



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2056

June 17, 2011

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

Website www.517prct.org
Mail Call MailCall@517prct.org
Mail Call Archives www.517prct.org/archives
Roster (from 2008) www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

The Future of the 517th Association

Hello, all -

I hope everyone is looking forward to next month's reunion! I know we will have lots of good times and great fun!

I wanted to summarize, before your reunion, the work of the committee that Merle established, regarding the future of the Association.

Merle asked that I head up a committee of Association and Auxiliary members to assess whether the Association should be dissolved or whether it should move forward, incorporating the Auxiliary and the Association into one organization.

The Auxiliary, established in Savannah at the 2005 reunion, was the brainchild of Howard and Jan Hensleigh. They looked around and realized that the vets weren't getting younger, and the overwhelming sentiment at the time was NOT to dissolve as they hit the 60-year mark, as so many organizations were doing.

Lou Darden headed up the initial investigation and assessment of whether an Auxiliary was feasible, and in fact served as our first president. She was followed by **Helen Beddow** and then myself, and **Mike Wells** is currently the Auxiliary president.

The Auxiliary exists to support the Association, and has assumed many important tasks, such as hosting reunions (thank you, **Helen Beddow**, **Karen Frice**, **Lory Curtis**, **Mike Wells** and **Chris Lindner**) and publishing the Thunderbolt, as well as maintaining the website and sending out Mail Call (thank you so very much, Bob Barrett).



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

The problem is that the Auxiliary can only exist as an extension of the Association; it cannot be the predominant force. Our potential members already outnumber veterans by far. Legally, the Auxiliary cannot exist without the Association.

Merle's question was twofold: should the Association be dissolved? And if not, how should we proceed?

Dick Seitz, Tom Cross and **Howard Hensleigh** agreed to provide input from the veterans' side; Karen Frice Wallace and Steve Markle agreed to provide input from the Auxiliary perspective.

The committee's efforts, though, were quick and incisive: The Association should not dissolve. The legacy of the 517 should be protected and supported as we move forward.

Howard Hensleigh drafted an amendment to the by-laws that could blend the organizations into one. Committee members were asked to review it, and the overwhelming response was that whatever it takes to keep the 517 alive, it must be done.

And so that was the recommendation to Merle, and I believe that Howard's draft was published in Mail Call for the general membership to review.

So along with the visiting and the trips and the Hospitality Room in Atlanta, there is real work to be done regarding the future of the 517 organization. Please make your reservations, call a friend and help decide your future. What will your legacy be? Will we continue to reach out, imploring vets or descendants to post their stories? Will we protect the work of the website's founder, Ben Barrett, who established it as so many organizations were closing their doors? Will we continue to have reunions? Will we be active and proactive?

The time to have your voice heard is now. Call a board member or an officer of either the Association or the Auxiliary. Talk it over. Make your plans and come to Atlanta.

Claire Giblin
daughter, **Allan Johnson, 596**
co-publisher, Thunderbolt

Bob:

About a month from today (6/18/11) the 517th will be reorganizing in Atlanta, Georgia. One of the actions to be taken during that Reunion will be the combining of the present Association and Auxiliary. This will require the election of a new slate of officers and Board of Directors. Helen Beddow was named Chairperson of the Nominating Committee and given a very important mandate and awesome task of assembling a list of names of interested and qualified individuals who would be willing candidates to fill the positions to be voted on. The members-at-large are encouraged to submit names of qualified members who are interested and can bring fresh ideas to the Nominating Committee. . If you do furnish names to the Nominating Committee, the individuals named should be aware you have placed their name in nomination and ask if they would mind being interviewed by a member of the Nominating Committee.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Recent concerns have surfaced that certain units or certain areas of the country are not adequately represented. At the conclusion of the election I want the vacancies filled with interested, willing, and capable individuals. I don't mind if they all come from the ranks of the infantry, artillery or the engineers. I also don't mind if they all come from Florida or California. The voting members will make that determination. However, I do care and would like to see that they do come as committed persons willing to work to insure the 517th Constitution and by-laws are followed and upheld to permit the continuation of the Unit.

Merle McMorrow

Mail Call News

Bob,

Tell Myrle [Travers] that the buses are supposed to park new the graduation field. LTC Cummings has informed me he will have some golf carts there to shuttle people who cannot walk. We need Myrle there so whatever it takes to transport him we will do. All my best, and hopes for a speedy recovery.

Airborne!

Lory Curtis

Hello Bob, I could not get **Steve Markle's** large **Clark Archer** file. The page failed to open.

Don Gentry

Don, You are correct – I did not insert the link correctly. I since repaired it in the last MailCall #2055. The entire set of files can be found at:

<http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/documents/517+PRCT+Documented+by+Clark+Archer+and+Merle+McMorrow.pdf>.

Be aware that the file is huge -- 283 MB! I will post most of it, in smaller pieces, to the web site over time. -- BB

Bob: great picture of Merle -- loved the hair do! But more importantly, am so glad he has recovered sufficiently that he is coming to the reunion. Hope **Hoyt Kelley** and his granddaughter are also coming. And thank you for the heat warning so we can plan accordingly.

Pat Seitz & Alan Greer



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Bob: Thanks for your e-mail. I would like to be on the MailCall list. Attached is my Bio, and I will send some pictures under separate e-mail.

Hoyt Kelley

[Hoyt supplied a great autobiography. I'll get it posted soon. – BB]

Hi Phil [McSpadden],

My name is **Dan Perry** and my father was **Cpl. Floyd R. Perry** 2 Bn HQ Co. 517th. I believe that there may have been a mix-up on my part leading to this misunderstanding. I did mistakenly include the 596 Eng and 460 Artillery in my correspondence with 517th MailCall about the GO (general orders) for the CIB that I located on the www.517PRCT.org website in the history/archives documents section. I will attempt to help clear this up. Below is a copy of your letter to the 12 June 2011 MailCall # 2055 and below that I will begin my explanation of what was written about the orders for the CIB.

http://517prct.org/documents/gen_orders22/general_orders_number_22.htm

I wrote an e-mail about finding my father's name on the 1944 Christmas Roster and the General Order # 22 and sent it to several people who are familiar with the 517th website the 517th MailCall and my letter mistakenly included the statement saying that 569 engineers and 460 artillery were included on the General Order #22 and sent it to MailCall. In my letter I explained that my father died in a VA Hospital 1961 of a staph infection when I was 3 years old and I had no idea about any of his service in WW II until my brother found a copy of his Enlisted Service Record WD AGO 53-55. The e-mail you made reference to was one of several that I have written attempting to get my father included on the 517th website and most recently I have been corresponding with several people about the July Reunion. I hope that this helps clear up some of the possible confusion. The MailCall in question is at this address;

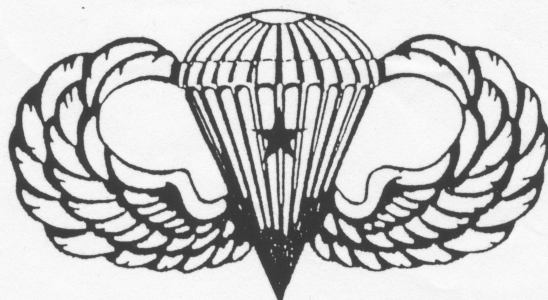
<http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/2050.pdf>

My most sincere apologies for such a grievous error about such an important and valorous achievement as the highest order of the CIB award and my personal regrets to the members of the 596 Engineers and 460 Artillery!

Respectfully submitted by a son of a 517th paratrooper!
Sgt. Dannie Perry (US Army Ret), son of Cpl Floyd Russell Perry,
HQ Co. 2nd Bn 517th PRCT

508 Voorhees Street
Rockville Indiana
47872
Home # 765-569-6014
dannieperry@att.net

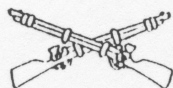
-- see next page for Clark Archer's list of the General Orders awarded to the 517th groups --



517th PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM



460th
PARACHUTE
FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION



517th
PARACHUTE
INFANTRY REGIMENT



596th
PARACHUTE
COMBAT ENGINEER COMPANY

COMMANDING OFFICER COLONEL RUPERT D. GRAVES

• CAMPAIGN CREDITS •

ROME-ARNO	WDGO	99	6 NOVEMBER 1945
SOUTHERN FRANCE	WDGO	87	16 OCTOBER 1945
PARACHUTE ASSAULT	WDGO	70	20 AUGUST 1945
RHINELAND	WDGO	118	12 DECEMBER 1945
ARDENNES-ALSACE	WDGO	114	7 DECEMBER 1945
CENTRAL EUROPE	WDGO	116	11 DECEMBER 1945

THE 517th PRCT FOUGHT ON BATTLEFIELDS IN ITALY, FRANCE, BELGIUM AND GERMANY
THE TEAM SUFFERED OVER 1500 CASUALTIES AND HAD 247 MEN KILLED IN ACTION

• UNIT DECORATIONS •

517th PRCT	FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE	FRENCH DECISION NUMBER	247
517th PRCT	BELGIAN CROIX DE GUERRE	BELGIAN DECREE NUMBER	6185
1/517th PIR	BELGIAN CROIX DE GUERRE	BELGIAN DECREE NUMBER	1329
2/517th PIR	BELGIAN CROIX DE GUERRE	BELGIAN DECREE NUMBER	7253
1/517th PIR	DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION	EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER	9396

• INDIVIDUAL DECORATIONS •

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR	PFC MELVIN E. BIDDLE	B/1/517 PIR	
SILVER STAR	131	DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS	6
BRONZE STAR	631	LEGION OF MERIT	5
PURPLE HEART	1576	AIR MEDAL	2
SOLDIERS MEDAL	4	FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE	17



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From: Adam Berry [mailto:aberry@initsys.co.uk]
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2011 4:33 AM
To: 517 Mail Call
Subject: Jacket

Dear Ben,

I wondered if I may make a rather unusual request to you. I am aware that in July there is a reunion of members of the 517th PRCT in Atlanta, and as much as it would bring me great pleasure to attend, the cost of flights from the UK are just too much. The request I have is, would it be possible if I were to post you a jacket, that you might get veterans of the Unit to sign it for me at the reunion? I will obviously quite happily pay any shipping costs back to the UK. It's a replica of the camouflaged jackets the guys used to wear, and I'd love for it to be signed by the men and have no way of doing it myself really. I recently took a similar jacket to Normandy and had it signed, and am looking to do the same with this one before it becomes, unfortunately, too late and with this being the last reunion it may be the only chance I get. I do however understand if you have much better things to be doing that getting a jacket signed, in which case don't hesitate to tell me.

Regards from the Uk, Adam.

Reunion Attendees:

Those of you planning to attend the reunion in July should begin gathering some of the 517th memorabilia that you don't know what to do with. A final resting place for it would be the Foster County Museum in Toccoa where the 517th has been allotted a portion of the space for its display. The museum has many visitors every year and your contribution would improve the display.

I know among other things I have pillow cases used by the soldiers to tell the girlfriend of their undying love and in doing so the cases also advertised Camp Mackall, Camp Toccoa, Ft. Benning, the 517th and the Paratroops. It was thought she would fall asleep at night with her head on the pillow dreaming only of her absent love. I carefully looked at mine and I don't think they have ever been used. At age 88 I really am not going to lose any sleep over it.

Merle

Please, include the attached events on Operation Dragoon in your newsletter. Please, note that **LTG Dick Seitz** will receive his French Legion of Honor Medal during this event. We have limited rooms reserved in Sheraton Hotel and I recommend for members to make a reservation soon, no later than 10 July.

Airborne! Monika Stoy



**Operation Dragoon - The "Forgotten D-Day"
The Allied Landings in Southern France on 15 August 1944**

**Outpost Europe, Society of the 3rd Infantry Division
The Embassy of France to the United States**



When: 4 – 7 August 2011

Where: Sheraton National Hotel, 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204

Who: Veterans of the 6th Army Group; 7th Army; 6th Corps; 3rd, 36th, and 45th Infantry Divisions; 1st Allied Airborne Task Force; 1st Special Service Force; US Army Air Corps; US Navy and Coast Guard, and their families; French Army Veterans; Allied Air Force and Navy veterans.

Special Honored Guests: Mr. Robert D. Maxwell, 3rd Infantry Division Medal of Honor Recipient in WWII and Operation Dragoon veteran and Mayor Michel Tonon, Mayor of Salon-de-Provence, France.

What: Commemorative Ceremony at 0900 on 6 August at the Memorial Amphitheater of Arlington National Cemetery - French Legion of Honor will be presented to Lieutenant General (ret.) Seitz (517th ABN), Mr. John Keller (3rd ID), Mr. John Carter (1st Allied Airborne Task Force), and Mr. Roy Brumfield (3rd ID). Historical seminars will be conducted on 5 and 7 August with a banquet the evening of 6 August.

Why: To honor the veterans of the Forgotten D-Day, to preserve history, and to educate the American public

**Room Reservations: Price - \$94 per night, from 2 days prior to event and one day after. Reservations: 1-888-627-8210
Reservation Group Name: Operation Dragoon**

**Point of Contact: Monika Stoy, President, Outpost Europe, Society of the 3rd Infantry Division
monikastoy@yahoo.com, PH: 001 703 912 4218
6531 Milva Lane, Springfield, VA. 22150 USA**

REGISTRATION: Event registration - \$30. Banquet - \$35.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From: J.mickael SOLDI [mailto:anvil-dragon@hotmail.com]

16th of June 2010, 16th of June 2011,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPo5HsYSKNE>

Nous ne vous oublions pas ,

MERCI DU FOND DU COEUR CHERS AMIS...

We remember...

THANKYOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS DEAR FRIENDS....

JEAN MICHEL SOLDI & ERIC RENOUX

15 Aout 1944 ASSOCIATION

Le Muy Airborne Museum founders

Letter Box BP 79

83490 Le MUY France

From: Darrel Egner

CINDY WILLIAMS was appointed by Obama as an Assistant Director for NATIONAL SECURITY in the Congressional Budget Office.....

Military Pay

This is an Airman's response to Cindy Williams' editorial piece in the Washington Times about MILITARY PAY, it should be printed in all newspapers across America.

Ms. Cindy William wrote a piece for the Washington Times denouncing the pay raise(s) coming service members' way this year citing that she stated a 13% wage increase was more than they deserve.

A young airman from Hill AFB responds to her article below. He ought to get a bonus for this.

Ms. Williams:

I just had the pleasure of reading your column, "Our GI's earn enough" and I am a bit confused. Frankly, I'm wondering where this vaunted overpayment is going, because as far as I can tell, it disappears every month between DFAS (The Defense Finance and Accounting Service) and my bank account. Checking my latest earnings statement I see that I make \$1,117.80 before taxes per month. After taxes, I take home \$874.20. When I run that through the calculator, I come up with an



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

annual salary of \$13,413.60 before taxes, and \$10,490.40 after.

I work in the Air Force Network Control Center where I am part of the team responsible for a 5,000 host computer network. I am involved with infrastructure segments, specifically with Cisco Systems equipment. A quick check under jobs for "Network Technicians" in the Washington , D.C. area revealed a position in my career field, requiring three years experiences in my job. Amazingly, this job does NOT pay \$13,413.60 a year. No, this job is being offered at \$70,000 to \$80,000 per annum..... I'm sure you can draw the obvious conclusions.

Given the tenor of your column, I would assume that you NEVER had the pleasure of serving your country in her armed forces.

Before you take it upon yourself to once more castigate congressional and DOD leadership for attempting to get the families in the military's lowest pay brackets off of WIC and food stamps, I suggest that you join a group of deploying soldiers headed for AFGHANISTAN ; I leave the choice of service branch up to you. Whatever choice you make though, opt for the SIX month rotation: it will guarantee you the longest possible time away from your family and friends, thus giving you full "deployment experience."

As your group prepares to board the plane, make sure to note the spouses and children who are saying good-bye to their loved ones. Also take care to note that several families are still unsure of how they'll be able to make ends meet while the primary breadwinner is gone. Obviously they've been squandering the "vast" piles of cash the government has been giving them.

Try to deploy over a major holiday; Christmas and Thanksgiving are perennial favorites.. And when you're actually over there, sitting in a foxhole, shivering against the cold desert night, and the flight sergeant tells you that there aren't enough people on shift to relieve you for chow, remember this: trade whatever MRE's (meal-ready-to-eat) you manage to get for the tuna noodle casserole or cheese tortellini, and add Tabasco to everything. This gives some flavor.

Talk to your loved ones as often as you are permitted; it won't be nearly long enough or often enough, but take what you can get and be thankful for it. You may have picked up on the fact that I disagree with most of the points you present in your open piece.

But, tomorrow from KABUL , I will defend to the death your right to say it.

You see, I am an American fighting man, a guarantor of your First Amendment right and every other right you cherish...On a daily basis, my brother and sister soldiers worldwide ensure that you and people like you can thumb your collective noses at us, all on a salary that is nothing short of pitiful and under conditions that would make most people cringe. We hemorrhage our best and brightest into the private sector because we can't offer the stability and pay of civilian companies.

And you, Ms.. Williams, have the gall to say that we make more than we deserve?

A1C Michael Bragg, Hill AFB AFNCC



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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
- 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:

Brenda Verbeck Mortensen
13046 Race Track Road #220
Tampa, FL 33626

