



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2330

Aug 7, 2016

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

Operation Dragoon and Belgium 2016

It's hard to believe, but it is August and we are packing again. My father, **Kaare Allan Johnson**, 596, and I will be leaving for France this weekend, and I am thrilled to say that we'll be visiting Belgium for the first time ever! I cannot wait to see **Irma** and **Arnold Targnion**, and **Maria Gaspar**, **Eddy Montfort**, **Eddy Lamberty** and so many other good friends to the unit. AND we'll be accompanied by **Patou** and **Roland Orengo** on that trip! It is very exciting and we are looking forward to the visit.

As you know, my father missed the Bulge due to an injury on 14 September, rejoining the outfit at Bergstein. Nonetheless, he's always wanted to go to pay his respects and see the many important sites there.

Upon returning to Sospel, we will be joined by first-time visitor **Robert Webber**, HQ Mortar Platoon, and his son Bruce. They are looking forward to exploring the hills near Sospel, where the 517 saw so much action.

Once again, we will return to the events in the Var, where longtime friends to the outfit await: **Eric Renoux** and his wife Laurence, along with **David Fouan** and many other local organizers. **Alison Libersa** is still the cemetery associate at the Rhone, and she will be welcoming new superintendent Dwight "Andy" Anderson to our beautiful Rhone Cemetery. We'll be at events in La Motte, Le Muy, Les Arcs, Trans-en-Provence and Draguinan, that I know of.

This is our tenth visit, I think, for August events since we first went in 2004, and our first without constant companion **Leo Dean**. I had so hoped that he'd recover to return.

I will try to update Mail Call, and stay in contact as much as possible. If you happen to raise a glass in the next couple of weeks, do join us in a toast to those not with us, and reach out to call those who are.

All the best -

Claire Giblin



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**Sur les traces de la
3^o Division US**



Tracé historique passant sur
les communes de Vauvenargues,
Saint Marc Jaumegarde,
Venelles, Aix-en-Provence



Contact: 06.51.89.20.44

Informations et inscriptions : www.facebook.com/fortyfourmemories/



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To the families of the 517th, that's what we are doing in Southern France...

This photo was taken for the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Sospel. (2014)

Loïc Jankowiak



MailCall News

I was so sorry to hear the news that **Hunter McDonald** passed. Hunter was a wonderful man. My thoughts are with his wonderful wife Emme and their daughters.

Claire and Rob did the real work at the St. Louis reunion of getting all the soldiers' stories. How awesome it is to have those CD's.

Darrell and Hunter are having a good time together now. I miss them both.

Chris Lindner



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I am trying to get in touch with someone that might have information on my late Grandmother's first husband. His name was **John C Casselman** and was from Clayton NY. He was killed in action on December 3, 1945 in Belgium. He was a first Lt. with the 517th paratrooper combat team. He was with the F Company 13th airborne division.

Thank you for your help, Megan Harshbarger

Hi Megan,

I did a little research last December for a Belgian friend who has adopted Casselman's grave in the Henri-Chapelle American cemetery in Belgium. I didn't find much, but did find one reference about Casselman's Bronze Star award:

<http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/2301.pdf>

Bob Barrett
MailCall@517prct.org

Mike Wells and I had a mini 517th reunion yesterday on Monday August 1, 2016. We went to dinner with our wives and had a great time

see attached picture

Lory Curtis, son of **H.L. Bud Curtis**, HQ, 1st Bn





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This is my uncle **Thomas L Rea**, 517th PRCT driving Wally Berry. Anyone know who he was?

Tom Rea

To
Seyt Tom Rea
Thanks for the buggy ride
Best wishes
Wally Berry



I'm guessing that the passenger must be actor **Wallace (Wally) Beery**.

From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallace_Beery

Wallace Fitzgerald Beery (April 1, 1885 – April 15, 1949) was an American film actor.^[1] He is best known for his portrayal of Bill in [Min and Bill](#) opposite [Marie Dressler](#), as [Long John Silver](#) in [Treasure Island](#), as [Pancho Villa](#) in [Viva Villa!](#), and his titular role in [The Champ](#), for which he won the [Academy Award for Best Actor](#).

Beery appeared in some 250 movies during a 36-year career. His contract with [MGM](#) stipulated in 1932 that he be paid \$1 more than any other contract player at the studio, making him the highest paid actor in the world.

His first wife was Gloria Swanson.

Jackie Cooper, Edward Brophy, and Wallace Beery in *The Champ* (1931) -->





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My step grandmother Betty Ross forwarded this article from the “Aberdeen World” from June to my father. It has just now reached me and I wanted to share it with the rest of the 517th family. The cover photo is of my grandfather **Norman Lindsey Ross Jr.** with I Company 3rd Battalion shaking hands with the local high school football coach. The article is meant show how our teachers and coaches are providing important life lessons to our young generation from those that sacrificed so much for us all. Enjoy!

<http://thedailyworld.com/news/local/history-laden-hyaks-mail-call-world-war-ii-vets>

Airborne! All the Way!

Scott Ross

Posted June 15, 2016 - 1:30am

History-laden Hyaks ‘mail call’ for World War II Vets

By **ANGLEO BRUSCAS**

Grays Harbor Newspaper Group

The last day of school proved to be a history lesson in real life experience for members of the returning Hyak football and girls basketball teams last week.

On Thursday, led by football coach Todd Bridge and basketball coach Larry Moore, the junior Hyaks paid a visit to five survivors of World War II at the Brookdale senior assisted living community. The students, sporting balloons, flowers, cards, letters and decorated envelopes, then presented “mail call” to the veterans.

The veterans included Correen “Corky” Peterson, who was an Air Force nurse during World War II, the Korean War, and then the Vietnam War; Arnold Samuels, who returned to Nazi Germany for the U.S. Army to hunt down war criminals after his family had been forced to flee Hitler because they were Jewish; Norm Ross, a paratrooper who took part in the Battle of the Bulge; Woody Howard, who served in occupied France; Jim Degestien, and Tim Hey.

Bridge said while teaching his American history class about World War II, he realized that “in two weeks time we could never possibly learn it all.”

They watched a video on Netflix called “Honor Flight,” which describes the annual program to fly World War II vets back to Washington, D.C., to visit the World War II National Monument, Arlington National Cemetery and other national landmarks.

“I was so moved by it, that I showed it to my students,” Bridge explained of the inspiration behind the tribute locally.

Samuels last year was on the Honor Flight, accompanied by William Sisco of the North Beach Veterans of Foreign War as his guardian, and both were part of the ceremony on Thursday.



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“You can study the Bataan death march, and you can study Iwo Jima, and you can study the Battle of the Bulge, but you don’t hear from the people that were there, and you don’t see the human side of it,” Bridge said.

So he got his junior students together to plan a visit to the local veterans.

“They over-exceeded what I was hoping for,” Bridge said. “This is a two-part project that gives honor to you folks who stopped their lives, some at the same age of the people here with you, and then you went out and took on the world’s baddest people on this planet.”

When that generation returned from the war, “you built America great,” he added to a round of applause.

The students then individually helped the veterans open their envelopes and thanked them each for their service to the country.

Bridge said the visit was set up with the help of Becky Fruh, whose children attend North Beach, and who works as a nurse at Brookdale.

“She told me that they had five World War II veterans there, so I just got this spur-of-the-moment idea,” Bridge said. “And this was their final project.”



(Angelo Bruscas/North Coast News) Coach and North Beach history teacher Todd Bridge, left, shakes the hand of World War II veteran Norm Ross.



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RE: 517th **William Mackenzie**

Hi. My Grandfather was with the 517th , however I'm not sure how early. He joined the Army in 1939, and moved around a bit. I would like to see if anyone has any stories or information about him. He never talked about it much. I still have a P38 that he brought back. His name was **William "Bill" Mackenzie**. I appreciate your time and any info anyone may know.

Thank you,
James Graham

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:

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Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

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