



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2422

October 6, 2019

*517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460<sup>th</sup> Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596<sup>th</sup> Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

### MailCall News

VETERANS · 26 septembre 2019  
Hoyt KELLEY, 517th parachute infantry regiment, 1st Battalion, Hq Company

Hoyt KELLEY came back in Southern France in 2013, at this occasion we recommend the mayor of Les Arcs to award him as a honnorate member of the town. It was also for us the opportunity to drive him where he jumped and recording his war experience : « I was in the class of 1941 so just graduating from high school and not old enough to go in the army when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. I remember well the day that seventh of December as we were rehearsing for a pageant at the Stake Tabernacle in Logan, Utah. Someone came and told us that the Japs had bombed Pearl Harbor, and I remember asking someone where Pearl Harbor was. I did not recognize the significance of that treacherous act at that time nor the effect it would have on my life

Read the full article about **Hoyt Kelley's** 2013 visit to France at:

<https://www.operation-dragon.com/2019/09/26/hoyt-kelley-1st-battalion-517th-parachute-regiment/>:



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Hoyt Kelley of HQ/1 died not too long after his trip to France, in July 2014.

See Hoyt Kelley WW2 journal at:

[http://www.517prct.org/bios/hoyt\\_kelley/hoyt\\_kelley\\_journal\\_updated\\_04\\_17\\_2013.pdf](http://www.517prct.org/bios/hoyt_kelley/hoyt_kelley_journal_updated_04_17_2013.pdf)



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Good evening,

A bit of information and request. As a current professor of criminal justice at our small state university here in Bemidji, Minnesota and avid amateur WWII historian, I had the opportunity to meet **Thomas D. Hill** [D Company], member of the 517<sup>th</sup> when visiting an assisted living facility. I was so impressed with Tom I decided to mark the 1942 Ford GPW Jeep I rebuilt as belonging to the 517<sup>th</sup>. See attached photo. I have not seen Tom in a year but still send him weekly correspondence. I was informed that he is not in the best of health currently so have not been able to visit him.

My request is wondering if I would be able to get any signatures from remaining members of the 517<sup>th</sup> on the Jeep's glove box? I would be willing to mail the door to any veterans who would be willing to sign it along with return postage. Or perhaps send it to a reunion event? I am hoping that there would be some veterans that would be willing to add their signatures to a true 1942 Ford GPW Jeep.

I look forward to hearing back for you! Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike Herbert

[Northpine92@hotmail.com](mailto:Northpine92@hotmail.com)

218-368-4947

905 Lake Boulevard NE

Bemidji, MN 56601

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Hi Mike,

I will get the word out soon to the vets. But I didn't get a photo attached. I'd love to have that picture for our next newsletter.

Bob Barrett

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Hello Bob,

Thank you for the fast response! Yes, I did forget to attach the photos, another great side effect of getting older. I was in law enforcement for 23 years prior to retiring from that and getting into higher education. I have been at the university for 16 years. I am currently writing a book on the 20 students who were students here during WWII and enlisted and were killed in action.

I purchased the Jeep two years ago from a fellow who lives just outside of Fort Indiantown Gap, PA. His history is that it came from the Camp there and was bought by the local school district. The body and frame are matching serial numbers with a DOD of 05-11-1942.

Do you have memberships that one can register for or a mailing list for the newsletters? I belong to the Military Vehicle Preservation Society and well as our Minnesota preservation group, The Red Bull Military Vehicle Club as well as the Camp





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Toccoa Historical Group. I also teach on honors class at the university about the contributions made by women and minorities during WWII.

If I can be of any assistance (Jeep rides to any local members) or you know of anyone looking for a pen pal I would be honored.

Thanks,  
Mike



Good morning, Bob,

Just checking in to see that you received the photos and wondering how I could sign up to receive the newsletter? I am certainly willing to contribute or become a member of some type. Have a great day.



Thanks,  
Mike



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Mike,

My apologies for the delay. I've been tied up at work and on the road (off the grid) for a vacation in the mountains. I am back now. I will add you to our 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team (PRCT) MailCall newsletter. I try to get out a newsletter every week or two. Nothing formal, and it just passing on news from the troopers, plus family and friends of the 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT. You are welcome to listen in and contribute, Any time you want to unsubscribe, there is a link for that in the weekly mailing.

Thanks for the photos of your jeep and the tribute to the 517<sup>th</sup>. I have to say I am impressed. I did not know much of the history of WWII Jeeps, other than riding in a couple of leftover US Army jeeps in southern France. I had to look up what a "Ford GPW" jeep is. I'll be including that info in the next MailCall newsletter which I hope to get out today.

Bob Barrett

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### Background on the Ford GPW jeep version from Wikipedia:

By July 1941, the War Department desired to standardize and decided to select a single manufacturer to supply them with the next order for 16,000 vehicles. Willys won the contract mostly due to its much more powerful 60 HP engine (the "Go Devil"), which soldiers raved about, and its lower cost and silhouette. The design features in the Bantam and Ford entries which represented an improvement over Willys's design were then incorporated into the Willys car, moving it from an "A" designation to "B", thus the "MB" nomenclature. Most notable was a flat wide hood, adapted from Ford GP.

The jeep, once it entered mass production, introduced several new automotive technologies. Having four-wheel drive for the first time introduced the need for a [transfer case](#), and the use of constant-velocity joints on the driven front wheels and axle, to a regular production car sized vehicle.

By October 1941, it became clear that Willys-Overland could not keep up with production demand, and Ford was contracted to build jeeps as well, using Willys blueprints, drawings, specifications, and patents, including the Willys engine.<sup>[43]</sup> The Ford car was then designated "GPW", with the "W" referring to the "Willys" licensed design and engine. During World War II, Willys produced 363,000 Jeeps and Ford some 280,000. Approximately 51,000 were exported to the U.S.S.R. under the Lend-Lease program.

Ford faithfully built jeeps with functionally interchangeable parts and components, in part facilitated by using components from common sources: frames from Midland Steel, wheels from Kelsey-Hayes, and axles and transfer-cases from Spicer.<sup>[44]</sup> However, there were many minor differences; the most well-known: the Ford chassis had an inverted U-shaped front cross member instead of a tubular bar, and a Ford script letter "F" was stamped onto many small parts. Many body detail differences remained for as long as January 1944, when a composite body, fabricated by American Central, was adopted by both Ford and Willys. It integrated features of both designs.<sup>[34]</sup> Through the chaotic circumstances of war, sometimes peculiar deviations from regular mass production came off the assembly line, that are today prized by collectors — for instance: the earliest Ford GPWs had a Willys design frame, and in late-1943, some GPWs came with an unmodified Willys body; and in 1945 Willys produced some MBs with a deep mud exhaust system, vacuum windshield wipers, and a Jeep CJ-style parking brake.

On 7 April 1942, U.S. patent 2278450 for the WW II jeep, titled "Military vehicle body" was awarded to the U.S. Army, which had applied for it, listing Colonel Byron Q. Jones as the inventor on the patent, though he performed no work on the design of the vehicle.<sup>[46]</sup> Filed on 8 October 1941, stating in the application that "The invention described herein, if patented, may be manufactured and used by or for the Government for governmental purposes without the payment of any royalty thereon",<sup>[47]</sup> the patent relates to a "small car vehicle body having convertible features whereby it is rendered particularly desirable for military purposes" and describes the purpose of the vehicle as being to create the automobile equivalent of a Swiss Army knife:

*"One of the principal objects of the invention is to provide a convertible small car body so arranged that a single vehicle may be interchangeably used as a cargo truck, personnel carrier, emergency ambulance, field beds, radio car, trench mortar unit, mobile anti-aircraft machine gun unit, or for other purposes*



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

**Subject:** Regarding: 19 of the World's Best World War II Museums and Historical Sites

Hey there,

Axel Hernborg from Tripplo.com here.

I have recently put together an epic article about **19 of the World's Best World War II Museums and Historical Sites** which I was thinking would make a great addition to one of your articles.

I saw your piece here <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/1994.htm> and wondered if you might be interested in adding a link to my article?

You can check it out below

<https://www.tripplo.com/articles/the-worlds-best-world-war-ii-museums-and-historical-sites>

Any thoughts?

Best regards,

Axel Hernborg  
[tripplo.com](http://tripplo.com)

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Hi Axel,

It is a good list of WW2 museums. I'm not adding it to our website, which focuses only on the 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team, and their part in the European Theater. But I am including your email and link to your blog in the next 517<sup>th</sup> MailCall newsletter, hopefully going out tonight.

See <http://517prct.org/mailcall/2422.pdf> after I post the newsletter later tonight.

Thanks,

Bob Barrett

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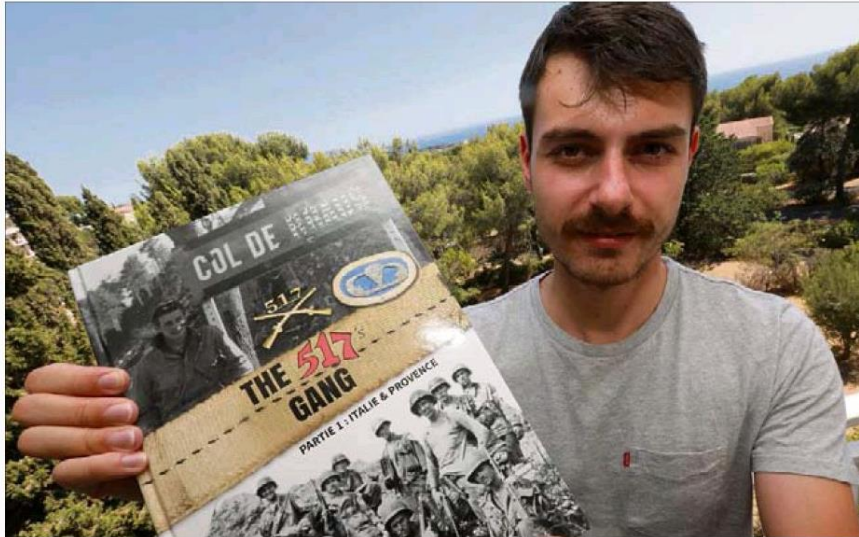
Var-Matin (La Seyne / Sanary)

## UNE AUTRE HISTOIRE DU DÉBARQUEMENT

Loïc Jankowiak, jeune auteur bandolais passionné par la Seconde Guerre mondiale, a collecté pendant dix ans témoignages et documents de vétérans américains du 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat.

15 Aug 2019 +3 more Dossier : Jean-Marc Vincenti jvincenti@nicematin.fr Photos et reproductions : Laurent Martinat et DR

L'opération Dragoon et la bataille de Provence aéroportée racontés à la première personne ! Porté par la passion de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le Bandolais Loïc Jankowiak est passé avec bonheur des reconstitutions historiques en uniforme et commémorations auxquelles il participait quand il était adolescent, à l'écriture, à l'âge de 26 ans, d'un formidable ouvrage. The 517<sup>th</sup> Gang raconte l'épopée du 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team, par ceux qui l'ont vécu. « À



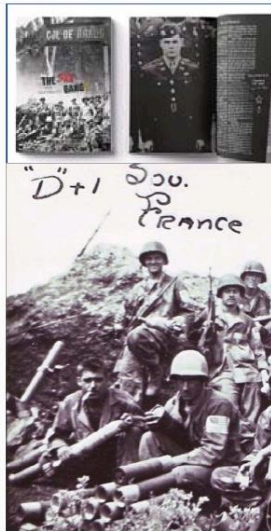
The 517<sup>th</sup> Gang, livre du bandolais Loïc Jankowiak, raconte l'épopée du 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team, par ceux qui ont pris part au débarquement de Provence.

l'inverse du débarquement de Normandie, on parle très peu du débarquement de Provence, la région où j'habite. J'ai voulu évoquer les parachutistes qui y étaient engagés, au sein de la 1st Airborne Task Force, "Para en Provence". Il y en a eu 10 000 et ils sont encore plus méconnus. Je me suis focalisé sur l'histoire d'une seule unité forte d'environ 2 500 parachutistes, dont l'histoire est oubliée, souligne-t-il. J'ai voulu rendre justice à ces hommes qui sont venus et dont le souvenir a été occulté. Plus qu'un devoir de mémoire, c'est un devoir de se remémorer ». Pour bâtir son récit, Loïc Jankowiak a d'abord mené des recherches dans les archives, avant de contacter des familles de vétérans et

Les anciens combattants encore vivants pour collecter leur témoignage. Il les a rencontrés lors de commémorations sur les ex-théâtres d'opérations : dans la région du Muy, de la Motte, des Arcs-sur-Argens... « Je parle aussi de la région de Fayence où il y a eu également des parachutages », glisse l'auteur qui se rappelle avec émotion sa découverte du cimetière militaire de Draguignan, à l'âge de 16 ans.

### Une centaine de témoignages

« La curiosité m'a amené à aller chercher des documents aux archives américaines, puis il y a quatre ans à interviewer de vétérans au téléphone, glisse l'auteur. Personne n'avait jamais été intéressé par l'histoire de la plupart des anciens combattants avec qui j'ai échangé ! » Aujourd'hui une soixantaine d'entre eux sont encore en vie et sont très âgés : « J'ai eu les contacts par les familles, par internet... Certains ont été surpris par ma démarche ; d'autres n'étaient pas intéressés au départ mais l'ont été après ; l'un d'eux a parlé deux heures et demie au téléphone avec moi. Il a fallu composer avec des malentendus et des accents à couper au couteau ! » Dans le livre de 312 pages, richement illustré de documents photographiques, dont beaucoup inédits, confiés à Loïc Jankowiak par les libérateurs, leur famille, ou issus de collections privées, ce sont donc les acteurs de l'évènement qui parlent – ils sont une centaine à témoigner – dans un contexte historique et chronologique précisé par l'auteur. « Il m'a semblé important aussi de situer le profil des tués – ils ont été une centaine lors des 90 jours de la cam-



pagne de Provence qui a fait 500 blessés – en mettant des noms sur les visages photographiés », observe Loïc Jankowiak. Un livre sur les paras du 517<sup>th</sup> Gang qui tombe donc à point nommé pour célébrer le 75<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'opération Dragoon. Tiré à 500 exemplaires, la première édition du livre a pu être réalisée grâce à un financement participatif. The 517<sup>th</sup> Gang est

### Related Stories

Dragoon racontée par les paras du 517<sup>th</sup> Gang  
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sorti le 6 mai. « Une date anniversaire, relève Loïc Jankowiak : c'est le 6 mai 1944 que les parachutistes de l'unité ont quitté les États-Unis en bateau pour rejoindre l'Italie, où ils prendront part à leur première campagne dans la région de Grosseto en Toscane, une sorte de test d'endurance d'une semaine, pour prouver leur valeur. Un mois après ils seront parachutés en Provence ». Pour contacter l'auteur : page Facebook The 517<sup>th</sup> Gang

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## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### NEW EVIDENCE REVEALS “G.I. JOE” NICKNAME WAS UNPOPULAR WITH U.S. TROOPS DURING WWII

During WWII, regular misapplication of the nickname, “G.I. Joe,” would prove to be a recurring point of contention for many in the military. Over 60 years later, new information has been discovered revealing how the name, now hugely popular with fans and collectors of the famous action figure toy, was previously one of regular frustration and controversy.

Originally, the abbreviation “G.I.” stood for “General Issue,” a shorthand term referring to basic equipment and enlisted personnel in the U.S. Army. During the war, the extended moniker “G.I. Joe” became common parlance when referring to any and all servicemen in the military. Used by reporters in their stories as a sort of “catch-all” nickname, “G.I. Joe” was unfortunately, often inappropriately applied, aggravating many troops and even the famed editorial cartoonist, Bill Mauldin.

At the time, Mauldin was serving in the 45th Infantry Division. With an art education from the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, he had been assigned to its company newspaper (and to Stars and Stripes) as sort of a “roving cartoonist.” Mauldin would drive up to the front lines everyday and document the lives of the ordinary, Army infantrymen he met there. His “Willie and Joe” cartoons quickly became hugely popular with the troops, who felt they provided an honest voice for their frustrations.

However, much to Mauldin’s chagrin, his famous creations were regularly misidentified as “G.I. Joe” in various newspapers and magazines, creating a growing resentment within the cartoonist towards the use (and misuse) of the name. Soldiers too, began to feel that the press was too loose with their use of the term, and often voiced their objections in letters to the editor.

Over the years after the war however, with the rise of Hasbro’s popular toy line of the same name, previous disdain for the “G.I. Joe” name by Mauldin and other U.S. troops has been largely forgotten. But today, some 60 years later, The Joe Report’s ace field reporter, James Long, has uncovered new evidence in the form of newspaper clippings from WWII that provide clear evidence of troop resentment toward the “G.I. Joe” name. Here are Long’s comments regarding these new discoveries...



“Yer combat badge don’t count. Ya need more of these battle participation stars.”





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### BILL'S MAUDLIN

Dear Editor:

After looking at Bill Mauldin's cartoon in *The Stars and Stripes* of May 14th, I think he left himself wide open to be taken over the coals. If that's his conception of a rear echelon tee-five clerk from headquarters he must have been thinking of the Draft Board who passed this individual for army service. They are to blame.

No doubt there are thousands of such guys who would have been much better off in a defense plant, and GI Joe in Mauldin's drawing probably hasn't got the length of time overseas to have as many "stars" as the clerk.

I agree with the cartoonist that the Infantry Combat Badge should rate many points, but it's up to the powers that be.

I happen to be one of the early birds who came over in '42, before the push in Africa; that is from El Alamein and through the desert all the way to Tunis. That's why guys like us are authorized a few more stars. We didn't ask for them; they were given.

I think any man—front line, rear echelon or whatever else, if he has the time over, he's entitled to a break just as well as anybody. A few more drawings like that and a lot of GIs won't like you. After all, we're supposed to be a team or have you forgotten?

—T-5 Herbert M. Leberle, MPs

### MAIL CALL

#### A Letter From Mauldin About 'GI Joe'

Dear Editor:

The editorial writer in the *New York Times* who screamed about the over-use of the term, "GI Joe," should get a Pulitzer Prize or something.

The expression is a headline writer's joy and an advertiser's bread and butter—and it has become as nauseating as "Sammy" must have become to our guys in the last war, after the British hung that name on them.

"GI Joe" came into general use in the States about the same time I started drawing Joe and Willie in *Stars and Stripes* and I've thought of changing Joe's name to Aloysius or some damn thing several times since, because occasionally Joe and GI Joe got hooked together in somebody's mind.

I've drawn Joe for more than four years in the Army, off and on in different papers, and he and Willie have always been infantrymen. Just as the half-ton command car was called a jeep long before the peep was invented, so Joe was Joe long before GI Joe got started, and I'd like to keep him Joe just as I call a peep a peep.

I mention all this because of the unfortunate similarity between the name of Joe, the honest foot soldier who is bucking for rotation, and the name, 'GI Joe,' the jerk who has become Tin Pan Alley's conception of every soldier, whether he be truck driver, company clerk or guard house lawyer. May the twain never meet!

—Sgt. Bill Mauldin

From: <https://patchesofpride.wordpress.com/2012/06/09/new-evidence-reveals-g-i-joe-nickname-was-unpopular-with-u-s-troops-during-wwii/>



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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- 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.

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