

# It's Normandy again after 50 years

I "was scared, because it was my first combat" said Art Mitchell of his involvement in the Normandy Invasion 50 years ago.



Art Mitchell served in the U.S. Army from December 1942 to October 1945.

Thousands of World War II veterans will return next month to Normandy for a 50 year anniversary of D-Day, the Normandy Invasion, also known as Operation Overlord. Veterans will return to Normandy with their families and old service buddies to visit, through one of four tour packages organized by Battlefield Tours, USA, Inc. of Louisiana.

Seventy-three year old, Arthur Mitchell of Warm Springs, the son of Louie Mitchell and Meta Tewee, is very excited to once again set foot on the sands of the Utah and Omaha beaches, where the invasion of Northern France from England began before dawn of June 6, 1944. Mitchell was one of 156,000 men who landed on the beaches of Normandy between the Orne estuary and the South Eastern end of Cotentin Peninsula which led Allied forces to the liberation of Europe and the surrender of Nazi Germany in May 1945.

Mitchell, just twenty three at the time of the famous D-Day said he felt, "scared, because it was my first combat."

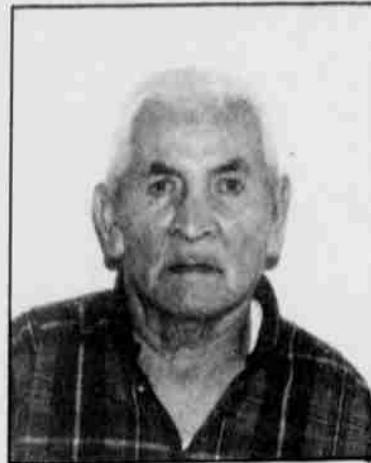
He was drafted into the United States 3rd Army, 80th Infantry Division, 319th Infantry Battalion in December of 1942, under General George Patton, at the age of twenty-one. He ranked as Staff Sergeant. He was a rifleman for almost two years and completed his service as a medic. While serving his country he served in five major battles which include Normandy, Battle of Bulge, Battle of

Northern France, Central Europe, and Austria. Mitchell served two years and eleven months of his life before he was discharged in October 1945. He then married Bernice Tohet Mitchell, January of 1946.

Mitchell was decorated with five battle stars; he was awarded a bronze star after the war, combat infantrymen badges, and also two combat medic badges, but he stated that he, "received the biggest prize in 44", which was the first Per Capita payment to Tribal Members for the amount of \$20 for the year.

He, as well as all veterans of the Battle of Normandy who visit the region in 1994 will be awarded a commemoration medal as a special anniversary gesture by the French. He will receive the medal during a ceremony, June 6, in which he intends to be dressed in full Indian Regalia. This will include a buckskin outfit as well as his war bonnet, which has a lot of history involved. Each feather on the bonnet symbolizes a battle fought in. Prior to himself, it belonged to World War I veteran, Louis Baker, who was originally from here, but did not live here. Baker told Mitchell that he is to pass the war bonnet onto someone in his family who not only has a history in the service, but actually fought in battles.

Four of Mitchell's family members will be making the trip with him; his wife Bernice, daughter Gloria, grandson Jose Calica, and niece Cassie Katchia. They will depart for Los



Art Mitchell

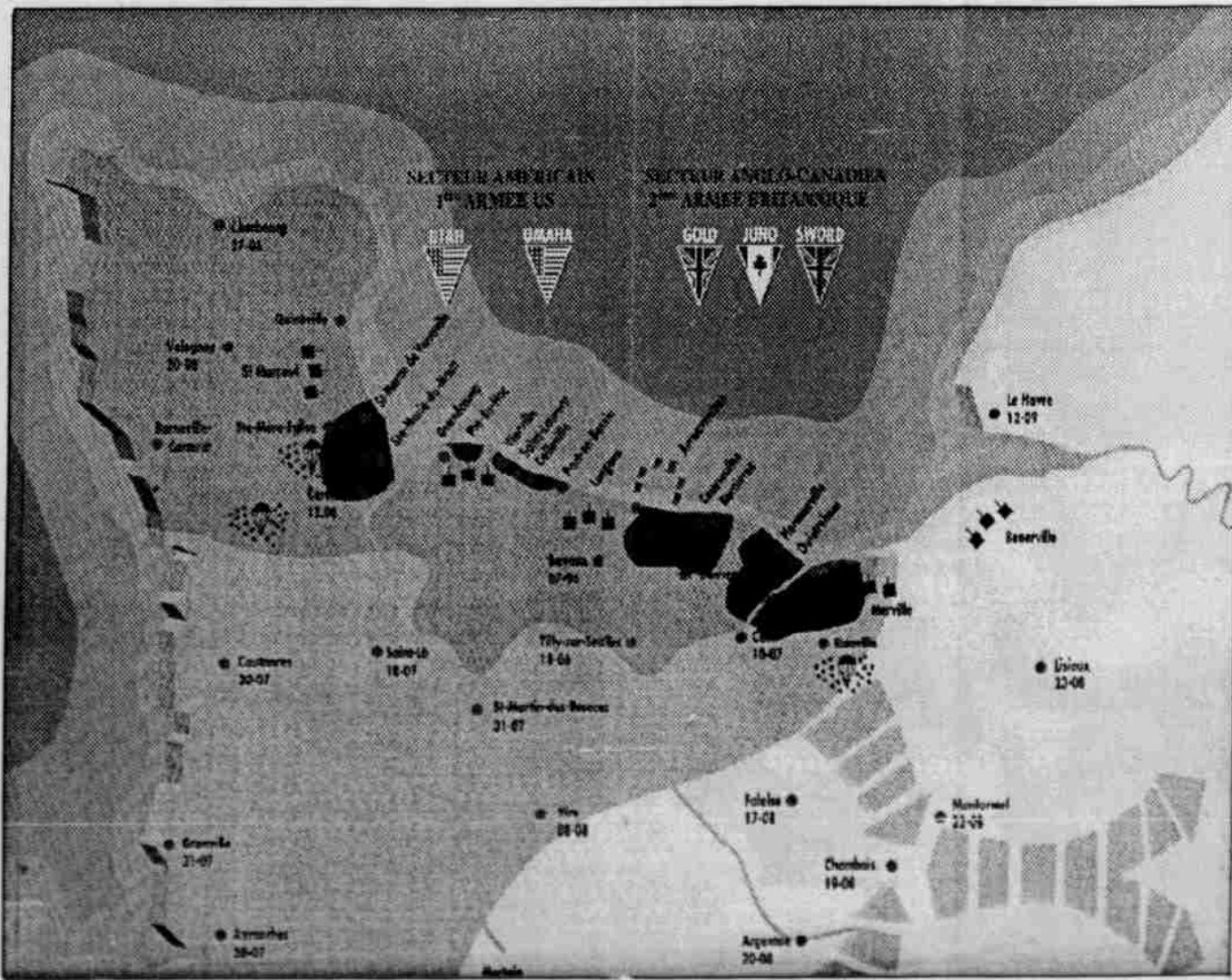
Angeles, Wednesday, June 1, and arrive June 3 in Normandy. Different landmarks will be visited, on June 6 (D-Day) ceremonies and celebrations of the day will take place. They will also stay in Paris for two nights before their trip ends June 9. It will cost approximately \$10,490 for the family to attend the anniversary, excluding the trips between Warm Springs and L.A.

Various fundraising activities have been held to raise money for the trip such as several Taco, Spaghetti, Luc-a-meen, and Chili & Frybread feeds since March. The family has been selling raffle tickets since the first of April for a drawing that was held at the Agency Longhouse during a going away dinner that was held for Mitchell on Thursday, May 26.

by Saphronia Katchia



Those who will be traveling to Normandy in June are pictured left to right; Jose Calica, Bernice Mitchell, Art Mitchell and Cassie Katchia. Pictured in front is Bonita Mitchell.



Pictured above is where the D-Day landings were in the battle of Normandy.