



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2179

September 29, 2013

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

Website
Send Mail Call news to
Mail Call Archives
2013 Roster (updated!)
Thunderbolt (Spring 2013)

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

Peace Day at Normandy Beach

Hi, Bob -

I don't know if you've seen this art project and photos from the Normandy beaches:

9,000 Fallen Soldiers Etched into the Sand on Normandy Beach to Commemorate Peace Day - September 25, 2013

<http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2013/09/the-fallen-9000/>



All the best -

Claire



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Taps

Ben,

I wanted to let you know that **Robert Cooper** of Co. D passed away this afternoon at the age of 94. Please send this out in your next mail call, I would appreciate it, and I know that grandpa would want those that are still with us to know as well. I don't any details yet, but when I do I can let you know, if need be.

Thanks,

Paige Christman, Bob's grand-daughter

I'm very sad to report the one of your men will not be reporting to the next semi annual reunion in Palm Springs, Ca.

Bill Christian passed away 25 Sept. 2013 at approx 21:30 hrs. He gave his very best, to the very end. But, cancer won the final battle. His wife, Sophia, and family were all with him.

Funeral arrangements are pending at this time.

He had served the last 10 years as a Hospital Volunteer at Western Medical Center- Santa Ana in his hometown of Santa Ana, Calif. He had been recognized for 3,733 hours at the end of June 2013.

Thank You ALL Very Much for Your Service

-Dale Moeller



Bill Christian in France 1944



Bill Christian of Brooklyn in Follonica, Italy



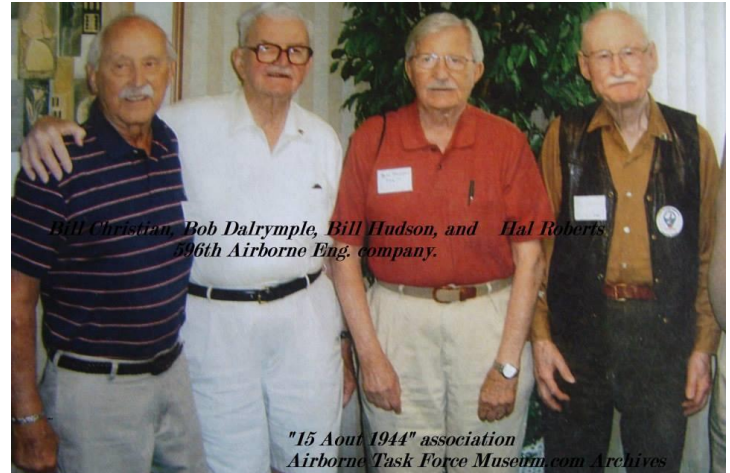
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Nous avons le regret d'apprendre la mort vendredi dernier de notre ami Bill Christian.

Parachuté à La Motte le 15 Aout 1944, nous le rencontrerons pour la première fois à PalmSpring 1997. Il ne cessera jamais de soutenir notre action et correspondre régulièrement. Nos prières et nos pensées vont vers toi Bill. Condoléances à toi Sophia te enfants et petits enfants.

Very sad to hear that pour good friend Bill Christian died last Friday. Our prayers are with you my friends, deepest condolences to Sophia, Children and Grand Children.

from <http://airborne-task-force-museum.com/>



MailCall News

Hello, My father in law **Thomas Blymire** was a member of the 517th. I would appreciate any info you might have on him. Also i am trying to find out if **James Lyon** was a part of the 517th or the 596th. Probably more likely the 596th. I looked thru the 1944 Christmas booklet. Blymire's name was in but I could not find Lyon's name anywhere. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Alan

Hi Alan,

Yes, I see that **Thomas Blymire** was in A Company. I haven't found any other info on him, but I will post a note in the next weekly MailCall newsletter to see who might remember him.

There is a Dr. **James D. Lyon**, who was in the 596th and attended reunions of both the 596 and 517th. I see his name and a picture in some of the 596th newsletters.

http://www.517prct.org/documents/596th_newsletters/Wings_Q1_1995.pdf I have a note that Jim Lyon passed away in 2012.

Bob Barrett



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I have heard nothing so far in my request to learn more about my father's time in WWII. He was in the 517th as a member of the 460th Parachute Infantry Regiment Battalion. I know he carried a machine gun and initially fought at Anzio. He also participated in Dragoon and fought in the Ardennes. He wore the 82nd insignia on his jacket and did spend time in Berlin. His name was **Martin T. Bockis**. He was active in the American Legion for his life and he died in Dec. 2011. Thank you

Anna Bockis

Hi Anna,

I did insert your note in last week's MailCall newsletter (<http://517prct.org/mailcall/2178.pdf>), but have not heard a response. That is unfortunate, but the ranks are thinning quickly.

We do know that he was with Battery D of the 460th:
http://517prct.org/documents/xmas1944/xmas_1944_battery_d.jpg

And we do have a history of the 460th online at
http://517prct.org/documents/short_history/460_short_history.htm

I will post your note again in next week's MailCall.

Bob Barrett

Subject: Goodbye to computer

To All my friends and family:

It has finally happened,,,,, Macular degeneration has finally taken over my eyesight and I can no longer get on the computer. I have had a lot of fun but it is over so thanks for being my friend.

A special note to everyone: **Myrle**'s cancer is behaving so far and he seems to be in pretty good health. My eyesight is the worst thing going on with me. I keep telling Arthur not to visit but he insists on giving me a bad time.

Take care and God Bless you all

Betty Traver

The Thunderbolt has been sent to the printer for publication. Claire, thanks so much for your hard work on putting this together. Bob has been sent a copy for the website. Hurrrrraay! we don't have to worry about another issue until next year.

JoAnne, you should be getting a bill

Lory



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From **Lory Curtis**:

I received a nice letter from Elizabeth "Libby" Smith the widow of **Rossa Smith, Jr.** of Company B. She wrote on September 17, 2013:

Dear 517th Newsletter,

I am the widow of **Rossa Smith, Jr.** of Company B, 1st Battalion. His papers state that he was an Ammo Sergeant. The Thunderbolt is such a pleasure for me to receive - so many nice letters and history to read. I note that your reunions are held in Florida and other cities the exception being the recent "Sentimental Journey" to Camp Toccoa in Georgia.

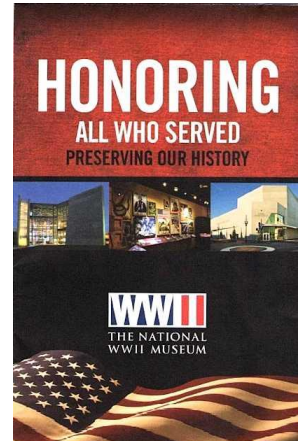
My intent herein is to ask your trip planners to come here to New Orleans to visit your museum - built and dedicated to honor World War II veterans.

We have it all - hotels, renowned food, and this WWII exceptional campus. Our buildings encompass tow sides of Andrew Higgins Drive.

I have given our address to our Group Sales Manager to send information to you. We opened on June 6, 2000 and I've been a Volunteer there ever since.

You will have an unforgettable experience so please come.

My husband was enormously proud of his service in the 517th.



Elizabeth (Libby) Smith -- 90 years young



L to R: Rossa Smith, Bob Fisher, Gene Brissey and Mark Hedgepeth. A break in Nice, France November of 1944, After 93 days of combat. (Courtesy of Eugene L. Brissey.)

Libby also sent this picture and states,

"This picture was found by a researcher at the WWII museum. It is also in the Volume on the journey of the 517th. Myself and each of our 4 children bought a copy. Libby"

As you know I had asked in the past mailcalls for those members who would be interested in going to New Orleans in June 2014 for a National Reunion. Unfortunately, the leadership of the 517th PRCT Association feels it will be too expensive for our members to come to one of our mini reunions, plus a National Reunion and the 70th reunion in France next year on August 15, 2014. Our leadership is asking all who can to save and plan to be in France next year in Le Muy, France to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Operation Dragoon and the 517th combat jump into southern France. We do want to plan a National reunion the following year 2015 in New Orleans.

Lory Curtis, Vice President, 517th PRCT Association



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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 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



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