



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2247

December 14, 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
www.517prct.org/archives

MailCall News

Bob! I probably can name some of the Co A personnel as I was in company A 1st platoon also. **Deacon Jones** in the picture looks to be about my age & I'm 90 years old. So I'd say he's about 89 years old instead of 98 yrs. old. Let me know if I'm correct.

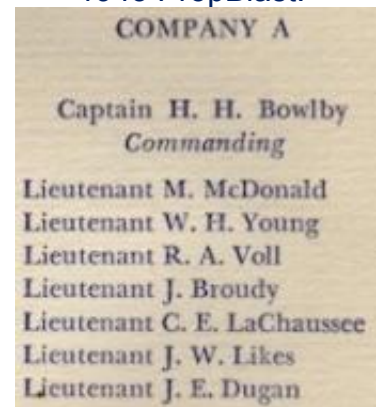
Mel Trenary

Breaking news: **Douglas "Deacon" Jones** passed away on December 4, 2014. He was 98 years old. See his story on page 8.

I'm betting that some of you can at least identify a few of the A Company officers in the Toccoa photo.



Here's a hint from the June 1943 PropBlast:





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January Kissimmee and Other Reunions

We have a 517th mini reunion next month in Kissimmee, Florida!

Kissimmee -January 2015 on MLK weekend. This year -January 17, 18 and 19. Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Of course, there will be arrivals on Thursday and Friday, and the hospitality room should be open Friday night. Banquet Monday; getaway day on Tuesday the 20th.

Please register, and book your rooms ASAP!

Kissimmee Info and registration forms are attached at the end of this MailCal and also posted on the Website (www.517prct.org).

Then in March Palm Springs, California. **Palm Springs March 9-13, 2015!!**

Now the GREAT NEWS is we will have another NATIONAL Reunion June 25-28, 2015 in New Orleans!!!

We have contracted with the Best Western Plus Lankmark Hotel, 2601 Severn Ave, Metairie, LA 70002. We are asking our folks to contact Armed Forces Reunion to make their reservation. A phone number and email address will be sent to mailcall soon with that information.

We are planning on visiting the World War II Museum (and many other sites), and hopeful some of our folks can donate uniforms, pictures, books and anything else you can think of to the Museum. There is a very small display of paratrooper stuff, mainly from the 101st. We need to make a strong presence of the 517th there! So if you are reading this please contact one of your friends in the 517th and encourage them to come to this national reunion. We are going to have a great time of it!!!!

Please send **Lory Curtis** (drlvc@comcast.net) an email back here to MailCall if you are planning on going so I can get a count.

Also for you international travelers - Back to France -August, 2015. Sospel was fantastic this year. Anyone interested in October, 2015?

Observances in France in the years like 66 and 69th anniversaries tend to be smaller, yes -but you can meet more people really interested in the 517. Please think about it if you're inclined and able!

Airborne All the Way!

Lory Curtis, Claire Giblin, and Karen Frice Wallace



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More MailCall News

Hi Ben,

I saw in the last mailcall that the niece of **Tom Rea**, the soldier I adopted, joined the mailcall. Could you send her my email address, and tell her I would love to get into contact with her?

Thank you for your efforts.

I wish you a merry christmas and a happy new year.

Thomas Bessems

Hi Janet and Tom,

Let me introduce you to **Thomas Bessems**, our friend who has adopted and cares for the Margraten gravesite of your uncle Lt. Thomas Rea.

Bob Barrett

Thanks. He is a great young man and we have connected . If only our youth here had the same appreciation for those who made the ultimate sacrifice!!!

Tom Rea

From December 2013. I'm not sure I ever posted this email and photo from Tom Rea. -- BB

Here is a picture of my Uncle **Thomas L. Rea**, 517th KIA on Feb. 9th.. 1945 the very last day of combat for the PRCT. His brother, my dad, Donald D. Rea is standing beside him.

Sincerely

Tom Rea

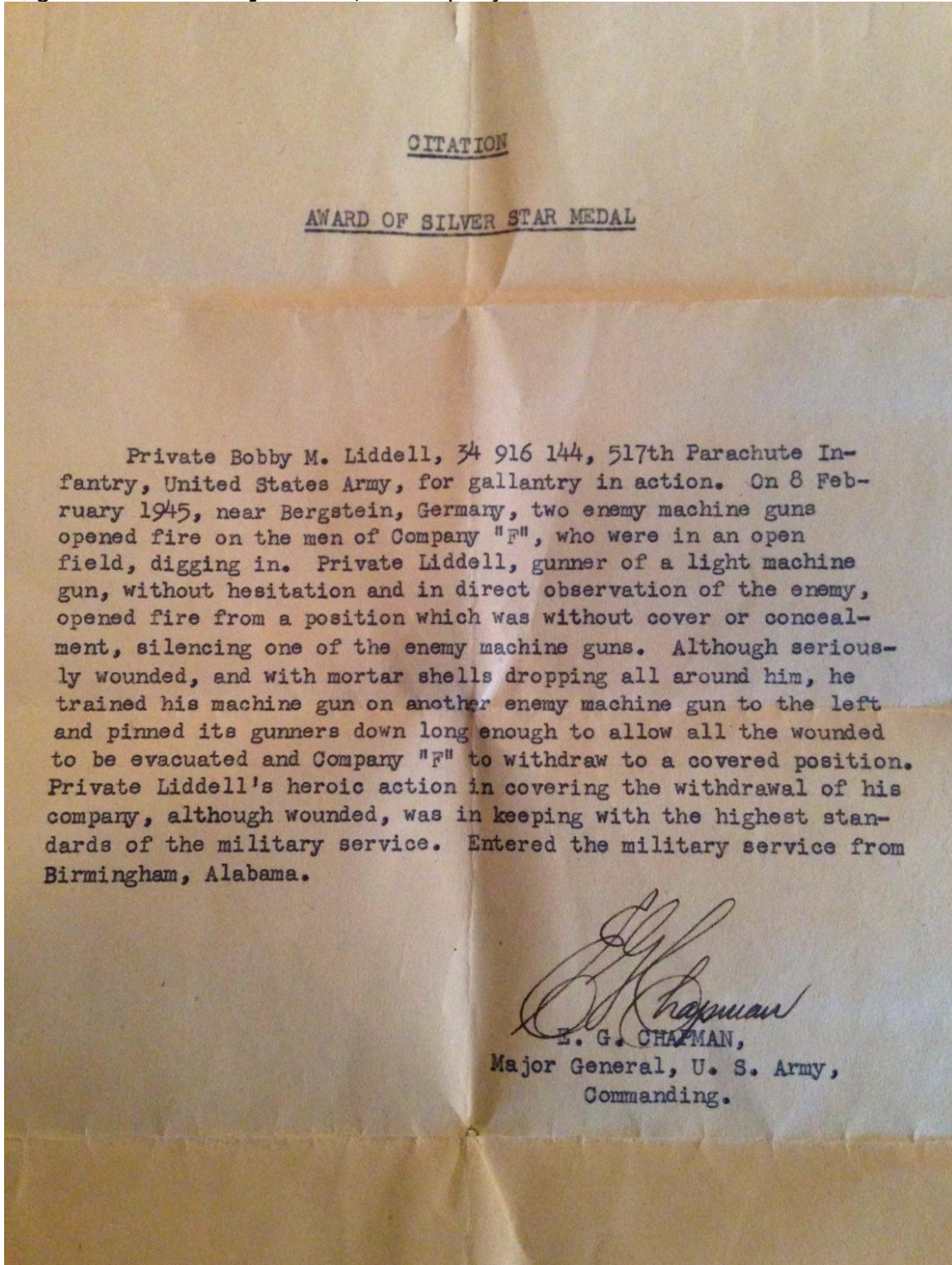




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Hi Bob! Don't know if you remember me but your Dad began the site by looking for info on my grandad, f.co 517th. I'm **Chris Liddell** (then in my mid 20s,now 42) I've had your Dad on my mind and I have some great news. How is his health? I know it's been a while but we finally found this w/his medals!

Chris Liddell, grandson of **Bobby Liddell**, F Company





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Note: Chris was one of the people who gave **Ben Barrett** the idea to build a website for the 517th, so that people could find info and do research on the unit. Here's a note from Ben in MailCall #661, March 2004:

It is unlikely that there would be a 517 website or "Mail Call" if a young man in Alabama had not sent email to people in Belgium a few years ago requesting information about his grandfather, Sgt. Bobby Liddell "F" Co. 517, and a Silver Star recipient. The request was forwarded by our a Belgian friend to me to see if I could help Chris. At that time I was just learning how to turn a computer on and so I asked my son ,Bob, how to find the information on the internet. The result was the website and later "Mail Call".

We have been able to help many relatives find information about their fathers, grandfathers and uncles, but have not been able to be of much help to Chris. We did contact one person in "F" Co. who briefly remembers Bobby Liddell and when he asked him what he did to get the Silver Star, Bobby Liddell's reply was something like "just doing what I was supposed to do".

Sainsbury's Christmas 2014 ad. Inspired by true events of 100 years ago:



<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=NWF2JBb1bvM>

Reporting death of **George Sanford** (460 – D Battery)

Hallo Bob,

about one year ago, we got my Father set up to continue to receive his issue of the MailCall at the St. Anthony Health Center. Now the delivery can be stopped. He has just passed away peacefully, just two weeks after his 96th birthday. I was fortunate to be with him when he died.

Thank you for your support.

John Sanford



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From 7FM, a radio station in Belgium and Luxemborg:

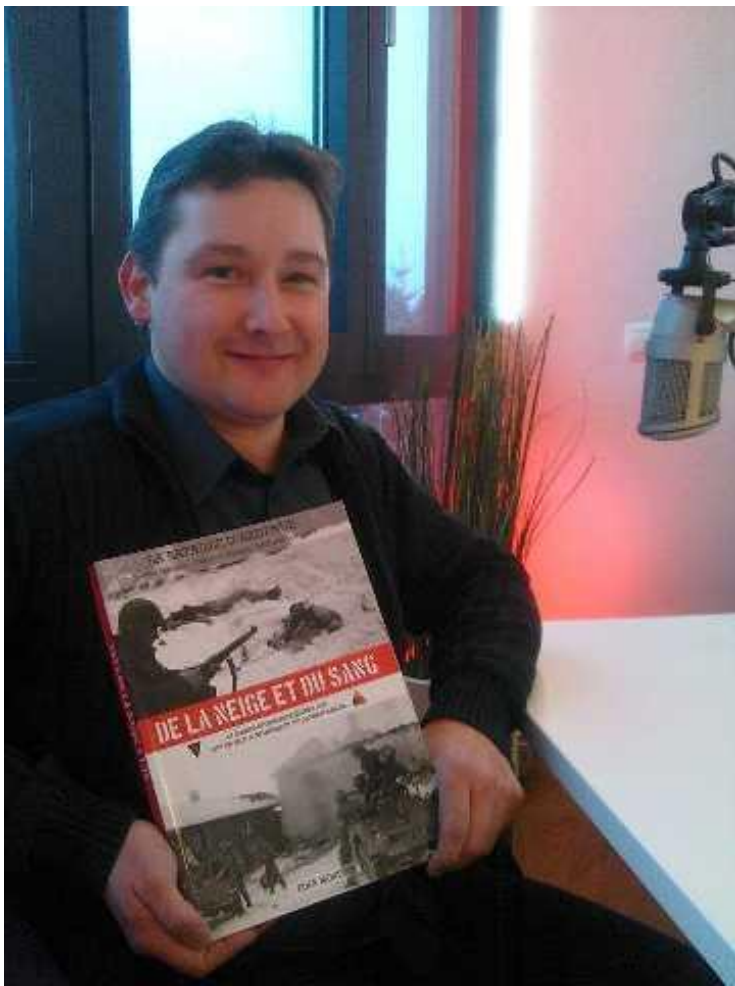
Nous recevions Eddy Monfort ce matin dans nos studios. Habitant le village de Malempré, il venait nous présenter son tout dernier livre "De la neige et du sang"...

Translation:

We received **Eddy Monfort** this morning in our studios, from the village of Malempré, We talked about his latest book '**Snow and Blood**' released in May.

With the group **Expo 14/18 and 40/45**, he has organized an exhibition at the à la Salle de l'Entente in Manhay, from December 13th to 28th. The end of this event will be followed by a march and a circuit with vehicles, participants and reenactors of that time.

If you would like more information and participate in the march, which will take place on 28 december , go to <http://www.ardenneswhitestar.be/>, <http://www.manhay1418.be/> or send mail to the Address e.monfort@belgacom.net.





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Douglas W. "Deacon" Jones passed away after a wonderful 98 years of life on Thursday, December 4, 2014, at Fairview Manor. He was born in Ashland, Ky., on July 4, 1916, son of the late Ollie D. and Virginia I. Stroud Jones.

Deacon's family moved to Erie in 1929 and he began his life-long involvement in the Erie community. He was a 1935 graduate of Strong Vincent High School where he excelled in football, basketball, and track. He was also a standout athlete at Perkiomen Prep School, University of Southern California, and Temple University, where he played basketball. In April of 1940, Deacon married the love of his life, Betty Bagans from Philadelphia. In 1943 he joined the United States Army and became part of the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Deacon served valiantly in the European Theater, 1944/45, jumping in and fighting through France, Italy, and at the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, where he earned two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star. His fellow "Battling Buzzards" became some of his closest life-long friends. Deacon retired from National Service Engraving Company of Erie in 1976 and went on to work for Bohman Music Sales. He was on the Board of Governors for many years at H.A.N.D.S. and along with his wife they enjoyed the outdoors, especially walking, swimming, and gardening. His most proud achievement was his and Betty's raising of five children. He was very involved in coaching, cub scouting, and mentoring many young people along the way. His children and grandchildren knew him for his listening ear, selflessness, humility, compassion, great sense of humor, a person who never forgot a name or face (including dogs), and a very talented pianist. He enjoyed entertaining many and played with the Troubadours in Erie until four months prior to his death.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his loving wife of 72 years, Betty; one daughter and son-in-law, Barbara J. and John E. Poux; and two sisters, Esther Dale Boetcker and Virginia Roland.

He is survived by two sons, David (Fely) of Fairview and Douglas (Rhonda) of Erie; two daughters, Betsy (Robert) Eisbart of White Marsh, Md. and Barrie (Tom) Nolan of Fairview; eleven grandchildren, Marla (Jim) Nix of Silver Spring, Md., Susan (Vini) Espinoza of Washington, D.C., Daniel (Kelly) Jones of Rangeley, Maine, Darren Jones of Chicago, Ill., Diandra Jones of Tortolla, V.I., David Jones of Raleigh, N.C., Leah (Mark Schiller) Eisbart of San Francisco, Calif., Margot Eisbart of Miami, Fla., Brendan (Meaghan) Nolan of Darien, Conn., Christopher (Johanna Kao) Nolan of Rangoon, Burma, and Jessica Nolan of Chicago, Ill. He is further survived by thirteen great-grandchildren, Zoe and Ben Nix, Rio and Sky Espinoza, Zachary, Brenten, Madison and Ethan Jones, Mackenzie, Jack and Marykate Nolan, Eleanor Kao and Maya Schiller.

A memorial service will be held at the convenience of the family and along with his wife they will be inurned in Arlington National Cemetery. Arrangements were under the care of the Russell C. Schmidt & Son Funeral Home Inc., 5000 Wattsburg Rd., Erie, PA 16504. Memorial contributions may be made to Glenwood United Methodist Church, 2931 Myrtle St., Erie, PA 16508.

Please visit www.SchmidtFuneralHomeErie.com to sign the Book of Memories. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/erietimesnews/obituary.aspx?pid=173391119#sthash.Z5gvlUkU.dpuf>

Sign the Guestbook at www.GoErie.com/obits



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Good morning Bob,

Thank you so much for getting back, and I'm thrilled to know that the mail call is still active and well. Speaking on behalf of our family, we would be honored to have his obituary and picture included in the next newsletter. I'm sure there are friends out there who would glad to have the update albeit sad news.

I'm so sorry I wasn't aware of Bill Bolin's request to hear from Deacon but hopefully my Grandfather heard somehow and responded to him. He always had a knack of finding things out, and I know he received the newsletter for many years. He was very proud of his regiment and so fond of the friends he made through the 517th, and I know he would be tickled to be featured in the newsletter.

Thank you for all you do for these veterans and for the 517th, it is appreciated beyond what words can express. Thank you for the copies of the newsletters as I will share them with family and I know they will have many thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jones (son of **Douglas "Deacon" Jones**)

Hello.

Do you have info or photos of **Thomas Blymire**. He was in the 517th and in Christmas booklet ,in I believe, private in co. A. He was my father in law. I have a photo of his face with an overseas cap with a blue parachute patch, but that's all. Hoping to find one in combat uniform or anyone that might have known him.

Thank you,

Alan

Hi Alan,

Unfortunately, I don't have any more info or photos about Blymire in my limited files. But I will post your note to the 517th family.

Yes, we know he was in A Company. Do you know if he was with them at Camp Toccoa? If so, he might be in this photo. Can you recognize him?

http://517prct.org/photos/a_company_camp_toccoa_1943.htm [Same photo as on Page 1]

Also, if you want to send me a copy of your photo, I would love to have it to post on the website.

Bob Barrett



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In a cemetery about six miles from the Dutch city of Maastricht lie buried 8,301 American soldiers who died in "Operation Market Garden" in the battles to liberate the Netherlands in the fall and winter of 1944–5. Every one of the men buried in the cemetery, as well as those in the Canadian and British military cemeteries has been adopted by a Dutch family who tend the grave and keep alive the memory of the soldier they have adopted. It is the custom to keep a portrait of "their" foreign soldier in a place of honour in their home. Annually on "Liberation Day" (May 5) , Memorial Services are held for the men who died to liberate the Netherlands. The day concludes with a concert, at which "Il Silenzio" has always been the concluding piece.

In 2008 the soloist was a 13-year-old Dutch girl, Melissa Venema, backed by André Rieu and the Royal Orchestra of the Netherlands.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4I3Rgg-L1M#t=63>

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

517 PRCT Florida Mini Reunion 2015
Ramada Hotel & Inn Gateway, Kissimmee, FL

Reunion Registration Form
Saturday January 17 – Monday January 19
MLK Holiday Weekend

Name _____ Spouse _____

Guest Names _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ Cellphone _____

Unit _____ Arrival Date _____

Registration Fee - \$75.00
(Includes Banquet Dinner and Hospitality Room)

Banquet Dinner:

Prime Rib _____ (# of people)

Chicken Cordon Bleu _____ (# of people)

Fresh Catch of the Day _____ (# of people)

Please send this registration form with your **check made out to**
517 PRCT Reunion by December 20th to:

Claire Giblin
24 Beverly Drive
Hillsborough, N.J.

Phone: 908-963-3528

Email: clairejgib@comcast.net

517 PRCT FLORIDA MINI REUNION, January 2015

WHERE:

Ramada Hotel & Inn Gateway
7470 Hwy 192 West
Kissimmee, FL 34741

800-327-9170

WHEN: January 17 – 19

(Hospitality Room Opens Friday Evening of January 16)

RATES:

A double room is \$65.00, Tower rooms \$75.00. They will provide these rates for the period +/- five days of the actual reunion to allow for early arrivals and stay-overs.

MAKING YOUR RESERVATION:

CALL 800-327-9170

Identify yourself as attending the 517 PRCT Reunion to get this special rate, WHICH INCLUDES BREAKFAST.

SCHEDULE:

The hospitality suite will be open 5pm to 10pm on Friday

10 am to 10 pm on Saturday through Sunday

10 am to 5pm and after dinner on Monday

Registration: Saturday morning

Rides to Services on Sunday can be arranged

Monday: Memorial Service 6:30 - 6:45 pm; Banquet 6:45 – 10pm

Hospitality suite open following the dinner

For further information contact

Claire Giblin, 908-963-3528

Email: clairejgib@comcast.net