



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2154

April 14, 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

RE: Letter in [MailCall #2153](#) April 7th.

The letter regarding the K.C. reunion was written by my Son, Brian Kelley, to his family following our attendance at the reunion. He was greatly impressed by the people and programs. He is an attorney living in California. Thanks for your interest.

Hoyt Kelley

I came thru France on the way to Arabia back in 77 but wasn't able to see where I fought in ww11.i was knock out of war the second day of our landing .sent to Naples for rehab. Joined outfit at fort barbonett. Spent time in nice with my CO. Then we took trip in box cars to Soissons getting ready for Xmas. Then trucks to the bulge. I remember having jelly & crackers for Xmas. We were kept busy from then on. My feet & hands got numb .we were pulled back for a day. Spent night in a barn put clean socks on, snuggled into hay & went to sleep. The next morning I could not put on my boots. My feet were swollen & black. Doc put tag on me & sent to England for rehab. So I missed some fighting toward the end. I cried when I learned my assistant machine gunner got killed & two others also got it. I communicate with a Belgian named **Jean Francois Pendant** who found my shelter half in Bergeval. He sent me a picture of it. I told him to keep it for his collection of ww2 things. We correspond every Xmas. I live just north of Houston in Livingston ,TX. I meet every wed. morning with veterans of all the wars in Conroe TX. & seem to be the only ww2 paratrooper that joins them. I've been to 3 517th reunions as most of them have been too far away & cost more than I can afford. So there you have it. I do take a few pills to keep me going ha!

Melvin Trenary



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Bob...

Not sure you have heard this yet, but *Saints and Soldiers: Airborne Creed* was just added to the Netflix streaming movie service.

Steve Markle

Dad is absolutely amazing in his recovery (but he will not win the "good patient" award)! Those 517th PRCT paratroopers are awesome.

Pat Seitz

Website update:

I have a pile of pictures from **Ray Hess** and from **Cameron Gauthier's** daughter, **Christine Mace**. I will be working on these over the next few weeks. I haven't forgotten.

Bob Barrett

Medal of Honor Among Thieves

By Bill Poovey

Associated Press
Sunday, April 30, 2006

CHATTANOOGA -- The Congressional Medal of Honor Society reports that there are 113 living recipients of the nation's highest military award, but an FBI agent said impostors outnumber the true heroes.

"There are more and more of these impostors, and they are literally stealing the valor and acts of valor of the real guys," said Tom Cottone, who tracks such pretenders in addition to his work on an FBI violent crime squad in West Paterson, N.J.

Some fakers merely brag about receiving the award -- and that's not illegal -- but some impostors wear military uniforms and bogus medals. "There are guys out there wearing the Medal of Honor who didn't earn it," he said.

It's hard to know the exact number of impostors, but there are about 25 pending investigations, said Cottone, who has been investigating fakers since 1995.

World War II Medal of Honor recipient Charles Coolidge of Signal Mountain, Tenn., got flimflammed out of his medal -- at a military reunion, of all places -- when someone offered to help recondition it and gave him back a fake version of the award.

Cottone tracked down Coolidge's real Medal of Honor from a man who was selling and trading medals in Ohio.



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"It was a big surprise to me to get it back," said Coolidge, 84.

Coolidge received the Medal of Honor for leading an outnumbered section of heavy machine guns during four days of fighting against German infantry and tanks in France in 1944.

Congress increased the penalty for fraudulently wearing the Medal of Honor in 1994 -- up to a year in prison and a \$100,000 fine. But there's no such penalty for other medals, and it's still legal to lie about getting the Medal of Honor.

"It is now not illegal for somebody to go on national television and say 'I was a Medal of Honor winner' or a POW," Cottone said.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation and other veterans groups are looking to change that. Rep. John T. Salazar (D-Colo.) is sponsoring the Stolen Valor Act to penalize distributors of phony medals and those who pretend to be decorated veterans.

Salazar's legislation would make it illegal to make a false public claim to be a recipient of any military valor award, such as the Medal of Honor, a Silver Star or Purple Heart.

"It is about more than punishing people," said Salazar, who was hoping the House Judiciary Committee would consider his bill. "It's about preserving the history and honor of those medals."

Cottone said he recovered two fake Medals of Honor at a New Jersey gun show. Both were made by HLI Lordship Industries Inc., a former government contractor for the Medal of Honor.

The company, based in Hauppauge, N.Y., was fined \$80,000 in 1996 and placed on probation after admitting 300 fake medals were sold in the early 1990s for \$75 each.

In December 1995, Illinois Judge Michael O'Brien resigned after he was confronted with questions about his claim of being a Medal of Honor recipient. O'Brien admitted that two Medals of Honor displayed in his chambers were fake. He has since died.

Cottone said investigators have to "catch someone wearing the medal." He said O'Brien couldn't be prosecuted because he was never caught wearing it.

Sometimes a military impersonation doesn't involve the Medal of Honor. Lisa Jane Phillips, 34, of Apex, N.C., pleaded guilty in September to impersonating an Air Force captain for almost three years.

Phillips bought uniforms and medals online or at military surplus stores and persuaded Meredith College in Raleigh, N.C., to exempt her from tuition because of her military service. She talked about serving in Afghanistan and Iraq and consoled other students whose relatives had been deployed.

And civilians are not the only impostors.

In October 2002, Cottone said he was introduced to a Navy captain who "was wearing at least 12 rows of ribbon bars," a Silver Star, a Legion of Merit, a Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart.

"There was too much of everything," Cottone said. "He was wearing 21 unearned medals." The captain was court-martialed and convicted, he said.

"If we don't maintain the integrity of these military awards, the real ones won't mean anything," Cottone said.

Frances Doss, whose husband, Desmond T. Doss Sr., was the only conscientious objector to receive the Medal of Honor in World War II, said it's hard to imagine why someone would wear a fake medal. Her husband died in March and was buried in Chattanooga.

"I guess they want attention so much they are willing to take a chance nobody will find out," she said.

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Camp Toccoa 70th Anniversary



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

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/Currahee Museum will be hosting a D-Day fun run up and down Mount Currahee on Saturday morning.

(see http://www.toccoahistory.com/2013_D_Day_Run_form.pdf) 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>

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 fathers trained. I hope to see you there Airborne All the Way!

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



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Military Humor

An old, blind Paratrooper wanders into a Marine's bar by mistake. He finds his way to a bar stool and orders a shot of Jack Daniels. After sitting there for a while, he yells to the bartender, 'Hey, you wanna hear a Marine joke?'

The bar immediately falls absolutely silent.

In a very deep, husky voice, the Marine next to him says, "Before you tell that joke, Paratrooper, I think it is only fair, given that you are blind, that you should know five things:

1. The bartender is a Marine with a baseball bat.
2. The bouncer is a Marine.
3. I'm a 6-foot tall, 210-pound Marine with a black belt in karate.
4. The Marine sitting next to me is a professional weight lifter.
5. The Marine to your right is a professional boxer.

"Now, think about it seriously Paratrooper. Do you still wanna tell that Marine joke?"

The blind Paratrooper thinks for a second, shakes his head, chugs his whiskey and shouts, "No, not if I'm gonna have to explain it five f***** times!!"

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
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