



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2242

November 23, 2014

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

Website
Send MailCall news to
MailCall Archives
2013 Roster (updated!)
Thunderbolt (Winter 2014)

www.517prct.org
MailCall@517prct.org
www.517prct.org/archives
www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
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Fred D. Waites, HQ Company

Trooper **Pfc. Fred D. Waites**, Hqtrs. Co. , 517 passed away at the age of 90 on September 28, 2014.



Jan. 23, 1924 – Sept. 28, 2014 WAITES, Mr. Fred Duel Waites, Sr, 90, a resident of Trussville, AL., passed away Sunday, September 28, 2014. Funeral services will be held Thursday, October 9, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. from Cain's Chapel United Methodist Church, Deatsville, AL. Burial will follow in Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church Cemetery in Coosa County, AL, Jefferson Memorial Funeral Home directing. Mr. Waites is survived by three sons, Fred Waites (Kathy) Trussville, AL, Russ Waites, Baton Rouge, LA, Jeff Waites (Lora Leigh), Birmingham, AL, six granddaughters, and four great-grandchildren. Visitation will be held Thursday, October 9, 2014 from 1:00pm until 2:00pm at Cain's Chapel United Methodist Church. Mr. Waites was born in Birmingham, AL, before moving to Billingsley, AL, in Autauga County. He was a devoted and loving husband and father to his family. He also served his community as a teacher and Coach of numerous men's and women's sports teams for over 35 years. His students, athletes and fellow coaches and teachers through the years were a true extended family to him. Mr. Waites served his Country honorably as a paratrooper in World War II and was deployed in many areas of Europe. Most notable were the invasions of France and Italy as well as The Battle of the Bulge.

He is preceded in death by his wife of sixty-six years, Mrs. Ella Madora Waites (Dora), his parents John Fred Waites and Emma Penton Waites, and two sisters, Ruby Doris Weldon and Ollie Dean Waites. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Col. Robert L. Howard Veterans Home in Pell City, AL in his memory. Please visit www.jmgardens.com to sign online guestbook. - See more at:

<http://obits.al.com/obituaries/birmingham/obituary.aspx?pid=172678526#sthash.TtsVE2Ue.dpuf>



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Thank you for the notice, Fred. I am sorry to hear that another great man has passed. I will share the news with the 517th family. -- Bob Barrett

As soon as I can I have a good deal of photos and some memorabilia of his that I want preserved. I figure in 2 generations, dad's descendants will not fully appreciate these. Would you be interested in me driving up your way to show you what I have? With modern high resolution scanning some of the photos might be worth archiving.

Thanks for the condolences. Dad was a good and gentle guy. Spent a career teaching and coaching HS kids. He never talked much about the war. About all he'd say is "I saw some terrible things." One thing that he dwelled on were the impoverished children he came across and from time to time he'd talk about 3 of his best buddies. One of those told me dad was extremely bothered by a particular fire fight. Late in the war, while participating in a squad size assault on a German fixed position entrenched in a tree line ... he and one other guy were the only 2 that made it in harmed. They were able to scatter the Germans and overtake a machine gun position. All the other troopers were either killed or wounded. He recalled that 2 troopers were killed. I do not recall where. Dad never mentioned this to us boys.

He did tell a story about he and a **Lt. James** (?) jumping on Aug. 15. They were to push out a bundle. It hung up. And in an effort to get it out the door, it suddenly let loose and all 3 went out together. By a miracle the lines never entangled. Dad was tubing and the shoot popped with him head down. Wrenched his shoulders. He hit a rock terraced wall and smashed his nose. It was crooked forever more. He did get up with James ... but upon greeting in the dark, they were so on edge that neither recalled the password. Dad told me it was something like Lafayette - Freedom. But he was not sure. Huddled together and awaiting daybreak, they were approached by what they identified as two Germans. After no answers to the password and hearing mumbling that they could not understand they pitched a grenade toss. The next morning they found the dead "Germans" some poor farmer's beef cow! He told me that he and James swore an oath to never tell the story to any of the troopers.

I tried to get him to write a memoir but he never did.

Fred Waites

Hi Fred, Sounds like some great stories. My Dad was the same way -- he never talked much about his war days at all when we were kids, other than showing us the hole in his back from a mortar shell. It wasn't until he reconnected with the 517th in his later years that I found out about the 517th. Being an independent "swat-team", assigned wherever the help was most needed, it was difficult to find much of anything about the 517th's history online before my Dad and I started the website.

So yes, I would love to have copies of anything you would like to share. My intention is to keep the website and all its archives available as long as I am alive, and by then hopefully, we can put it into the hands of the army or some historian site for preservation. I don't want the original photos and artifacts -- I'd rather have them stay with the family. But I want to digitize as much as I can just to preserve the stories and the history for friends, family, and researchers.

If you can digitize the photos yourself, I can receive any format or size. If not, get back to me and we'll figure something out.

Thanks, Bob Barrett



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MailCall News

RE: Belgium 70h celebrations

Here are some photos of 70th celebrations in Belgium that **Irma and Arnold Targnion** sent [from Belgium].

I believe the first two were from Armistice Day and the other was from September at a dedication of this bunker restored.

Thanks.

Mimsey Boyle



Great pictures of Howard! Thanks for including them.

Pat Seitz



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A few of my Uncle Bob's things continue to show up at my parents. My sister just sent me an original copy of this photo of Service Company at Toccoa and I'm not seeing it on the 517th site. Bob was a member of Service Company Mar 43 - Jan 44, then G Company from Jan 44 and finally H Company from Aug 7, 1944 until he was discharged in Oct 1945. He is the 9th from the left in the middle row.

I left the file on the large side thinking you know what may be best for posting if in fact you don't already have it.

Elaine Berger, niece of **Robert Magnuson**



See: http://517prct.org/photos/toccoa_service_co/toccoa_service_co.htm

Happy Birthday to **Fred Brown**, 90 years young today ! (November 22)

From: [First Airborne Task Force ; The Forgotten Paratroopers](#)





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Hello,

I have just recently come across the 517th PRCT website. My grandfather was **HG "Chuck" Thompson**, who was in Company D. He passed away suddenly in 1998. I attended several reunions with him and my grandmother in the 70's and 80's. When I was there with them, I was too young to realize the significance of what I was witnessing. I really wish I could go back and experience those reunions again now! A few weeks ago, my son (who is 7 years old - ironically the same age I was when I attended my first reunion) was working on a school assignment about Veterans for Veteran's Day. He and I started talking a lot about his great grandfather, whom he never had the pleasure of meeting. Since then, I have spent a lot of time researching the 517'th. I would love to re-connect with any of the people I remember from the reunions. I know some (**Floyd Polk, Tom Latimer**) are no longer with us. I also remember with great fondness **Roger Goodsell, Rudy Aube, Frank Gallucci, Bill Uhler, Ted Lober, Woodie Kennamer, Troy Payne**...and I am sure other names will come to me. I don't want to bother anyone, but would love to have the opportunity to speak to any of them again. Or, if you have any suggestions for finding more history or stories specifically about Company D, I would appreciate those too. Thank you so much for all the work you put into the website. I look forward to much more time reading and exploring the site. And I look forward to hearing back from you soon. Thanks again for all you have done and continue to do.

Fondly,

Khris Kendall

Hi Khris,

I will include your note in the next MailCall. There are a few members of D Company who receive MailCall online, and a few more who get their news in the Thunderbolt.

Here is one D Company photo that I found from a 1973 reunion. Is that Chuck in the back row?
http://www.517prct.org/reunions/reunion_new_orleans_1973.htm

On a quick look I don't see other mentions of Chuck Thompson on the website materials. But here is one set of D Company photos you might look through:
http://www.517prct.org/photos/d_company_files/kane_company_d.htm

Of course, we know he was with D Company at Christmas 1944:
<http://www.517prct.org/documents/xmas1944/xmas1944.htm>

If you want to follow the history of the 517th, the best resources are the books Paratroopers' Odyssey (which is on the website) and Battling Buzzards (from Amazon). And the best video history is "A Cut Above" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guJE71bIP10>

PS: If you have any wartime stories or photos, I would love to add them to the website.

Bob Barrett



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Name Those Troopers - Answers



Barney Hekkala, A Company



Doc Lecklider (on right), A Company

From *First Airborne Task Force*:

"Doc" Lecklider boards his plane. In direct violation of the Geneva Convention and keeping with an instinct for self-preservation, some medics went tint the battle armed. Doc carries a holstered German G.P.25 pistol on his right hip and an M3 fighting knife strapped to his keg. Soon after D-Day there came an order that the medics were not to be armed.





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Military Humor



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
- 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 Miriam Boyle Kelly
19 Oriole Court
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866