIN with the battalion reinforced...to establish road blocks; to patrol to HUPPAIN and TOUR-EN-BESSIN; to be prepared to continue the attack.

The plan for the 1st Bn, intially in reserve, was to land on Beach Omaha, EASY RED, and pass through the 2nd Bn as rapidly as possible, capture FORMIGNY and SURRAIN and seize and establish all around defensive positions; to be prepared to repel enemy counterattacks; to be prepared to cover the valley leading to BAYEUX with fire...to secure bridges south and southwest of TREVIERES where minimum personnel would be used and bridges would be prepared for demolition; to establish road blocks; to patrol the BAYEUX-STE LO Road and to be prepared to continue the attack....

The I&R Platoon was to have one six-man patrol move directly to the vicinity of MT CAUVIN (735853) and establish an OP and report all enemy installations and movements observed enroute to and after establishing the OP. This was to be in the 3rd Bn area.

Another six-man patrol, was to move directly to the vicinity (637856) and establish an OP and report all enemy installations and movements observed enroute to and after establishing the OP. This was to be in the 1st Bn area.

The most favorable observation from the attacker's standpoint would be found on MT CAUVIN and on the high ground to the north of TREVIERES, for these two vantage points would give good observation of the main routes or approach which would have to be used by the defending forces when they would launch their counterattacks.

The military aspects of the terrain showed that the sea approaches to the ASSAULT BEACH would be clear, containing no obstacles to navigation; that there were exposed anchorages in depths of 36 ft, 3/4 mile offshore from any point along the coast. High ground at GRANCAMP-LES BAINS and STE HORORINE-DES-PERTES commanded this

anchorage.

The beach was of firm sand below High Water Land and of coarse shingles above this line to the back of the beach. Beach roadway expedients would be necessary above High Water Line. The beach was 7,900 yards long; runnels existed sporadically never more than 2 1/2 ft deep, promising difficulty at certain stages of the tide at various points on the beach. The landing of LCTs could begin 5 hours before High Water and continue to 5 hours after High Water. LSTs would have to be dried out for unloading as gradients would not permit crafts to approach shore close enough for vehicular wading. The distance from the back of the beach to High Water averaged 25 yards. The eastern portion of the beach was backed by a grassy bank 4 to 6 feet high, slope 1:4. The remaining portion of the beach had a rough stone seawall 6 to 12 feet high, slope 1:1 to 1:2. It was possible that at High Water with an offshore wind, the sea wall might be awash.

The cliffs between VIERVILLE and PONTE-DE-LA-PERCEE were not scaleable without apparatus, thus the portion of the beach was reduced to 5,000 yards. Since the beach was slightly concaved, the heights on either end commanded its entire length, and considerable sections would be subjected to observed fire from the high ground immediately to the rear.

Observation would favor the defender. Fields of fire for the attacker would be poor in the early stages of the advance for weapons of all types. The only cover and concealment on the beach would be provided by the seawall, the groynes and the cliffs.

The exits of the 16th Combat Team would be E3, a ten foot tarmac road running from the back of the beach to COLLEVILLE, and E1 leading to ST LAURENT. The exits were narrow, winding, but adequate. About 100 yards of roadway would be necessary over the dune sand between the beach and the road. Exit F1 was a sandy track, not more than 6 ft wide, leading from the beach over rising ground to join a rough road, 8 ft wide, leading to COLLEVILLE.

Once off the beach, observation and fields of fire would be limited because of the earth hedges and trees which lined the borders of the numerous small cultivated fields. The roads in the area, generally sunken and lined with thick, substantial, hedges interspersed with rows of trees standing 15 to 20 ft high, would limit fields of fire. Small arms and machine guns would be limited to short ranges.

The cliff overlooking the beach must be cleared of the enemy for the assault troops would be subjected to observed fire from both flanks.

The rapid rise and fall of the tide and the strong tidal current will make it difficult for the enemy to maintain underwater obstacles on Beach Omaha. The width of the beach at low tide would present difficulties in the sighting of underwater obstacles preventing landing at various stages of the tide. The shingle strip along Beach Omaha would be a possible obstacle to movement of M/T and tanks. The concave shape of the beach would permit grazing fire by flat trajectory weapons sited anywhere along the beach or the flat strip directly to the rear.

The enemy to be encountered in the assault was the *716th Infantry Division* (no combat experience) with Hqs at CAEN, with 30% of personnel reported to be poles and not more than 50% Germans. Their equipment included British French and Polish weapons. The division was composed of the *726th Inf*

Regt, holding the coast from the mouth of the DOUVE to LONGUES; and the *736th Inf Regt*, holding the coast from ARROMANCHES to the ORNE. There was an indication that a third Inf Regt might have been added, location unknown to date, composed of Georgians under German Officers and NCOs. The possible third regt of the *716th Inf Div* might have elements in the BAYEUX-ISIGNY area. The division's artillery was *656th Regt*, probably composed of 3 Bns. A few Russians in German uniforms were reported in TREVIERS and FORMIGNY. At CARENTAN, according to reports, was the Hqs of an Inf Regt which might be part of the *243rd Inf Div*, reported at LA HAYE DU PUIITS. Also at CARENTAN was reported the *17th Machine Gun Bn* and a battery of two 280mm railway guns, range 40,000 yards.

Mobile units in the CERENCES-COUTANCES area were believed to be elements of *Schnelle Brigade 30*. This mobile brigade was a brigade staff formed to control a number of *Schnelle Abterlunzen (mobile bns)* belonging to GHQ pools. It was reported that *Schnelle Brigade 30* had its Hqs at COUTANCES; that it controlled 3 Bns, the *517th Mobile Bn* at ST Lo, a Bn at COUTANCES and another one at CERENCES. It was reported that each mobile bn contained bicyclists, motorcyclists, self-propelled anti-tank guns, armored reconnaissance vehicles and possibly cavalry/

The mobile counterattack divs, in NW France, that might be committed as divs in the assault area were the *SS Panzer Div Hitler Jugend*; the *21st Panzer Div*; the *179th Panzer Tr Div*; the *2nd Panzer Div*; the *353rd Inf Div*; the *SS Panzer Gren Division Goest Von Berlightingen*; the *273rd Panzer Tr Div*; the *SS Panzer Div Das Reich*; and the *3rd Parachute Div*.

It was estimated that the enemy had enough aircraft available to make 1500 sorties over the entire NEPTUNE area on D-Day, 150 of which could be fighter bomber missions and 100 of which could be long-range against the beaches, and 250 of which could be long range bomber missions against shipping. The balance would be fighter cover or sweeps.

Known enemy defenses were reinforced infantry positions guarding exits from the beaches. Strongpoints consisted of pillboxes, concrete personnel shelters and ordinary field emplacements. Some tank turrets mounted on concrete structures have been reported. In addition to heavy weapons such as machine guns and mortars, many strongpoints contained light guns, AT guns and AA guns, mounted either in open emplacements or in concrete casements. Older type pillboxes, personnel shelters and casements were 3 ft thick the newer type 6 ft, 6" thick. Anti-tank ditches had been constructed across most of the important beach exits. Nearly all strongpoints were extensively wired and mined....

The enemy morale, it was reported, was not good. Their equipment was generally second rate. Of the civil population, the Normans had a political record of antagonism to strong authority. At present their dislikes were directed against the Germans and Vichy. Thousands of Normans from CALVADOS had been evacuated by the Germans in anticipation of invasion. Workers were forced to go to Germany....It is believed that a great majority of the population would do its best to impede German resistance in case of invasion

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Continued on next page.

Editor: Neil Thompson

Guest Editor: John D. Bowen

SPIRIT OF AMERICA

The Chapter has secured 40 free tickets for the Saturday, 11 June, 2PM performance of this military extravaganza which combines top performances of the US Army Band (Pershing's Own) and the 3d US Infantry (The Old Guard) in a thrilling performance at the Capital Centre (now US Air Arena) Landover MD.

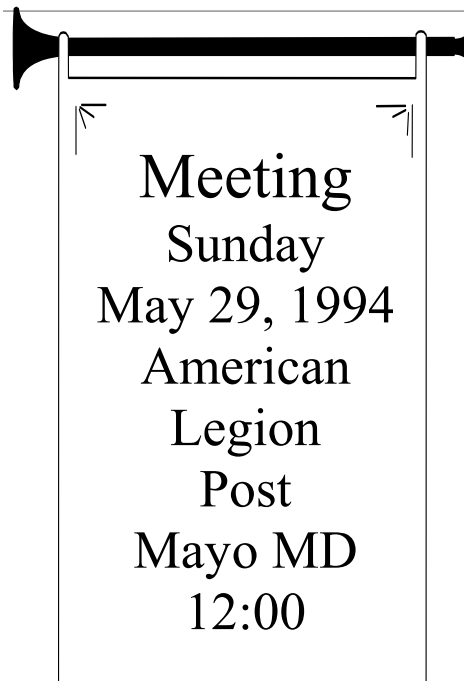
The story of the American soldier is traced through the birth of our nation into the 21st Century. Moments in history are re-created through spectacular production effects and magnificent musical compositions.

One of the highlights of this two-hour show includes the precision of The Army Drill Team, displaying their skill and coordination in dramatic silence. Later, the voices and instruments of the US Army Band fill the arena in delightful sound.

Though the tickets are free there is a \$6 parking fee charged by Abe Polin for parking in this taxpayer provided lot. Double up and car pool. There is no reserved seating but we will try to block off an area with our chapter flag.

Tickets can be had by calling our Chaplain, John Bowen, on 301-3846533 or writing him at 613 Chichester Ln, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

Other performances are Jun 9&10 at 8 PM, June 11 at 8 PM, and Jun 12th at 1:30 and 6:30 PM. For these shows send a self-addressed envelope to: Spirit of America, Fort Lesley J Mc Nair, Wash DC 20319-5050. This is an outstanding event.



Meeting
Sunday
May 29, 1994
American
Legion
Post
Mayo MD
12:00

MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE

A Presidential Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Tombs of the Unknown Soldiers will be followed by a Memorial Service.

11AM

Plan to arrive around 10:30

Memorial Day Ceremonies will also be held at all MD Veteran Cemeteries.

ARCHIVES EXHIBITS

Two exhibits recently opened, on WWII, at the National Archives Rotunda at 7th and Constitution. **Powers of Persuasion** exhibits WWII Posters that we all knew. **Faces of War** reveals in words and images the very nature of war. Free

**DID YOU PAY YOUR
CHAPTER DUES ON
16 DEC?**

PARADE
Glen Burnie
22 May 1994
Contact Darrell Kuhn on 766-6912 for
parade information

Home from Walter Reed Hospital
John Mc Neese
Monty Montelongo
are on the mend.
Get back in shape soon!



DAYS TO FLY THE FLAG

**8 May - VE Day- 49th Anniv. of the Surrender of
Germany. Also Mother's Day**
21 May - Armed Forces Day
30 May - Memorial Day
14 Jun - Flag Day