



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2194

December 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
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This Week in 517th History

The 3rd Battalion held its position at Manhay for the next week. Although the line had been restored and the 2nd SS Panzer had been turned back, the village continued to be the hottest of hot spots. On December 27th three American P-38's, apparently assuming that Manhay was still held by the Germans, strafed and bombed the Battalion positions, killing three men. The 2nd SS Panzer continued to make life miserable for the paratroopers.

The village lies in a broad, shallow depression overlooked by higher ground on all sides. German tanks and antitank guns kept the streets covered with enfilading fire; often the shells would ricochet several times before exploding. A tanker

standing in his his turret was hit squarely and killed. The shell did not explode for several hundred yards. A briefly-visiting TIME magazine correspondent wrote an article describing Manhay as "the town of running men" because any movement at less than a dead run was likely to be costly, if not fatal.

The Battalion kept reconnaissance and combat patrols active. One night a patrol raided and destroyed an enemy OP, reducing the effectiveness of the harassing fire considerably.

Other than the Germans, the only living being the Battalion had found initially in Manhay had been an old woman who was determined to remain in what had been her home. However, after two days, another emerged -- an American soldier who had been hiding in the chimney of a ruined house since the German capture of the town.



St Jacques



Trois Ponts



Malmedy



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Hearing voices speaking English, he finally decided to risk coming out of his hideaway. It turned out that he had a brother in the 460th. Colonel Paxton had him escorted to the rear, and called Colonel Cato to arrange a pass so that the two could meet.

* * * * *

On December 28th the RCT was attached to the 7th Armored Division. Colonel Seitz' 2nd Battalion was moved into a blocking position above Manhay in the vicinity of Mont Derrieux, on commanding ground astride the Manhay--Liege road. Although about two miles north of the crossroads, the Battalion position was under direct German observation, and became a target for enemy tank and artillery fire.

Next day the RCT (less 3rd Battalion, less Company G) returned to XVIII Corps reserve. The Headquarters and 2nd and 3rd Battalions remained in place, while the 1st moved to Harre, five miles north of Manhay, in order to be conveniently located if needed to block or counterattack. The Regiment was now disposed in great depth, with the 3rd Battalion (minus) at Manhay, the 2nd two miles north, and the 1st three miles north of the 2nd.

* * * * *

December 26th-27th had been the high-water mark of the German offensive. Over the next few days attacks at Erria and Sadzot were broken up by the 82nd Airborne and 3rd Armored (with the help of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion) but elsewhere the front remained quiet.

For nine critical days the 517th RCT had served as a "fire brigade" of the southern flank of XVIII Airborne Corps. Enemy penetrations had been decisively defeated at Soy-Hotton and Manhay, the 2nd SS Panzer Division had been badly hurt, and the 560th Volks Grenadier Division had been crippled. Germany's last great gamble had run its course.

Both sides now waited for the Americans to make the next move.

Other MailCall News

[AIRBORNE MUSEUM "15 Aout 1944" Association](#) shared a link.

60th D-Day Provence August 15 2004. Mitch Quiles AFAM of D-Day



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwNAGjzWBMs>



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Hi Bob,
Goodness, you put in a huge amount of work on the MailCall and the website.
I'm guessing you didn't get the text of our trip, so I'll try again to attach it.
Thanks,

Julie Black



My dad, **1st Lt. Edward Athey**, 3rd Battalion H Company, shared photos and stories of southern France as I was growing up. He passed away in July, as my husband and I were making plans to visit Nice and Sospel on our way to link up with friends in northern Italy. The journey to WWII sites was bittersweet, because we couldn't share our experiences with him. I wore Mom's small version of his parachute wings throughout the trip.

Dad had a 1944 tourism map from the Hotel Negresco on which he'd marked a street and a theater, as well as assorted photos of Nice's waterfront area. So, we started in Nice and were able to walk from our hotel to Dad's marked street and theater. When we thanked the hotel desk clerk for helping us follow the map, she said, "Our history is important to us. We forget that it is also important to you." When we took the map to the Hotel Negresco, staff carried it like it was fine china and photographed both sides.

Morris McDowell had introduced us to a French couple through email, and we next headed to Sospel to meet them. Once there, **Roland and Patricia Orenge** treated us like family, as they have treated other 517th vets and families lucky enough to visit them. Roland



looked at my assorted 1944 photos, recognized each location, and took us to visit all of them. For the Golf Hotel and close-to-town sites, our transportation was his 517th jeep. When we'd stop, he'd introduce us to locals who were so gracious and visibly happy to meet us. What a special 3 days. His personal WWII museum is extensive. In his closet of uniforms, he has a reversible parka like the one Dad had from the Battle of the Bulge. It lived in the family car for many years, and Dad wore it when he put on tire chains many times each winter.

My husband and I don't like to fly, but if there are special 70th anniversary celebrations in southern France next summer, we may have to make the trip.



See all the photos at :

http://517prct.org/photos/2013_julie_black_in_sospel/ed_athey_sospel_photos.htm



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Interesting pictures of the helmet sent by Raymond Rinsma.

In case no one had replied yet, 522 F SV BTRY is the Service Battery of the 522 Field Artillery Bn which was the artillery Bn of the Japanese American 442nd RCT who arrived in the Maritime Alps in November and swapped duties with the 517th. The 522nd is an interesting unit since although part of the famous 442nd it was also later detached and took part in the liberation of Dachau.

http://www.goforbroke.org/history/history_historical_veterans_522nd.asp

Concerning the stenciled blue whale on the helmet I would take it as a soldier's fantasy/personal initiative and I don't see any immediate connection whatsoever to either the 460th or the 522nd.

Happy Holiday Season!

Gilles

Some current pictures of the Villa Leopolda, the 460th's command post in 1944 and now the most expensive estate in the worlds - \$1.2 Billion:

<http://www.forbes.com/pictures/mhj45edfjh/villa-leopolda-villefranche-sur-mer-france/>





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Hope you and yours had a most joyous and blessed Christmas. The **Dick Seitz** clan members all departed this morning for their respective homes. We were blessed to have everyone together in Miami for Christmas as this year was our first one without Dad. We toasted all of the men of the 517th, recalled Dad's stories of Christmas Eve during the Battle of the Bulge and remembered Dad and the men of 517th at Mid-night Mass, which was glorious.

Pat Seitz and Alan Greer

Hello All,

Merry Christmas and all the best wishes for the New Year and above all a good health.

Best regards

Your Dutch friend

Ronald Stassen

I wish all of the 517th rct team that are still going strong & the team that keeps it going a Merry Christmas . I enjoy every mail call. Thanks! For keeping the outfit alive & strong.

Melvin Trenary

Merry Christmas Bob. Another great job on MC #2192. Don't know if you saw it (you always do) or not but I am 99% sure that is a picture of your Dad on Page 9 with McMorro and the girls I don't know why but your Dad always attracted the girls where he went. I really do know why, he was always a nice guy where ever he went. I miss him. *[Yes, I did see that. I was there in Le Muy and remember that picture. – BB]*

Then on Page 17 there is a picture of myself, Leo (never had a picture without his glass of wine) and Hal and a long lost Colonel. This was taken at Operation Dragoon in Washington. She and I stayed in touch via E-mail for a short time. I can't recall her name or address, but I do know she was promoted to General. She was a sharp lady and very nice.

Merry Christmas to all of the 517 Family. Have a great 2014. Just another reminder, please mark your calendars and let **Claire** and **Helen** know how many of you will be attending our Florida Mini Reunion in January. What a great way to start off the new year. She and **Helen Beddow** need this information so they can finish planning this Reunion.

Darrell Egner



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Dear Howard,

even to you my kindest regards and merry christmas to you and your family. there surely is a reason being still here on this earth, old friend ;-). Could you imagine, we were able to find us about 20 years ago? i do not think so.

i still believe it is a miracle and made possible from a higher instance.
i wish you a peaceful new year, god bless you and your family.

your friend

Georg Rieck

Jean-Loup,

I think Georg said it was a miracle that could not have happened twenty years ago. This is a credit to Higher Authority and the internet technology. I, along with Georg, feel the hand of the Lord is in it all. BUT, you did a lot to make the miracle happen; without you there would have only been loose ends and I could never have returned his grandfather's pictures to him. I am grateful for your persistence.

I think the guy you identified in the G Co. picture is **Hector Colo**, KIA at St. Cezaire on the G and I Co. attack that took the town. I don't think Colo was trying to stand out; he just didn't have his hat on straight. If it had not been for **Sgt. Dallas's** getting behind the German defense line and creating a huge hole in it with his accurate (deed hunting) fire there would have been many more casualties. The G Co. men are very clear in your picture and I can pick out **Wengryzinovicz, Harger, Caylor** and others.



Highest regards,

Howard Hensleigh



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HAPPY NEW YEAR 517TH !...and All the best in the New Year. - Paul Abbene





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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

Only 3 weeks until Kissimmee!

**Florida mini-reunion
January 18-20, 2014
Kissimmee, FL
[Registration Form](#)**