



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## A PROCLAMATION

### ETERNAL HEROES MEMORIAL DAYS

- WHEREAS:** On the night of June 5-6, 1944, more than 6,500 elite paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division - the first of the first - spearheaded the American airborne assault on the Cotentin Peninsula in Normandy, France with the critical missions of securing four causeways leading inland from the beach codenamed Utah and neutralizing enemy resistance in advance of the amphibious landings at dawn on D-Day morning by 4th Infantry Division; and
- WHEREAS:** A great many of the paratroopers were mis-dropped from their designated drop zones, before dawn a small group led by Major John P. Stopka, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, attacked and captured a strategically sited and important German garrison headquarters and strongpoint at Marmion Farm, on the outskirts of Ravenoville village. Major Stopka took the decision to hold the farm until relief arrived from Utah Beach, thereby denying enemy movement against the northern shoulder of the 101st assault area and the critical exits; and
- WHEREAS:** Throughout D-Day other mis-dropped paratroopers from mixed elements of the 101st, even some from the 82nd Airborne, arrived at the farm thereby strengthening the American defense against "...repeated enemy counterattacks..." the paratroopers held firm until relieved on the early morning of June 7, 1944, by lead elements of 4th Infantry Division; and
- WHEREAS:** On June 6, 2012, the Eternal Heroes Memorial was inaugurated in Ravenoville Honoring the "Raveno Boys" whose heroic stand made a significant contribution to the success of the amphibious landings on Utah Beach and ultimately the Allied invasion of Normandy on D-Day; and
- WHEREAS:** Among their number were these gallant sons of Georgia: John L. Eubanks of Baldwin County, James D. Hogue of Macon-Bibb County, and David E. Morris of Cobb County. The State of Georgia recognizes their contributions and the sacrifices made by so many on the beaches of Normandy on the Eternal Heroes Memorial Days; now
- THEREFORE:** I, BRIAN P. KEMP, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim June 6-7, 2024, as ETERNAL HEROES MEMORIAL DAYS in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Four.

GOVERNOR

ATTEST

CHIEF OF STAFF

