



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2261

March 8, 2015

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

Website

www.517prct.org

Send MailCall news to

MailCall@517prct.org

MailCall Archives

www.517prct.org/archives

2015 Roster (updated!)

www.517prct.org/roster.pdf

Thunderbolt (Winter 2014) www.517prct.org/archives

517th PRCT West Coast Party - Last Call!

The 517 PRCT West Coast party starts tomorrow. If anyone else is in the San Diego/Palm Springs area, you are welcome to drop by and say hello.

West Coast Party March 9-13, 2015 [Registration Form](#)

Information and Registration form at the end of this MailCall

We have about 20 people with 5 or 6 troopers registered for the West Coast reunion.

The troopers include:

John Jonientz

Allan Johnson

Leo Dean

Gene "Zoot" Snyder

Anthony Mandio

Manuel Ventoza

Jay Castello possibly

Good group for our gathering!

We can handle a few more. Jump on a plane and join us!

Karen Frice Wallace



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In Memorium – William T. Webb, HQ Company, 3rd Battalion

The Hi, Bob -

It is with great sadness that I report the death of **Bill Webb** of the 460th. I spoke with his wife Leila this morning; she advised that he passed on Thursday and that the viewing, funeral and burial will be on Tuesday.

Bill and Leila have been longtime fixtures at the Kissimmee reunion and were hosts for years. The years run together and they were always there helping, hosts or not, first to arrive and last to leave, even as the journey of 27 miles grew harder and harder. Bill was always jovial and happy to share stories. He was generous with his time and the history, and I'm glad to report that I have a copy of his book, which of course shared his perspective on the combat team as well as his fascinating time as a pilot. Just thinking about him telling a story brings a smile to my face as I type - he could joke about anything, especially himself. Fiercely proud of the combat team and his service, it shows his devotion that they even hoped to be at the Kissimmee reunion (which we had to cancel) this year, even as he was not doing so well. It's hard to imagine Kissimmee without Bill Webb.

Leila says she doing well thanks to family, and says that the hospice team was great. They were able to have him at home, to her relief, at the end.

Our hearts go out to the Webb family.

Claire Giblin

William T. Webb, 89, of Saint Cloud, passed away on March 5, 2015. He was born on March 8, 1925 to Hugh and Blanche (Molly) Webb at Port Huron, MI.

Mr. Webb owned and operated Via Air Inc. and Webb Enterprises He worked as a Corporate Pilot for Mc Clure Oil, Frisch's Big Boy and Northwestern Bell. He was in the Citrus Business in FLa. and the Coal Business in Michigan .He was a member of The Elk's, Moose, American Legion, Shriner's and The Masons in he just received his 60 year pin.

William is survived by his loving spouse of 69 years Leila, Two Sons, Thomas M. Webb, Bruce A. (Cynthia) Webb; Three Granddaughters, Sheila Webb (Christopher) Mc Clelland, Nichole Webb and Michelle Webb; Two Great-grandsons, Joshua Mc Clelland and Jonah Mc Clelland.

Visitation will be held Tuesday, March 10, 2015, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm. with Funeral Services at 2:00 pm at the Fisk Funeral Home with Leonard Thompson, officiating. Burial will be in Rose Hill Cemetery Kissimmee, FL. In lieu of Flowers donations may be made to the Shriner's Hospital for Children 12502 USF Pine Drive Tampa, FL. 33612. or www.shrinershospitalforchildren.org. Online condolences can be given at fiskfh.com . Arrangements under the direction of Fisk Funeral Home and Crematory 1107 Massachusetts Ave. St. Cloud, FL. 34769



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In Memorium – Gerald Glanus Stokes – G Company



Mr. **Gerald Glanus Stokes**, 92, passed away on Saturday evening, February 28, at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany.

Funeral services are planned for 11:00 AM on Tuesday, March 3, from the graveside at Oak Grove Cemetery. Rev Betty Lou Miller will officiate.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday morning, beginning at 10:00 AM, at Hancock Funeral Home, 427 S. Lee St.

Born October 23, 1922 in Gainesville, FL, he was a son of the late Frank Stokes and Edna Shaw Stokes. Mr. Stokes was retired from the United States Army.

He dearly loved his grandchildren, and was an outstanding and devoted husband, grandfather, father and father-in-law.

Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Alice Hall Stokes; one son, Gerald G. Stokes, Jr. (Helen); two daughters, Linda S. Foster (David) and Susanne S. Roquemore (Edwin, Jr.); grandchildren: Anisha F. Flowers (Ed), Allison F. Kauffman (Justin), Laura Foster, Scott E. Roquemore, Todd S. Roquemore, Gerald G. Stokes, III, and Elizabeth S. Stafford; and 10 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Charles M. Stokes, and by a grandson, Jason R. Stokes.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions to the League of the Good Samaritan, c/o Magnolia Manor, 2001 S. Lee St., Americus, GA 31709, or to a charity of one's choice.

To sign our online guestbook and express your condolences to the family, please visit www.hancockfuneralhomeinc.com

From Stars and Stripes, *War Correspondents Notebook*
by Hal Boyle
"With the U.S. 517th Parachute Combat Team"

Returning from a sniper unit to clean out some woods for his infantry company, Pvt. Gerald G. Stokes, of Tampa, Fla., became separated from his group.

When he bumped into the men from the relieving infantry unit he walked up to the company commander and said:

"What's going on?"

The captain took one look at his "Gott Mit Uns" belt, his Iron Cross and Nazi bayonet—all battlefield souvenirs — and immediately put him under arrest as a Nazi suspect.

"I am a paratrooper," yelled Stokes indignantly.

"You're too small to be a paratrooper," replied the captain.

Stokes was herded back to a prisoner of war pen, probably the most forlorn paratrooper in the history of airborne armies.

There someone recognized him and a few minutes later he was free and boiling mad. He gave the captain a meaning look as he stalked away.

"It's funny," said the captain. "I thought he was the first prisoner we had taken with a southern accent."



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MailCall News

The cast is off my ankle and it is completely healed.

I will be in Palm Springs next week. I also plan on New Orleans in June.

[Mail Call #2258](#) had a great article on my friend **Charles A. Derbin**. When we jumped into Southern France we were in the same plane. **Lt. Col. Walton** was jumpmaster, **Captain Pearce** was No. 2. I was number 6. Chuck was No. 9. **Chaplain Brown** was the last man, No. 17. He had to stand between the pilot and co-pilot. Col. Walton and Captain Pearce landed in a vineyard. There was a German machine gun at the other end but couldn't press the muzzle down. Chuck cut the suspension lines, made a rope, crawled in to Captain Pearce, tied the rope around him and dragged him out of the vineyard. I met him shortly after. Somehow he found a French farmer with a two-wheel cart, with horse. Chuck had given Capt. Pearce a shot from his morphine syrette that was wearing off. So, I gave Capt Pearce a shot from my morphine syrette. Then we got him to the Aid Station. I was able to visit Chuck and Vera several times when they lived in California.

He stayed in the army for 22 years. Retired as a Chief Warrant Officer (W-3)

Airborne,
Leo Dean

(Next, I'll send you some info about **Chaplian Guenette**.)

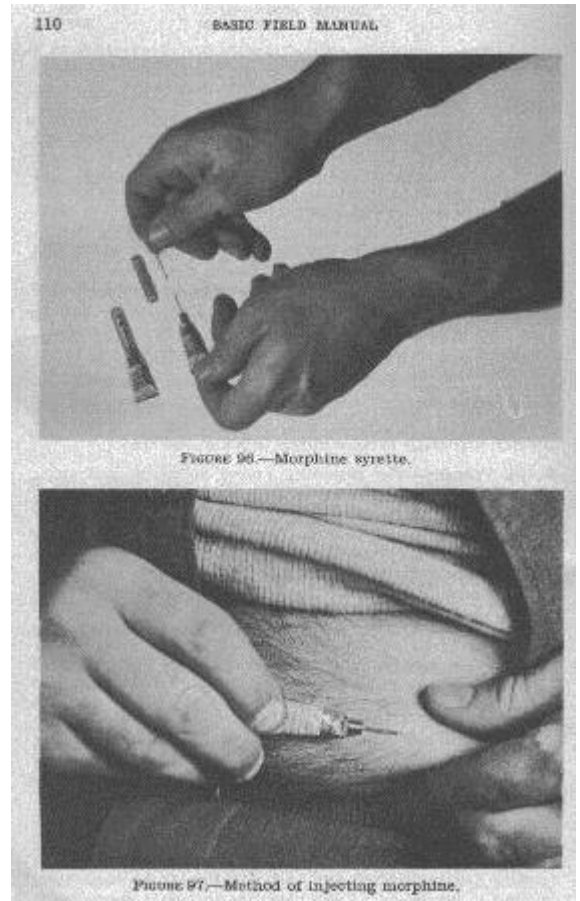
From: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syrette>



The morphine syrette used in World War II had a wire loop pin with a guard in the end of the hollow needle that was used to break a seal where the needle was attached to the tube. It was similar to a

Superglue tube. After breaking the seal the wire loop pin was removed and the hollow needle was inserted under the skin at a shallow angle and the tube flattened between the thumb and fingers. (See subcutaneous injection.) After injection the used tube was pinned to the receiving soldier's collar to inform others of the dose administered.

Instructions for using the Syrette from the FM-21-11 Basic Field Manual –First Aid for Soldiers, April 7th 1943 --->





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Hey Bob,

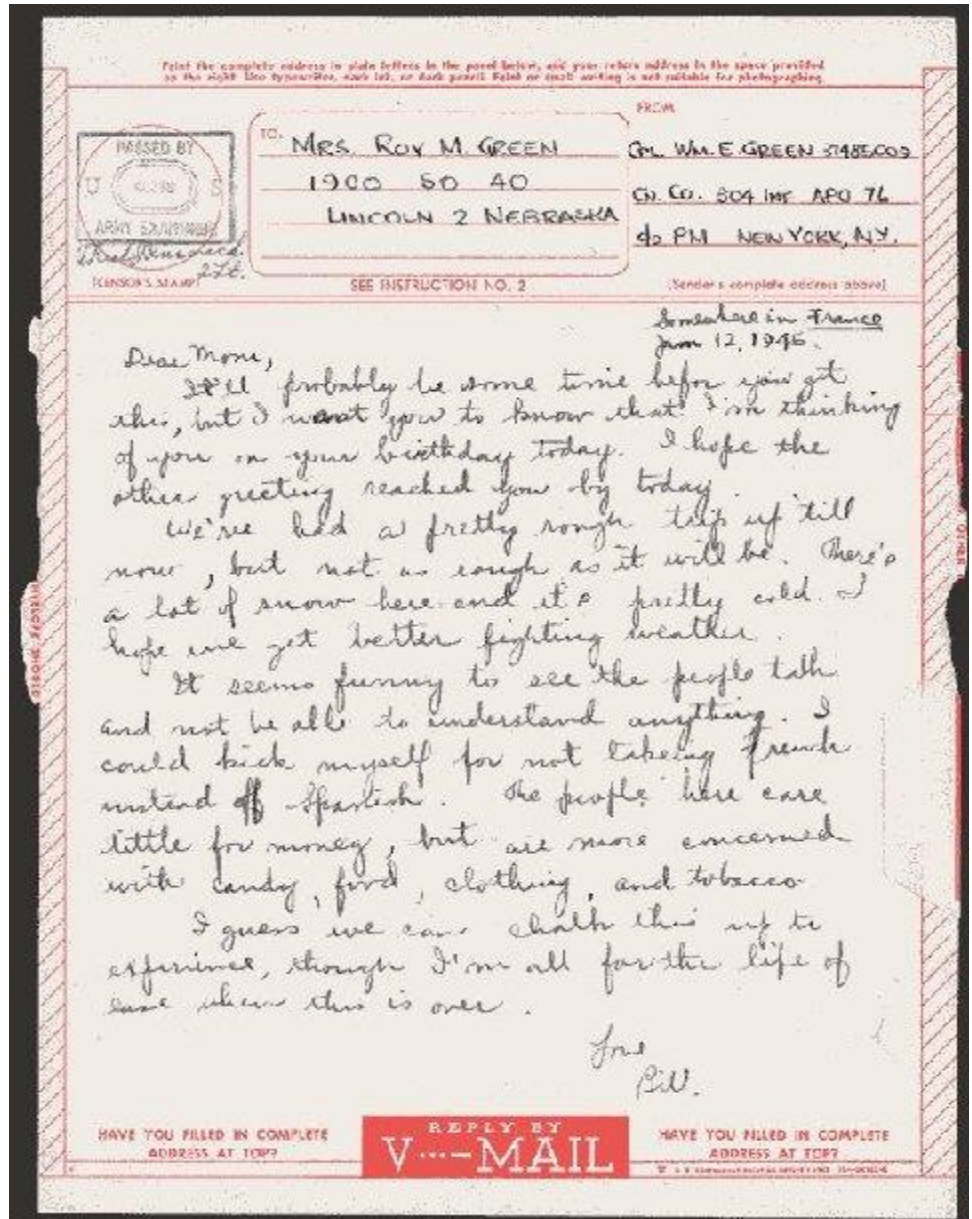
Here is a sample of a V-Mail Letter. I have tracked family war letters and found that the date stamped by when the local "developer" made the film had no relation to when it was sent. Once in a while a letter arrived only to have earlier letters arrive after that. Interesting that this system worked as well as it did. Notice in the logo below, the Morse Code for the letter V is shown after the V, *dit dit dit dah*, like Beethoven's 5th.

Don Gentry

From Wikipedia:

Operation and function:

V-mail correspondence was on small letter sheets, 17.8 cm by 23.2 cm (7 by 9 1/8 in.) that would go through mail censors before being photographed and transported as thumbnail-sized image in negative microfilm. Upon arrival to their destination, the negatives would be blown up to 60% of their original size 10.7 cm by 13.2 cm (4 1/4 in. by 5 3/16 in.) and printed.



According to the National Postal Museum, "V-mail ensured that thousands of tons of shipping space could be reserved for war materials. The 37 mail bags required to carry 150,000 one-page letters could be replaced by a single mail sack. The weight of that same amount of mail was reduced dramatically from 2,575 pounds to a mere 45." This saved considerable weight and bulk in a time in which both were hard to manage in a combat zone.

In addition to postal censorship, V-mail also deterred espionage communications by foiling the use of invisible ink, microdots, and microprinting, none of which would be reproduced in a photocopy.





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View a two-minute newsreel describing V-Mail: "New Service Speeds Mail to U.S. Troops, 1944," produced by the Office of War Information. National Archives (208-UN-113).

[Watch movie >>](#)

[Transcript](#) of the newsreel's audio is available.



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From the US Post Office, here are some good instructions on how to preserve letters and memories:

Preserving your family's documents and letters:

<http://postalmuseum.si.edu/warletters/PreservingYourLetters.pdf>

RE: Jean Mickael Soldi and Eric Renoux

I am **Melanie Hanson** (Davis), a daughter of a Buzzard, **Gary Davis** 517th, F-Co

I read **Rick Sweet's** note on the poker set that he gave to the Musee de la Liberation. I would just like to give **Jean Mickael Soldi** and **Eric Renoux** a **BIG** heartfelt **THANK YOU!**

If it wasn't for them, the history of our 517th prct would not be remembered in France. They have went above and beyond to see to it that our loved ones are remembered for the sacrifice they made for the French families during WWII.

Like Rick Sweet and many others that have given Jean Mickael and Eric items that belonged to their Father, Grandfather, Uncle or friends, **Thank you.**

I know my Father fell in love with the area and the people of South France. I will always have a place to call home when I am there visiting my Fathers 517th Airborne treasures along with my French Family (**Jean Mickael & Adrien Soldi ; Eric, Laurence and Laura Renoux**) 😊

Jean Mickael and Eric, THANK YOU FOR HONORING OUR FAMILY AND LOVED ONES OF THE 517TH ! WE LOVE YOU!!

~**Melanie Hanson**



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In my message on the death of the Minnesotan **Louie Gelen** of the 596th, I stated that there were eight of us left from the original 137 in the company.

They are (with spouses and addresses):

- **Robert (Marya) Dalrymple**, Green Valley AZ - Company Commander-
- **Robert (Avis) Anderson** -First Platoon, with me at Manhay
- **Bill (Gloria) Hudson** -First Platoon-
- **Allan Johnson** -Third Platoon**-
- **Lyle (Mary Ann) Madison** -Third Platoon**-
- **Herb (Marie) Reichwald** -Second Platoon-
- **Manuel (Laverne) Ventoza** -Third Platoon**-
- **Ed Phillips** -Headquarters Platoon-

** All members of the third platoon.

Remembering the wild third platoon which:

1. broke almost every rule, and,
2. suffered, perhaps, the highest KIA rate of any platoon in the 517th combat team.

Why do they still have the most survivors?

Somebody else has to figure this one out.

Bill Hudson

Bill,
Thanks for the info. **Robert Anderson** was not on our Thunderbolt roster, so I have added him.

But on our Thunderbolt roster, I also have the following 596th troopers still receiving the Thunderbolt:

- **Willard H. (Bill) Conger**, (Marjorie) in AR
- **Ernest Kosan** in NY

We never know if they actually receive the Thunderbolt, so if you have any info, let us know.

Bob B.



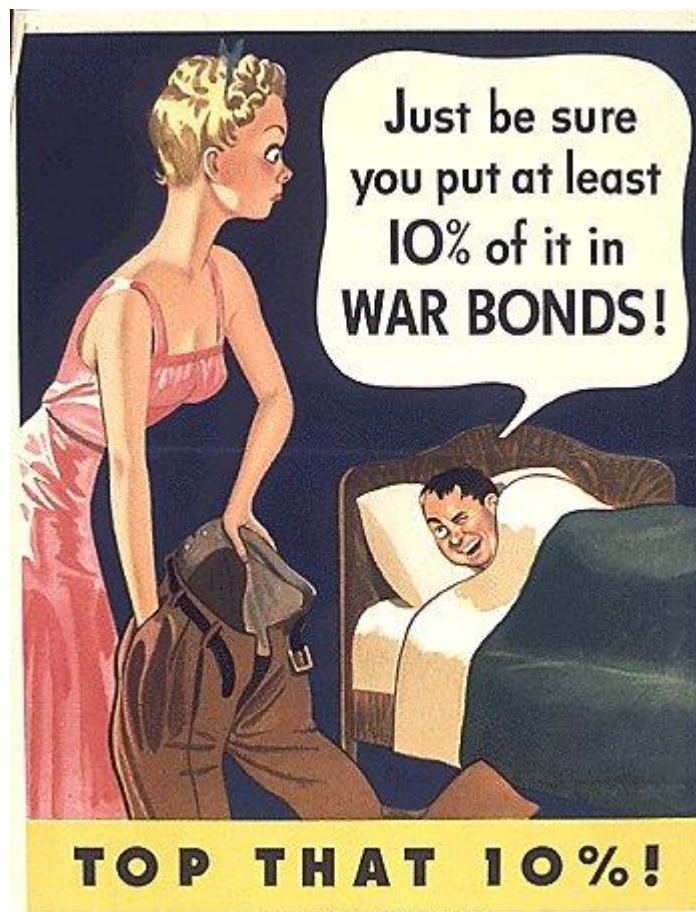
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Administrivia

If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>

- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, 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





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2015 517th PCT PALM SPRINGS REUNION

**March 9-13, 2015
Palm Springs, California**

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

We have reserved the entire resort for our group.

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.

Your 150.00 registration fee will cover all meals at the resort. We may go out for our banquet this year, will keep you updated.

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: \$ 150.00

Your registration fee will cover all meals at the resort including the banquet which will be at the lodge.

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 517th event!

Questions?

Karen 541 948 2486
Wayne 541 948 2484