



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2306

January 10, 2016

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

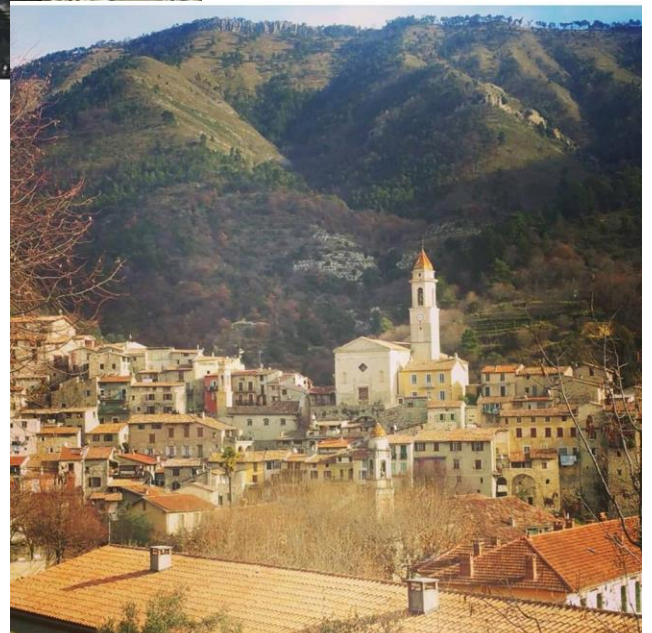
MailCall News

Facebook pictures from **Amy Phillips**, granddaughter of **Gary L. Davis**, F Company



A little slice of heaven here on earth in the south of France — in Nice, France.

♥ This tiny village of Luceram in the south of France. This is one of the villages my Papa's 517th Airborne division liberated in WWII.





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This little house served as my Papa's head quarters during WWII.



All throughout the villages are plaques honoring the men in my Papa's division who fought to free the people of France alongside the French resistance.

The "1098" is a little hill of great importance. A stronghold of the Germans that the 517th division eventually defeated. My Papa lost his best friends here and his ashes are now here as they should be.





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German pillbox roof with shrapnel still in tact on the 1098 hill.



Remnants of World War II



And this is when I started to cry. I reached the top of the hill and saw this. I didn't realize that a plaque dedicated to my Papa was here.



So many tears. I could feel him everywhere. So proud.



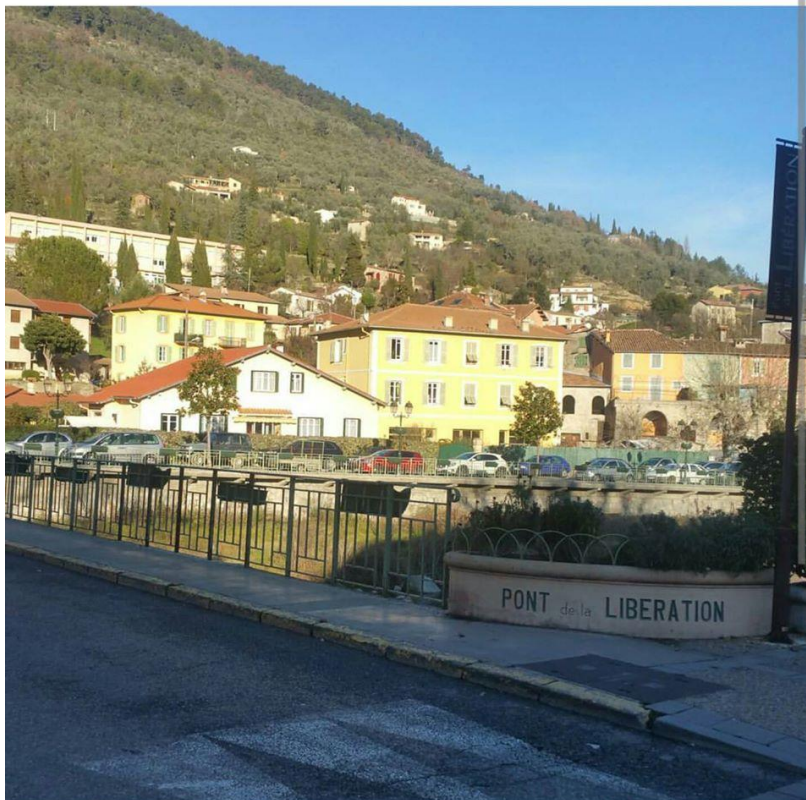
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A pillbox where the Germans hid. The barbed wire, shrapnel, and everything still there.



My Papa did this pose on this same rock. ❤️

Another town liberated by the 517th. Papa posed here too.



Point of Liberation bridge in Sospel, France



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Honoring the 517th division in Sospel.

The beautiful town of Sospel.



Sospel Chapel



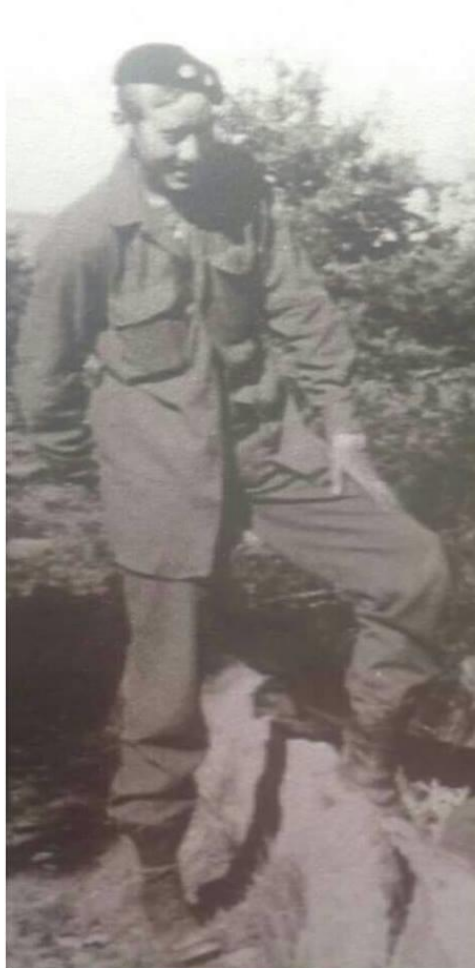
The Sospel Chapel. I didn't expect such a majestic place in such a small town.



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The man who made this amazing day possible. #family ♥ - with **Jean Michel Soldi**



Me & Papa

Standing where he stood in WWII — with **Jeanne Davis** and **Jean Michel Soldi** in Sospel, France..



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I really liked the Happy New Year from **Patricia et Roland Orengo!!** If they do not mind I'd like to share this.

It's a good reminder for myself.

Katherine Wheeler

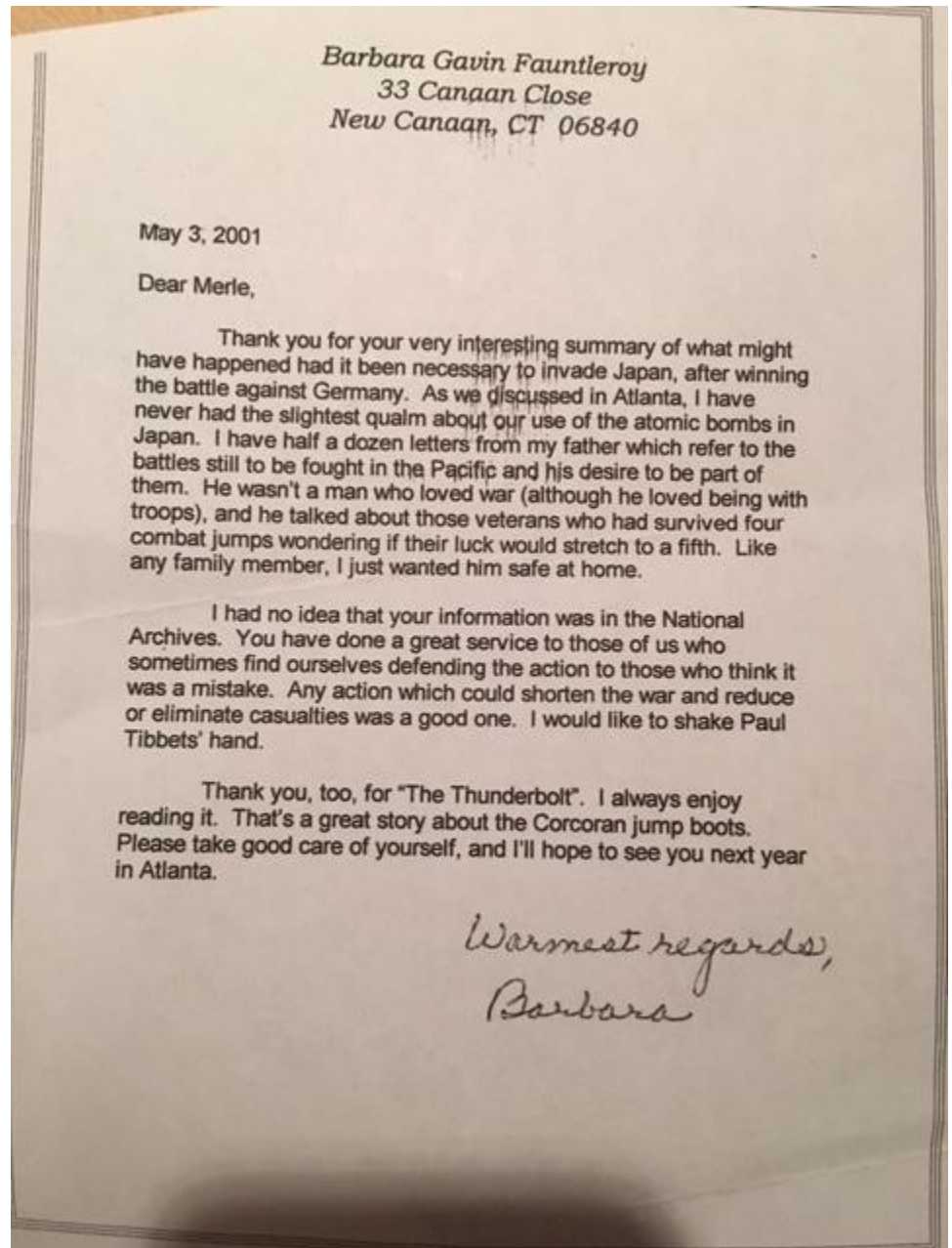
The enclosed letter I received over fourteen years ago was from **General Jim Gavin's** daughter. I met her at one of Don Lassen's Airborne Award ceremonies. I was editor of the Thunderbolt at that time and would occasionally submit material for his paper "The Static Line". My only cost to attend his reunion was airfare.

Barbara was defending and supporting our right to use the atomic bombs to bring World War II to an earlier conclusion. I told her I also had argued at home that we were justified in doing so and I produced some support for reaching that conclusion. She asked if I would send her a copy of what I used to support my argument. I sent her a copy of the 16 page document I had used for one the Thunderbolt issues produced during the period of my Presidency 1999-2001. Do you have copies of all our earlier Thunderbolts? I was editor and publisher up until 2004. I used to keep extra copies of all issues since they cost us less than fifty cents each. Then they went with my downsizing which started in 2011.

Happy New Year

Merle McMorrow

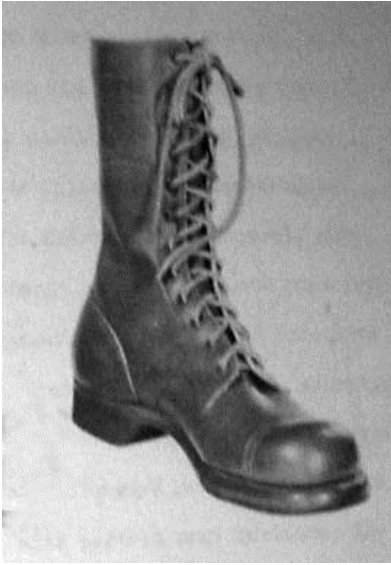
Hey Merle – Tell us about the Corcoran jump boot story. – BB





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From: http://olive-drab.com/od_soldiers_clothing_combat_ww2_jumpboots.php



Paratroopers Jump Boots

The development of parachute units was started by the United States Army in 1940, part of the general expansion beginning at that time. Every item of clothing and equipment was scrutinized for its suitability for the special needs of the airborne troopers.

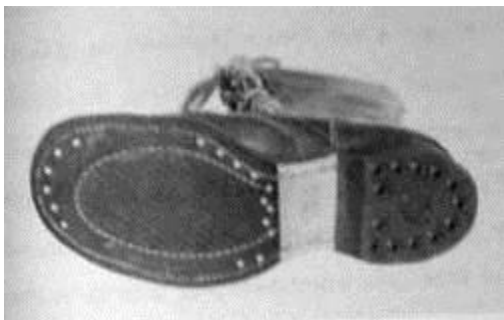
World War II Jump Boots for Paratroop Infantry (Photographed at the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot during WW II).

Airborne Units Paratroopers Jump Boots

When parachutists of the U.S. Army airborne units were being equipped in 1940, the first item to be considered was special footgear, part of the

development of clothing and equipment for parachute units, covered further on [this Olive-Drab.com page](http://thisOlive-Drab.com/page). [Photo to the left shows paratrooper Raymond O. Barkuy, wearing the M-1942 uniform with jump boots, 31 January 1944.]

Army jump boot design started by combining features from existing use by others, including German parachutists, units who started earlier than the U.S. and had already participated in combat in Europe. The design was partly derived from the ordinary high-top boot (shoe), worn throughout the Army and the M1928 mounted boot. The equipment and experience of U.S. Forest Service "smoke jumpers" were studied. The Marine Corps also had parachute units and experiments had shown the need for special footwear after broken bones were suffered. In October 1940 the first design was recommended by the Infantry Board and put into procurement after overcoming bureaucratic objections. The first design was like a shoe, with special braces, but was not a success, however, and a second shoe-based design also failed tests showing that many of the special features of braces and cushioning added little to the comfort and safety of the boot/shoe.



In August of 1942 the "Boots, Jumper, Parachute" was standardized, a tall laced boot with 11 to 13 pairs of lacing eyes depending on the foot size. It was a clean design that dropped straps and other reinforcements of earlier designs and had many points strengthened to take the punishing wear of jumping. The heel and sole were rubber with the leading edge of the heel slanted to avoid a snag point for lines or to catch on the lip of the aircraft door. Often called "Corcorans" after their first contractor,



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they were made by several different companies for both government and private sales. [Corcoran's Company of Stoughton, MA](#) continues to make the boot style more than 60 years later.

The tongue, under the laces, is in the form of a gusset and forms part of the uppers. The jump boots also had a capped "bubble" toe, and diagonal stitching across the instep (the external vestige of a webbing reinforcement strap on the inside). They were originally issued with standard brown laces but those were replaced by leather thongs, measuring 70 inches in length. Jump boots were available in more than 110 different sizes.

The boots were very popular with the Airborne units, providing a strong, military look that was distinctively different from boots worn by other units, symbols of the paratrooper's elite status. The boots did as much for paratrooper morale as they did for their feet. The Airborne troops tucked their trousers into their boot tops to show the maximum boot, more for appearance than for any other reason. These boots remained officially in service until the paratrooper uniforms and boots were merged with other Infantry uniforms in late 1944 (See the Olive-Drab page on the "[Boots, Service, Combat M-1943](#)").

As the Army tried to get all soldiers into double buckle boots, the jump boots spread beyond Airborne, to units such as Rangers, who were eager to adopt the sharp look. Airborne units resisted giving up their distinctive boots, only slowly accepting the phase in of newer standard boots. When the [Boots, Service, Combat, Russet M1948](#) came into widespread use during and after the Korean War -- a boot with very similar styling to the Boots, Jumper, Parachute -- gradually the specialized Airborne boots disappeared.



From: http://olive-drab.com/od_soldiers_clothing_combat_ww2_jumpboots.php



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Hello dear friends of America;

This mail to tell you that the plaque dedicated to **Colonel BOYLE** and **Major FRASER** is on a monument bilt in Melines - near Soy Hotton, not very far from the 517th monument at the cross road " Quatre Bras" - about 1 mile - on the territory of Hotton but near Soy. **Colonel Bruce Chestnut** came especially to choose the stones to built this monument dedicated in 1992. **Colonel Fraser** and **Sheila Boyle** + about 20 american veterans took part in this ceremony. The monument of Melines was built by Florent Lambert, he died a few years ago. Best wishes for the New Year and Love from Trois-Ponts.

Irma and Arnold Targnion

Dear Friends,

About the question on the monument (2305 mail call), it is situated in the hamlet of Mélines - MELINES (Between Soy and Hotton).

I profite of this message to sending you my Best Wishes for 2016. This new year will gave you much joy, happiness and a good health !

Very Sincerely,

Eddy Monfort
Manhay – Belgium

I built a medal box for my Grandfather **Raymond Doane** 596th a few years ago. It took about 8 months to get it the way i wanted it and it wasn't cheap. I told my nephew, "Kyle, I wish I could have just ordered a print or a poster at this point." Not many people build a shadowbox for someone who passed away twenty years earlier, and that realization was the start of Medal Graphics. In the end the poster turned into a custom designed fine art Giclee canvas print. We are letting everyone know we are open for business at Medal Graphics. The web site is www.medalgraphics.com . We also hope that all you guys like us on face book too at Medal Graphics. We are building e commerce into the web site and hope to have it finished soon for all out of town friends and orders. In the meantime feel free to email us at the web site or call the studio during regular business hours.



Thanks Gang
Johnny Privott



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Dear friends of the 517th PRCT,

This "Boyle=Fraser plaque" is part of a WWII monument located in the small hamlet of Melines, less than a kilometer from the Quatre Bras crossroad (Soy-Hotton area). This monument was erected by the local historian Florent Lambert.

In the center of the monument you see the portrait of Corporal John Shields, C Company of the 23rd Arm. Eng. Bn. In the early morning of December 21, he was part of a patrol probing for the German advances. After leaving the small hamlet towards the south, the patrol hit the spear tip of Kampfgruppe Bayer, led by Major Gerhardt Tebbe. Corporal Shields was one of the victims of this confrontation, leaving his body in the ditch along the road still with grenade in his hand. Shields body was only recovered in 1948 by Florent Lambert who was travelling along the road with his father. Unlike every other day he stopped their horse drawn cart to investigate the glim he saw along the road.

The pillar standing in front of the monument has a plaque honoring the sacrifice of the 290th Infantry Regiment of the 75th Infantry Division. This infantry regiment was rushed into combat, arriving in the Hotton-Erezée area on December 24th. That same night most of its companies travelled through the line of the 517th PRCT between Soy-Hotton, to engage the enemy to the south. On Christmas Eve and Day, they would undertake several assaults on fortified German positions. Needless to say their sacrifice was high.

We shall never forget.

Kind regards,

Dieter Laes,
Belgium





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Happy and blessed 2016 to the men of the 517th and their families. A special thank you to you and Joanne for everything you do for the 517th carrying on your Dad's mission of preserving the connections and history of the unit.

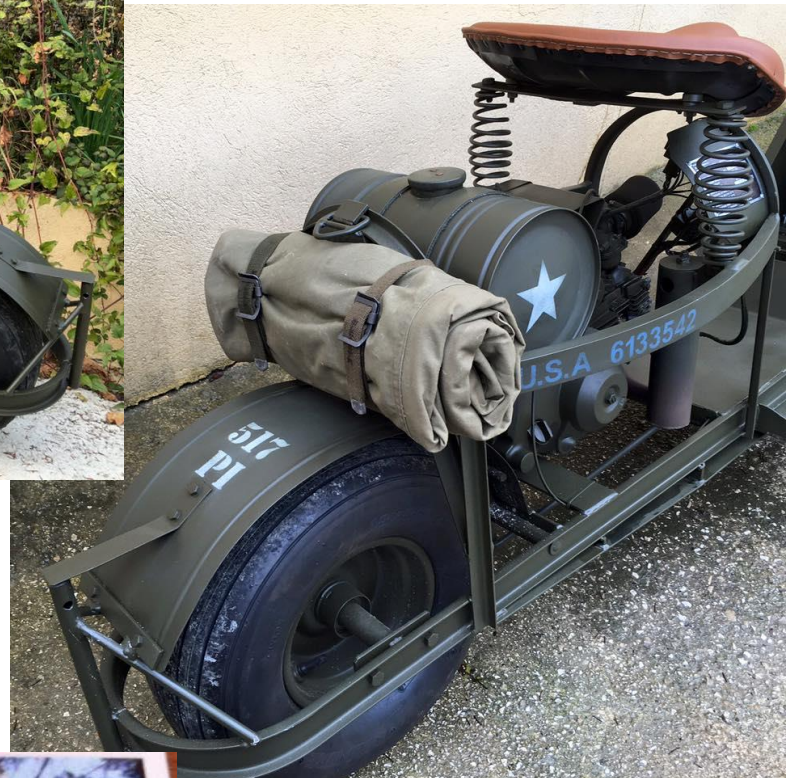
Enjoyed the piece on the baseball team and the story of the fake minister. Those paratroopers!

Pat Seitz



517th motorcycle

Posted by "Sam MrSammos" on Facebook:



A 517th restored jeep and **Leo Dean**, also from Mr Sammos kast summer



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Battle of the Bulge 1944-1945



Killed German soldier in Stavelot, Belgium, 2 Jan 1945



A German Panther tank from the 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich lies on its side in Manhay, Belgium.

Photos from: <https://www.facebook.com/World-War-II-1584273495176153>



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An American soldier examines an abandoned PzKpfw V Panther tank near the village of Manhay
December 28 1944



German-held positions over the Amblève river in Stavelot, as seen from the front lines.
December 30, 1944.



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Manhay Crossroads



Marlene Dietrich, on the edge of the Ardennes Forest in Belgium, December, 1944



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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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