

517 PRCT - MailCall No. 2007 – July 31, 2010



Website www.517prct.org
Mail Call MailCall@517prct.org
Mail Call Archives www.517prct.org/archives
Roster www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

Recent website additions:

[Pvt. Jesse Ellington, A Company](#)
[Don Fraser's CP near Col de Braus then and now](#)
[Warbird Magazine article about the 2008 St. Louis Reunion](#)

Honshu Reunion 1948



1: David K. Brooks 3: Dick Seitz 4: Bill Pencak 6: Bill Boyle
8: Tom Cross 10: Raymond Cato 13: Bob McMahon

http://www.517prct.org/photos/honshu_1948.htm

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MailCall News

Bob McMahon is the man on the first row, far right . Colonel Cato is next to him.

Bob Dalrymple, 596th Engrs

I am quite sure that Bill Pencak is #4 and Bob McMahon is #13. One of the men looks like Jim Bennett, but I'm not sure Jim was there at the time.

Howard Hensleigh

Honshu Reunion 1948

6 is definitely Bill Boyle, #4 Pencak and #13 Bob McMahon. This reunion was at our quarters in Japan. Bob McMahon filled the water jug with gin so there were many unusually happy people. I remember Bill came home from the club after he had hardly gotten there.

Best to all.

Babbie Boyle

Reenactments

Hi Bob,

Just to let everyone know that the 517th received some exposure in the UK on the weekend of the 17th/18th of this month. Our reenactment group displayed as D Company, 517th PIR preparing for the drop into southern france. It's the 2nd time we've displayed in the UK as the 517th and we pride ourselves on being the only group in the UK to do so. The 517th will again be represented at the end of August at the Detling Military Fair as we're there to put on a Maritime Alps display. At Kelmarsh on the 17/18th we laid out weaponry, drop containers, ration crates and lots of equipment for the public to view and in some cases get their hands on. We also on occasion kitted members of the group out in full combat gear and parachute harnesses to give the public a good idea on how a fully loaded paratrooper looked. We were well received about the public and very much enjoyed explaining the camouflaged Jumpsuits and Equipment to members of the public who seemed confused by it all. Photo's will hopefully be coming soon but Veterans of the 517th can rest assured that they are getting the coverage they deserve at reenactment events throughout the UK.

Regards,

Adam Berry

aberry@initsys.co.uk

Bob, the new format is great, very professional looking. Thank you for continuing the MailCall.

joe richardson, jr

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MailCall News

T/Sgt David S Lang 20 225 431

I am the son of David S Lang, age 91, who is still alive in New Smyrna Beach Florida and would welcome contact from other WWII veterans from the 517th. Anybody out there?

David Lang
(908) 303-7003

David,

Glad to hear from you about your Dad. I will include your note in the next MailCall newsletter, which goes out weekly to 517 troopers, as well as friends and family.

In case you didn't know, he was with the Service Company of the 517 and he is listed on the December 1944 roster.

<http://www.517prct.org/documents/xmas1944/xmas1944.htm>

Has your Dad attended any reunions? Is he able to travel at all? If so, he should get to one of the upcoming reunions, as there will not be many more. There is always an East Coast mini-reunion in Florida every January.

One last thing: In the most recent roster, from 2008, there is listed another member of the Service Company who also lives in New Smyrna, FL. Leroy R. Johnson.

Bob Barrett

MailCall@517prct.org

Tim, thanks for the honorable mention in Mail Call. Little late but thanks for all the work you did to make the SLC Reunion so successful. Just wanted you to know that I am in love with your Governor for passing a state law that isn't being enforced by the Federal Government even though they are suing your state of Arizona.

The good that came out of it is, at least our so called President can't come to Arizona any more as he is not a Citizen of the USA.

Regards,

Darrell Egner

[Didn't I just say that I wasn't going to put any political messages in the MailCall? What the heck. It's Darrell. He can say whatever he likes. – BB]

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MailCall News

I'm Richard H. Wheeler, "B" Btry 460th Prcht FA Btn

I now have my Mail Call #2005 and Mail Call #2006. Excellent Format and reading: You are doing an excellent job for us, Bob Barrett.

On 3 June 1943 at Ft. Lewis, WA, raised my hand to be a Paratrooper and on 15 June 1943 after 5 days on a train arrived at Camp Toccoa, GA. Here I found my beginning of what a Paratrooper was about.

Camp Toccoa, GA was a weeding out, and make you quit, not to become a Paratrooper. If I was called I'd go again.

From 15 June 1943 to end of war in Europe I've been any and wherever the 517th Prcht Inf Combat Team has been.

USA - Italy - France - Belgium - Germany

Then instead of occupational duty in Berlin, Germany signed for duty in Pacific Theater. The bomb dropped before getting there, and I was sent home.

It's now been 67 years since I raised my hand at Ft. Lewis, WA to be a Paratrooper. In the 517th Prcht Inf Combat Team, I am not as physically able as once was, but in my thinking I'll always be Airborne. I am now writing and my grandchildren and great grandchildren will be able to read what their grandfather, Richard Hugh Wheeler, did and was - a Paratrooper during World War II - his thoughts of a Paratrooper, and what he has done to be a Paratrooper.

Bob, your dad, Ben Barrett, started Mail Call and here the 517th Combat Team read and received letters, brought together through your dad's efforts, and now, Bob Barrett, you have picked up the 517th Combat Team's "HOORAH," carrying on where your dad has left off at, gone but never forgotten.

I have photos of your dad, our Ben Barrett, and myself. So as long as I'm alive, Mr. Ben Barrett will be there on material he's printed. I have saved all the Mail Calls.

On our jump in combat in Southern France, I was a rifleman against a German machine gun, made it through.

In closing, Bob Barrett, God Bless you and a Salute.
Thank you.

Richard H Wheeler 39-209-734

"B" Btry 1st Sect 460th Prcht FA Bn assigned to 517th Prcht Inf Combat Team

airbornekd@earthlink.net

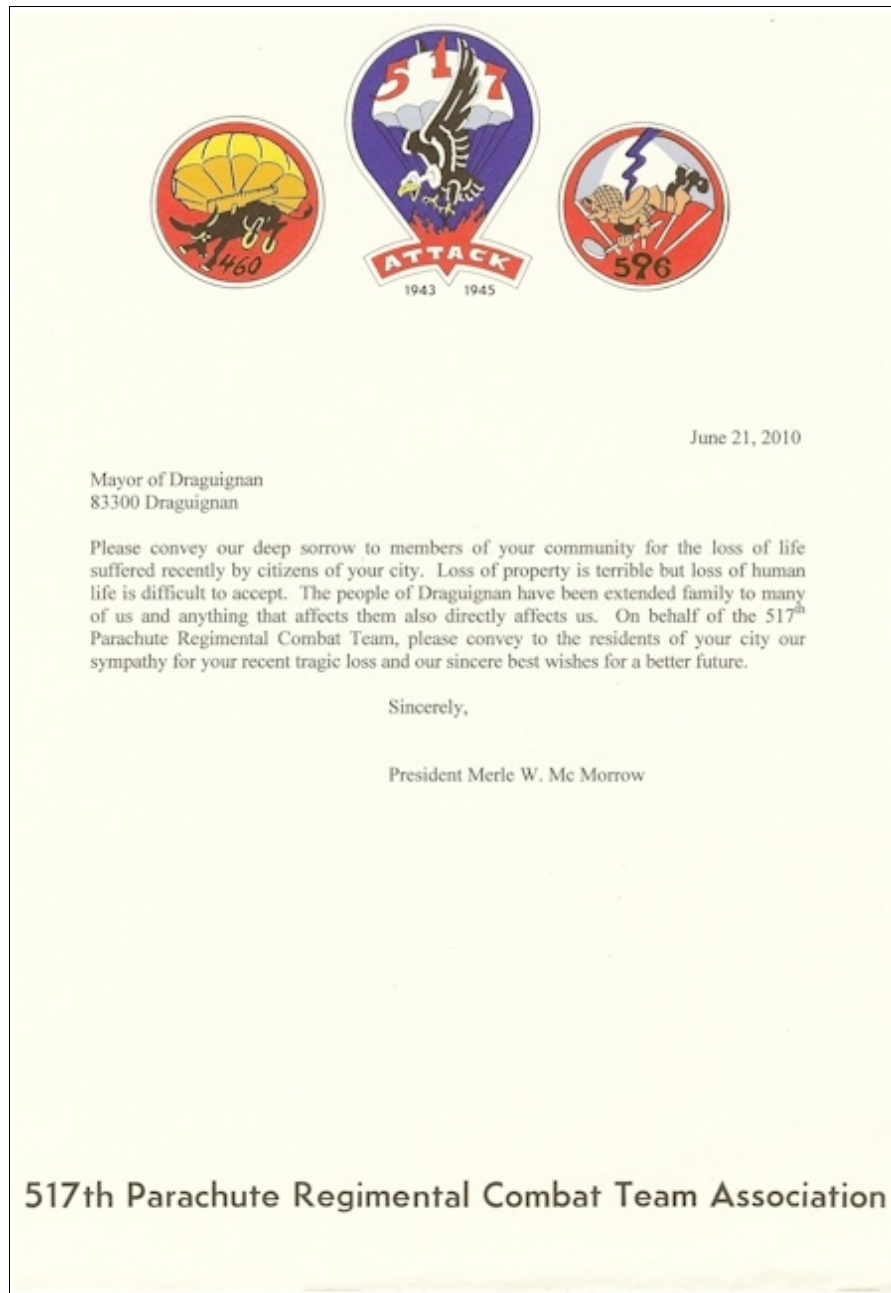
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Draguignan

That was a great response to my request for a translation of the letter to the 517th from the Mayor of Draguignan. [[MailCall #2006](#)] I sent similar letters to other cities that were adversely affected by storms earlier this summer.

Since receiving the translations I feel certain some wonder what the Mayor was responding to. A copy of the letter I sent to Draguignan is included as a attachment.

Merle Mc Morrow



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Musée de la Liberation – Le Muy

Hello everybody.

Excuse me for writing to you, but you are all, like me, on Jean-Michel Soldi's e-mail list of friends and you will have read about and seen the images of the destruction caused to the collection at the Airborne museum in Le Muy.

My father was one of the British Pathfinders who landed in the early hours 15th August 1944 in an event that he would remember for the rest of his life.

He was so pleased that Jean-Michel and Eric took a genuine interest in the events of that time and had a desire to commemorate them in the very location where the liberation of the South of France started that he, like many of you, supported their efforts to create this very personal tribute to those young soldiers who came from distant lands to rid France of her tryannical occupiers.

Now when, after twenty years of dedicated labour, they had succeeded in producing a small, but personalised display from artefacts largely given by you veterans or members of your families, displayed so as to commemorate the individual as much as the historical moment, nature has dealt them a terrible blow.

They immediately rose to the challenge despite their own problems - Eric's car, for example was destroyed in the floods as were his office and vital documents. Nonetheless, they worked all the hours they could to salvage as much as they could from the waters, mud and filth which invaded the museum then, without delay, began the arduous task of cleaning, drying and restoring all they possibly can before the damage is too great.

I had been in touch with them about what help they might need and the immediate reply typically was "none, just tell our friends we are thinking of them".

However, they were receiving no assistance from the town hall and although they got support from friends locally with rust removal products and the like, they needed more. They will have considerable expense going forward too with specialist cleaning and restoration as well as to reprint all the photographs and documents which have been ruined, to repair or replace the display cases and so on.

We also hope that out of this disaster will come the opportunity to expand and improve the collection going forward as well as making it more accessible to the veterans and their families through the generations - plans which will be discussed next month at the commemorations in Le Muy and La Motte.

We on the UK side of the Atlantic have organised an consolidated effort to make an immediate contribution towards these costs and I wondered if perhaps you, their American friends, would be like to do something similar and if so whether anyone would volunteer to take the lead.

Our plan is to set up a website, with PayPal facility, to make it easy and cost-effective for anyone to donate in future, but clearly any appeal in America needs to be led by a representative of the American contingent.

Hopefully you agree that this unique display is a great testimony to the past and a link to the future so worthy of your support and that someone among you has the time and inclination to coordinate efforts in the U.S.A.?

If I can be of any help or you require any information, please do not hesitate to contact me, or of course Jean-Michel Soldi anvil-dragon@hotmail.com or Eric Renoux (cbrian9@aol.com).

Kind regards

Chris Compton cmc@cce-int.co.uk

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Musée de la Liberation – Le Muy (cont.)

Chris Compton (continued)

Of course, as well as financial donations, artefacts, documents and photographs from the period are very much welcome.

Oh, Chris -

I had no idea - I have emailed our friends a couple of times but had not heard back except that they did not lose any friends but that there had been damage to the musee. Thank you so much for filling us in on the rest.

I am copying Merle (the 517 President, whom you've met), Bob Barrett (Ben's son), Joanne (whom you would remember as Ben's daughter), Helen Beddow (Helen and her husband Hal went with you to Le Meton (sp?) one day), Steve Markle (with the 517 Auxiliary), and Mike Wells and Lory Curtis (President and VP of the 517 Auxiliary).

Steve Markle and Bob Barrett have already - weeks ago - offered to help with reproducing photos. Steve especially has digitized probably thousands of photos.

Please continue to keep us posted on a drive for donations. My only concern is that although the museum was established by Eric and Jean Michel, I don't know what the current status is with the town of Le Muy. I do want to make sure that donations go to the museum and not a general town fund, and I'm sure you concur on that.

Thank you, thank you Chris, so very much - for letting us know the story here.

Warmest regards -

Claire Giblin

MailCall News

Diane

By now you have probably received answers to your question about GI Insurance. Just in case you haven't here is the answer to your question. When we were discharged from the service they offered us a chance to purchase our \$10,000 Life Insurance. My answer was no. I believe I told them if I made it through WWII why did I need insurance now.

As I recall a few years later they gave us another offer to buy into the GI plan. By then a friend I went to college with sold me a \$3,000 term life policy. I ended up buying a GI 20 year plan in the amount of \$3,000. As it turned out the GI plan was less than half the term life price. Needless to say the 20 year plan has been paid off long ago and I still have it. Oh yes, I dropped the term life.

Have a nice day,

Darrell Egner

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MailCall Format Discussion

Dear Bob...Organizer...Typesetter.. whatever...

Thanks..kudos to you for all that you do for the 517 mail call..however, for the past few days I've been in a quandary trying to read the messages,needing a pdf so called Adobe. I never even heard of such a name, and I tried and tried to click on the steps that would enable me to read your mails to no avail. I finally got my daughter, Mary, to come over to get my computer to accept this new Adobe thing. Thankfully, I am now reading your mail...PTL. and it's in good format. I have to admit I'm a real nerd when it comes to computers, but God knows we really need them....so again Bob, thanks for keeping the 517 alive through the MailCall.

Mel Dahlberg, Company {F}

Subject: Uhh....ack!

Hi, Bob -

I had a bad feeling about that PDF thing, and I didn't know what was bothering me. Now that I am cranking out the next Thunderbolt, I have figured it out.

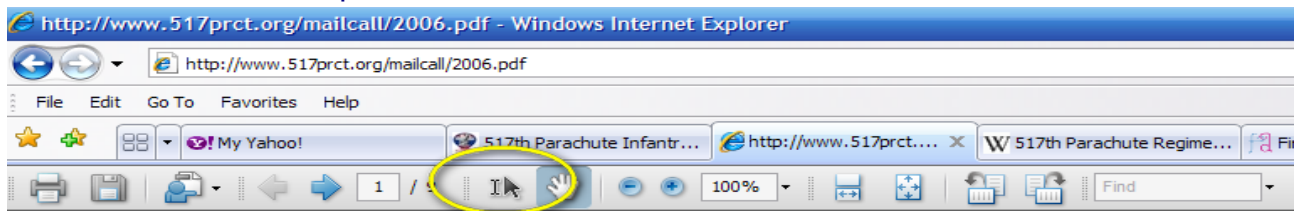
Am I not sufficiently tech-savvy, or am I right that I cannot copy and paste into another doc? I am just trying to get through the last three July Mail Calls (from the changeover to the end of the month), and I think I'm in beaucoup de trouble. Any ideas or suggestions?

In other news, I don't know about you, but France is just screamin' at me. I hate not going, and I am glad we've already decided to go again next year. You in?

Hope all is well with you and yours -
Claire

Claire,

Good point about the cut and paste. But if you have a fairly current version of Adobe Reader, you should be able to cut and paste. You need to find this Select tool:



To add any tools, right-click the bottom toolbar (anywhere on the right side) and add the “Select and Zoom” function. Once you have the Select tool, you can Copy any text. Let me know if you need any help. – Bob Barrett

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A 517th Wedding Escort

Dear Bob,

War & Peace!

The today's mail call with the story the GMC's ride in Normandy gave me the idea to forward this pictures!

On the 10th of July, we celebrated the wedding of my sister Cécile, using a very unusual car for the young couple: a 1943 GMC showing the marking of the 460th FA (517th).

A very peaceful end of career for this Field Artillery tractor....

The young married, their testimonies and a band had a ride in the village of Vence while the band was playing live. An unforgettable souvenir...

Only inconvenient: several kilometers of ribbon were necessary to fully decorate the truck!!!!:)

Don't be surprised if your next airport pick-up in Nice will not be with a rented Japanese car....:)

Take care,
Frederic Brega



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Administrivia:

- If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>
- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our treasurer Leo Dean at 14 Stonehenge Lane, Albany NY 12203.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: MailCall@517prct.org
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.

Save the date!

Annual 517th Reunion (probably the last one)

**July 13-18, 2011
Atlanta, GA**

with visits to Camp Toccoa and Fort Benning

