



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2180

October 6, 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

More from Southern France

Dear Bob, dear All,

Here are a few pics of Les Arcs ceremony that we do not have to forget. Les Arcs was the first important and hard spot in Southern France for the 517th.

We are so happy that the Mayor and the president of french veteran answer very promptly and were very enthusiastic when we requested for **Hoyt KELLEY** the medal of the town. Hoyt was one of the first entered in this town in the early hours of "D" day, with Bill Boyle's group landed north.

It was also very emotional when we drove him up there on the exact spot he landed, but also on the spot his best friend died, on the first hours of that day. He received order from a lieutenant to cut the line, probably thinking it was telephone, in fact it was high voltage and was immediately electrocuted. Grand Pa friend told us this story many times but we never know who he was. Now, we know and we will do our best to have something dedicated to him... hope next year.

Pics attached of the ceremony on the railway bridge, when the Mayor presented Hoyt the medal of city of Les Arcs. Thank you Monsieur le Maire !

kind regards to you all.

Jean Mickael SOLDI, Eric RENOUX,
Airborne Task Force Museum association
Southern France





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



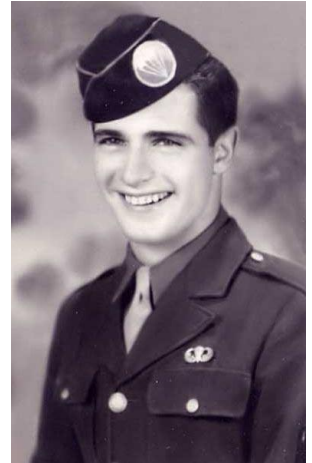


517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Note: The soldier who was electrocuted after being ordered to cut wires was **Cpl. Danny Fisher**, as reported in **Hoyt Kelley's** [biography](#) and discussed in previous MailCalls.

There was a very similar event, also early in the invasion, when **Lt. Maurice Miley** (HQ/2) was also electrocuted cutting wires.

-- BB



Cpl. Danny Fisher --->

MailCall News

Bob Cooper died last week. Here is one of his stories:

Subj: **Battle of Bergstein**
Date: 4/5/2003 2:05:09 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: [RCooper663](#)

Ben:

I am not as articulate or have the command of the English language as **Gene Brissey** or **Howard Hensleigh** but I remember the night of Battle of Bergstein. I don't remember dates, but I will never forget that night. That slippery muddy climb and the flares every few feet trying to stay in side of the markers that the sappers had marked trying to be as quite as possible. Just before daylight the word came back along the line Lt. Cooper can you lead us back. The first squad of the 3rd Platoon of D Company was near the rear of that line. What was left of us. The only problem was that Lt. Cooper was wounded the day before. So I being the only Cooper around said to my self I am not Lt. Cooper but I can lead us back. So Cpl. R. Cooper lead the way and we got off that slippery muddy hill or mountain.

Bob Cooper

Hi Bob,

If you can pass this along to Anna Bockis, from my photo records this is D Battery photo September 18th 1943 Camp MacKall

Jim Miller

Martin Bockis, 460th PFAB --->





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Bob - Would you mind forwarding my email address to Mrs. Libby Smith? I saw her note in MailCall 2179 mentioning he (**Rossa Smith**) was in B Co., 1st Battalion, but also in the photo was **Gene Brissey** of E Company. I checked the December '44 roster and Mr. Smith is listed as being in E Company (as were Gene Brissey and my dad). Would like to hear anything she can tell me about Sgt. Smith. Thanks! mark

Mark Landreth



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.)

Lory,

Could you forward Mark's note to Libby Smith? She is the widow of **Rossa Smith**, B Company, who sent you a note and photos recently. (MailCall 2179)

(I do have an Elizabeth Smith on the T'Bolt roster from Louisiana, but a note says that Elizabeth is related to an Elbert Smith (no mention of which company, not Rossa Smith. Is our info wrong? Could that be her?)

Mark is correct: **Gene Brissey**, **Rossa Smith** and **Mark Hedgepeth** in her photo are all listed with E Company on the Christmas 1944 roster. The fourth person, Bob Fisher, is not on the E Company roster, but there is a Robert E. Fischer listed with HQ/2 which is the same battalion. **Robert E. Fischer** is still on the Thunderbolt mailing list, living in Illinois, but not on MailCall.

Bob Barrett



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

PS: **Smith, Hedgepeth, Landreth** are all in the photo of the E Company survivors.



WW-II Declared Over - 1945 Color Video. VJ Day – The Greatest Generation Celebrates



Excellent quality video taken in Honolulu in 1945 as the first news broadcasts of the surrender of Japan and subsequent end of WW-II hits the airwaves. To say the least, the party was definitely on. My Papa was in Japan at the time of the surrender of Japan. He was a member of the Army's 1st Cavalry Division at the time.

jerry Harold via **jerry wofford**

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=CZ85j6U2Fvs

Bob: It is very sad to read how the ranks are thinning. Alan and I plan to visit **Howard Hensleigh** on October 23 and will send you pictures. It'll be 6 days before Howard's birthday. Also, I found a picture album from the 40th reunion in France of the 517th. I can try to scan the photos (there are quite a few, so maybe I should cull them down) and send them too you if you'd like.

Pat Seitz



Veterans break past WWII barricades after government shutdown

4:40 PM, Oct 1, 2013



WASHINGTON (CNN) - Busloads of World War II veterans, many in wheelchairs, broke past a barricade Tuesday morning to cross into the World War II Memorial, as onlookers applauded and a man playing the bagpipes led the way.

PHOTO GALLERY | [See veterans enter closed WWII memorial](#)

The National Park Service closed all of its parks, including national memorials, as a result of the federal [government](#) shutdown that went into effect at 12:01 a.m ET. But a spokeswoman from the National Mall and Parks Service said efforts were no longer being made to hold anyone back.

RELATED | [Government shutdown could cancel Air Force-Navy Game](#)

"These are important visitors," she told reporters, adding that they're seeking guidance from the director's office on "where we go next." "Obviously we did not want to do anything to mar the trip of these people," she said, saying the visitors came from Mississippi and Iowa. "They've come here specifically to see the memorial that was built for them."

Most of the veterans who arrived at the World War II Memorial came courtesy of nonprofit programs, including Honor Flight Network, that transport the aging men and women to Washington.

Johnson, the spokeswoman for the National Mall and Parks, said the memorial hosts Honor Flight visitors every day. "We want to make sure that they have a good time and are enjoying the memorial, but legally, the National Mall and the memorial are closed," she said.

Asked if she was off the clock and volunteering her time, Johnson replied: "Apparently so."



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Updated: 5:22 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013 | Posted: 5:21 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013

WWII vet, oldest Medal of Honor recipient, dies



In this March 21, 2013 photo, Nicholas Oresko, a 96 year old medal of honor recipient celebrates at the Sunrise Community senior center in Cresskill, N.J. Nicholas Oresko, an Army master sergeant who was badly wounded when he single-handedly took out two enemy bunkers during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945, died Friday night, Oct. 4, 2013 at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, hospital officials announced Saturday. He was 96. He was the nation's oldest living Medal of Honor recipient (AP Photo/The Record of Bergen County, Marko Georgiev)

The Associated Press
CRESSKILL, N.J. —

A World War II veteran and the nation's oldest living Medal of Honor recipient has died in New Jersey.

Nicholas Oresko, an Army master sergeant who was badly wounded as he single-handedly took out two enemy bunkers during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945, died Friday night at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, hospital officials announced Saturday. He was 96.

Oresko had been hospitalized after injuring himself in a fall at an assisted living center in Cresskill. He died of complications from surgery for a broken right femur.

A November 2011 article on the Department of Defense website described Oresko as the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient. The medal is the nation's highest military honor, awarded by Congress for risk of life in combat beyond the call of duty.

A Bayonne native, Oresko received the Medal of Honor from President Harry Truman on Oct. 30, 1945.

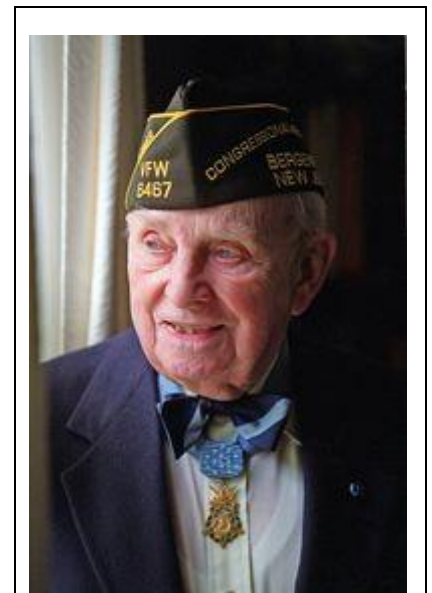
At 28, Oresko was the platoon leader when automatic fire pinned down his unit. Realizing a machine gun in a nearby bunker needed to be eliminated, Oresko moved out alone in the morning darkness, braving bullets that zipped about him, until he was close enough to throw a grenade into the German bunker. He rushed the bunker and used his M-1 rifle to kill the soldiers who survived the grenade blast.

Then another machine gun fired, knocking Oresko down and wounding him in the right hip and leg. He managed to crawl to another bunker and take it out with another grenade. Despite being weak from loss of blood, Oresko refused to be evacuated until he was

assured that the mission was accomplished.

His actions on Jan. 23, 1945, were credited with preventing numerous American casualties and were praised as key to the Allies' victory.

The Bergen Record reported that several veterans and young members of various branches of the military stayed with Oresko in his final days after a friend wrote about his health problems on a Facebook page and noted that Oresko had no immediate family still living.



FILE - This May 25, 1999 file photo shows Nicholas Oresko, a World War II Medal of Honor recipient, with his medal at his home in Tenafly, N.J.. (AP Photo/Star Ledger, Jerry McCrea)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Military Humor

As a group of soldiers stood in formation at an Army Base, the Drill Sergeant said, "All right! All you idiots fall out."

As the rest of the squad wandered away, one soldier remained at attention.

The Drill Instructor walked over until he was eye-to-eye with him, and then raised a single eyebrow. The soldier smiled and said, "Sure was a lot of 'em, huh, sarge?"

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



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM