



**The Association**  
OF FORMER STUDENTS®

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY®

## *Traveling Aggies*

In the Footsteps of Rudder

August 28, 2016

September 7, 2016



**TRAVEL PLANNERS**  
INTERNATIONAL

**Aug 28**

**Depart** from your home city to Paris. *Overnight Bayeux* *B,D*

**Aug 29 Monday**

**Arrival and on to Normandy**

After an early morning arrival in Paris at Charles de Gaulle Airport, the group will depart for Normandy by motorcoach. Check into our hotel. Followed by an early welcome dinner.

*Overnight Bayeux* *D*

**August 30 Tuesday**

**Touring Normandy**



After breakfast at our hotel the first day of our tour is an overview of the British and Canadian sectors of the D-Day invasion area. We begin with a visit to the German coastal gun battery at Longues-Sur-Mer, and then we move on to the temporary harbor at Arromanches, followed by a visit to Gold Beach. After visiting the site where Sergeant Major Stan Hollis earned the Victoria Cross, we will push on to Juno Beach where the Canadian 3rd Infantry Division landed on June 6th. After that we will walk around at Site Fortifié Hillman, the command post of the German 736 Grenadier Regiment and the scene of a critical firefight during the early hours of the invasion. We finish up the first day with a visit to Pegasus Bridge: the famous location where British gliders captured crossings over the Caen Canal and the Orne River before dawn on D-Day

**August 31 Wednesday**  
**Touring Normandy**

Breakfast at our hotel. On our second full day in Normandy we will visit some of the most important sites in the American Airborne drop zone area, as well as Utah beach. We will walk in the sand where the 4th Infantry Division landed, explore Norman hedgerows, discover obscure battles, and learn the names of soldiers who fought them. Other sites are better known, like Brécourt Manor, where Dick Winters and a group of men from "Easy" Company conducted a now-famous assault on a German field artillery battery that was portrayed in both the book and mini-series Band of Brothers. We will also visit Ste. Mère-Église, where paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division landed during the pre-dawn hours of D-Day, and La Fièvre, where a stone bridge and raised causeway were the scene of a fierce battle during the first three days of the invasion.

*Overnight Bayeux* *B,D*

**September 1 Thursday**  
**Touring Normandy**

After breakfast we begin the day at Pointe du Hoc located four miles west of Omaha Beach for a detailed look at the site of the daring assault by the men of the 2nd Ranger Battalion. We will hear how Lt. Col. James Earl Rudder and his men scaled the cliffs to neutralize a German artillery battery as well as the

subsequent heroic defense of the terrain during repeated counterattacks after dark on June 6th and before sunrise on June 7th. We will also visit Omaha Beach to hear more stories of bravery and courage. We finish the day at the Normandy American Cemetery that overlooks Omaha Beach.

*Overnight Bayeux* *B,D*

**September 2 Friday**  
**Depart for Maastricht**

An early breakfast on our transfer day to Maastricht. Upon arrival we will check into our hotel. This afternoon we have a walking tour of Maastricht.



*Overnight Maastricht* *B,D*

**September 3 Saturday**  
**The Hurtgen Forest and Hill 400**

Six months after the 2nd Rangers assault of Pointe du Hoc, Rudder's Rangers were ordered to capture Hill 400 near the German village of Bergstein. The objective was an icy, slippery hill 1,322 feet high and laden with fighting positions. Several attacks against the German offensive on the hill had resulted in many losses to the allied forces. The Rangers were told to attack and hold Hill



400 for 24 hours or until duly relieved. On December 7th, D and F Companies launched an assault on Hill 400 at 0730. After a Ranger patrol reconnoitered the height in the predawn darkness, one company took position to provide fire support, while two others charged up the slope. Catching the Germans by surprise, the Rangers seized control of the crest and captured twenty-eight prisoners with only light losses. Almost immediately, however, they were hit by enemy shellfire and two counterattacks. Here again, Rudder and his men experienced intense combat and suffered heavy losses. By late afternoon only twenty-five of Rudder's men remained on top of the hill but on December 9th the 2nd Ranger Battalion, or rather what was left of it, was relieved.

*Overnight Maastricht      B*

### **September 4 Sunday Depart for Luxembourg City**

A leisurely breakfast and late departure today as we head to Luxembourg City for the next three nights. On December 8, 1944, Rudder took command of the 28th Infantry Division's battle-ravaged 109th Infantry Regiment. With its new commanding officer, the 109th Infantry moved to the quiet front to the south in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg – a move that put the regiment in the crosshairs of the Battle of the Bulge. On the way to Luxembourg, we will visit the Mason Armstrong Memorial at Neufmesnil, the 291st Engineer Combat Battalion Memorial at the Lienne Creek



bridge, the Parker's Crossroads memorial at Baraque Fraiture, and Panther #401 in Houffalize.

*Overnight Luxembourg      B*

### **September 5 Monday Battle of the Bulge**

Today we drive north to visit sites associated with Easy Company, whose stories inspired the TV miniseries *Band of Brothers*: Halt Station, the foxholes of the Bois Jacques, the village of Foy, the cemetery at Recogne, the intersection at Noville and the original Easy



Company memorial at Rachamps. Before getting on the road to return to Luxembourg, we will also visit the Mardasson Memorial - a magnificent monument to the men who struggled throughout the siege of the city of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.

*Overnight Luxembourg      B*

### **September 6 Tuesday Bastogne and surrounding area**

Today we again drive north through Ettelbruck, but then we move on the town of Diekirch where Colonel Rudder's command post was located at the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge. While in Diekirch, we will also visit Musée National d'Histoire Militaire, Luxembourg's National Museum of Military History. This is one of the greatest military museum's in the entire world and it is generally dedicated to the ways that the Grand Duchy was affected by the Second World War. After a brief visit there, we will then follow the Sûre River to the east so that we can walk the ground where Rudder's men - the men of the 109th Infantry - experienced the hardships of combat during the Battle of the Bulge. We will see foxholes, dugouts and arbor glyphs left by Rudder's men on the Hoesdorf Plateau, and then we will even walk into Germany where we will climb into a bunker belonging to the Siegfried Line.

*Overnight Luxembourg      B,D*

### **September 7 Wednesday Depart for Home**

From Luxembourg



# TRAVEL PLANNERS

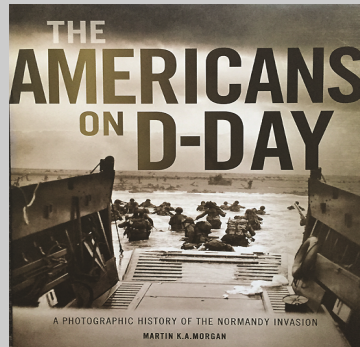
## INTERNATIONAL



**Martin K.A. Morgan** is an author/historian who specializes in American and military history. He holds a BA in history from the University of Alabama (1991), an MA in history from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (1996), and is currently a history doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He is the author of *Down To Earth: The 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment in Normandy* (Schiffer, 2004) and *The*

*Americans on D-Day: A Photographic History of the Normandy Invasion* (Zenith Press, 2014), and he contributes frequently to *World War II Quarterly*, *Shooting Illustrated* and *The American Rifleman*. He has also contributed to such other publications as *Aviation History*, *World War II*, *World War II History*, *Armchair General*, the *Garand Collector's Association Journal*, 39/45 (France) and *After the Battle* (England).

In addition to publishing, for over a decade Martin has also appeared regularly on television programs relating to historical subjects on PBS, Discovery, National Geographic, History, H2, The Weather Channel, Syfy, Oxygen, the Outdoor Channel, The Smithsonian Channel, and The American Heroes Channel. With a background as a park ranger and a museum professional, Martin's experience in public history paved the way for the publishing and broadcasting work he does today. Since 2002, he has been leading battlefield tours around the world, especially in Europe.



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# TRAVEL PLANNERS INTERNATIONAL

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Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

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