



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



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

**MailCall No. 2245**

**December 7, 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](http://www.517prct.org)  
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### *December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbor*

## World War II: Attack on Pearl Harbor

in: **20TH CENTURY** **20TH CENTURY WARS** **AMERICAN HISTORY** **ASIAN HISTORY** **EUROPEAN HISTORY** **WW2** hosted by [Rebecca Brayton](#)



This event single-handedly spurred the United States into joining the conflict in World War II. The Japanese attack on Hawaii's Pearl Harbor was meant to crush American morale, as well as immobilize the Americans so Japan could continue its conquests around the world unimpeded. The attack was the culmination of decades of tension that existed between the U.S. and Japan, and was the breaking point needed to force the Americans from their stance of neutrality and into the war. In Part 4 of our series on WWII, WatchMojo.com learns more about the years leading up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and about the results of this historic event.

<http://www.watchmojo.com/video/title/World%20War%20II:%20Attack%20on%20Pearl%20Harbor%20-%20History/>



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From "A Veteran's Remembrance"

by **John A. "Boom Boom" Alicki**

Upon arriving in Hawaii, I was assigned duty with the U.S. Army Hawaiian Department, Fort Shafter, Territory of Hawaii (TH) under the Command of Lt. General Walter C. Short with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 64<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery (M) Regiment. Later in mid-1941, I transferred as Sergeant to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 53<sup>rd</sup> Coast Artillery Brigade (M) Regiment in Communication when we were hit by the Japanese surprise attack on December 7, 1941. Other than the infamous attack by the Japanese, I will always remember the day I stood for four hot grueling hours at rigid attention as Guard of Honor in front of Headquarters Hawaiian Department when the Japanese Ambassador, Admiral Kishiburo Numura, stopped by prior to the infamous attack to confer with Lt. General Walter C. Short and Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet.

### **Lenoir News Topic of Lenoir, NC (2002) Remember Pearl Harbor**

A sneak attack changed his life. Today John Alicki lives in a round house surrounded by oriental gardens, a quiet stream, and seclusion. He can hear you coming.

Sixty-three years ago at Pearl Harbor, he heard the warplanes coming from so far away. John Alicki, depending how you might view his experience, was either in the right place at the right time or the worst time in history.

Either way, John holds no regrets that he was just about to enter a church overlooking Pearl Harbor when more than 350 Japanese bombers began their surprise attack from the air on December 7, 1941. He was packed and ready to board a ship to go home to the United States the next day.

John had already spent more than six years in the armed forces and he was ready to get out. But 10 months later in October 1942, John was still at Pearl Harbor and for the next fifteen years he continued active service to his country.

Later in World War II, John also fought against Nazi Germany as a paratrooper with the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team. He also fought in the Korean conflict in the early 1950s. During his military career, he collected some 18 medals and citations including the Purple Heart and Bronze Star medal.

The fact he was at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, is recorded on his official 1957 honorable discharge from the U.S. Army as a Major.



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*"This sneak attack changed my entire life,"* he said in a recent interview at this two-story house on the base of Hibriten Mountain.

*"After that, nobody could tell me what was going to happen to me ... except that I was in for the duration."*

On December 7, John was a U.S. Army sergeant in the 53<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigade. On the day of the infamous attack, which brought American military forces into World War II, John had made special arrangements to attend church service with some of his men in the outfit, and some Hawaiian native friends.

*"It just so happened that on that Sunday morning they got me up a little early and held me to my promise to go to church. While we were entering the church just before eight a.m., we heard something in the distance like firecrackers. As we went into the church the sound became more audible. Then we saw planes overhead. They had to pass over us to get their bombs to the ships. It so happened we had a Colonel in the church and he said, 'Wait a minute; He got up and went out, came back and said, 'We are under a Japanese attack. You men in the church get back to your stations: The explosions started shaking the church. When I stepped out of the church I could see the red disk emblem on the side of the planes. From where the church was/ you could see the whole harbor. To me, it seems like it was only yesterday."*

*On December 7, 1941, I was just a kid, 23-years old and still wet behind his ears and learning about life/ and here I am today. I'm thankful to the Almighty to be here."*

The Japanese attack lasted for two hours and came in two waves of aircraft about an hour apart, pounding United States ships and installations at Pearl Harbor. The best of American's fleet was at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. When it was over, 21 ships were sunk or destroyed, 2,403 military personnel were dead and another 1,178 wounded. The entire event is widely accepted as American's single worst military defeat in peacetime.

Of the dead, some 1,177 went down with the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor on that Sunday morning according to official statistics with the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association (PHSA). The PHSA motto is "Remember Pearl Harbor-Keep America Alert." The PHSA has a current membership of 12,197 Americans who were present on that day in December 1941.

Now that 64 years have gone by, John holds no resentment toward the Japanese people.

*"As you can see I am influenced by the oriental people. The Japanese have as much feeling as we have. A lot of them have the same regrets we have. I feel that we need to let the Japanese know that we are truly and sincerely their friends and this silent animosity has to be completely done away with. Then we can get along and live in peace. We have to let them know the past is the past and let's not forget it."*



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## MailCall News

Hi

Sorry for my bad english  
My name's Fred and I live in France near Paris  
I am passionate about American Heroes of WW2  
especially by paratroopers and gliders  
I have this picture and I would like to know more  
Know the names of these people etc ...  
Can you help me?  
Thanks

Regards  
Fred (Frederic Cha)



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Hi Frederic,

That is a picture of A Company of the 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment at Camp Toccoa, where they were formed and trained in 1943. We have a copy of that photo on our website at: [http://517prct.org/photos/a\\_company\\_camp\\_toccoa\\_1943.htm](http://517prct.org/photos/a_company_camp_toccoa_1943.htm)

The only person identified by name is **George Sullivan**.

We have other photos of A Company troopers at: <http://517prct.org/photos/photos.htm>

In the next 517<sup>th</sup> newsletter, I will ask if anyone can identify other members in your photo.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

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Many thanks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
Where is G.SULLIVAN on the picture?  
Regards  
Fred

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**George A Sullivan** is front row sitting seventh from the left. We have many more photos of George Sullivan and A Company at: [http://517prct.org/photos/george\\_sullivan/george\\_sullivan.htm](http://517prct.org/photos/george_sullivan/george_sullivan.htm)

We also have many pictures from Capt. Joe Broudy at [http://517prct.org/photos/joe\\_broudy/joe\\_broudy.htm](http://517prct.org/photos/joe_broudy/joe_broudy.htm)

I think Broudy was a Lieutenant at Camp Toccoa, and became the ranking officer of A Company when they went overseas.

The officers are all sitting in front in the middle. I am hoping that someone can help identify a few of the officers and others. I will let you know.

Bob B.



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Subject: **John J. Knopf**

Hi,

Do you have any info on **John J. Knopf**? I saw that he was in the medical detachment, 517th PRCT and received the Bronze Star and 3 Purple Hearts, but don't know much else.

Any help is appreciated. Thanks

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Hi Connor,

Yes, John Knopf was with the medical detachment, and received 3 ~~Bronze Stars~~ Purple Hearts because he was in the field a lot.

Unfortunately, his daughter reported that he died back in 2009.

What would you like to know about him?

Bob Barrett

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Thank you for the reply.

Any idea what campaigns he was involved in? I read that he was in Italy, but did not state other campaigns, but I'm assuming he was in more as he was wounded 3 times I saw (do you mean 3 Purple Hearts and not bronze stars?) and he is on the Christmas 1944 roster you have on your website.

Any other info you may have would be great.

Thank you...

Connor

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You are correct, I meant Purple hearts.

I do not have complete casualty records, but I do see Knopf had a NBC (non-battle casualty) in July 44 which would be in Italy. Since he is listed on the Christmas 1944 roster (<http://517prct.org/documents/xmas1944/xmas1944.htm>), he was with the 517 in France (Operation Dragoon) from August to December at least, and would most likely also been with them in the Ardennes during the Battle of the Bulge (Dec 44 - Jan 45, and probably the push into Germany (Feb 45). Those were the major actions of the 517th: Italy, So. France, Ardennes, Germany.

You can find some short histories of the 517th on the website. A great overview is the documentary "A Cut Above" at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guJE71bIP10>

Bob B.

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Thanks again! I also have the e-book of 517th PRCT by Turner Publishing and there is a short story called "an accident in Italy" by **John Knopf** and is about 4-5 pages. He talks about how they went out in an ambulance on 21 June 1944 and they hit a mine.

Here is the last part I want to share. Not positive if he would have received the Purple Heart, but pretty sure. That means he probably would have been out of action 4 times.

“Just then there was a tremendous explosion blowing the ambulance off the road. In turning, he had struck a land mine.

Standing alongside of the ambulance, I was blown into the air and hit the ground like a sack of potatoes. **Corporal Simpson** came flying out of the cab his face blackened from the explosion. As I staggered to my feet, my eyes felt like I had all kinds of debris in them. **Sergeant Morrissey** and the German sergeant had been knocked down, but neither were injured. The German sergeant approached me, took a small mirror from his pocket to show me what had happened to my face. It was not a pretty sight, but not all that bad except for my eyes. I told him in fairly decent German to return to his unit and we would make our way on foot back to our unit. As a result of the explosion only Sergeant Morrissey could hear well. We walked in single file with him beckoning with his hands to hit the dirt as some sporadic artillery fire had commenced. Just as we reached the area of the railroad trestle, a major came up in a Jeep doing a recon.[...]

Excerpt From: Turner Publishing Company. “517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team.” Turner Publishing Company, 2012-04-27. iBooks.

This material may be protected by copyright.

Check out this book on the iBooks Store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewBook?id=523124447>

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Thanks for that info. I forgot about the Turner book. I do have a copy of that that I will have to dig up. Parts of that, including the longer unit histories, are taken from other books and articles, but most of the bios, the "remembering when" and photos were collected by Turner in 1998. (My Dad, **Ben Barrett**, had not yet reconnected with the 517th, so his stories did not make it into that book.)

Do you have a connection to John Knopf?

Bob B.

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My only connection is that I have some of his items from the war. I am not a relative. I do research on items I have from the war and add their item/story to my website as a tribute to them and so their stories are remembered and not forgotten.

Thanks...  
Connor



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Bob: This is a moving video. In case you haven't seen it, am sharing it with you for Mail Call.

Nothing more to be said. **Pat Seitz**

[Project Vigil: D-Day 2014, The saluting boy on Omaha beach](#)



***Dec 5, 1945:***

### **Aircraft squadron lost in the Bermuda Triangle**

At 2:10 p.m., five U.S. Navy Avenger torpedo-bombers comprising Flight 19 take off from the Ft. Lauderdale Naval Air Station in Florida on a routine three-hour training mission. Flight 19 was scheduled to take them due east for 120 miles, north for 73 miles, and then back over a final 120-mile leg that would return them to the naval base. They never returned.

Two hours after the flight began, the leader of the squadron, who had been flying in the area for more than six months, reported that his compass and back-up compass had failed and that his position was unknown. The other planes experienced similar instrument malfunctions. Radio facilities on land were contacted to find the location of the lost squadron, but none were successful. After two more hours of confused messages from the fliers, a distorted radio transmission from the squadron leader was heard at 6:20 p.m., apparently calling for his men to prepare to ditch their aircraft simultaneously because of lack of fuel.

By this time, several land radar stations finally determined that Flight 19 was somewhere north of the Bahamas and east of the Florida coast, and at 7:27 p.m. a search and rescue Mariner aircraft took off with a 13-man crew. Three minutes later, the Mariner aircraft radioed to its home base that its mission was underway. The Mariner was never heard from again. Later, there was a report from a tanker cruising off the coast of Florida of a visible explosion seen at 7:50 p.m.

The disappearance of the 14 men of Flight 19 and the 13 men of the Mariner led to one of the largest air and seas searches to that date, and hundreds of ships and aircraft combed thousands of square miles of the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and remote locations within the interior of Florida. No trace of the bodies or aircraft was ever found.

Although naval officials maintained that the remains of the six aircraft and 27 men were not found because stormy weather destroyed the evidence, the story of the "Lost Squadron" helped cement the legend of the Bermuda Triangle, an area of the Atlantic Ocean where ships and aircraft are said to disappear without a trace. The Bermuda Triangle is said to stretch from the southern U.S. coast across to Bermuda and down to the Atlantic coast of Cuba and Santo Domingo.



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

Hello Sir,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am Daniel W. Jones, grandson of **Doug W. Jones** who served proudly in the 517th Parachute "C" company. Better known as "**Deacon**", my grandfather is currently 98 years old and now residing in a retirement home in Erie, Pennsylvania. His wife, Elizabeth Jones, passed in September of 2012 and within a year he moved from his residence to the retirement home. Up until a month ago Deacon's health was quite well and active. He was still entertaining the crowds with his organ playing as his son, Doug Jones (Jr) would accompany him with the saxophone. Sadly, these past few weeks he has begun to decline, and as family we fear the worse is approaching. I wanted it to be known to his regiment the current status of his condition, and if there was anyone who remembers Deacon and would like to write to him while we are still blessed to have his presence. The address to reach him is below:

Fairview Manor  
Attn: **Douglas W. Jones**  
900 Manchester Rd, Fairview, PA 16415

He would be absolutely tickled to hear from friends and comrades. Deacon is in wonderful hands as he has loving family and friends constantly close, and any and all correspondence will be read respectively to him. I have in my possession some photographs from his time in Europe from 1944-45 and will scan them so that they can be shared on the 517th website. He has many fond memories of his time in the 517th, and has made enduring friendships for many many years from those he proudly served with. I thank you all for support, friendship, and for your sacrifice for serving your country so honorably.

Thank you Mr. Barrett, and if there is anything else I can do to pass the word, please let me know what I can do to help.

Sincerely,

Daniel W. Jones  
110 Court St.  
Farmington, ME 04938



Tom Bodack Jeff Thomas Jim Lathers "Deacon" Jones  
Lille, France 1944-45





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

Re: 517th MailCall - November 30, 2014 – Manhay 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

It should be pointed out that the First Platoon of the 596th Engineers went into Manhay with the Third Battalion.

Only two of those engineers still survive, **Bob Anderson** of Nebraska and myself.

**Bill Hudson**

144 Frederick St.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95062  
(831)427-1454  
[HUDSONWG@comcast.net](mailto:HUDSONWG@comcast.net)

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I am the niece of **Thomas L. Rea**, and the first cousin of Tom Rea of New Hampshire. Tom forwarded one of the news letters to me and I would like to "subscribe" as well. Would you put me on the list? I am forever grateful for what all "our boys (and gals) did" for us, and would enjoy reading the posts each Sunday. God bless you for what you do!

**Janet Keddington** (my mother was Roberta Rea, Tom's younger sister.)

### *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 Miriam Boyle Kelly  
19 Oriole Court  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866