



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2456

December 13, 2020

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

Kaare Allan Johnson, 596th Parachute Combat Engineer



<----- In remembrance of a GREAT man!

Mike Wells

Hello Bob, Ray Estrella. I received, and read, our current 517 PRCT Mailcall. So sorry to learn of Mr. Alan Johnson's passing. I was honored, to have met, and spoken, with Mr. Johnson on several occasions at the Palm Springs, CA conventions. May he Rest In Pease, he has now joined many of his 517 Band of Brothers in the Big DZ in the sky. He was a patriot, and proud member of the "Greatest Generation".

Airborne All The Way.

-- **J.R. "Ray" Estrella** - Past President-Chapter 78 - Special Forces Assn.

May God bless Allan and his beautiful family. What a wonderful life, so emblematic of so many of the 517th's finest. My prayers are with Laure and Claire. What wonderful memories you have of such a fine man! Love,

Wayne Cross

So sorry to hear about Allan Johnson. Sincere condolences to Claire and her family for the loss of your Dad. My brother Lory always spoke so highly of your Dad, and I would sit mesmerized listening to his stories at reunions. He was truly a hero, and an inspiration for the 517th. I know he is back spending time with his "Band of Brothers."

Tim Curtis



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Claire,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to Camp Toccoa at Currahee Inc in memory of your father **Karre Allan Johnson** of the 596/517th PRCT.

You will soon receive the official letter from our project chair Cynthia Brown, who just lost a brother to Covid19, but I wanted to pass along our thanks quickly.

Just to update you on the progress of the 517th barrack, it is about 2/3 finished, the windows (original Camp Toccoa) were just installed the first week of December. We have obtained the donation of the materials to do the inside and will have it insulated at the end of December. We just received a generous donation to cover the cost of the siding for the outside and are working to get the installation of this siding scheduled. We hope to get the funds for the HVAC system in Feb/Mar timeframe. Our goal is to have the 517th barrack completed by D-Day 2021. We are currently looking for a 517th uniform to display on a mannequin in the 517th when it is completed. We have a replica of a 506th man uniform in the just completed 506th and visitors are pleased to see it. Please put out this notice to other descendants of 517th men, it would be wonderful to have a uniform from a 517th man on display in the 517th barrack.

Thanks again for the donation.

George Smith

Treasurer

Camp Toccoa at Currahee, Inc

Good evening,

Please extend my heartfelt condolences to Cynthia Brown on the loss of her brother. This is an extraordinarily difficult time.

Thank you for your kind acknowledgement of funds received, along with the plans for that area of Toccoa. By copy of this email, I am alerting the 517prct.org webmaster, Bob Barrett. He'll make sure to get it into an upcoming issue of the electronic newsletter.

Thank you very much for your prompt response and summary of future work slated for the barracks. It's really exciting to see it coming to fruition!

Have a great weekend -

J. Claire Johnson Giblin
daughter, K. Allan Johnson, 596/517 PRCT



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

I am very close to Allan and his family. These last months, Covid prevented us from seeing each other like every year and we often made videos to talk about Allan, Claire and Jim. we supported each other during this difficult period for different reasons.

Allan and his way of life is a model for me... always smiling, always nice words to say, a wonderful storyteller, never complaining, a considerate father and grandfather.

He sent me kisses by video 2 or 3 days before he left and I watch often this video since.... I really love him.

Rest in peace Allan. And we will see again, for sure. 💔

I will be forever guarantor of the memory of 517 in Sospel.



Patou Pavia

Dear friends of America, our thoughts are with you as you lost a great friend. We are so sad to learn that Allan JOHNSON left us, Please, accept our sincere condolences. It would be impossible to put in words our Love and Devotion to all those brave men who fought for our Liberty. We had the great honour to welcome K.A.JOHNSON and his daughter Claire in august 2016; we spent a few days together and shared some ceremonies with homage at US monuments in this area.

The members of CADUSA (US AIRBORNE RECEPTION COMMITTEE) send their sympathy and Love. As soon as the churches will be open again, (by now, closed because of the virus) a Holy Mass will be celebrated in St Jacques churches in memory of K.A. JOHNSON, Our affection to all of you.



Arnold and Irma TARGNION - TROIS-PONTS - Belgium and members of CADUSA



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Other MailCall News

Hello!

Who is running Mail Call now? My grandpa was **John Marsinko** of 1st Battalion HQ. He saved every single mail call going back many years and used to write in regularly! I was curious who had taken over running this and if I could write a piece or contribute pictures and such.

Thank you!

Marissa Cominotti

[John served in the 1st Battalion of the 517th from Toccoa to its last day of combat. John was **Col. Bill Boyle's** radio operator and followed him until the Colonel was badly wounded in the "Bulge".]

Hi Marissa,

I took over MailCall after my father, **Ben Barrett**, died about 10 years ago. While Dad was sending out MailCall often, sometimes daily, I still try to get them out weekly when I can, as long as we have news and stories to print. So yes, we are always looking for news and especially war-time stories and pictures.

We do have a Search function on the website, through which you can look up people and places by name and find all the times they were mentioned on articles on the website, including past MailCalls.

Nice to meet you!

Bob Barrett

Nice to meet you, Bob. About how many people are still signed up to get the newsletter now? Grandpa died five years ago at 91, and I imagine there are not many paratroopers left these days. I'm sure there are still plenty of people who use the website though, because it is its own little history trove. I'm glad that you are keeping it going. If you need any help, please let me know.

After the holidays, I'll look through some photos and see what I can scan and put together to share with you. Grandpa took a lot of pics and told a lot of stories. I'm currently working on a novel, and one character is a WWII vet. That was how I got started researching and using your site.

Merry Christmas!

-Marissa Cominotti

Hi Marissa,

Yes, the numbers of remaining 157th troopers is getting smaller. I try to keep track of those that have written in and attended past reunions. I think the remaining troopers probably number less than 50, although most are not online and I haven't heard from in several years. There are about 400 people



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

who signed up for MailCall over the years, with about 100 to 150 are active readers. I know most of the regulars and consider them as long-time very close friends and family. I just keep the MailCall and website going as a decent historical record and tribute to these great men. Since the 517th was an independent "orphan" special operations unit during their entire short existence, there is not much of a formal historical record, so my Dad and I just felt the need to collect what records and stories we could get our hands on. I am often surprised at how many relatives from the next generations still reach out to find out about their family and the 517th.

I know that your Grandfather served closely with Bill Boyle in HQ/1. But I cannot find any pictures of John Marsinko in my records or reunion photos, so I do I look forward to any stories and pictures you might have for the website.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

From **Eddy Monfort** in Belgium:

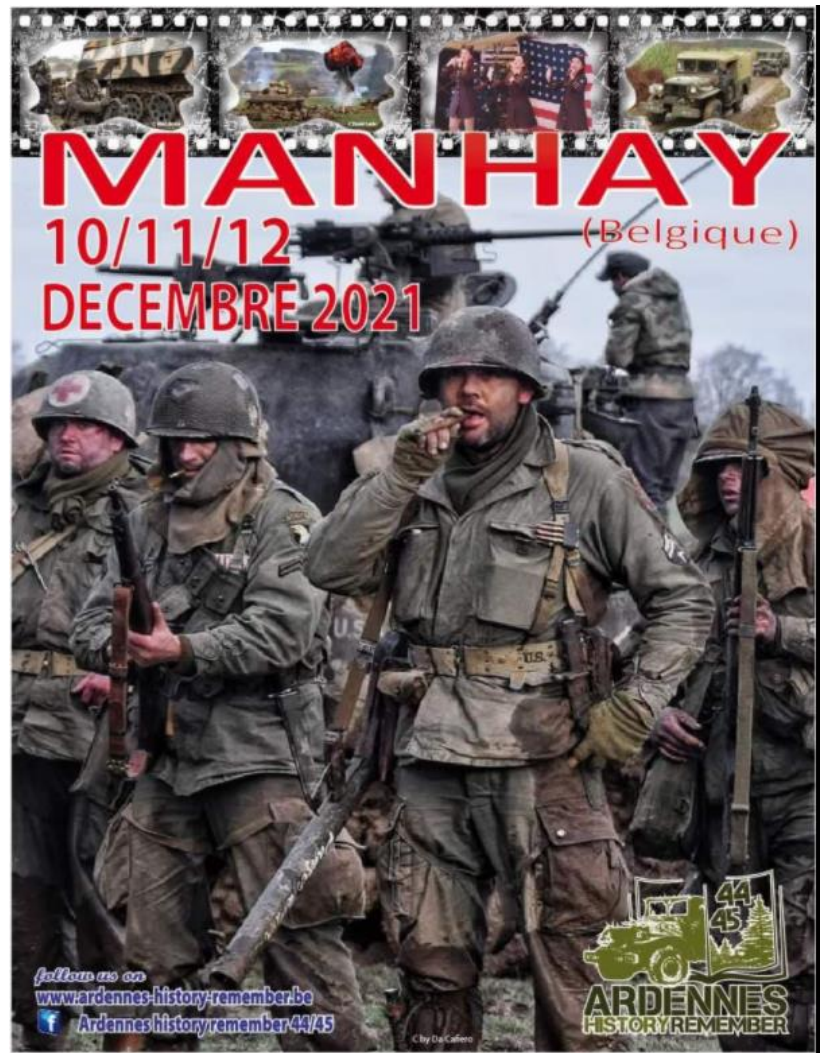
This weekend of the 76th anniversary of the Battle of the Ardennes, the ceremonies are very sad, but they are not forgotten, in accordance with the safety measures. Tomorrow some pics will be posted about this.

As promised, since today we had to be together in Manhay, here's poster 2021! Hopefully by then Covid will be just a bad memory.

Following our invitation, we thank everyone who sent us photos. The choice has been difficult at times. But here's this beautiful poster we wanted to include as much information as possible. Reconstitution and presentation of the two camps, the ride of the vehicles but also our lovely Dolls, which, through their songs, make the parties fun!

2020 has been cancelled but the organizing committee will meet you in 2021! Only 365 days left! THANK YOU

THE MANHAY ASBL - ARDENNES
HISTORY REMEMBER





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From the [Thunderbolt August 1943](#), in Camp Toccoa:

Charmers Two



Assisted Divisional Commander, General Whitelaw, compares notes with Frances Langford in the Officers' Mess. That man eavesdropping is Lt. Frank Stone.

Julia Frances Langford (April 4, 1913 – July 11, 2005) was an American singer and actress who was popular during the Golden Age of Radio and made film appearances for over two decades. She was known as the "GI Nightingale,"^[1] a forces sweetheart, who entertained troops touring often with Bob Hope.

"Why 'Mess' In Such Large Letters?"



Bob Hope reading the inscription on a leather cigarette case given him by Col. Walsh. Hope was designed the first honorary member of 517's Officers' Mess. S/Sgt. Oliver smiling from behind.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Found on eBay:

[Rare Vintage ID'd WWII US 517th Airborne Paratrooper Grouping W/ Jump Wings +](#)

Pvts. Richard and Roger Tallakson were both in A Battery of the 460th PFAB. I had forgotten that these identical twins were in the 460th, and they were allowed to serve in the same unit.

Two members of the 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion, Roger and Richard Tallakson, were identical twins. They had asked to jump from separate airplanes so Mom and Pop wouldn't get a double jolt in a single telegram from the War Department in Washington, D.C. When the green lights flashed in their respective C-47 cabins, they leaped into the dark unknown. Roger landed some twenty-five miles from his designated drop zone, and Richard crashed to earth thirty miles from his target field. After daylight, each twin began asking other troopers for information on his missing brother. Richard heard that Roger had been killed, Roger was told that Richard died. Two days later, the twins were joyously reunited in an assembly area. Neither had been injured.



From *The Spy Who Spent the War in Bed: And Other Bizarre Tales from World War II* (2003) by William B. Breuer



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.

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