



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2119

August 19, 2012

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

Website
Mail Call
Mail Call Archives
Roster (from 2008)

www.517prct.org
MailCall@517prct.org
www.517prct.org/archives
www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

MailCall News

I know this message will come out in next week's mailcall, but today, August 13th I want to put out a big thank you to all 517th troopers for their bravery and sacrifice on August 15, 1944, as they jumped into southern France in operation Dragoon. I didn't realize that August 15th is also the day set aside as National Airborne Day. What a fitting time to celebrate and remember our airborne soldiers on August 15th. Also, as you have posted on mailcall the movie Saints and Soldiers Airborne Creed, is about the 517th jumping into France. What a great tribute to these gallant men of the 517th. On this August 15, 2012, I hope each trooper is relaxing and enjoying their lives with their families. Thank you for what you did for all of us so many years ago.

Lory Curtis, a proud son of **Bud Curtis**, HQ, 1st Bn

Bob,

A few weeks back I sent you a DVD with video Tim and **Mike Wells** shot at the banquet. One of the videos was of former President **Darrell Egner** presenting **General Seitz** with a very special plaque from the men of the 517th PRCT. I think it is a very special honor that these men would continue to think so highly of their commander in a war fought so many years ago. As I told General Seitz after the reunion, I believe even after a commander leaves his command, the command doesn't leave him, and this is true here. I believe these men would put on a pair of jump boots and follow General Seitz anywhere.

Airborne All the Way!

Lory Curtis



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As you know the Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, Columbus, GA hosted a premier of Saints and Soldiers Airborne Creed. Our own **Hal Beddow** traveled from Savannah, GA down to Fort Benning with his son. There Miller Robson a news reporter from Channel 38 put Hal on T.V. Below is the link to Hal's interview. Miller informed me that there was standing room only at the movie premier, many WWII veterans were there, along with about 100 new Army paratroopers. One family drove all the way from Tallahassee, Florida to be there. Many had to be turned away because there were no more seats. In the theater Hal was asked to stand and be recognized. The audience gave him a big long round of applause for his service. After the movie Hal met with many of the people to answer questions, and had his picture taken with them. I personally want to thank Hal Beddow for making the long drive to Fort Benning to represent the 517th PRCT Association and all the troopers. Thank you so much. Also, a big thank you to Miller Robson from Channel 38 for sponsoring this event and bringing recognition and attention to the 517th PRCT.

Airborne All the Way!
Lory Curtis

<http://www.wltz.com/category/201234/video?clipId=7616532&topVideoCatNo=201233&autoStart=true>

Hi Lory,

Thank you for the 517th pin and the medallion. I will be proudly wearing the pin on air quite often including this morning!

I really enjoyed meeting **LTC Hal Beddow** and his son. I think we formed a great friendship and will continue to stay in touch.

The movie screening was a huge success last night at the National Infantry Museum. We had to turn away folks as it was standing room only. What a great time.

Thanks again for all you do in honoring our veterans.

God Bless,



MILLER ROBSON
PROMOTIONS/MARKETING DIRECTOR
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706 507 7159 (PHONE)
706 221 3889 (FAX)



Bob - forgive the blast to all three emails, as I'm not sure which is best. Just rolled in from Ft. Benning and the premiere. If you have a chance, go see it! I think people will be surprised that it's not your typical shoot 'em up action movie, through there's enough of that. For a limited budget, the crew of Go Films did a phenomenal job. It was apparent they worked really hard to get things right. I think the 'troopers of the 517th will be pleased with the result. Kudos to **Lory Curtis** for all his efforts in working



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with the producer, director, cast and crew, and in putting together the book of his dad's letters that formed the basis for the film.

Be well, **mark landreth**

Hello,
I am researching **Pvt. Bertil Gustafson, 517th Parachute Infantry, Company E** who died January 3, 1945 in Werbomont, Belgium. Can you tell me what happened that day? What were the events that led up to that day?

Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,
Jill Johnson
Park Rapids, Minnesota

Jill,

I cannot find any specific mentions of Pvt. Gufstason on that day. I did find a couple of entries about E Company:

1/3/45 2nd Bn 517th PRCT

2nd Bn. was assigned to attack and seize Trois Ponts and Monte Fosse. D Co. and E Co. were the lead companies and F Co. was in reserve. They passed through a battalion of the 82nd that had been in defensive positions for 5 or 6 days. **Attack was very costly. 20 KIA and 90 WIA.** Trois Ponts was the northern shoulder of the salient known as "The Bulge."

E Company, 2nd Battalion / 517th PRCT

Trois Ponts and Mont Fosse were costly for E Company which attacked Mont de Fosse on 3 January and was blasted. Got help and moved through area before returning to Trois Ponts and had a break before moving on into Battle of the Bulge. E Company was deeply involved through the woods to Hunnange.

Werbemont is about 10 miles west of Trois Ponts.

These notes are from A Chronology of the 517th PIR (focusing on 2nd Battalion and E Company) at www.517prct.org/documents/chronology/landreth_chronology.htm, compiled by **Mark Landreth**.

I will post your note in the next weekly email newsletter, and I will let you know if anyone responds with more info.

Bob Barrett
MailCall@517prct.org



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15th of August 1944-2012 :

Thinking of you all, still in our hearts, remembering the sacrifice you all did for our freedom dear friends of the great 517th in this special day, of 68th anniversary celebration.; Miss you a lot.. God bless you, God bless America. !!

Airborne all the Way

J. Mickael , Eric and all your friends of Southern France.

"15th of august 1944 airborne task Force Museum association southern France

anvil-dragon@hotmail.com

<http://www.facebook.com/adrien.soldi#!/media/set/?set=a.418231764878946.83604.251521034883354&type=1>



Leo Dean and Adrien Soldi

Some more photos from Le Muy from Eric Renoux's facebook:

Allan Johnson, Leo Dean, Eric Renoux and friends





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Photos from Eric Renoux's facebook



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Hopefully you can get these before the anniversary.

Thanks to Merle and some of my resources at work, we now have digital copies of some very interesting maps and documents of the Battle of the Bulge. These are all pretty large but well worth the download. I have 4 ready and have a few more smaller ones that will be available tomorrow here;

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

- **BattleoftheBulgeDropZone_32** — is a reference map for the dropzones for the member of the 517 in the Battle of the Bulge. The Original size of this document is 36”x 54”. VERY BIG DOCUMENT Scaled down to something that is easy to share and review. It is well worth the download.
- **BattleoftheBulgeDropZonePart2** — is a supplemental map for troops dropped in a zone outside of the map above.
- <http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/bulge/pathfinders.jpg.html> Is the locations determined for the pathfinders dropped in advance of the jump.
- <http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/bulge/QuatreBras.tif.html> Lists battle activity.

As part of the recognition for the soldiers I have found the reports for the 1st platoon of the 596 activity with the 509 during this operation;

From <http://www.509thgeronimo.org/509thTimeline.htm>

15 Jul 44 - Organized under the 1st Airborne Task Force (Provisional Seventh Army Airborne Division) code name: RUGBY FORCE

- Pathfinders designated and attached to the Provisional Pathfinder Detachment, 1st Airborne Task Force

- 509th Parachute Combat Team organized comprised of the 509th PIB, 463rd Pcht. Field Artillery Battalion and 1st Plt., 596th Pcht. Combat Engineer Company in preparation for Operation Anvil-Dragoon

15 Aug 44 - Fourteen Paratroopers of the 509th Pathfinder Team in a C-47 departed Marcigliana Airfield, Italy at 0100 for Drop Zone 'C' 2 miles southeast of LeMuy. Planes encountered 1/2 mile visibility and fog over the French coast resulting in a misdrops of the Pathfinders in vicinity of Belluny, France in the mountain forest area southwest of Grasse. This was 16 miles from their intended DZ.

15 Aug 44 - Air-Assaulted Southern France, Operation ANVIL-DRAGOON. Around 01:00, 1200 paratroopers of the 509th PCT loaded onto 90 C-47s divided evenly into two serials and located at two separate airfields departed Folonica, Italy and Grosseto, Italy. HHC and A CO 509th PIB and HHB and A Battery 463rd PFAB and 1st Plt, 596th PCEC formed serial #1 (45 C-47s) which departed Folonica, Italy. B and C Company, 509th PIB and B and C Battery, 463rd PFAB formed serial #2 (45 C-47s) which departed Grosseto, Italy. At 04:15, the 509th PCT



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was to land on Drop Zone 'C' 2 miles southeast of LeMuy, France to seize high ground overlooking the town, destroy communications and secure the secondary road leading to St. Maxime. Serial #1 dropped at 04:21 within a mile of the intended DZ without the aid of the Pathfinders. By 07:00 Serial #1 had assembled on their Battalion Commander. 463rd recovered and assembled three of the 75 mm PAK howitzers and trained them on LeMuy. 22 rounds were fired against enemy positions still occupying the town. Serial #2 misdropped in the vicinity of Saint Tropez

15 Aug 44 - Participation credit begins for Southern France Campaign

24 Aug 44 - Occupied Cannes without opposition followed by the 551st PIB. Linked up with the 1st Social Service Force

29 Aug 44 - Crossed the Var River and drove through Nice

30 Aug 44 - Entered Beaulieu without opposition

02 Sep 44 - Cleared area vicinity La Turbia

08 Sep 44 - Pushed through Menton to Italian Border assigned defensive positions in the Maritime Alps along the Franco-Italian border

14 Sep 44 - Participation credit ends for Southern France Campaign

Subject: Battling Buzzards and Clark Archer

Dear Ben

I am preparing to send in the final manuscript for my book in a couple of weeks. Unfortunately I have not been able to obtain permission from Random House to reused a few short extracts from Battling Buzzards for my own book.

I would like to ask you the following: do you know if there was any relation between Clark Archer, and Gerald Astor for writing Battling Buzzards? The reason I am asking is that it seems that certain events described in Archer's Paratroopers Odyssey are based on very specific information, perhaps letters sent to him by veterans, though he does not quote them directly.

In Astor's Battling Buzzards, this very same very specific information comes back, but in the form of an actual quote by a veteran.

I was wondering if perhaps Clark Archer sent copies of all his 517th material to Gerald Astor, in order to help him write Battling Buzzards.

In any case, do you know if Clark Archer's family may have kept any of Clark archives, in particular letters that may have been sent to him in the 1980's when he was putting together Paratrooper's Odyssey?

Thanks

Jean-Loup



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To: Dan Smith (dapas517@aol.com); Michael Wells (WELLS_860@MSN.COM); 'joanne barrett'

Subject: FW: Battling Buzzards and Clark Archer

Just passing this request on to you folks to see if you can help. **Jean-Loup Gassend** is trying to finish up a book that he is writing. He is allowed to use excerpts from the Paratrooper's Odyssey, written by the 517th members, but not from "The Battling Buzzards" by Gerald Astor. He is hoping that some of the stories and quotes printed by Astor were actually provided to him from **Clark Archer's** records. If so, does anyone have a pile of Clark Archer's files that might contain those records or letters? I know we got the morning reports, but do we have the rest of Clark's files?

Bob Barrett

MailCall@517prct.org

Bob: excellent, excellent Mail Call, thank you with a special thanks for sharing Howard's comments about clothes, weather etc. (how blessed we are to know Howard and have his recollection and smarts -- he is a lawyer's lawyer plus, in other words the best of the very best), and for sharing your and Merle's exchanges on propaganda delivery.

This Wednesday we remember the 517th's lead in the drop into Southern France. Even before we realized what a wonderful group the 517th was, Alan and I had a rendezvous with that date, for slightly different reasons than the men of the 517th. Dad asked if we could move the date of our 1981 Miami wedding to Friday, August 14, so that he would not miss the 517th reunion in Orlando on August 15. Needless to say, that change has served us very well for the past 31 years!

We salute the men of the 517th for for their valor and sacrifice. They are role models for us today. God bless them all.

Pat Seitz and Alan Greer

Submitted by	Comments:
Name: Mel Trenary	Here is my email for future reference
From: Livingston, tx	
E-mail: mctrenary@me.com	Added: August 18, 2012



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Hello,

I've recently been going through some family photos and found some World War Two photos taken by great uncles. I found one of my photos is same as a picture on your site (Link: http://www.517prct.org/photos/markle_596th/building3.jpg). Could please provide me with more information about this photo? The page says it is by **Pvt. Gene Markle**, but the tribute page no longer works.



Thank you very much,

Sean King

Email: kingsa09@gmail.com

Hi Sean,

What outfit were they with?

I am including Steve Markle on this note, who has posted many pictures of his Dad, Gene Markle, and other 596th members on his markleweb website: <http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/>

That specific photo can be found at : http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/places/?q2_page=4 It is of the Heysel Exposition Hall in Brussels.

Hope this helps.

Bob Barrett

Unfortunately I have next to nothing to go on in my search for information. Of my family in the war were six great uncles, all last named Briggman and my grandfather William English. Almost none of the pictures are labeled in anyway. And worst of all they have all passed away before I was born. They were all from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and, to the best of my knowledge, were Privates serving in the European Theatre. As of right now this is all I know.

I wish I could help you more in giving you information, but right now I just don't have it. But I will continue searching and hopefully can come across more information. But if you or Steve think any of the info I've mentioned sounds familiar it would give me something to go on.

Thanks for your help.

Sean King



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Sean,

It's probably a long shot that one of the Briggmans was with the 596th. I can't find any record, although the records are very incomplete, especially for "replacements" that came in after the Battle of the Bulge.

All the fighting that the 596th did was in the Ardennes in eastern Belgium, and did not pass through Brussels as far as I know. (I'm not sure exactly what or where the 596th did to receive the Croix de Guerre, but I'll keep looking.) My guess is that the photos of Brussels and Germany were fairly common for those who went sightseeing on leave after the war or during occupation activities. Anyone who went to Brussels could have taken that picture (or is it a postcard?)

I'll post these notes in the next MailCall and see if anyone else remembers who might have travelled through Brussels.

And as Steve suggested, if you know the hometowns you might be able to find enlistment records. I found 9 Briggman's in the NARA records:

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/display-partial-records.jsp?f=3475&mtch=9&q=briggman&cat=WR26&dt=893&tf=F&bc=,sl,sd>

That doesn't tell you which unit they were assigned to, but there might be some clues, and it does give you their serial numbers.

Bob Barrett

Sam Phillips was my grandfather who served in World War II in the 517th.

I'm trying to find out how I can get a copy of his citation to accompany his Bronze Star. That is, unless it was just for serving in the ETO during his tour.

I have attached a copy of his service records (item 33 is the Bronze Star award).

Any suggestions were I can go to find this out?

Best Regards,

Dennis Cooper, Maj, USAF (Ret.)

Dennis,

I am coming up mostly blank on this. I think he was with the 517th (Medical) Clearing Company, not the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team. Therefore I don't have any records.

I found only a couple of references to the 517 Medical Clearing Company on the internet:

<http://research.archives.gov/description/531436>

<http://www.spokesmanreview.com/obits/?ID=68539>

Bob Barrett



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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.
- 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 our new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Dues, etc.) and make all checks payable to:

517 PRCT Association, Inc.
c/o Joanne Barrett
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Cohasset, MA 02025