



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2302

December 13, 2015

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

Tec/4 Leo P. Dean – Regimental HQ Co.



It is with great sadness that I report that **Leo Dean**, Reg. HQ, has made his final jump.

Many of you might have followed his progress, as he moved from the hospital in France (after breaking his leg in August) to the hospital in Albany, to rehab, to Renee's home and eventually back to his own home in recent weeks. He resumed his routine and was driving and working, and living alone. He wasn't working quite as much as he used to, but he was going in to the office regularly.

He never said he was working; he would actually always correct me. He always called it "going to the office." He always liked going to the office, whether during the week with colleagues or on the weekends when it was quiet.

And he died at the office, with his boots on.

He was a successful business man in the financial services industry, a devoted husband to Helen, and friend to many. He was justifiably and fiercely proud of his service with the 517th, and enjoyed himself so much at our New Orleans reunion in July. I'll never forget him with all of the celebrants on Bourbon Street, the night that the Supreme Court decision in support of gay marriage was announced. Leo made lots of friends everywhere he went!

And so it was during our trips to France. He was celebrated, remembered, and sought out. He was genial and generous with his time, telling stories and posing for pictures whenever asked.

Just this past week, Renee - like a daughter to him - and I had started planning his return to France. He was so excited and looking forward to it. He's fought back from so many injuries, and





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

had kicked all of the challenges associated with the broken leg - we were sure he could do it.

Renee is planning the funeral and although the obituary isn't posted yet, I am told that it will be at Hans Funeral Home in Albany. The viewing will be 4-7 PM Wednesday; the funeral at 9AM on Thursday.

Bob, when the official obituary and arrangements are published, could you please run it? Thanks.

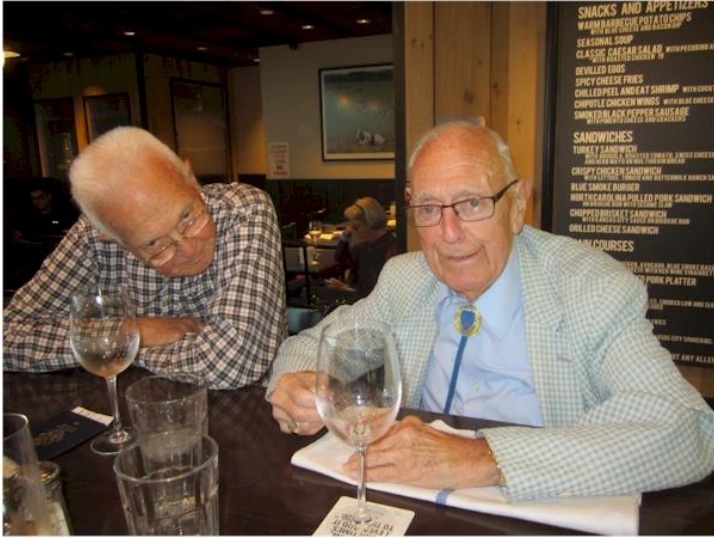
Let's raise a glass to Leo and celebrate a life fully lived. Airborne! All the way!

Claire Giblin



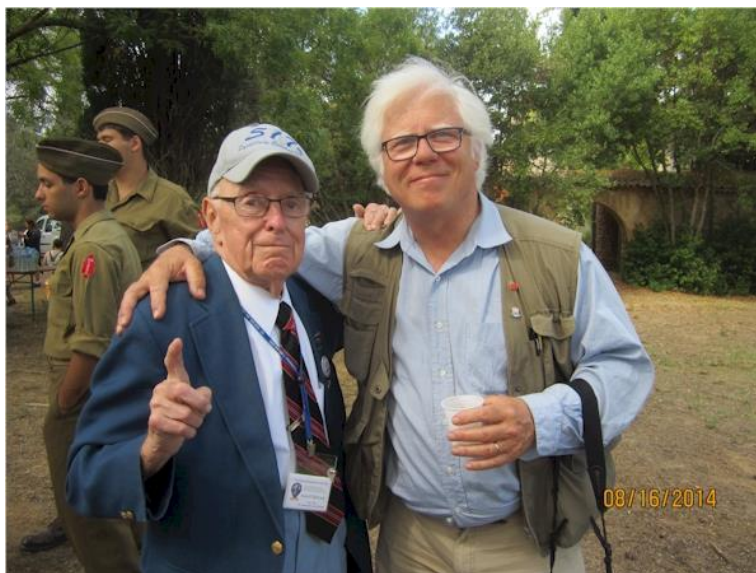


517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

We pray that the many happy memories of Leo's life with all of us will, with time, overcome the sadness and pain that have accompanied us in these days.

For his family, his 517th family, his friends in USA but also here in France, although it's difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, may looking back in memory help comfort tomorrow.

A glass of Rosé Leo ? Yes, the first one today.....

We are sure to continue to say it with Leo in our mind.

Wishing him God's peace

Included 2 pictures took in Ste Roseline and the others at Rhone Cemetery in 2014. Leo loved those of Ste Roseline.

Patricia and Roland Orengo





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

MailCall News

Hi Ben,

My name is Kylee Johnson, and I stumbled across your webpage the other day when doing some research on my Grandfather, **Raymond Johnson** who was a PFC in the HQ company of the 1st battalion, 517th. Unfortunately, I don't have any stories to share, but I was wondering if you or any of the guys have any information about him? Most of the stories on your page looked a little older (most are from 2001), but its never too late to try right? I never got the chance to truly get to know him and would love any information on him. Anyways, thanks for your time, and sorry for any inconvenience.

best,

Kylee Johnson

Hi Kylee,

On a quick look, I don't see a lot. But I do see **PFC Raymond Johnson** on the December 1944 roster. And it looks like he was one of the signers of the HQ/1 "short snorter"

From: <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/2069.pdf>



I'll dig around this weekend and let you know if I find any more.

Bob Barrett



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

RE: Mel Trenary story

I am an avid reader of the weekly mail call going on about 10+ years now. I still have my dad **Mike Sura's** 3rd Battalion H Company stories to marry with what I read each week. Reading Mel's account as his story, I can't help paralleling my father's account to me as I remember. The details that Mel talks to can fill in the broad spectrum of facts my father gave to me so many years ago. The training, downtime, transportation, battles, hospitals, the close relationships with guys like **Seeberger** and **Monkhouse** and don't forget the Bulge.

We were fishing in Canada on Memorial Day weekend in the late 60's. It started to snow and we were not dressed for it on a far from camp portage. My uncle who was with Patton said it is not that bad. My cousin and I endured but finally won out going to shore and getting a fire going. May dad Mike and his brother laughed at us and said, "Not sure you two would survive the Bulge as this one day snow was a picnic in comparison."

Dad did meet his brother Joe at the front sometime before succumbing to his wounds in the mine field near Bergstein, Germany. He and **Dick Huggler** (3rd Platoon, 2nd squad) were taken off the field on Feb. 6th 1945. The war was over when they recovered enough to come back to what was left of the outfit. Dick was still alive (living in Alpina, MI) when my wife and I attended the Atlanta Reunion, but has since passed away.

I think of that day and always remember what our troops endured fighting to turn back the Bulge; every time I have to trek in one of our Midwest snowstorms.

Merry Christmas and bless all who served in the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Dennis Sura

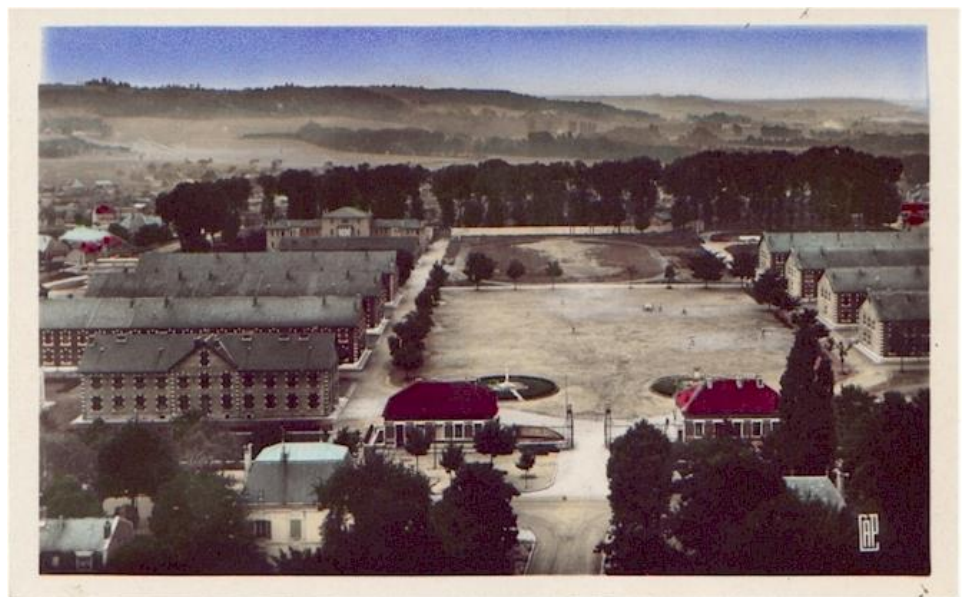
517th History 1994

Soissons, France

Home to the 517th from Dec 9 to
Dec 21, 1944

(Post Card from
Boom Boom Alicki)

See Paratrooper's Odyssey:
[Soissons](#)





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

1944 - Dec 14 - [Hamburg Iowa Reporter - Dick Spencer's account of Howard Hensleigh in Les Arc](#)



From the Daily Iowan, the publication of the students of journalism of the University of Iowa, we copy the following letter regarding Lt. Howard Hensleigh, formerly of this place:

From "Somewhere in France" comes a letter from Lt. Dick Spencer, 1943 graduate of the University of Iowa, member of the Sigma Delta Chi, national journalism fraternity, and a former Union Board member.

"One of our 'U. S. I. Four Horsemen' picked up a Bronze Star," he writes—Lt. Howard E. Hensleigh, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert D. Hensleigh, 117 Richards street. At the outbreak of the war Lt. Hensleigh was studying law at the University of Iowa. Now he is a paratrooper in France. Lt. Spencer's letter is reprinted below:

"This is a story about one of the 'local' boys; one of the Hawkeyes who lives in Iowa City. Just a few years back you might have known him as just plain Howard Hensleigh . . . a nice quiet guy who was taking pre-law there on the campus.

"Now he's First Lieutenant Howard Hensleigh, after his recent battlefield promotion, and he is holding down the job of battalion intelligence officer for our parachute outfit. And in the journals of the militiae, you will find after his name these words

"For heroic achievement in action against the enemy at Les Arcs, France, on 17 August, 1944" . . . the award of the Bronze Star medal.

"Probably the next time you see him, the only way you might guess this would be through recognizing the funny little ribbon over his left pocket; or he might be in civilian clothes, and you would never know . . . Howard isn't much of a talker about what he has seen and done.

"So I'm sending this story back to the 'Old Home Town Paper'; just one of the little incidents that Howard worked himself into . . . and out of . . . and brought about his recent citation from the president.

"By now it's no military secret that the air corps dropped us 28 miles from our planned drop one; and, as intelligence officer, Lt. Hensleigh made the necessary contacts with the French people and the French underground forces to find our position on the map and get the band of troopers moving towards our objective. Most of the way there, Lt. Hensleigh took up the position of the lead scout.

"Then there was the big night attack on Les Arcs . . . a story in itself, of chasing Jerries through grape vineyards and ravines in the black of night . . . and finally losing contact with the fleeing enemy.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

"Dawn found us in positions just outside of the town, wondering 'if' and 'how many' as we studied the town through field glasses.

"Hensleigh led the patrol to find out. It consisted of one squad, picked at random from a company, and they moved aggressively right into the town . . . covering each other from opposite sides of the street.

"A group of excited French people met them in one doorway; with excited explosions of words and gestures, from which the patrol picked up three words . . . 'Germans . . . Americans prisoners!'

"They surrounded the house the French people had indicated, and Lt. Hensleigh and a few of the men stormed it.

"Doors flew open, paratroopers appeared from everywhere, and the German guards stood terrified as they faced the 'Butchers with Big Pockets.' Needless to say, the fourteen American prisoners sent up a word of thanks to old Geronimo when they saw them . . . they were all from one of the infantry divisions that had made the beach landing, and gone ahead on a spearhead patrol.

"Hensleigh distributed the Jerry weapons to the Yanks, and they started out of the building. Again they were met by a group of excited natives who, through an effervescence of chatter and sign language, told them that a German patrol was coming down the street.

"Howard signalled to the men to split formation and take cover behind the walls on both sides of the street, and waited . . . listening to the clomp of approaching hob-nailed boots on the cobblestones.

"When the 'supermen' were well within the trap set by the troopers, Hensleigh gave the signal. In a flash the walls were lined with grease-paint smeared faces . . . all set well behind the business end of tommyguns, rifles and carbines, itching to issue out those 'one way tickets to Valhalla'.

"There was a wild clatter of long rifles and square helmets hitting the ground . . . and shouts of 'Kamerad!' And so the patrol returned, leading eight Jerries back and fourteen American boys to be returned to their units.

"That's part of the story behind that bit of bright-colored ribbon you might see over Lt. Hensleigh's pocket, and much more than he would ever tell you. Because if you know him, you know he doesn't talk much about the things he's done. And if you meet him on the campus after the war, he'll just be some nice, quiet guy who is studying law on the campus'?"



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

Website
Send MailCall news to
MailCall Archives
2015 Roster (updated!)
Thunderbolt Archives

www.517prct.org
MailCall@517prct.org
www.517prct.org/archives
www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
www.517prct.org/archives

