



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2200

February 9, 2014

*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](http://www.517prct.org)  
[MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)  
[www.517prct.org/archives](http://www.517prct.org/archives)  
[www.517prct.org/roster.pdf](http://www.517prct.org/roster.pdf)  
[www.517prct.org/archives](http://www.517prct.org/archives)

## Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday – Maj. Tom Cross

From: [AIRBORNE MUSEUM "15 Aout 1944" Association's status update.](#)



HAPPY 95 BIRTHDAY MAJOR THOMAS CROSS!

Happy birthday to one of our hero, Major THOMAS CROSS, famous officer of the parachute regiment American 517th just celebrated last Saturday its 95 years!

A true hero of the United States Army, son of general Thomas Cross, it will be respectively Commander of company, executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, wounded in the day J Provence despite a broken leg he held with his men its objective: the village of la Motte. Become Commander of the Rigger company of the 11th Airborne in Japan he is also the designer of the Parachute of the riggers patent. God bless you sir...

He is one of the real heroes of the US army, commanding officer of the 2nd battalion, 517th parachute infantry regiment. with great respect and admiration Happy Birthday Sir Thomas...





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Major Tom CROSS in Nice France 1945

HAPPY 95 BIRTHDAY MAJOR THOMAS CROSS ! Bon anniversaire à un de nos hero, Le Major THOMAS CROSS, fameux officier du 517em regiment parachutiste Américain viens de fêter samedi ses 95 ans ! Un veritable hero de l'Armée des Etats Unis, fils du general Thomas Cross, il sera respectivement commandant de compagnie, executive officer du 2em bataillon, blessé au jour J Provence malgré une jambe cassée il tiendra avec ses hommes son objectif : le village de la Motte . Devenu commandant de la Rigger compagnie de la 11em Airborne au japon il est

egalement le designer du brevet Parachute des riggers. God bless you sir .. He is one of the real hero of the US army, commanding officer of the 2nd battalion 517th parachute infantry regiment. with great respect and admiration Happy Birthday Sir Thomas..

### *MailCall News*

#### Jumping & not always landing where you wanted to...



According to **John S. Hopkins**, he is the guy on the left with the little x under him. The back of the photo states the following:

“That x is me and that picture was taken on one of my jumps, the one where I had to make a true landing. It was taken by one of my buddies, **Willard Wyatt** Ogden, Utah. I hit a big pine not shown but off to the left of the picture. Johnny”

[This is from **Kelly Cohan Holderbaum**'s blog at <http://sunnyancestry.com/2013/02/02/jumping-not-always-landing-where-you-wanted-to/>

Kelly is the granddaughter of **John S. Hopkins**, HQ/2



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

To: webmaster@517prct.org

Subject: hello

I present M DECHAMPS THIERRY.taken y residences has belgium ,  
thier de limbourg n30 4830 LIMBOURG .

A few months ago adopted the grave of :

**SERGEANT WISE, ALBERT R.**

CALIFORNIA ,517 PRCHT INF REGT compagny A  
sériial number :37343354

Died , friday , january 05/1945

Buried at Henri Chapel Américan Cemetery Belgium

He recieved the Bronze star, Purple heart .



By examing google saw the site of 517 prcht inf , is why I allow to  
write you to ask if it was possibility for you to have renseignements ,  
reports , photography ,if he has to let il know that is forgotten, Wise  
albert or places or I can have this informations.

For me is important to know his history as he and his brothers weapons made our history and to offer us  
the most beautiful of presens our freedon today is honor for me to decorate with flowers its grave.  
Is important of step to forget their sacrifices.If it causes expenses step of concerns I shall pay by  
paypal .Thanks you has advanceof your help ( assistant) which you could brought in my researches.  
In wait of your answer please mister to receive my sincereres greetings .  
Well has you .

M DECHAMPS THIERRY

---

Hello Thierry,

After a very quick look, I haven't found a lot about Albert Wise. No photos or stories yet. I do have  
copies of a couple morning reports where he was reassigned and promoted to Corporal (June 44), and  
later to Sgt (Oct 44). Unfortunately I do not have the morning reports from Belgium when he was killed.  
But I will keep looking for more info and I will include your note in the next 517<sup>th</sup> MailCall newsletter and  
see if anyone else has any information.

I do know about the events in the Bergeval area in January 1945. My father, Ben Barrett, was wounded  
in Bergeval on the same date, but with H Company. I just included Bill Boyle's story of the battle in a  
recent MailCall, which I have attached. That story came from the Paratroopers' Odyssey book, which is  
on the website at: [http://517prct.org/documents/odyssey/odyssey\\_history.htm](http://517prct.org/documents/odyssey/odyssey_history.htm)

I will continue searching. Thank you for your tribute to Sgt. Wise.

PS: You sent me a photo of the wrong grave site, not Albert Wise.

Bob Barrett





# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Thierry,

I just found two pictures of Albert Wise (KIA). There were taken in Sospel, France in September or October 1944. I found them in Michel De Trez' book, *First Airborne Task Force*.

Bob Barrett

517<sup>th</sup> PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT



Les vainqueurs du Fort Barbonet. A l'arrière : non identifié, Pvt. Kenneth J. Perkin, Sgt. Albert R. Wise (tué au combat), Pfc. "Stumpy" Baker, tous de la "A" Company et Pvt. Burton M. Woodroof de la Hq. Co., 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. A l'avant : non identifié, Cpl. Francis A. Mango, Pvt. Gerald G. Wolf, également de la "A" Company.

The victors of Fort Barbonet. Back row : unidentified, Pvt. Kenneth J. Perkin, Sgt. Albert R. Wise (KIA), Pfc. "Stumpy" Baker, all belonging to A Company, and Pvt. Burton M. Woodroof from Hq. Co., 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Front row : left to right; unidentified, Cpl. Francis A. Mango, Pvt. Gerald G. Wolf, also from "A" Company.

The victors of Fort Barbonet. Back Row: unidentified, Pvt. Kenneth J. Perkin, Sgt. Albert R. Wise (KIA), Pfc. "Stumpy" Baker, all belonging to A Company, and Pvt. Burton M. Woodroof from Hq. Co, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Front row: left to right: unidentified, Cpl. Francis A Mango, Pvt. Gerald G Wolf, also from A Company.

Standing on a German pillbox: Sgt. Albert R. Wise (KIA), T/5 Ralph K. Call, Malcolm "Red" Evans, all from A Company.



thank you of your messenger who m pleased, I am sorry d to have sent the good photo, I am going to make him(it), thank you for your help(assistant), thank you has your père, we owe to them c a lot is an honor for me.

Well has you.  
Thierry



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

MailCall delivery status:

Got another “hard bounce” of last week’s MailCall. **Forest Wellman**’s mail was returned – Account does not exist.

Also, MailCall was marked as “spam” by one person, so that person was unsubscribed automatically.

Note: If you know longer want MailCalls sent to you please use the unsubscribe link in your email. If you mark us as Spam in your email system, then it could cause delivery problems for everyone else. MailCalls are only sent to people who have requested to be added in the past. (Although most readers signed up with **Ben Barrett** many years ago.)

---

Jim,

I did get one more piece of info about **Bill Myers** from **Mark Landreth**. I’m not sure if this is the explanation for his purple heart (although I would think this is war-related enough).

Bob B.

---

I forgot to mention **Bill Myers** [E Co.] (while he may have been wounded during the Battle of the Bulge) was evacuated because of a terrible case of frost bite. They thought he was going to lose both feet.

**mark landreth**

---

Gents,

Thank you!! It looks like he [**Bill Myers**] went back to FT Benning GA around March 45 until Aug-Sept 1945, as an Airborne instructor. There isn't a Purple Heart on the ribbon rack of his 4 pocket dress uniform. I was just trying to piece together his story etc...In my book frostbite rates a Purple Heart. I have all of the morning reports for 2/517th coming in the mail. As soon as I get them I will scan them and send them to you for others to have available.

Cheers!!

Jim

---

Jim Z,

Where are you getting the morning reports? I have most of them scanned in for many, but not all of the Companies. We inherited these Xerox copies from **Clark Archer**, the 517th historian, after he died, but they are incomplete. I do think I have most of E Company from June 44 to March 45. But there are some companies that I am missing parts or all.

Bob B.



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

Jim - That's great to know. Also, I can't wait to see the morning reports. Have been waiting a long time to be able to add them to the chronology of E/2/517 I've been working on. Somewhere, I have a copy of the synopsis **Bill Myers** wrote for his kids of his war experiences. Mark

---

Mark,

Is there any chance I could get a copy of what you have, please. Do you have any photos of Bill, or the Company "yard long" photos he might be in, I will pay for your troubles/copies etc..

I'll get a few pictures out to you of his dress uniform and Jump uniform. The M42 was worn Stateside, I'm assuming because of its perfect condition.

As soon as I get the reports I'll scan them and email them to you. I use a fantastic paid researcher to run down some of my projects. He was recommended by the NPRC/NARA.

Thanks

Jim

---

Hi Jim -

Am copying Bob Barrett so he can add **Bill Myers** address to the 517th body of information.

Caveat - I haven't spoken or communicated with Mr. Myers since August '09 and I do not know if he is still alive.

He had, at some point previous to our conversation, a hemispherectomy. His recollection was of the broad generalities of his time with the 517th but he had intermittent trouble remembering specific events.

His address is William R. Myers, 3111 Country Club Lane, Jeffersonville, IN 47130. I have a phone number (812) 284-1788.

It'll take a couple of days to get it done, but I'll copy you material he sent me in 2003. It contains a time line of my father's combat experience in WWII (Dad and Mr. Myers were in the same platoon).

Again, I don't know whether he's still alive and if you find out, please let me know.

Thanks!

mark

---



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Jim - Here's the info I received from **Bill Myers**. It'll give you an idea where E/2/517 traveled during their time overseas. Hope it's helpful. Be well, mark

Bob - Don't know if you're interested in seeing this or not, but it might be worth a quick look. Thanks! mark

Mark,  
THANKS Brother!!!

This is fantastic information.


With your permission I would like to email Bill's Son mentioned in the file. The retired Airborne LTC that I purchased Bill's uniforms from would not give me specific's on who he purchased the grouping from. The only detail he gave me was it came out of Indiana. A picture of Bill in either of these uniforms would make my year.

Thank you so very much for the continued correspondence, it means a lot to me.

Jim


Here are a couple of samples of **Bill Myers'** journals. For the entire journal, see: [http://www.517prct.org/bios/bill\\_myers/bill\\_myers\\_journals.pdf](http://www.517prct.org/bios/bill_myers/bill_myers_journals.pdf)

EXTRA NOTES I thought would be of Interest




## OFFICER'S I know \*

RANK	NAME	OUTFIT	ADDRESS	AUTOGRAPH
Col	<i>Shaw</i>	517		
Col	<i>Liety</i>	517	New Jersey	
Maj	Thomas Cross	517	New Jersey	wounded
Capt	Edga Brooks	517	Illinois	
Capt	McKinley	517	North Carolina	
Capt	Newberry	517	North Carolina	wounded
Lt.	Kendall	517	Texas	
Lt	A. Jansen	517	California	
Lt	Bennell	517	New York	Dead
Lt	Freeman	517		Dead
Lt	Kisalmich	517	New Jersey	wounded
Lt	Quigley	517	New Jersey	wounded
Lt	Widdle	517	West Virginia	



## DAVID HINES



*ite*  
**DDY**

*Hines*  
517<sup>th</sup> PRCT C.T.  
SELECTEE   
*nia* AGE 22  
SS  
*California*

Taken at *Marshall MAR. 44*

Complexion L Color of Eyes blue Hair Blond

Boating \_\_\_\_\_ Pool \_\_\_\_\_  
Fishing \_\_\_\_\_ Golf \_\_\_\_\_  
Skiing  Boxing \_\_\_\_\_





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

In regards to **CPL Hopkins** and military records I just wanted to say that I grew up in St. Louis, Mo and we watched from a distance when the military personnel building located on Page Ave was burning. You could see the smoke from our home but I know I was little and do remember it burning down.

FYI: my Dad **Nate Rubenstein** is in the front row 3rd from the left of CPL Hopkins that is circled. Dad served with the 517th throughout the war. I also had his DVD 214 papers and there were several mistakes on these documents also.

**Chris Lindner**



Just received this story about **Bill Mauldin**. This is a great tribute to a man who knew exactly what it was like to be an infantryman. I think his cartoons and what he was honors the men of the 517th. The last cartoon here in this email shows Willie giving Joe his last pair of dry socks. This brought back so many memories for me as a soldier. There is nothing we would not do for our fellow soldiers. I know that many of these things happened to the men of the 517th. In fact during the Battle of the Bulge my Dad took off his boots because they were cold and soaking wet as he crawled into his foxhole one night. As he slept the boots froze and in the morning he couldn't get them on. Bare footed standing in the snow he didn't know what he was going to do. Troopers came over and inquired what's wrong Curtis, he said my boots are frozen and I can't get them on, and I have no dry socks. The troopers found a pair of rubber boots and gave my Dad 3 pairs of socks that he quickly put on. Don't ever tell me this is not a band of brothers. The men of the 517th took care of each other and our troops today know and understand the same thing. We truly are a band of brothers forever!



*"Joe, yestiddy ya saved my life an' I swore I'd pay ya back.  
Here's my last pair of dry socks."*

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





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

This MailCall (#2199) contains one of Claire's pictures at the Florida mini showing a trooper and his wife, two Iowa University Hawkeye supporters. They are wearing I O W A sweaters one of which shows Herky the Hawk. Although the Iowa teams have always been called Hawkeyes, it was our own 517th **Dick Spencer** who hatched Herky 65 years ago, according to page 34 of the most recent alumni magazine. This was not news to me as Dick and I were both back on the Iowa campus after the War and attended some of the football games together. As most know Dick also created our 596th, 460th, and 517th logos. He was a talented guy and left his mark along the way.



I would like to know who those Iowa U supporters are. I have not lived in Iowa since 1954, but those hills and bluffs of Southwest Iowa are still the hills of home for me.

Best airborne regards,

**Howard Hensleigh**



You can buy lots of Iowa Hawkeye "Herky" apparel at the [www.hawkshop.com](http://www.hawkshop.com)



Read **Dick Spencer's** story at <http://www.iowalum.com/pub/memories/dickspencer.cfm> and [https://www.iowalum.com/magazine/football\\_history/1948.html](https://www.iowalum.com/magazine/football_history/1948.html) and [http://www.iowalum.com/magazine/aug04/big\\_bird.cfm](http://www.iowalum.com/magazine/aug04/big_bird.cfm)



Dick Spencer III



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

I want to say many thanks to **Jess Ross** for the 200 pictures of our reunion in KC as posted in letter #2199. I was also impressed with **Phil McSpadden's** video of the "Lady Astronaut" and her tour of the space craft. I'm going to have all of my family to view this great video.

**Mel Dahlberg**

---

Hi Mel,

Did you see the wartime photos from **George Ross**? :  
[http://517prct.org/photos/george I ross/george I ross.htm](http://517prct.org/photos/george%20ross/george%20ross.htm)

You are in several photos!

Bob Barrett

517th PIR F Company  
France 1944  
**Traver, Wright, Oson,  
Dahlberg & Anderson**



517th PIR France 1944  
**Musanie & Dahlberg**  
behind the gun



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

### *An Invitation from Sospel*

As every year, a mass will be celebrated for Saint Joseph in the Chapel at our home. Some of you visited this chapel in 2009 during your stay in Sospel. We had spent some very pleasant moments all together talking about your time in 1944 in Sospel and you had wanted to know more about the life of its inhabitants. This moment was full of emotion, love and friendship - indestructible - and our friendship will endure through the generations.

During that visit, you had inaugurated our modest monument set up as your honor and at the end of the visit, **Nancy Fraser** had scattered ashes of her father **Major Fraser** around this monument. It was a moving and meaningful moment. We were moved by this mark of love for Sospel of Major Fraser. One month later we received his granddaughter **Vanessa Armand** who during her 2 years in France became our "daughter by heart", not a step daughter but a "heart daughter".

This year, the priest of Sospel, at our request, will bless this monument. We shall send you the pictures and maybe a movie.

We would also like to let you to know that we wish to receive you this year, the year of the 70th anniversary, here in Sospel, where we plan to make a big party. A date between 8 and 14 in August would suit us.

We remain at your disposal to organize this stay in Sospel.

Airborne ... all the way!

**Patou Orengo**

### *More MailCall News*

After reading one the recent Mail Calls, and seeing that you might not always have information to pass-along to the 517th Family, I thought I'd send some information about my uncle and where he came from. I know this is LONG but maybe you'll be able to use parts as filler for more than one Mail Call.

It's been a true blessing to have so many 517th Troopers and my family-saved documents to learn about Uncle Floyd. Every time I sat with your Dad (**Ben Barrett**), **Lud Gibbons**, **Marvin Moles**, **Bob Vaught**, and "**Dick**" **Seitz**, tears would well-up in my eyes as they told me about Floyd. Never knew the man but still get emotional just to learn something new.

The Western Union Telegrams, V-Mails, and letters he sent home have helped know a little about Floyd. But none of my family EVER talked about his time in service. This is where the Troopers above come in...plus the excerpts from some of the books and articles written about the 517th. Attempting to anchor Floyd in various European locations, as well as training in America, has been a priority with me. I pray I finish the searches soon.

Thank you for ALL you do for the 517th!

**Kent Immerfall**

PS: The attachment is titled "**Dear 517th Family**"





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### Dear 517<sup>th</sup> Family - Searching for Lt. Floyd Stott

Dear 517<sup>th</sup> Family,

Yes, it's cold in the Frozen Tundra (Green Bay) but not any colder than 70 years ago when our loved ones were far-off in a foreign land, fighting to preserve the freedoms you and I share every day. I pray each of you is as healthy and happy as can be and that you will have a chance to "Thank" a Veteran this week.



In my continued efforts to track my Uncle Floyd Stott, and his whereabouts so many years ago, I've been pleasantly surprised to be able to view old newspaper clippings from the early 1900s up through the 1940s. You remember those tidbits in small-town papers that told who was visiting whom, who was home on furlough, who was at someone's home for dinner, etc.? Because I wasn't born before Floyd was KIA, I have had to "learn" about him from the 517<sup>th</sup> Troopers as well as bits and pieces of "news" I'm able to track-down in my genealogy searches.

Thought I'd share a few lines from-the-past and maybe they'll bring a smile to your face or remind you of a place you might look for articles about your Trooper. The spellings and punctuation are just as they appeared in the papers. Uncle Floyd was born in North Mankato, MN, but his parents and two older sisters moved back, shortly after his birth, to a farm outside of little Burt, IA. He attended Country School #5 in Portland Township and graduated from Burt High School. The Burt Monitor and Algona Advance were the papers most of the "memories" are taken from.

The time after Floyd graduated high school and eventually became a paratrooper in the 517<sup>th</sup> is spotty, at best. However, in digging through files I've learned he was a member of the National Guard at Fort Dodge, IA, (Feb. 10, 1941), The Iowa-Nebraska 34<sup>th</sup> Division as a Private in the Infantry, and trained at Camp Claiborne, LA, assigned to "G" Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Bat., 133<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment.

Burt Monitor – Nov. 21, 1940 – *Floyd Stott came up from Ames Thursday evening to spend the weekend with his parents.*

Burt Monitor – Jan. 9, 1941 – *Floyd Stott, student at Ames, spent the holidays with his parents.*

I put these two first because I was under the impression Uncle Floyd attended Iowa University in Iowa City. Since the Registrar there has no record of Floyd, and since I located these tidbits, I'm beginning to think he went to Iowa State Univ. in Ames...for whatever reason I am not yet sure. I have a family member who works at ISU looking for more data.

Burt Monitor – Apr. 2, 1942 – *Mr. and Mrs. Wyot Stott (Floyd's parents) received a cablegram Monday from their son, Sergeant Floyd Stott, sent somewhere in Great Britain. He said he was well and wished them a Happy Easter. This was the first they had heard from him in a number of weeks.*

Burt Monitor – Oct. 29, 1942 - ...A bunch of our relatives...were Sunday dinner guests at the Wyott Stott home, in honor of Sergeant Floyd Stott, who recently returned from Ireland.

I have not yet learned WHY Floyd was in Ireland, or what outfit he was a member with, but I have some items (now family heirlooms) he brought back and gave to his mother.



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Burt Monitor – Apr. 29, 1943 – ... a Veteran and family were heading back to Marianna Field, Fla... *On the way there they were to visit Lt. Floyd Stott and another friend at Ft. Benning, Ga.*

Burt Monitor – June 3, 1943 – *Lt. Floyd Stott left Monday evening for Ft. Benning, Ga., after spending ten days here at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wyot Stott.*

Burt Monitor – Oct. 21, 1943 – *Lt. Floyd Stott arrived home on Monday night from Camp MacKall, N.C., where he is a platoon leader. He is a paratrooper. He came most of way by plane. This week's Advance (Algona, IA, paper) printed a very interesting letter from Lt. Stott in which he gives a vivid description of how a paratrooper feels when he makes a jump. (That article will be at the end.)*

A Rationing Calendar from The Burt Monitor – Thursday, June 3, 1943

### TIRES

Class A Ration: Second inspection deadline, September 30.

Class B Ration: Second inspection deadline June 30.

Class C Ration or bulk coupons: Third inspection deadline, August 31.

Commercial vehicles: Every 60 days or every 5,000 miles, whichever occurs sooner.

### GASOLINE

A book coupon No. 6 (4 gallons each) valid through July 21.

### FUEL OIL

Period No. 5 coupons (11 gallons each) expires September 30.

### COFFEE

Coupon No. 24 (1 pound) valid through June 30.

### SUGAR

Coupon No. 13 (5 pounds) valid through August 15.

Coupons Nos. 15 and 16 valid through October 31 for 5 pounds each for canning purposes.

### PROCESSED FOODS

K, L, M blue stamps valid through July 7.

Meats, Fats, Cheese, Canned Fish

J and K red stamps valid till June 30.

L red stamps valid June 6 and through June 30.

M red stamps valid June 13 and through June 30.

### SHOES

Coupon No. 18 becomes valid June 16.

If any of you recall reading these types of notices in your local papers, then you've "been around a while." And the younger generations need to KNOW how folks lived in WW II times in America.



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

The Algona Advance – Abt. October 19, 1943

### Here's How Paratrooper Feels When He Makes Jump Into the Thin Atmosphere

*THIS VIVID LETTER BY A PARATROOPER was written to his family without expectations of publication. The writer is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Wyot Stott, of Portland township, and was born and reared in this country. He volunteered for service in the national guard and in 1940 was sent to Camp Claiborne, La. Later he was with the troops sent to Ireland, but after a period there was sent home for officers' training at Fort Benning. (This was the editor's note at the top.)*

By Lt. Floyd Stott

**Fort Benning, Ga., Sept. 3** – *Today I made my seventh jump. Up to this time, each jump I had experienced a feeling which is indescribable. You might call it fear – yes, I guess that is what it was. Honest paratroopers would call it that. However, there are jokes and little songs that go around the group present. Meaningless titters rise and you can readily tell everything isn't as it should be in an organization such as ours. But there is really nothing seriously wrong. It's just that we are making another jump, and some good fellow is uselessly trying to raise the spirits of his buddies.*

*We are briefed in the classroom upstairs above the hangar. The mosaics are passed out to the men who are to jump. The field that each is to jump on is pointed out – "H" field. It is one not entirely devoid of trees and bordered on two sides by the Chattahoochee River – a deep old river 300 feet wide that has already claimed members of our branch of service.*

**On the Way.** *Oh, well, little incidents like that add to our alertness and interest, and there is no going to sleep this afternoon. When we are sufficiently oriented, the pilots and co-pilots who are to fly us over our jump area are brought in and told what is expected of them. They are also taking training.*

*No questions are left, so we trek downstairs and into a different hangar to get our chutes on. Several stop for a drink of water. They aren't thirsty. Just a stall on time – thinking perhaps a few minutes might make a difference, and someone will change mind about our going up or the weather may not permit.*

*To you who have never left the door of a plane while it was in flight at 1200 feet, this will appear as cowardice, but it isn't exactly that. And it isn't a feeling to be ashamed of. We all feel it at one time or another during our career, but it's seldom you find one that will admit it.*

**Mae West Put On.** *We put on our Mae Wests – remember what I said about the Chattahoochee? Even though there is a patrol boat running up and down the stream, it is comforting to know you have about you the means to stay afloat; that is, if you make it down that far, and safely.*

*Next comes your main parachute; then your emergency. It's all heavy – 37 pounds.*

*The harness fits exceptionally tight, but you don't mind when you understand that it has to be tight or there is danger of your parting from your chute when the opening shock takes place. But it feels good when the instructor tightens the belly-band on the reserve chute; kinda fills up that empty feeling in the stomach.*

**What the Rope's For.** *A long rope is tied on your left side, out of the way in case you have to pull your emergency. There is a reason for this rope, too. In case you make a tree landing, and are a long way from both tree-trunk and the ground, you can tie the rope on to your chute and slide down to terra firma.*





## **517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team**

*Everything has been inspected, and we walk out on the runway to climb into our plane. Number 53, it says, and it is nick-named "Barfly." That's o. k. with us. One plane is as good as another. Only I wish those two buddies of mine were going with me instead of in that other group.*

*We fasten our safety belts and take off with little time lost. As soon as our wheels clear the field, we are allowed to unfasten safety belts and smoke. Needless to say, everyone is smoking, either from the relief they derive from it, or just to help pass the time. For this is where time really hangs heavy on your hands.*

**Poising for the Jump.** *Someone attempts a stirring paratrooper song, and a few heatless jumpers chime in. But the feeling just isn't there. Besides, those two motors are making a tremendous noise, and the craft is vibrating a great deal, plus your own nervousness. Oh why, of why did I join the paratroopers? You ask yourself inside, but at the same time you look down at the faces and kid some guy about getting hold of a bum chute which probably won't open.*

*I'm the fourth to jump, and my turn is up before I know it. The windows had previously been blacked out so we couldn't have the benefit of studying underlying terrain.*

*From the time I am called to the door, I am given 90 seconds to recognize the terrain below as I had seen it on an aerial photograph 30 minutes ago. And did you ever try memorizing something when you were frightened?*

*I carried my little equipment bundle up to the door, hooked my static line on the anchor line cable, stuck one foot in the door, got a healthy hold on a pipe, and peered out into the atmosphere.*

**There's Where to Land.** *The propeller blast beats you in the face and it is almost impossible to see anything to the direct front because of it. You look back into the plane at all of the fellows watching you. There are three new students. "Cheer up, Stott, look at those rookies back there. How do suppose they feel? You're an old-timer."*

*With that on my mind, in addition to other things I take another look out the door. Oddly enough, I feel better. Sure enough, there is the bend in the "GET READY!" "STAND UP!" "HOOK UP!" "CHECK EQUIPMENT!" "SOUND OFF FOR EQUIPMENT CHECK!" "STAND IN THE DOOR!" "ARE YOU READY?" "LET'S GO!!!"*

**Eight More Seconds.** *While the men are checking equipment someone compliments me on my boot shine. You'd be surprised how a little thing like that helps when at the correct time.*

*Here's the intermittent stream which is my north limiting point, and the pilot has brought the ship down to about 800 feet and slowed down to 95 miles an hour, which is essential for jumping safely. I count off three seconds to compensate for the wind drift, which is 134 yards for the altitude we're flying, then I kick out the equipment bundle.*

*Eight more seconds and Stott will go out! I'm counting them to myself, and a multitude of things are going through my mind – not all sins, either. Strangely enough I expect to live to make another jump. I only wish this one were over a corn field back home in Iowa instead of in Alabama.*

**Into the Atmosphere!** *Here's the split-second for my jump! I crouch down low, with my hands on the outside of the plane door; I look out into the horizon and make a vigorous leap into space, at the same time making a half-left turn, keeping my feet together, and ducking my head, so the connector links won't hit me in the back of my head and cut it open.*



## **517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team**

*I reach the end of my 15-foot static line and the back-pad of the chute is jerked off. The propeller blast picks up the canopy of my chute and whips it out over my head like a shot. A terrific shock is experienced – but nothing ever felt better, because it means that the means of transportation to mother earth is in working order.*

*Now look up at the canopy and see if there are any blown panels. Check oscillation and see where the hell you think you're going to land – not that you can do anything about it, can't even light in the river if you want to – lucky day! Think I can miss those trees down there, too.*

**What a Bump!** *Soon I'm 100 feet off the ground, and am making the necessary manipulations with my risers so I will come in with the wind. Bango! I hit! My poor legs must be broken! But let's get up and give them a try. Wait a minute - gotta get out of this chute first, and do it as if in combat. Lie flat on back, unbuckle leg straps, unbuckle the chest strap! Take off Mae West and rope, quickly roll over to right and assume firing position at anyone who may have run up by now intent on taking your life.*

**Why, Nothing to It!** *All o. k., now you can get up. Easy, now. But hey, everything seems in order. Legs navigating all right. Why, there's nothing to it! This parachuting is the life. Run over to the gang, where everyone has his own way of landing and wants to expound to the rest. Now wasn't that easy!*

*Another one coming next Thursday night. Don't tell anyone, but every darn trooper who has to make that jump is worrying like a demon about how it will turn out. But do you think you can tell it on him? You can bet your boots these men won't let you find it out if they can help it.*

*There's no getting around it – the best men in the service are in the PARATROOPS, that's my guess. They're a fast-moving, hard-hitting outfit which is more than a novelty, and don't you forget it!*

---

I sincerely hope you appreciated my uncle's words. I have learned a great deal about this man... just by finding these yellowed pieces of paper. And remember that parachuting out of a "perfectly good airplane" was not the **norm back in the early 40's. So our home-folks had to be mortified to read these words.**

**Kenton "Kent" Floyd Immerfall**

Nephew of **Floyd A. Stott**

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. "I" Co., 3<sup>rd</sup> Bat., 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### February 3 – Four Chaplains' Day



"Four Chaplains Day" is to be observed annually on February 3 in America by the unanimous resolution of the U.S. Congress in 1988. It is a day to remember February 3, 1943, when one of the most remarkable and inspiring acts of heroism in the history of warfare took place in World War II. It is a day to honor the heroism of the Four Chaplains, who selflessly gave their lives "that others may live." However, although veterans in The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and other veterans organizations, will hold special

observances on Four Chaplains Day, most American media, most American schools, and, therefore, most Americans, will not observe it. Indeed, most Americans, including children who will not be taught about in their schools, will not even know that there is a National Four Chaplains Day, or why. This is true even though, as a former soldier who owed his life to them has said: "Their heroism is beyond belief. That is one of the reasons why we must tell the world what these people did."

On February 3, 1943, the *Dorchester*, a converted luxury cruise ship, was transporting Army troops to Greenland, escorted by three Coast Guard Cutters and accompanied by two slow moving freighters. On board were some 900 troops, and four chaplains, of diverse religions and backgrounds, but of a commitment to serve God, country, and all the troops, regardless of their religious beliefs, or non-belief. The four Chaplains are: Rev. George Fox (Methodist); Father John Washington (Roman Catholic); Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode; and Rev. Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed).

At approximately 12:55 a.m., in the dead of a freezing night, the *Dorchester* was hit by a torpedo fired by German U-boat 233 in an area so infested with German submarines it was known as "Torpedo Junction." The blast ripped a hole in the ship from below the waterline to the top deck.

The engine room was instantly flooded. Crewmen, who were not scalded to death by steam escaping from broken pipes and the ship's boiler, were drowned. Hundreds of troops in the flooded lower compartments were drowned, or washed out to the frigid waters, where most would die. In less than a minute, the *Dorchester* lost way, and listed on a 30-degree angle. Troops on deck searched for life jackets in panic, clung to rails and other handholds, saw overloaded life boats overturn in the turbulent water, leaped overboard as a last desperate hope for life. Many with life jackets drowned when the life preservers became waterlogged. Of the 900 troops and crew on board, two-thirds ultimately died; most of those who survived, had lifelong infirmities and pain from their time in the icy waters.

*Dorchester* survivors told of the wild pandemonium on board when it was hit and began sinking. Many men had not slept in their clothes and life vests as ordered because of the heat in the crowded quarters below. There was panic, fear, terror; death was no abstraction but real, immediate, seemingly inescapable.

The four Chaplains acted together to try bring some order to the chaos, to calm the panic of the troops, to alleviate their fear and terror, to pray with and for them, to help save their lives. The Chaplains passed out life jackets, helping those too panicked to put them on correctly, until the awful moment arrived when there were no more life jackets to be given out. It was then that a most remarkable act of heroism, courage, faith, and love took place: Each of the four Chaplains took off his life jacket, and, knowing that act made death certain, put his life jacket on a soldier who didn't have one, refusing to listen to any





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

protest that they should not make such a sacrifice.

They continued to help the troops until the last moment. Then, as the ship sank into the raging sea, the four Chaplains linked hands and arms, and could be seen and heard by the survivors praying together, even singing hymns, joined together in faith, love, and unity, as they sacrificed their lives so "that others might live.&q uot;



The few survivors testified to the selfless act of the four Chaplains:

"The ship started sinking and as I left the ship, I looked back and saw the chaplains with their hands clasped, praying for the boys. They never made any attempt to save themselves, but they did try to save the others. I think their names should be on the list of "'The Greatest Heroes' of this war," testified Grady L. Clark. "I saw all four chaplains take off their life belts and give them to soldiers who had none. The last I saw of them they were still praying, talking, and preaching to the soldiers," attested survivor Thomas W. Myers Jr..

"It is impressed clearly in my mind that these chaplains demonstrated unsurpassed courage and heroism when they willingly gave their life belts to four enlisted men, who, because of the utter confusion and disorder brought about by the torpedoing, had become hysterical. They helped save the lives of many of the troops," testified John F. Garey.



These testimonies, taken from author Dan Kurzman's valuable book "No Greater Glory: The Four Immortal Chaplains and the Sinking of the Dorchester in World War II," are but some of the sworn statements of grateful survivors upon which Congress awarded the Four Chaplains an unprecedented "Congressional Medal of Valor" in 1961.

Earlier, in 1944, they were awarded Purple Hearts and the Distinguished Service Cross. They did not receive the Medal of Honor because of restrictions which limits that medal to combatants. In 2004, delegates to The American Legion National Convention representing 2.7-million wartime veterans, voted to support making an exception and awarding the Medal of Honor to the Four Chaplains.

At the dedication of the Chapel of the Four Chaplains in 1951, then-President Harry S. Truman said their sacrifice reflected the fact that "the unity of our country is a unity under God."

Read more about the Four Chaplains at: <http://www.fourchaplains.org/story.html>

[Story sent in by **Nila Gott**]



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

### *More MailCall News*

The account of the battle of Bergstein written by **S/Sgt. Milton Rogers** provides a good description of what the individuals of the Combat Team suffered through that disaster.

Rogers made one mistake I made for years, until I was corrected by **Woody Woodhull's** niece. I mistakenly thought his name was Woodhall as Rogers did. I'm not sure how you cross reference things on the website, but Woodhall and Woodhull are one and the same guy, a prince of a fellow.

This account also says much about **Flave Carpenter**, first sergeant and later Lt. of I Co. We all had great respect for the 460th forward observer teams who were right at the front with us adjusting artillery fire to make our attacks much less costly in life and limb. Carpenter was the kind of a guy who would take the citation write-up rejected by the 460th and based on his personal observation of **Washburn's** actions in combat run the award through the Combat Team channel and get it awarded.

Along with the artillery observers Rogers gives the medics due credit. If wounded we knew we would be in good hands. Neither medics or artillerymen were awarded the combat infantry badge, but they deserved them.

Rogers' account also gives an accurate feeling we had of promotions and awards. Frequently an officer would get a higher award than the enlisted men who carried many of the difficult combat loads. Some explanation needs to be made of Woody's getting a silver star while the enlisted men at Bergstein were awarded bronze stars. Woody was killed right beside me directing artillery fire on the enemy to our direct front. The German paratroops worked a machine gun team up behind a rock wall about 200 yards ahead. The first burst hit Woody in the chest and I think he died immediately. **Red Meline** and I took over the radio and got the machine gun squad which was quite a feat for a couple of infantrymen. Woody had educated us on many patrols. In the late 1950s **Tommy Thomson**, of the 460th, and I both worked at the Pentagon and occasionally had lunch together. He mentioned that he was in touch with Woody's sister. He told her that he deserved all the awards and decorations he had received. She wrote back, "WHAT AWARDS AND DECORATIONS?". He had received none. Tommy and some of his 460th friends then wrote up an award for a silver star which was awarded to Woody long after the War was over. In the Battling Buzzards the author got a story from a Lt. who wasn't around our action spot that Woody was killed by mortar fire. This guy also said **Doc Dickinson** treated a German prisoner while the severely wounded **Bob Reber** waited for treatment standing up. This story is not accurate for two reasons. **Dan Dickinson** would never have done that and **Bob Reber** never stood up after he was hit on that hill in the attack south of Stavelot.

Another thing caught my eye in this Bergstein account. "We were expected." Meaning the German defenders were waiting for us when we started the attack. This is accurate. It brings to mind a conversation I had with **Dick Seitz** several reunions ago. I mentioned that **Lt. Col Forest Paxton** always preceded his 3rd Bn. attacks with heavy artillery preparatory concentrations. Dick responded, "With one exception---Bergstein. **Col. Graves** did not want artillery before the attack to destroy the element of surprise." **Col. Graves** did not make many tactical mistakes, but this may have been a big one. There was no way we could have surprised those German paratroops. They were familiar with every square inch of the terrain of our attack and had planted schu mines which would have alerted them when the first one got stepped on. These were mines with no metal that could be detected with a hand held detector. There was enough explosive in it to take off as much as half a leg and as little as half a foot,



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

depending on what part of the boot was just above the mine when stepped on. In **Jim Birder's** case it was a deadly disaster as he sat on it. This meant that the 596th men who cleared a path through the mine field had to probe each inch of the path on their knees with a bayonet. They ran a white tape the length of the mine free path so we could follow it. The Germans were so on top of the situation that they quickly re-mined the path. There was absolutely no way we could have pulled a surprise attack. AND we surely could have used all the artillery preparation we could get.

### **Howard Henslegh**

---

I didn't recognize any of those old men at the Kissimmee reunion, but I recognized **Babbie Boyle** having seen her at reunions in the past. Time has gone by so fast. I wish I could go to every reunion & see all the guys I used to know , but they are gone now. You are lucky to get to a reunion. May you keep having them! Soon we will be a memory. God bless!

### **Mel Trenary**

### *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, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: [MailCall@517prct.org](mailto: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





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### *Vote to Merge the 517<sup>th</sup> Association and Auxiliary*

#### **Solicitation for Votes of Active Members of the 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team Association, Inc. to Merge the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association and Auxiliary**

**Background:** At the annual 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Reunion in Atlanta in 2011, the members voted to merge the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association (troopers and veterans only) with the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Auxiliary Association (family). The purpose of this action was to ensure that the next generation is included and can officially participate in various committees and be voted in as officers of the Association, in order for the heritage of the 517<sup>th</sup> to continue even after all the troopers are gone. This merger was approved on the condition that it did not affect our ability to deduct donations to the Association on our individual income tax returns.

It turns out that the IRS does require us to lose the ability to deduct donations once we admit non-veterans; therefore that merger never took place. The officers and board members of the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association now recommend that we remove the condition enabling a merger of the two memberships.

Current members of the 517<sup>th</sup> Association are asked to complete this form and send it to us.

**Note: In order for your vote to be effective, it must be received no later than April 1, 2014. The vote and merger will take effect on May 30, 2014.**

---

**Please vote by placing an "X" in one of the boxes below:**

I vote that 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Auxiliary members will become Active Members of the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association, Inc. with all the attending obligations and privileges, including the right to vote and hold office. This will allow wives, widows, descendants, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews of Members to continue to fulfill the objectives of the Association. Donors to the Association will be able to deduct their donations on their 2014 tax returns if the donation is made on or before May 30, 2014, but will not be able to do so thereafter.

I vote that the 517 PRCT Association and Auxiliary group memberships will NOT merge and donations to the Association will continue to be deductible after May 30, 2014.

Note: Only current Active Members of the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT Association (i.e. troopers who served with the 517/596/460 in WW2) are eligible to vote on this matter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Which Battalion, Battery or Company were you with during WW2? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please send you completed form to: 517<sup>th</sup> Association  
c/o Bob Barrett  
27 Fuller Meadow Road  
North Andover, MA 01845



# *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

## *2014 West Coast Reunion*

### **2013 517th PRCT PALM SPRINGS REUNION**

**March 10-14, 2014  
Palm Springs, California**

**Anahata Retreat/Lodge Hot Mineral Springs Pool and Spa** here we come!

This will be a reunion like no other!! We have reserved the entire resort for our use.

We will provide breakfast, lunch and dinner while you sit soaking your feet in the warm springs.

There will be options for each meal and snacks all day so you won't go hungry.



**Rate:** Rooms will run from 120.00 to 200.00 per person for the entire stay, not per night, including all taxes and resort fees. This fee will be based on how many sign ups we get.

**Registration fee:** \$ 100.00  
Your registration fee will cover all meals at the resort including the banquet which will be at the lodge with a choice of chicken or steak.  
We may leave the lodge for ribs, museum, follies or ??, which would be additional charge.

Please mail registration form (next page) as soon as possible to lock in rate.

Karen Wallace  
66295 Highway 20  
Bend, OR 97701  
541 948 2486

Please join the Frice Team, (the gals), and our many friends for another great 517<sup>th</sup> event!

**Questions?** Karen 541 948 2486 or  
Wayne 541 948 2484

**Please confirm by March 1st.**



# *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

## **2013 517th PCT PALM SPRINGS REUNION**

### **Registration form**

**March 10-14, 2014  
Palm Springs, California**

Please provide the following information before March 1st:

Date and time of arrival: \_\_\_\_\_

(We will arrange transportation from airport and return if needed)

Names of participants:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Note: Extra person for banquet at \$20.00 per person

Any special activity you would like to do?

Please send this registration form and \$100.00 registration fee per person to:

Karen Wallace  
66295 Hwy 20  
Bend, OR 97701