



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2268

April 26, 2015

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

517th PRCT 2015 Annual Reunion



2015 National Reunion

New Orleans, LA June 25-28, 2015

[Program Info](#) [Hotel Information](#)

[Event Registration](#) [Hotel Reservation](#)

Registration Cut-off date: May 22

I am excited to see so many people registering for our conference in New Orleans, June 25 thru our banquet on the 28th. My reservations are all complete. I hope to see all of our dear 517th Paratroopers one more time, and their sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, and friends. New Orleans, here I come!!!!

Lory Curtis

Excellent Mail Call! You sure did make my mouth water describing all of the food choices there in New Orleans. I am looking forward to it!

Rick Sweet

We regret that we will not be able to make any of the reunions planned for 2015. We have had 2 cousins who planned wedding for this year and they both have done so over the Palm Spring Mini and New Orleans National reunion. We wish we could come and hope there will be future ones. Please keep us informed.

Scott, Deana and Dorothy Ross
Seattle



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Enjoyed the Hawk history in this email. Alan and I have registered for the New Orleans reunion and hotel. We will be coming from the Florida Bar convention in Orlando on Friday, so we will arrive Friday evening. Unfortunately, we won't be able to stay for the banquet Sunday evening as we must be back in Miami on Monday a.m. Look forward to seeing everyone for the group breakfast Saturday. We plan to visit the WWII museum on Saturday in case anyone else misses the Friday tour of the museum.

Pat Seitz

PS we've just returned from a wonderful trip to Barcelona, Malta, Sicily and Madrid, and a trip to Manhattan KS so that's the reason we have been out of the loop on Mail Calls of recent.

MailCall News

Hello, this is J.R."Ray" Estrella, Son-In-Law of **Elbert "Bert" Duran**,(Deceased) A Co. 517. Thank you much for the great article regarding the connection between the 517th and Special Forces. From 1962 to 1966, I served under then **Captain Gene Frice** with HQ Co. 17th Special Forces. In 1990, we formed Chapter 78 - Special Forces Association in Orange County, CA. We proudly named our chapter after **Lt Col Frank J. Dallas**, another proud 517th trooper. I was the founding President of Chap 78 SFA. I also had the great honor and privilege of meeting LTC Dallas, and spending several days in his company. Col Frice was not only a great mentor to me, he also became a dear friend and father figure to me for many years, until his passing. He will be greatly missed.

-- **Ray Estrella**

I received this note and video from a co-worker:

This is the Norwegian Royal Guard Regiment (equivalent to the British and Canadian Guards regiments). These guys give the USMC Band and Honor Guard and the Army's 1 BN 3d Infantry (The Old Guard) a run for their money. It is interesting how a cheesy Hollywood theme (from "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly") can sound impressive when played by an elite military band.

I can't remember ever seeing a display of precision to beat this!

All of this is being performed on ICE!



Those are US made Garand M-1 rifles (WWII), and they are heavy weapons (9 POUNDS EACH) also, known for its balance!! When that one fellow goes on his own – YOU'VE NEVER SEEN A RIFLE SPUN THAT FAST! Unbelievable!

<http://sorisomail.com/email/16993/exibicao-de-banda-militar--um-espectaculo-imperdivel.html>



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Armed Forces Reunion wanted to do a story about my Dad and the 517th. Attached is the story that Armed Forces Reunion will put on on their website and I believe newsletter. There is only one mistake, the call the aircraft a C-17, but it was a C-47.

A great tribute to our veterans.

Airborne All the Way!!
Lory Curtis

Tribute through the Generations Keeping the Legacy of the 517th Alive

By Scott McCaskey



Harland "Bud" Curtis was with the battle-tested 517th U.S. Army Parachute Regimental Combat Team over Europe, but rarely talked about his World War II experiences. Only when son Lory joined the Marines and was getting ready to serve in Vietnam did dad share a bit of wartime perspective: "Keep your head down son."

Years later Lory and his brother Tim were watching the acclaimed HBO Series Band of Brothers and suspected the show featured stories of the 517th and asked their father. It did, and he soon began to share some of his memories.

"Dad was on a combat jump into southern France and was coming down over what he thought was water," recalled Lory, age 66. "He was trying to cut off his chute when he realized it was a thick fog bank and in almost an instant hit the ground. He got out of the chute, said aloud the password and was immediately under German fire, a bullet whizzing

right by his ear. He stayed put on the ground until he saw sunlight break the horizon and then took off like hell through the bullets. He slipped down a deep ravine and thought he was a goner until he found himself in a group of American soldiers taking cover under a ledge. The gunfire soon stopped and they moved on."

The 517th PRCT saw heavy fighting in Southern France, Italy, Belgium, Germany and at the Battle of the Bulge. They spent 94 consecutive days in direct combat on the front lines in France, more than any other unit of the war. Known as the Battling Buzzards, they were the only parachute regimental combat team in the European theater and its ranks received a Medal of Honor, six Distinguished Service Crosses, five Legions of Merit and scores of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars and Purple hearts. More than 250 paratroopers were lost. President Truman presented the Medal of Honor to Melvin Biddle of the 517th for bravery at the Battle of the Bulge.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

In 2004 Curtis, who retired from the war as a Private First Class, was one of 100 American soldiers to receive an all expenses trip paid by the French government to receive the Legion of Honor, the French equivalent of the U.S. Medal of Honor. He was with one other member of the 517th, Dr. Walter Golforth.

“These men of the 517th and World War II in general were truly of the Greatest Generation,” said Lory, who served 27 years in the U.S. Marines, active duty and reserves, and in the Army National Guard, where he retired as a Major. “I’m so thankful to each one for the sacrifices they made. One of the last things my father said before he passed away was to “never let the 517th die.”



Their story lives on not only in memories, but in print and film. Published in 2012, *Letters Home: A Paratrooper's Story*, is an account written by Lory of his father's wartime experiences, taken largely from letters he sent home from the front to his mother. The book was made into a movie, *Saints and Soldiers: Airborne Creed*, <http://www.airbornecreed.com>, in which Bud Curtis is played by actor Jasen Wade. Lory also serves as the 517th PRCT Association's First Vice President and is joined by many members of the extended family in never letting the 517th die. They are among a growing number of families nationwide that are ensuring the wartime legacies of those who went before continue to live on.

“The book and movie were written and made to honor not only our father and the 517th, but to honor all our veterans, and all men and women serving in the military,” said Lory, who lives in Salt Lake City. “We remember and

recognize the huge sacrifices they made and are making now to defend and keep our country free.”

The 517th PRCT Association will hold a reunion in June 25-29 in New Orleans, where they will visit the National World War II Museum. BookMyReunion.com's parent company, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc., has managed many previous reunions for the 517th and will direct the upcoming event. “Most of the veterans of the 517th are now 91, 92 or more, with maybe a couple youngsters at 89,” Lory said. “So it's going to be a special one. The museum has a C-17 hanging from the ceiling and some exhibits dedicated to our paratroopers. The trip should bring back some memories and keep more alive for the future.”



Scott McCaskey is a contributing writer for BMR.com, Account Director at Goldman & Associates Public Relations and a former staff writer for the Virginian-Pilot newspaper.



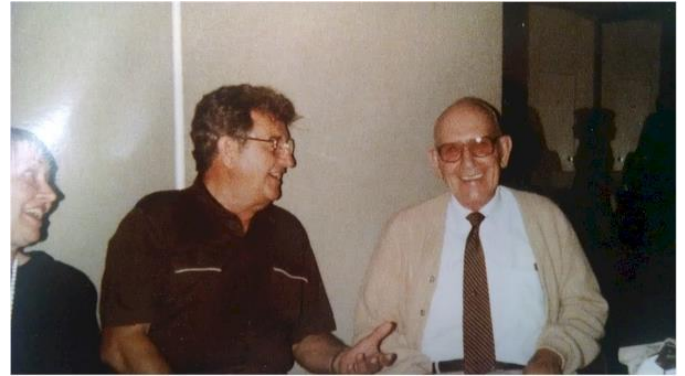
517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Earl Whisenhunt, who I believe was in G Company, 3rd Battalion, sent me these pictures.

The first picture is of Earl in 2014 at age 94. I hope I look that good at 94

The second picture is of **Al Deshay** on the left and **Dallas Long** on the right of G Company



The third picture of the group are:
Back row: **Dallas Long, Al Deshay, Jim Kitchen, George Correa**
Front row: **Harger** on the left and **Earl Whisenhunt** of the right



The photos were taken by Earl Whisenhunt in 1984 in Nice France at the 40th Reunion of their combat jump into southern France, August 15, 1944.

The card was given to Earl Whisenhunt by then Mayor of Draguignan at the 40th Reunion in France.



Earl also sent me this question, that I do not know the answer to so if anyone out there knows the answer please let Bob know on mailcall:

Earl stated, " I don't remember which reunion it was, but is was sometime in the 1980's a bottle of champagne was bought and it was to be held by all presidents and handed down each year. The bottle of champagne was to be given to the last 517th trooper still alive to make a toast to the 517th PRCT. My question is, where is the bottle now??? Who has it?? Also if you do not have a list of all 517th members now how will anyone know who is the last member alive? Lory, run this up the flag pole and see if anyone can give any information on this."

Lory Curtis



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



??? Battery 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion
Montaldo airfield, Italy
August 1944.

In reading the 5 April 2015 edition of Mail Call, p.10 of 11, I found the group photo labelled as HQ Battery, 460th PFAB [above] not quite right. The location in the Crater bivouac area did match other group photos from my Father's collection. (He happened to have been the First Sergeant of the Battery from the end of the Tennessee Maneuvers in March 1944 until 15 August when he suffered a broken ankle upon landing in France.)

The unit and commander pictured are not accurate, in my opinion. Here's why: According to the unit's Morning Report on 27 April 1944, longtime Battery CO, **Captain Alfred Ziebarth**, was reassigned to 2nd Army. No mention was made of his replacement. On that same report, the new 460th BN Commander, **LTC Cato**, and staff were picked up. Additionally, **LTs Woodhull, Weller, and Lanahan** were transferred from HQ Battery to D Battery. No mention was made of any new battery commander in that report. In reviewing the morning reports from then until 1945, **1LT Herbert C. (not G) Weinstein** was the Battery Commander until the unit came home. Weinstein did not become a Captain until he was promoted per para 1, Special Orders 18, HQ 6th Army Group dated 15 Oct 1944.

As 1LT Weinstein was not an O-3 in Italy during the summer of 1944, neither is that officer in front of the formation 1LT Weinstein. Photo quality/resolution quality aside, I did my best to compare the men in that photo to those in a March/April 44 group photo with some men identified by name. I did not find a match to anyone. Attached you will find a photo of 1LT Weinstein. It is not the same officer in front of the Crater



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



1 LT Herbert Weinstein

formation. I conferred with a living former HQ Battery member and we agreed that my image was of Weinstein. He was known for the way rakish he wore his cap. If you examine his winter uniform closely, you will notice that the pockets on his Class A jacket were very tailored. His artillery branch brasses are not just crossed cannons, but appear to have the numerical designation "460" above them. From everyone I have ever talked to about him, he was well respected. Given a correct location in the Crater, and absent any stronger evidence, I would hold that that unit is one of the other batteries of the 460th PFAB but not HQ Battery. Captain Weinstein returned to civilian life on Long Island. He was not active in 517th reunions after the war. He died in Florida in 2003.

And what of HQ Battery's first commander? Like my father, **Alfred G. Zeibarth** was one of the original 460th

cadre at Toccoa. He helped shape the unit in 1943 and 44. According to a 460th member, Zeibarth was an expert shot with the pistol. He was born in 1910 in Davenport, Iowa. He enlisted in Feb 1941 serving in the 34th Division at Camp Claiborne before going to the 82nd Div. He may have had an earlier enlistment showing up in the Army for the 1930 Census. His assignment between the time he left the 460th in April 1944 and December 1944 is not certain. As of December 1944, he was assigned to the 675th Glider Field Artillery Battalion (GFAB), part of the 11th ABN Div. He served in New Guinea, Leyte, and occupied Japan. Major Ziebarth left the Army from the 675th at Ft. Campbell in June 1949. He died on 30 June 1960 and is buried at Ft. Snelling, MN. Attached as #2 is an image of Captain Ziebarth. He is wearing one of the few expert or sharpshooter badges in the unit. Compare the tailoring in his uniform to 1LT Weinstein's.

The third image is of my father as 1st Sergeant, taken in the same formation as Captain Ziebarth and 1LT Weinstein in the Spring of 1944.

I hope my research sheds a little more light on the 460th. Thanks for all the hard work with Mail Call!

Thomas F. Finley III
LTC (Ret.)
(son of **Thomas F. Finley**, 1st Sergeant, HQ Battery, 460th PFAB)



Capt Zebarth



1st Sgt. T. F. Finley Jr



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Frank,

Excellent detective work. I will include this in tonight's MailCall.

PS: Are you saying that you have Morning Reports for the 460th?

Bob Barrett

In my enthusiasm about meeting **Earl Boone**, I forgot to mention that I met **Jim Krause** while I was there. He got there at the end of my visit. He is also the one that was bringing Earl Wendy's Hamburgers.

I guess I was focused on my visit with Earl but enjoyed Jim also and glad that he is also around to visit with Earl when he can.

Blessings,

Anne Justice

Did you see that the model for Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter died?

You hardly ever see the entire painting shown in a print, which is unfortunate, because I'd forgotten that she had "Mein Kampf" under her feet.

[See next page for the story of Rosie the Riveter.]

Book yourselves for NOLA!

Claire Giblin



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Model for Norman Rockwell's 'Rosie the Riveter' dies at 92

By [Elahe Izadi](#) April 22 at 7:32 PM



Mary Doyle Keefe in 2002, posing with the May 29, 1943, cover of the Saturday Evening Post, which featured Norman Rockwell's "Rosie the Riveter." Keefe was the model for Rosie. (Jim Cole/AP)

You know Mary Doyle Keefe, but maybe not by that name. In 1943, the then-19-year-old telephone operator had been called upon to provide a unique kind of service during the war effort: Become the face of dedicated patriotism from the home front.

Norman Rockwell painted Keefe as "Rosie the Riveter," an image that graced an iconic Saturday Evening Post cover and "became a symbol for millions of American women who went to work during World War II," according to the Norman Rockwell Museum.

Keefe, 92, died in Connecticut this week after a brief illness, her family told the Associated Press on Wednesday.

How Keefe's likeness came to be immortalized — and turned into a symbol of female independence — happened rather serendipitously. Rockwell and Keefe were neighbors in Arlington, Vt., and he often asked folks in the community to pose for his work.

During a 2012 interview with the Hartford Courant, Keefe recalled how she returned for a second photo session because Rockwell asked her to model in a blue shirt and loafers. She was paid a total of \$10.

"He liked to paint from photos, so his photographer took pictures of me, just posing me different ways and telling me to look this way or that," Keefe said. "I don't remember the photographer telling me to have any kind of attitude on my face, but I'm 90 and don't remember."

The resulting image — of "Rosie" with a rivet gun on her lap, sandwich in hand and "Mein Kempf" beneath her feet — didn't quite resemble the 19-year-old. Keefe, who told the Courant she had never even seen a rivet gun before, was petite, contrasting with Rosie's large biceps, broad shoulders and large hands.

"Other than the red hair and my face, Norman Rockwell embellished Rosie's body," Keefe told the Courant. "I was much smaller than that and did not know how he was going to make me look like that until I saw the finished painting."

The 1943 oil on canvas painting "Rosie the Riveter" by Norman Rockwell is displayed in Bentonville, Ark. (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art/AP)

Rockwell sent Keefe a letter 24 years after completing the painting, apologizing for bulking her in size



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

“and calling her the most beautiful woman he’d ever seen,” the AP reported. “I did have to make you into a sort of a giant,” he wrote.

Keefe got teased a fair bit for the image, which Rockwell said was inspired by the way Michelangelo painted Isaiah in the Sistine Chapel. But, she told the Courtant in 2002: “It didn’t bother me. I was slim and trim. Just the idea of being able to sit for Norman Rockwell was a nice thing to do.”

A popular song, “Rosie the Riveter,” predated the painting, as did J. Howard Miller’s motivational “We can do it!” poster. But the Rockwell work, which includes a lunch pail emblazoned with the name “Rosie,” received wide distribution via the Saturday Evening Post.

Soon, the work took on a life of its own. The painting was taken across the country to sell war bonds, something Keefe said made her proud.

“I didn’t think much about it, and I didn’t really see myself as some epitome of the modern woman,” she said in 2012. “There was a war on, and you did what you could. And in a small town like Arlington, it was simply a matter of we knew he was a painter and asked a lot of people to come down to pose for his pictures.

“I didn’t really make anything of it and didn’t really see it or realize what would happen to that picture until it came out.”

The painting sold in 2002 for \$4.9 million, which at the time was the highest amount paid at a public auction for a Rockwell, according to the AP. The work is now at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Ark.

In an obituary written by Keefe’s family, the painting is described as “a nationally known icon of American resolve for women assisting in the war effort during World War II.” Keefe, the obituary said, earned “much appreciation and acclaim over the years” for it.

Keefe went on to earn a degree in dental hygiene from Temple University and married Robert Keefe, whom she met during a dental cleaning appointment. The pair had four children, 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Her husband died in 2003, the AP reported.

“Mary will be remembered as a loving, patient, and generous wife, mother and grandmother,” the family’s obituary reads. “Her personal interests included maintaining a daily interest in sporting teams, especially the Red Sox, Celtics, and UConn Women’s Basketball teams, as well as bridge, golf, cooking, and baking for her family and friends, and watching with great delight as her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren grew and prospered.”



The 1943 oil on canvas painting “Rosie the Riveter” by Norman Rockwell is displayed in Bentonville, Ark. (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art/AP)



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Mary Doyle Keefe, fondly known to many as "Rosie the Riveter," of Simsbury, passed away peacefully on April 21, 2015. She was 92. She lived for the last eight years at The McLean Village Community. Mrs. Keefe was predeceased by her husband of 55 years, Robert J. Keefe, Sr.; parents, Sarah and John Doyle of Arlington, Vermont; brother, Edward Doyle; and sister, Frances Doyle Mooney.

Born in Bennington, Vermont, Mary was a proud resident of Arlington, Vermont. After graduating from Arlington High School, she attended Temple University, graduating with a dental hygiene degree. Mary was a dental hygienist in Bennington when she met Robert J. Keefe, whom she married in June 1949. They established themselves in Whitman, Massachusetts and later, Nashua, New Hampshire, raising their four children and making lifelong friends in both communities. Mary and Bob were founding members of a Whitman Supper Club, a storied club that lasted for more than 40 years.

As a young woman, while working as a telephone operator out of her mother's home in Arlington, Mary was asked by West Arlington resident and artist Norman Rockwell to model for a painting as a hard-working airplane riveter, with a riveting gun in her lap and one foot firmly on a copy of *Mein Kampf*. She received \$10.00 in compensation and much appreciation and acclaim over the years. The work appeared on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* on May 29, 1943, and "Rosie the Riveter" soon became a nationally known icon of American resolve for women assisting in the war effort during World War II.

Mary will be remembered as a loving, patient, and generous wife, mother, and grandmother. Her personal interests included maintaining a daily interest in sporting teams, especially the Red Sox, Celtics, and UConn Women's Basketball teams, as well as bridge, golf, cooking, and baking for her family and friends, and watching with great delight as her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren grew and prospered.



Michelangelo's image of the prophet Isaiah from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

In Memorium – Ann Pugh

I am sorry to send this e mail. Ann Pugh died on Sat April 18 in Alexandria VA. She had a very long and happy life. My brother and sister in law were here with me and we had many wonderful discussions of her rather remarkable life before her death. She had the capacity to thank all her caregivers before her death for their kindness and patience. Her mind was sharp up until 36 hours before her death.

While most knew of my father's great achievements, some might not have know that she was a pioneer in early television where she was both on screen live talent as well as producer and managed all her show's advertising for a 6 day a week live show on NBC. She also acted in NY, taught college after WWII, wrote industrial shows and plays and was active in politics. She had a masters from University of Southern California and recalls celebrating VJ Day at the beach.

In her materials there are three handwritten letters from Ronald Reagan from 1965-1970 thanking her for driving her around Dallas and persuading him to fly on a plane for the first time. Regardless of what you think of Reagan she was right in recognizing that he had greater potential than doing NBC or GE TV narration and soap commercials.

During WWII she wore a uniform as a volunteer for V12 soldiers at Texas Christian University picking up aluminum, paper, glass, rubber and other reusable materials. She also produced shows for soldiers. Later in the 1960s she recycled items from our house long before it was fashionable. We used to tease her that she wasted more fuel driving the materials in a gas guzzling car to the industrial center some 15 miles from our house than it saved society. But she knew it was right and did it weekly despite our teasing. In her 90s she washed out food baggies after storing food. No doubt that special Baggie bacteria kept her alive 92 years.

Her plays were published and one was produced as recently as 2011. Two of her children's books are still used in schools in Colorado and Texas.

She was proudest of being a mother of three, a very happy wife of a man who was her best friend for almost 49 years and grandmother of 6, great grandmother of 9.

She was in her last TV commercial for WRC in Washington DC in 2005 where she memorized her lines and got the commercial done in only 3 takes. The commercial camera team and producer were surprised at her skill at age 82. She just turned to me and winked. After doing a 60 minute live show six days a week for 6 years a commercial about Medicare was a breeze.

Her ashes will be placed with my father's ashes at the church courtyard where they were married in Ft Worth, Texas. A small service will be held on June 20th there.

My mother appreciated your friendship.

I thank you also. Please let me know if you will be in the Washington DC area. Please note this is my correct e mail address. Please remove my mindspring e mail from your records.

Thanks,
Theresa Pugh





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

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