



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2011

September 6, 2010

*517th Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

Website  
Mail Call  
Mail Call Archives  
Roster

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### *MailCall News*

Dear Bob,

I have been almost out of circulation recently for two reasons: Until recently, after moving into a new building, I had a poor internet connection.

The other reason is that I have had some close calls on health care. Not to bore anyone, but to answer questions in advance, here is what happened. We moved into a new "state of the art" building on April 1; it is great in many respects, but had no electric door openers. On May 15, I broke my right leg just above the ankle batting into a door in opening it. Since I do not feel anything below my shoulders, I didn't realize the break and stood up using my standing frame for an hour making the break compound with loss of about a quart of blood, before I recognized what was going on. The bones were shattered and had little or no chance of knitting back together. The compound never healed and by Friday July 8 it became infected, getting worse on Saturday and Sunday when they sent me to the Emergency room in Palo Alto. While there the infection got to the heart and lungs which stopped functioning for almost four minutes. I came to in the Xray department as when they did CPR they thought they might have cracked my ribs, but didn't. To get rid of the infection, they amputated the leg about half way between the knee and ankle on Tuesday 13 July. Things have gone quite well since. I thought recovery during CPR was an everyday occurrence until the doctor told me that only 5 out of 100 make it. So, the Good Lord was with me, and after those close ones in WWII, I should say, AGAIN.

My airborne best regards,

**Howard Hensleigh**



## *MailCall News*

A number of Association and Auxiliary members are being solicited to work with Claire Giblin who has been selected to chair a committee. This committee has been directed to seek a means to insure that an organization representing the 517th continues to exist. However, the submittal of suggestions and ideas to accomplish this task is not limited specifically to those selected to serve on the committee but is open to the membership of the two organizations.

Everyone recognizes the 517th Association can only continue to exist as long as there are active veteran members. If the Association is dissolved the Auxiliary automatically is dissolved also. What we prefer to do is establish a new organization made up of members of the two organizations. Planning to accomplish this objective is still in the preliminary planning stages and your suggestions and ideas need to be incorporated to insure a good workable operation.

Our Legal Eagle Howard Hensleigh believes a new organization can be formed that will accomplish our objective. This plan for reorganization needs to be in place prior to our 2011 National Meeting. This will permit any necessary changes to the bylaws, dissolving of the Association and establishing a new entity, as well as the election of a slate of officers for the new organization.

Merle

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Hello,

<http://histoireconstitution.cowblog.fr> is the blog of a young french friend who does commemoration with us. You have to watch his blog, it is "superbe".

His name is Mahfoud Prestifilippo.

Kisses

Patricia and Roland

Sospel, France

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Hi Bob:

I hope this message finds you and your family well. I have been enjoying my summer. I was wondering if there is any way I may have a 517 pin. It appears it may have popped off my blazer on an airplane. It will be on the aircraft flying to Hawaii (sorry it is headed in the opposite direction). I would appreciate it if you may direct me as to inquire on a new pin, I know feel that it is a part of my medals for my uniform.

I am sending my warmest regards to the 517th friends!

Thank you so much,

Teresa Messina (from Seattle) *[Teresa, Send me your address and I'll send you a pin. – BB]*



## *MailCall News (continued)*

Was unable to open Your Aug 30 mail letter. Really was interested in reading about Gen Seitz at Ft Bragg, I remember him as a Major at Camp Toccoa, GA back in 1943.

### **Forest Wellman**

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**From:** Claire Giblin

**Sent:** Friday, August 27, 2010 6:27 AM

**To:** Steve Markle

**Subject:** can you scan photos? and a link to interview coming

Hi, Steve -

I just finished talking to Rita Kramer, daughter of **Harlon Roberts**. Sadly, her father died in June of 2009; we will put his name in the next Thunderbolt's Taps, of course.

I am copying her so you have her email address. Bob, you are copied so you can add her to the Mail Call list.

Steve, I'm writing to you because she has photos! She has an album and loose pictures, and she doesn't know what to do with them. I asked her to get in touch with you so you could at least scan and enhance them - I told her about the magic you worked with the 596 company photo.

She is wondering where the photos were taken and who might be in them.

After that, she will consider donating the album to one of the museums: I hear that the D-Day Museum in New Orleans is incredible, but that might only be a June 6 thing. I also hear that there is a museum or exhibit at Fort Benning; I have not been. I did tell her my sentimental favorite is the little museum in Le Muy, which suffered such damage this summer.

Of course, this raises the larger question of what to do with memorabilia....one that we must address sooner rather than later. Sigh.

Steve, hope you've had a great summer with your family - my very best to them (as you might guess, Rita has twins, too - hers are 13).

Hugs,

Claire



*MailCall News (continued)*

**From:** Steve Markle

**Subject:** Re: can you scan photos? and a link to interview coming

Thanks Claire.

I would more than be happy to assist Rita in getting these photos converted to digital form and help her in submitting them to the site for future generations.

MY take on the memorabilia (including the photos) is that they should stay with the family. It may sound selfish, but in our case for these small items that my dad kept in his lifetime, I cannot put a price or value to them and our future generations. We CAN share by providing these digital copies and images of the pieces of memorabilia, but I want the original. If there are extras or items that were not of an individual nature they could be handled differently. Each family needs to make the decision that is appropriate for them.

You didn't tell me what company/unit her father was part of. Once we get them posted to the 517 site, others in that company might be able to help out.

Our summer was very nice, having a much milder one than we are used to (although it hit 109 the other day), and are planning one last road trip over the Labor Day weekend to head up to Gene Frice's 85th in Bend Oregon. Should be FUN.

BTW... the kids started this week at the local JC. NOW I feel old.

-Steve-

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**From:** Rita Kramer

Steve/Claire

Thank you for the e-mail. The pictures in question are an old album my Dad had in his things. Not sure where it is from, possibly a training camp. There are autograph pages in the front. Not sure if you would be interested, but I will gladly mail it to you if you wish. The pictures are old and they are not marked. No dates, names or places. I have no idea where they were taken My Dad is not in any of the pictures, but someone else might really enjoy them. I do have some of him jumping that I can scan and send to you if you wish.

Claire - per our conversation attached is the link of the WWII stories from the veterans of Marshall County, WV. It was a class project of the high school in that county:

<http://www.lindapages.com/marshall/rww2bios.htm>

Attached is Dad's obituary. It lists his service record. Thanks for putting him in Taps - he often mentioned to me he would like this done at his passing.

[http://www.altmeyer.com/\\_mgxroot/page\\_10863.php?id=682581](http://www.altmeyer.com/_mgxroot/page_10863.php?id=682581)

Thanks for adding me to the mailing list. I will forward it on to my brother - he may be interested.

Rita



*MailCall News (continued)*

From: Steve Markle  
Sent: Saturday, August 28, 2010 10:25 PM  
To: Rita

Thanks for the response Rita.

The best thing that we can do with the old photos is to scan them and get them out on the 'net. Do you know the Company/group that he was attached to with the 517? That will help when the photos are posted to the site to get the guys from the same company to review.

If you send on the pictures and whatever papers you have, I will be happy to scan and return to you with a digital copy. I will also coordinate with Bob the upload to the 517 site. My mailing address was listed below.

I would encourage your family to maintain the originals of these when this is completed.

He is a portion of the collection that I have scanned;

<http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/>

-Steve-

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Not sure if this is the correct forum but --

This is Fred Waites' (517 th) oldest son Fred, Jr. **PFC Fred D. Waites, 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team, Hqtrs. Company**, wanted me to tell you that he is still kicking! He is living with his son, Fred Jr. in Trussville , Al. He is 86 now and a widower. After the war, Fred attended Ole Miss and later finished college at Mississippi Southern College, Hattiesburg .... Class of 1950. He was a member of both the Ole Miss and MSC football and baseball teams, and received a BS in Education from MSC. He taught high school social studies and coached various sports in both Louisiana and Alabama until his retirement in early 1980's. His long time hobbies included training brace beagles, during which time hid "Eagle Claw Kennels" produced four Field Champions. After retiring he, along with his wife of over 60 years Dora, took up a skill that was taught to him by his grandfather and both became master makers of fine white oak baskets. He and Dora were featured for this art in the Southern Living several years back. He wanted those of the 517th. that remember him to know that he is doing about as well as an 86 year old can and would love to hear from any of the guys that were with him during the war. He can be reached at Fred Waites, Sr., 6234 Fox Branch, Trussville, Al. 35173.

Thanks,

Fred Waites, Jr.



Website Guestbook Entry

Submitted by	Comments:
Name: <b>Howard Gray</b> From: Savannah, GA E-mail: <a href="mailto:howard_gray@bellsouth.net">howard_gray@bellsouth.net</a>	I have been trying to do some research on my wife's great-uncle <b>Charles P.Ginn</b> . From letters he wrote her mother (his niece) during the war he was originally in E co at Camp Toccoa, then in HQ, 2nd Bn. I know he was a medic and eventually transferred to the 82nd in 1945. If anyone has any more information on him I would appreciate hearing from you. Charles is deceased but I had several conversations with him about his airborne service since I was assigned to the 101st Abn for a time.  Added: September 5, 2010
Name: <b>Joe Combest</b> From: Duncan, OK E-mail: <a href="mailto:joecombest@yahoo.com">joecombest@yahoo.com</a>	<b>Ben Combest</b> , G Company. Passed away 9/2/2010. RIP. The best man I ever knew.  Added: September 3, 2010

More MailCall News

Dear Bob:

May we echo the comments about your superb Mail Calls in both content and visuals. Thank you for your outstanding efforts.

Thank you also for Claire's information about contributions to help Eric and Mickael restore the museum to which they have been devoted so much love and effort. Alan, Dad and I had the privilege to visit it and we can't begin to image the damage. Chris Compton's report gives us hope that it come back better and stronger given everyone's combined efforts.

Tom Copsey's French is impressive and his lovely letter was an excellent spokesperson for us all. We also appreciate the pictures from the Dragoon commemoration. Dad wished he could be there with everyone in person rather than just in spirit, but it looks like Darrell and Gene did everyone proud. There is a small clip of Dad's National Airborne Day speech on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtFBsp19gZs>. My cousin Jim Hardy says that if you type in National Airborne Day 2010 there are more snippets of the speech.

Our gratitude to Wade Gilbert for posting the videos. I had trouble getting Allan Johnson's interview video to run smoothly, but that may be due to my computer. What I could hear was marvelous. Watching it just reaffirmed the blessing of making the videos, and how amazing the 517th men are and were.

**Pat Seitz and Alan Greer**



***PFC Robert W. Brown – 460 PFAB***

**Subject: Tribute to PFC Robert W. Brown A Battery - 460th PFAB killed September, 5th 1944 near l'Escarène Rail-road stati**

**For Mister M. Mc Morrow - 517<sup>th</sup> RCT President,**

Sir,

I'm happy to inform you that I organize, September 5<sup>th</sup> 2010 in l'Escarène a day for tribute to PFC Robert W. Brown, A Battery - 460th PFAB (first American soldier killed on our county of l'Escarène).

Since I was a child, my grand-pa Joseph Arnulf (1923-2004) said to me : ***“a young paratrooper was killed near our field on railroad-station area at beginning of September, 1944, and you owed to honor and remember this man !”***

After 6 years of investigations, I Met a veteran : Ignatius Joseph BAIL who was in the same unit and it's very amazing because Jospeh Bail was Robert W Brown best friend and he was gravely wounded the same day ! (I made I. J. BAIL honor-citizen of l'Escarène by municipality's decision in 2008)

Now we are very friends with Bail family and I'm very proud for that. With my wife Elodie, we were in Pennsylvania this summer and we decided with them, now, to be the “same family” !

**That's the program for September, 5<sup>th</sup> in l'Escarène :**

**9H30 Arrival of liberty convoy (reenactment vehicles and 517<sup>th</sup> troopers)**

**9H45 ceremony tribute to Robert Brown (inauguration of his “plate”)**

**10H30 “En-route” for the village of l'Escarène !**

**11H00 Mass in the church of l'Escarène, for Robert W. Brown and 517<sup>th</sup> RCT roll of honor**

**12H00 Reenactment exposition on the “plaza”**

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I hope that this day will be a success and that you will inform your veterans friends.

I send you Robert W Brown plate and 3 other pictures :

*USA 1943 : Robert W Brown and Ignatius Bail*

*L'ESCARENE 2008 : Ignatius J Bail with his wife and me when we found the place where he was wounded and R Brown killed.*

*USA 2010 : Ignatius J Bail show us pictures and war documents*

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After this event I will send you new pictures ! I'm proud to say you that young French never forget that young Americans made for their freedom !

Excuse me for mistakes, my English is not very correct.

Sincerely,

**ARNULF Nicolas  
2418 CH de Montagnac  
06440 L'Escarène - France**



*PFC Robert W. Brown – 460 PFAB*

**TUNNEL**

**Robert W. BROWN**

**MORT POUR LA LIBERTE**  
**le 5 septembre 1944**

*Les Escarènois reconnaissants*

En hommage au Private First Class Robert W. BROWN

"A" BATTERY - 460th PARACHUTE FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
517th PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM - US ARMY

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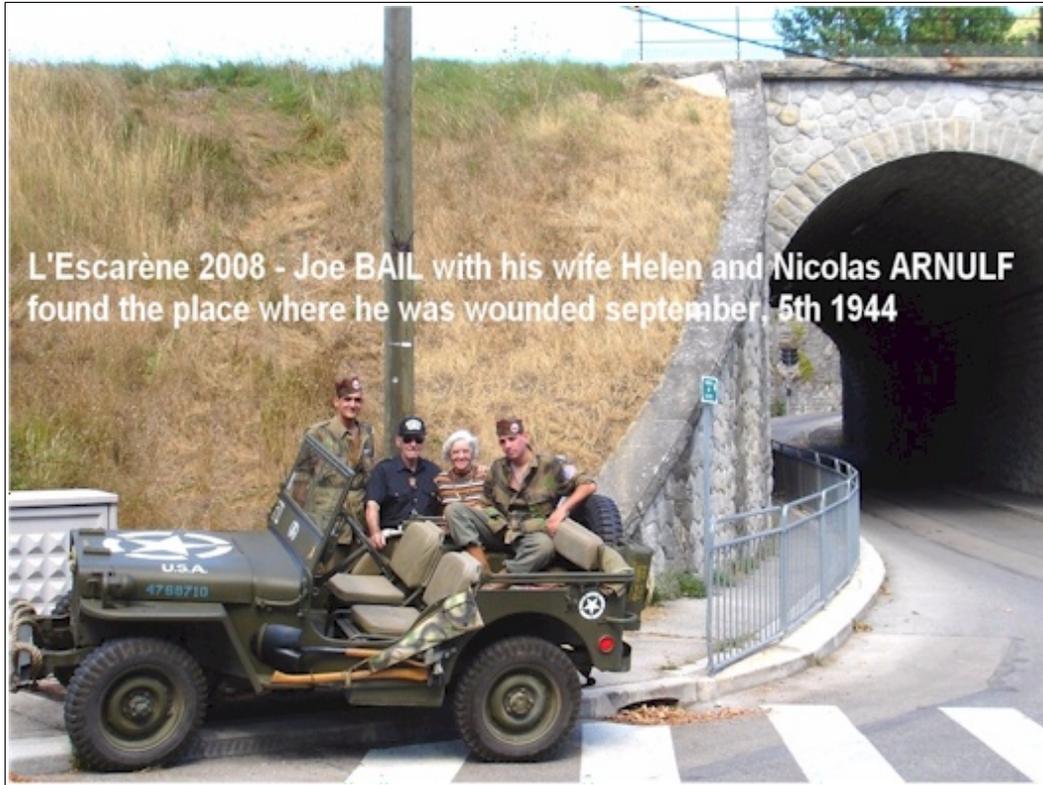
Jeune soldat américain tué le 5 septembre 1944 en ces lieux

Début septembre 1944 : alors que l'armée allemande est retranchée sur le Col de Braus, les parachutistes américains du 517th PRCT reçoivent l'ordre d'attaquer en direction de Sospel. Le 460th PFAB installe alors ses batteries de canons de 75 au nord-ouest de l'Escarène sur la zone de la gare et des prés supérieurs afin de fournir au plus vite l'appui d'artillerie nécessaire à la progression des fantassins. Le 5 septembre une salve d'obus allemands s'abat près d'un canon placé sur la voie ferrée, blessant 9 parachutistes et tuant 1 homme, le soldat Robert W. Brown âgé de 20 ans...

**Passant, souviens toi qu'ils ont donné leur vie pour notre liberté...**



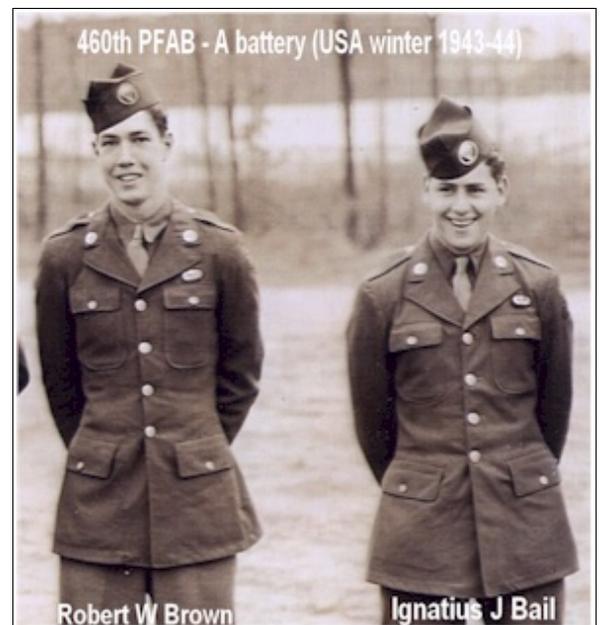
***PFC Robert W. Brown – 460 PFAB***



L'Escarène 2008 - Joe BAIL with his wife Helen and Nicolas ARNULF found the place where he was wounded september, 5th 1944



USA (PA) 2010 - Ignatius J BAIL - 460 PFAB / A with Elodie and Nicolas ARNULF



460th PFAB - A battery (USA winter 1943-44)

Robert W Brown

Ignatius J Bail



## Photos from the Golf Hotel, Sospel - 13 August 2009

Vous êtes invité à voir l'album photo de Patricia et Roland intitulé : [visit Golf Hotel](#)



visit Golf Hotel

13 août 2009

de Patricia et Roland

[Afficher l'album](#)

[Voir le diaporama](#)

### Message de Patricia et Roland :

Mr and Mrs Blancardi who received us in Golf Hotel given me these pictures for you.  
Patricia and Roland Orengo



***[Click on any picture to open the album with full-size photos.]***



***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.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: [MailCall@517prct.org](mailto: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.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our treasurer:  
Leo Dean  
14 Stonehenge Lane  
Albany, NY 12203

***Save the date!***

**Annual 517th Reunion (probably the last one)**

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

**with visits to Camp Toccoa and Fort Benning**

