



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2148

March 3, 2013

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

Website

www.517prct.org

Send Mail Call news to

MailCall@517prct.org

Mail Call Archives

www.517prct.org/archives

2013 Roster (updated!)

www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

Thunderbolt (Winter 2013)

www.517prct.org/archives

MailCall News



August 16, 2009 -- Ben Barrett, Merle McMorrow, Hal Beddow, US Ambassador Riley, Leo Dean, Allan Johnson, Lud Gibbons...

Bonjour Bob, Hope you and your family are well. Here, in South France it's snowing !!!...

I'm reading about the article with **Merle Mc MORROW** and the Légion d'Honneur he had with his friends in August 2009 in South France !! Great souvenir !!!

See the picture attached, taken in the American Cemetery in Draguignan the 16th of August 2009 with all the US Veterans (and your father) decorated with Legion d'Honneur accompanied by Kathleen A. RILEY US Ambassador in Marseille South France!



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Have a good day !

Regards

Eric & Jean Michel

Airborne Task Force Museum - South France

I want to join **Pat Seitz** and **Alan Greer** in wishing a wonderful birthday to our own **Jesse K. Davis**. I had the pleasure of meeting Jesse at one of the national reunions a few years ago, and he so enjoyed seeing his fellow troopers at that gathering. Maybe it was Savannah?

Happy Birthday to **Jesse Davis**! Hope he had a great celebration!

Claire Giblin

Dear **Merle** -

I am thrilled that you received the Legion of Honor last week. I am only sorry that the rest of us weren't there to help you celebrate.

Congratulations to one of our former Association presidents on France's highest civilian honor. I've been honored to travel France with you and I am thrilled to hear of this latest recognition of a proud 517 veteran.

Great news!

Claire Giblin

Earl Tingle tipped me off to this - evidently our own **Phil McSpadden** received the Legion of Honor on January 29, 2013, in a ceremony honoring 24 veterans. This is wonderful news and I hope that Phil will be sending in a picture or local news story.

Congratulations, Phill! It is always fantastic to see one of our own recognized. We are so happy for you!

Claire Giblin

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20130130/NEWS/301299970>

See full article on next page.



France marks special day for D-Day veterans

By [Ray Weiss](#)

STAFF WRITER

Published: Wednesday, January 30, 2013 at 5:30 a.m.

DAYTONA BEACH — They were mostly teenagers then, storming the beaches of Normandy, unsure if they would see tomorrow.

Many didn't.

They died on D-Day or during the battles that followed while liberating France and the rest of Europe from Nazi domination.

The survivors are now in their late 80s and 90s. Father time is their enemy, one that cannot be defeated.

But their D-Day legacy remains one of history's most critical turning points.



Almost 69 years after the invasion, 24 of those World War II veterans received France's Legion of Honor Medal on Tuesday at a ceremony at the International Motorsports Center, NASCAR's office building.

Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the medal is the most prestigious honor given by France for exceptional merit. Notable American recipients in the past include Thomas Edison, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Colin Powell.

"Today we honor 24 of those courageous veterans who represent all of those who fought for our freedom," Gael de Maisonneuve, the French counsel general in Miami, told a standing-room-only crowd. "I am honored to have the opportunity to formally present you with my country's highest distinction and assure you that the French people will never forget what you did."

Michael Yatsuk of Daytona Beach Shores served with the Army Air Corps from D-Day through the Battle of the Bulge. "I'm excited. This is something I never thought about."

At age 94, Yatsuk was the oldest recipient Tuesday, which was attended by four generations of his family, including his 9-year-old great grandson, Cameron.

The medal currently is being given to American veterans nationwide who fought during the liberation of France between 1944-45.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Isadore Serkin, 89, of Ormond Beach had his medal pinned to his old Army dress jacket. He was a messenger in the infantry at Normandy.

"I'm quite amazed," he said of receiving France's top honor. "I never had anything like this."

Ian Mackenzie, 89, of Palm Coast was a pilot who flew 79 missions in a P-38 at Normandy, moving on to other campaigns in France, Belgium and Germany, "As the front lines moved up, we moved up."

"I think it's great of the French doing this," he said.

Claude Berthoin, the French consulate's Volusia, Flagler and St. Johns County representative, said World War II veterans are being sought out who served in France after the invasion to liberate Europe on June 6, 1944. They then must apply and subsequently are screened for the medal.

"Not all of the applications result in a medal," said Berthoin, an international businessman from Ormond Beach. "It's a long process. It has to be certified. It takes almost a year."

So far, he said about 800 medals have been handed out in Florida — the most in the United States.

"The French people owe you," Berthoin told the veterans. "It is a blessing you survived."

Frank Smith, 86, of Ponce Inlet lied about his age in March 1943 so he could join the Army, telling authorities he was 18, two years older than he was.

Smith was involved in three combat campaigns in France with the infantry as a combat engineer, landing at Normandy.

"This was tremendous," he said after the ceremony.

Then it was time to join others and celebrate the victory of Normandy and the freedom they gave Europe as teenagers — with some French champagne and pastries.

What is the Legion of Honor medal?

Created in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, the award recognizes exceptional service to France, and rewards military and "civil merits." On the 60th anniversary of the Normandy invasion in 2004, France decided to grant the medal to all U.S. veterans who fought to liberate the country. There are five degrees of the Legion of Honor, including knight, which the veterans received.

For more information about applying for the medal call 305-403-4180 or email legionofhonorflorida@yahoo.com.



News-Journal / Steven Notaras

The military medals of Phillip McSpadden are now accompanied by the Legion of Honor Medal, left, after it was bestowed in a ceremony at the International Motorsports Center in Daytona Beach Tuesday, January 29, 2013. (Steven Notaras)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Rick Van Dijk from Netherlands. Heerenveen (North) to be exact. I'm 19 years old.

I am looking for **Hubert B. Ford** from C-compagnie His SERIAL NUMBER: 36742041 his RANK: Private First Class, Award : purple heart

In the second world war he fought with the 517 PIR of the 13th Airborne Division. Today I'm become his Godfather. In a small summary, I have read that he was born in Kansas in the year 1925.

I hope you guys can help me feather, I am looking for pictures of this man. Also, I am looking for other data of this man.

I feel responsible for his grave and take his adoption very seriously. This also has an emotional value for me.

I hope you what can do for me.

Best regards, **Rick van Dijk**

Hello, Rick.

Thank you for your tribute to Hubert Ford. We do not have a lot of information about PFC Ford on the web site, but I will continue to do some research.

We do know that he was Killed in Action in Belgium, and is buried in the Henri-Chappelle cemetery. He is one of 5 soldiers of the 517th who is memorialized on the plaque in Logbierme, Belgium.

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

The incident is mentioned on page 36 of the "Record of Company C" at:

http://517prct.org/documents/c_co_history/c_co_history.htm

I am going to post your inquiry in our weekly MailCall newsletter, and see if anyone has more information.

Also, we did hear from a nephew of Hubert Ford in 2007:

Guestbook entry

Name: **Fritz Eickberg** I was looking information regarding my uncle, Pfc Hubert B.

E-mail: vinland6@hotmail.com Ford, C company, KIA Logbierme, Belgium. Any info would be appreciated. Thanks

Dear Sir,

I just came across the correspondence and your e-mail address the relative of Cpl. Albert Caraciolo who was killed in Logbierme, Belgium. My uncle, Hubie Ford was also killed in Logbierme, I believe the same day. If you have any information about my uncle, it would be greatly appreciated. The 517th



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

website is very informative and there were a couple of pics of my uncle there. Thanks for any info you might share with me.
Sincerely,
Fritz Eickberg
Villa Park, Il.

Also in 2002:

Entry of Nov 23, 2002 at 22:58 [EST]

Name: Fritz Eickberg

Unit:

Email: ejday11@hotmail.com

How I found the 517th page: From a search engine

Comments: I'm seaching for information on my uncle, PFC Hubert (Hubie) B. Ford who served in the 517th, C Company, I believe, KIA January 14, 1945. Thanks for any help you might give.

Best Regards,

Bob Barrett

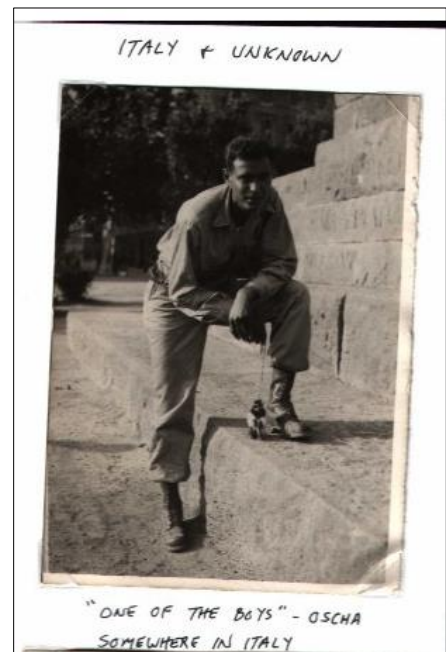
MailCall@517prct.org

Hello my name is Amy Pohanic and I am the granddaughter of **George Ochoa**. I am writing to inform you that he passed away Friday February 22 and his funeral will be held Thursday February 28th at Ft. Logan (CO) national cemetery at 2:30.

Thank you,

Amy

Photo from Don Barry's scrapbook
www.517prct.org/photos/barry.htm





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

I received from **Ray Hess**, via Claire, a package of his WWII photos. It will take me a couple of weeks to scan hem all in. Most of them are new to me.

Here are a couple of samples from the infamous F Company

:



Lt. George Giuchici



Gene Frice

Feb 18, 2013

Dear Bob

I want to extend to General "Dick" Seitz my best wishes on his 95th birthday. He is a true gentleman and deserves my utmost respect.

I would like to relate a story about the first time I met him, at that time a major commanding the 2nd Battalion. We were in French barracks in Boisson, France after arriving from the Southern France campaign. Many of the men enjoyed going into town, in fact too many, that passes had to be obtained to leave the base. One evening I left without a pass and Sgt. Minick turned me in. I was sent to Major Seitz's office, and he said I will be court-martialed and arrested to quarters. After about 2 days of doing a lot of extra duties, General Von Runstedt of the Germans invaded Belgium, and the 517th was called up to fight in the "Battle of the Bulge". We, including me, were given new weapons to clean up the cosmoline(sp). Therefore, I was dismissed from being arrested to quarters, much to my relief.

Years ago, at a reunion, I asked the general about this and he said he can't remember the situation - bless his heart!

God Bless you general and may you have many more birthdays!

Mel Stehberg



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Camp Toccoa 70th Anniversary

Hello everyone,

This Month marks the 70th anniversary of the activation of the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Camp Toccoa, GA.

As not to disrupt our Palm Springs reunion I have made arrangements with Brenda Carlin, the director of the Camp Toccoa/Currahee Museum to have a 517th Get-Together on Friday, May 31, and Saturday June 1st. Everyone is invited to come. There is no registration,(because this is not a reunion), but please come and celebrate the activation of the 517th. I know our President, Allan Johnson is planning on attending along with many others I have spoken with.

As you know there is no National Reunion this year and our organization is having two great mini reunions, one in Florida that was held in January, and the Palm Springs California Reunion this month Mar 11-15th. Thanks to all who are putting these reunions on, I know what that is like.

On the weekend of June 1, 2013, the Camp Toccoa/Churrahee Museum will be hosting a D-Day fun run up and down Mount Currahee on Saturday morning (see the attached application form for the fun run) I'm not sure how much fun that will be, but I and Brenda are planning some fun activities for the 517th while we are there. Brenda has recommended that we stay at the Country Hearth Inn, 302 W Savannah St Toccoa, GA 30577 (706) 297-7799, or the Toccoa Inn and Suites, 106 Stephen Cir Toccoa, GA 30577, (706) 886-1048

<http://www.toccoainn.com/Home.html>

A proposed itinerary of events are:

Friday, May 31st

12:00 noon Meet for Lunch and visit
1:30 pm Tour Toccoa and visit Camp Toccoa Museum
2:30 pm For those who would like drive up Mount Currahee and see the view
6:00pm Meet at Museum for dinner and watch the 517th movie, Saints and Soldiers Airborne Creed.

Saturday June 1st

7:00 am Prepare for Fun Run up and down the mountain, that is if you are doing that
8:00 am Fun Run or in my case a fun walk on level ground
11:30 am Recognition of runners
12:00 pm Tribute to the 517th at Parachute Park
1:00 pm Lunch
2:00 pm Visit Museum, visit with friends, see WWII rein-actors
6:00 pm Dinner and 1940's Swing Dance

Brenda is expecting a large group to these events so I recommend making your motel reservations soon. I am excited to return to Camp Toccoa to see where our father's trained. I hope to see you there

Airborne All the Way!

Lory Curtis, son of Bud Curtis, HQ, 1st BN

D-DAY RUN - CAMP TOCCOA AT CURRAHEE

3 MILES UP - 3 MILES DOWN

JUNE 1, 2013 10K RUN



The 2nd Annual D-Day Run honors the soldiers who trained at Camp Toccoa and jumped at Normandy on June 6, 1944. The 10K run will take you in the footsteps of the 18,000 men who trained on Currahee Mountain during the war.

All proceeds will be used for the Camp Toccoa at Currahee Project, www.camptoccoaatcurrahee.org, that will preserve the legacy of the men who trained there. Thank you for supporting the D-Day Run and celebrating the Greatest Generation.



When: Saturday, June 1, 2013, at 8:00 a.m.; check-in begins at 7:00 a.m. Race will be held rain or shine with no refunds.

T-Shirts: All pre-registered runners will receive a t-shirt. A limited number of shirts will be available for those registering on race day on a first-come, first-served basis.

Where: Currahee Mountain, 5 miles west of Toccoa on Highway 123/2428 Ayersville Road, Toccoa, Georgia 30577

Registration: \$20 per person if postmarked before May 24, 2013. Late registration is \$25.

Awards: Overall Male/Female, Overall Masters Male/Female and the top 3 finishers in each age group: 10 & under, 11- 20, 21-30, 31-40, 41- 50, 51-60, 61-70, and 71 & older.

Directions: From Atlanta, take I-85 North to 985, continue north to 985 turns into 365/17 exit to Toccoa/Lavonia. Turn right at Jeanette Jamieson Intersection Hwy. 123/13, travel 2 miles; the entrance to the property is on the left. From Greenville, take I-85 South to the 17 exit (Lavonia/Toccoa), turn left at the light and continue north to the Jeanette Jamieson Intersection, 365/17, turn left intersection. Turn left onto Highway 123/13, and the entrance to the property is on the left.

All proceeds from the D-Day Run will be used for the Camp Toccoa at Currahee Project.

Please mail completed form and check to:

Currahee Military Museum, 160 N. Alexander St., Toccoa, Georgia 30577

For more information or registration form, call 706.282.5055, or email toccoahistory@windstream.net, or register online www.active.com

Print Name _____ Age _____ Circle Gender: M or F

Address, City, State, Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Circle Shirt Size: S M L XL XXL Date of Birth ____/____/____

Waiver: In consideration of acceptance of this entry, I waive any and all claims for myself and my heirs against the officials, sponsors and benefitting parties of the 2012 D-Day Run for injury or illness which may result directly or indirectly from my participation. I further state that I am in proper condition to participate in this event.

Runner's Signature _____ Date _____
(Parent or Legal Guardian if runner is under 18 years of age)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

517/460/596 Roster Review

Help us update the roster! Check your address and contact info on the new roster at www.517prct.org/roster.pdf. Send any corrections to MailCall@517prct.org.

Note that only people marked with a green **Y** will receive the Thunderbolt newsletter in a paper version. But if you receive weekly MailCalls, you don't need to receive the paper copy since we will be posting all future Thunderbolts on the website and in future MailCalls. See: [Winter 2013](#)

West Coast Mini Reunion

West Coast Mini
Palm Springs, CA
March 11-15, 2013
[Registration Info](#)



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 Donations, In Memory of... etc.) and make all checks payable to:

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