



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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MailCall No. 2473

January 30, 2022

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

Col. Thomas and Bette Cross



Subject: COL Thomas and Bette Cross Initial HD Video Version of Funeral and Gravesite Services (01/12/2022)

Ben

Here is the link to the initial HD version of the funeral and gravesite Services for Dad and Mom which occurred on 1/12/2022 at Arlington National Cemetery. In addition to Cross family members, also attending were Rick Seitz and Matt Lissner representing the 517th PIR as well as representatives from the 82nd ABN Division, the US Army Quartermaster General, BG Michelle Donahue, and members of the Aerial Delivery and Field Services Division (US Army Airborne Rigger School), FT. Lee, VA and rigger veterans. I'll have the official photographs soon and will send relevant ones to you.

<https://vimeo.com/665593675/216a495de4>

Tom Cross, Jr.
(703) 966-1779



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Bob,
Sorry for the errant email being forwarded. I realized my mistake when I received your latest web site news update.

The initial email contains the link for the January 12 funeral services for our dad and mom. At the reception that followed at Patton Hall, FT. Myer, VA, we had a great reunion with **Rick Seitz** and **Matt Lissner**.

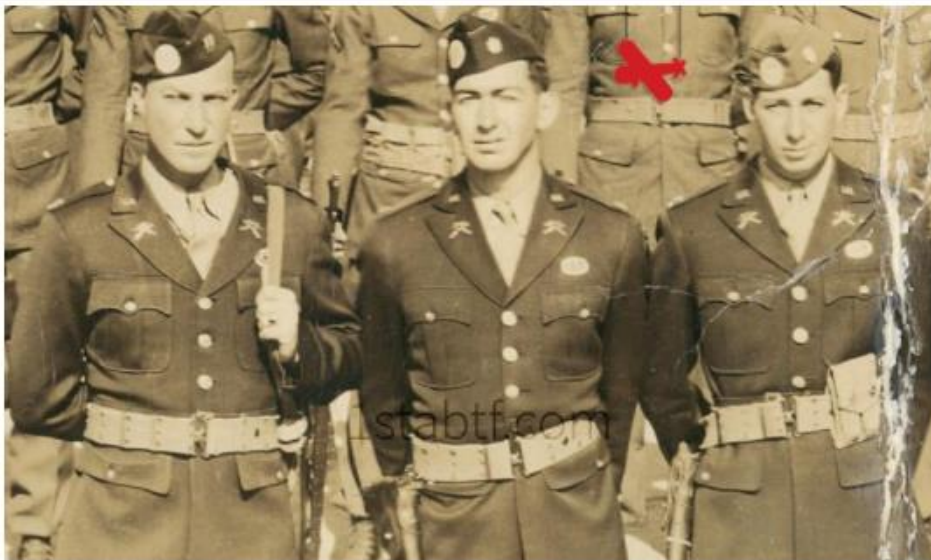
Dad and mom are now in close proximity at Arlington National Cemetery to his parents, **MG Thomas and Edna Cross** and brother, **COL Richard Cross** and not far from mother's parents, **MG Wayne and Ruth Zimmerman**. I will send a picture of Rick and Matt with our family, Mary, Wayne and myself and other pictures of 517th interest when they are available.

Tom Cross, Jr.

Col. Tom Cross passed away on July 3, 2020 at the age of 101. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on January 21, 2022, with his wife Bette.

Our good friend **Loïc Jankowiak** wrote this great tribute page on his [1st Airborne Task Force](#) website:

[Thomas R. Cross, luckiest or unluckiest man of the 517th PIR?](#)



Trois commandants du 2/517th PIR. De gauche à droite : Le Capt. David Armstrong (D/517), le Major Thomas R. Cross (XO 2/517) et le Lt. Col. Richard J. Seitz (CO 2/517)





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Hi Tom, That's a beautiful ceremony for your Dad and mom. I'll include the video link on the next MailCall, which I hope to get out soon.

My Dad , **Benedict J. Barrett**, and mom are also buried at Arlington. It is such a beautiful place. I will drop by myself to pay tribute to Col. Cross next time I get to DC. I know that **Gen. Mel Zais** and probably many more 517th troopers are interred there. (I'll have to compile a list someday.)

Regards, Bob Barrett

PS: A couple of others at ANC:

Major General Sidney Michael Marks – Commander C Company, 1st Battalion
Brigadier General John Marvin Kinzer – 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion
Major General Louis Walsh Jr. – Commander of the 517th PIR at Camp Toccoa

Who knows other 517th troopers at Arlington?

Maria Gaspar

Dear Irma and Arnold

I am **Theresa Pugh**, daughter of **Charles Pugh** from 517th. I stayed at your wonderful home in 2012 and you took me to see Marie at her home. It meant so much to me.

I am so sorry to hear of her death. I think she was a remarkable woman. I was honored to have known her. And my father said she was the bravest woman he ever knew.

As a child I recall receiving a box of five chocolates every Christmas. My father shared them- we each got one piece on Christmas eve. He treasured that gift more than any other gift at Christmas. That seemed odd to me as a child since I didn't know her. Only when I was a teenager did I realize the significance of the sharing of chocolates.

I will write to her family.

I hope you two are staying well- in these frustrating times of covid. I hope to see you again. You are always welcome in my home outside Washington, DC.

With great respect,
Theresa Pugh

Bob, I would like to E mail Irma & Arnold, but I don't have the current address, they were great hosts for Beverly and I back in 2007. We would like to wish them good health and thank them for the passion they have for American Vets & the 517.

Great to read Mail Call, many thanks.

Morris McDowell



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Hi Morris,

Here's an old address I have on the roster, but I expect this is correct.

Irma and Arnold Targnion
70 avenue de la Salm B 4980
Trois Ponts, Belgium
arnold.targnion@belgacom.net

The address from Maria's family is:

Family GASPAR
7 Bergeval - B 4980
TROIS-PONTS, Belgium

Best Regards,

Bob Barrett

Hi Bob,

Thanks for the latest Mail Call. I know how hard it must be to keep it going, but greatly appreciate it when time allows. So sorry to hear about **Maria Gaspar**. She was a wonderful friend of the 517th, and I will never forget the day she welcomed my late wife Laura and I into her home along with Irma and Arnold. They told such poignant stories, allowing me to understand what a difficult time it was for my father in the Ardennes. Their devoted remembrance of the 517th is a tribute to their great character. Blessings to her family.

Tim Curtis

son of **Harland "Bud" Curtis** Hdq. 1st

Other MailCall News

Bob, I'm glad to see you're still out there. I was getting worried about you. Just wanted to follow up again to make sure you still have what you need to get my dad's (**Ray Helms**) photo document added to the photos section of the 517th web site.

Stay safe and healthy.

Glenn Helms



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Hello Claire

I am writing a book on the Second World War in Saint-Cézaire and of course I am talking about the 517th. While doing my research and interviewing village elders, someone showed me three photos of American soldiers taken on August 23, 1944 in Boulevard Courmes in Saint-Cézaire. I send them to you.

I hope to see you this year.

Big kisses from France

Elisabeth Atlan



Elisabeth!! How wonderful!

I am including Bob at Mail Call and **Tom Copsey**, who might be able to help.

This is wonderful!!

All the best to Jean-Marc, Evangeline and Cameron!!

Bises

Claire [Giblin]

MailCall # 2473

Send news to MailCall@517prct.org

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U.S. Army Remembers Betty White's World War II Service: 'A True Legend'

December 31, 2021

While Hollywood mourns the loss of iconic television star Betty White, who died Friday at the age of 99, the U.S. Army is remembering the actress for a role she played off the screen: that of World War II volunteer.

In a statement issued Friday on Twitter, the Army said it was "saddened by the passing of Betty White," adding that she had a personal history with the military branch.

"Not only was she an amazing actress, she also served during WWII as a member of the American Women's Voluntary Services. A true legend on and off the screen," the statement concluded.

While White began working as an actress and model in the late 1930s, her aspirations were put on hold during the Second World War. A month before her 20th birthday in 1941, she went to work with the American Women's Voluntary Services (AWVS).

The AWVS provided women volunteers to offer services such as ambulance and truck driving, fire-fighting, aircraft-spotting, navigation, and aerial photography.

In a 2010 interview with Cleveland magazine, White talked about her assignment — driving a truck of supplies to barracks in the Hollywood Hills — and attending dances for the troops ahead of their deployments abroad.

"It was a strange time and out of balance with everything," White told Cleveland, "which I'm sure the young people are going through now. We'll never learn. We'll never learn."

[U.S. Army Remembers Betty White's WWII Service: 'A True Legend' | PEOPLE.com](#)





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Catching up on older MailCall news:

January 9th, from Loic's Facebook page:

🇬🇧🇨🇦 After years of inactivity on my website, it is getting a new look! New update, new pages and my very first article (in both languages) in four years. I had forgotten how tedious it was to write an article on the net and how satisfying it was to have it completed.

I had focused all this time on my print publications, it's time to get back to it.

The article I wrote concerns two brothers who served in two units being very dear to me. The article is available in both languages. Enjoy!

<https://wp.me/p7pZww-27h>

This story is about two brothers, Robert Murray of the 460th PFAB and his brother William of the First Special Service Force (FSSF). Both troopers were in Italy, when Robert found out that his brother had been recently KIA.

<https://1stabtf.com/en/borthers-destiny-460th-pfab-fssf/>



December 10, 2021:

Hi Bob,

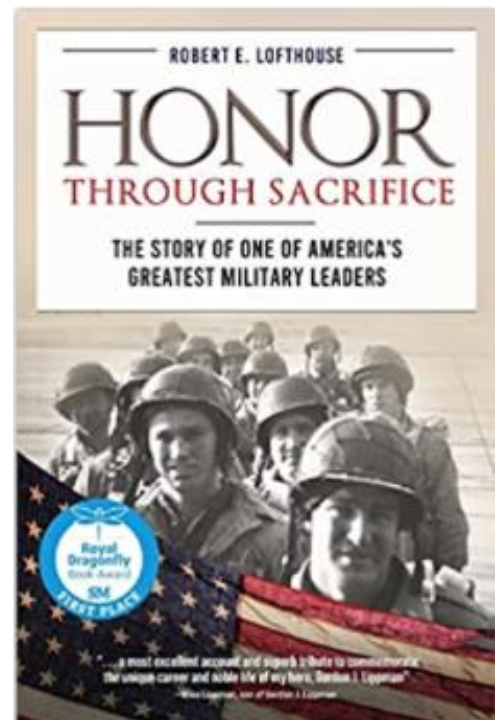
For your consideration on the 517th website, please add my book to the list of stories about veterans of the 517th.

[Honor Through Sacrifice – The Story of One of America's Greatest Military Leaders](#)

Best,

Robert Lofthouse | T 610.392.7084 | rob@holdtheline.press | www.holdtheline.press | Author of [Honor Through Sacrifice](#)
1st Place Winning Author: 2021 Royal Dragonfly Ebook Awards | #1
New Amazon Release on 11/4/2021

This is the book about Gordon Lippmann, A Company. - BB

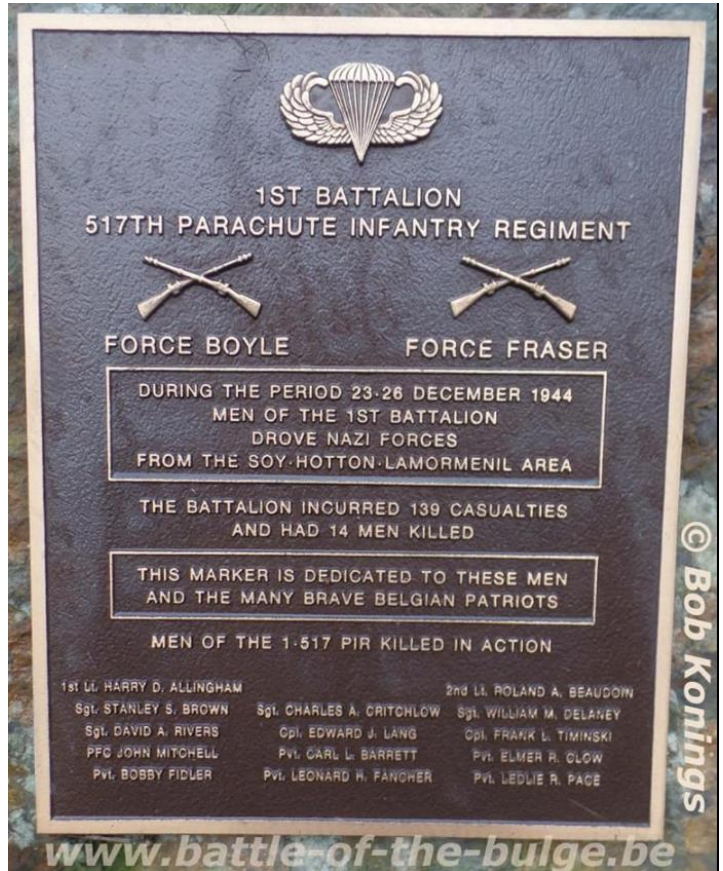




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December 16, also from Loic, on the 517th Family and Friend Facebook page:

I am in Belgium this week end and got the luck to see the monument dedicated to the 1/517 between Soy and Hotton about the Forces Boyle & Fraser. A great monument to these wonderful paratroopers!



On Nov 27, 2021, at 9:48 PM, Karl <ancestry@wickert.us> wrote:
To Whom it may Concern,

(Nutshell) 517th SG—What does SG Mean?

(Elongated)

I have started the beginnings of the genealogy hobby.
I know my Grandfather was in WWII. To my knowledge he was Army Airborne.
My Father said that my grandfather was in the 82nd

Then I find this book:

Seventeenth Airborne Division
1999
ISBN:9781563114366, 1563114364

Where he is listed under 17th Airborne Division Association Members as:
W M Wickert Sr 517 SG



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This leads me to believe he joined this after the birth of his son William McCloud Wickert Jr.

From what I can find, it appears the 517th operated under the 13th, 17th, & 82nd Divisions at one point and time

Fun but frustrating, and Google isn't helping me much right now.

I greatly appreciate your time and any pointers to the right direction.

Thank you,

Karl Wickert

Hi Karl,

I done some quick searching of my 517th PRCT records (which are very incomplete),but haven't found any specific mention of William Wickert. Not conclusive yet, and I will continue digging.

Yes, the 517th PRCT was an independent unit and was under both the 17th and 13th Airborne at different times.

But there were at least two other 517 designated groups in WWII, including the 517th Airlift Squadron, the 517th Airborne Signal Company, and the 517th Air Service Group. The Signal Company was part of the 17th Airborne. (Are you sure the initials are not "SC"?).

The Air Service Group was most likely referred to as a Service Group (SG), since they were all part of Airborne units. The 517th ASG was formed near the end of WWII, mostly located at airfields in Italy. I don't think the Air Service Group was assigned to a specific Division, but probably supported any Airborne group that needed them.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/517th_Air_Defense_Group

Hope this helps.

Bob Barrett
MailCall@517prct.org

Bob,

I greatly appreciate the searching and the reply!

Thank you for the link.

I do not have an actual copy of the book, but from what I have seen, it is definitely SG.

I was just told he was part of the 82nd Airborne, which had some interaction with the 517th also.

For it's brief existence during World War II, the 517th had a lot of intermingling

The hunt and search continues.

Thank you again,
Karl Wickert



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Nov 11, 2021 - Veteran's Day

On the 517th Family and Friends Facebook page, as relayed by **J. Michel Soldi**



Bethany Hanson Armstrong and her 3rd grade class honoring her grandfather F company **Gary Davis** on veterans day teaching new generation that they must remember the sacrifice of these men for our freedom. Well done Bep.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From: Nicole Mauser-Storer <n.mauserstorer@huskers.unl.edu>

Sent: Friday, October 15, 2021 9:13 AM

To: MailCall@517prct.org

Subject: Question on Jump History of 596th

Greetings!

I had sent some information a while back notifying the group that my grandfather **Robert E Anderson** of Nebraska had passed in 2016.

I have been trying to determine via the documents my grandfather saved and via historical information I have found how many times the group jumped in the war. After reading many of the mail calls, and other documents it looks like there was one combat jump, but I'd like to confirm. Is that information on the website and I've overlooked it? Is there a place you would recommend looking?

Robert E Anderson was in the 596 and from what I can determine First Platoon with **Bill Hudson** and Commander **Robert Dalrymple**.

Thanks for the help!

Nicole Mauser-Storer
n.mauserstorer@Huskers.unl.edu

PS - I have signed up for future mailcall notifications and look forward to them

Hi Nicole,

Sorry for the extremely late reply. I've been on a MailCall hiatus for a number of months. Hoping to be a bit more regular going forward.

To answer your question, yes, the 517th PRCT, including the 596th only made one combat jump into southern France. There were other in planning, including into Germany, but the never occurred.

Bob Barrett



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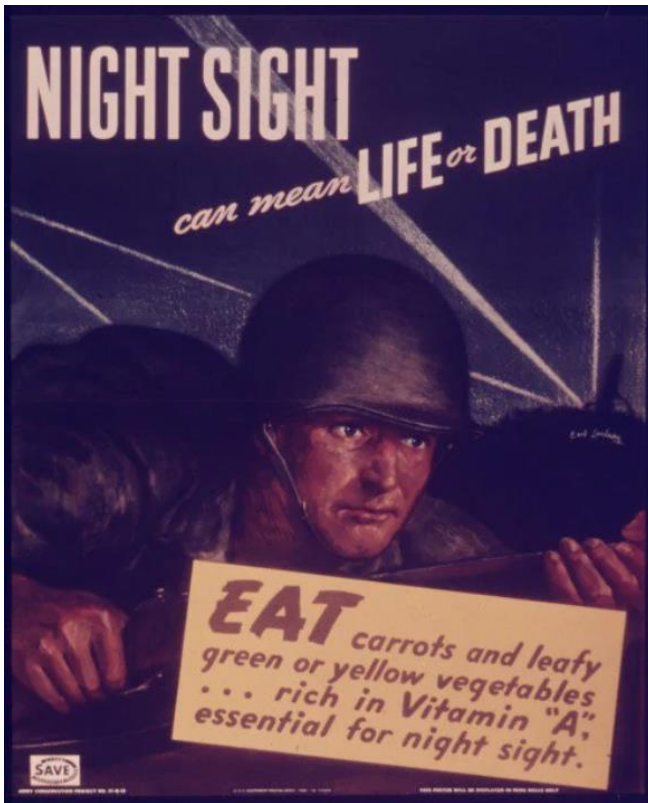
Post from **Claire Giblin**, way back on October 2, 2021:

Dad's uniform on display at Toccoa at Currahee. **Ben Arnold** is currently there for an event this weekend.

K. Allan Johnson, 596th



I still have a few more emails and items from last year to post. Nothing urgent (except Glenn's additional photos of his dad, Ray Helms). I'm working on rebuilding my PC and recovering some website tools, with slow but sure progress. I'll get to it all soon. - BB



A WWII Propaganda Campaign Popularized the Myth That Carrots Help You See in the Dark

How a ruse to keep German pilots confused gave the Vitamin-A-rich vegetable too much credit

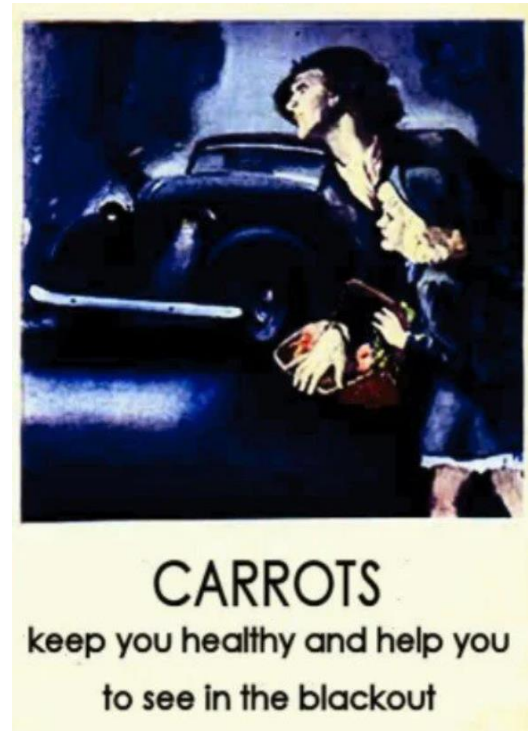
During the 1940 *Blitzkrieg*, the *Luftwaffe* often struck under the cover of darkness. In order to make it more difficult for the German planes to hit targets, the British government issued citywide blackouts. The Royal Air Force were able to repel the German fighters in part because of the development of a new, secret radar

technology. The on-board Airborne Interception Radar (AI), first used by the RAF in 1939, had the ability to pinpoint enemy bombers before they reached the English Channel. But to keep that under wraps, according to Stolarczyk's research pulled from the files of the [Imperial War Museum](#), the Mass Observation Archive, and the UK National Archives, the Ministry provided another reason for their success: carrots.

In 1940, RAF night fighter ace, [John Cunningham](#), nicknamed "Cat's Eyes", was the first to shoot down an enemy plane using AI. He'd later rack up an impressive total of 20 kills—19 of which were at night. According to "Now I Know" writer Dan Lewis, also a [Smithsonian.com](#) contributor, the Ministry told newspapers that the reason for their success was because pilots like Cunningham ate an excess of carrots.

For the full article:

[A WWII Propaganda Campaign Popularized the Myth That Carrots Help You See in the Dark | Arts & Culture | Smithsonian Magazine](#)





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In Memorium – George E. Rumsey, HQ/1

George Ellsworth Rumsey

1925 to 2021



Christian, Husband, Father, Father-in-law, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, Godfather, Uncle, Friend. Passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family, November 5, 2021. George was born in St. Paul, MN on January 8, 1925. Preceded in death by beloved wife Gloria, son Mark, daughter-in-law Bridget Votel (Anne), Father Ellsworth, Mother Marcella, Step-mother Marie, Brother Edward, Sister Joy Galbreath, Parents-in-law Giocondo & Madellena Giuliani, Brothers-in-law Angelo Giuliani, William Chandler, Thomas Galbreath; Sisters-in-law Genevieve Giuliani, Agnes Giuliani and Mary Louise Chandler.

Educated at St. Mark's parish K-8, graduated Cretin High School 1942. Enlisted at age 18 in the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment, which saw combat 1943-45 in Italy, Southern France, Rhineland, Ardennes & Central Europe. Following discharge he graduated in 1948 from Minneapolis School of Art (MCAD) with a BFA and began a 60+year career in Advertising Art Direction and Design. June 19, 1946 George married Gloria Giuliani. They were blessed with 5 children and enjoyed 67 years of marriage. He was proud of his wife & children. He enjoyed Downhill Skiing, Handball, Gardening, The North Shore, Family Gatherings, Sports Cars and was known to enjoy a Bombay Sapphire-Up on occasion with friends & relatives. Survived by children Timothy, (Rosemarie) Molly, (William Park) Anne, & Daniel (Holly). He leaves 10 grandchildren: Emily Rumsey, (Matthew Tabaka) Leslie Rumsey-Rogers, (Dallas) Glynis Rumsey, Matthew Park, (Amy Quint) Monica Park, (Peter Henricks) Andrew Park, Christopher Park, (Kia Heise) Amy Dols (Timothy) Sarah Beam & Elisabeth Beam. Great Grandchildren include: George Rogers, Archie Dols, Cassandra Park, Remington & Lexington Park, Miles Tabaka Rumsey, Esme Rogers and two babies on the way. Also survived by sister-in-law, Dorothy Rumsey plus nieces, nephews & close friends.

Memorials preferred to Cretin Derham Hall "Mark Rumsey Fine Arts Endowment" or donor's choice.
651-698-0796

From [MailCall 2141](#), January 2013:

Arrived in Toccoa early March 1943. **John W. Forrest** and I were sent to the 460th first and then back to the 517 for whatever reason. Was in Headquarters 1st, Machine Gun Platoon to the end in 1945, and my dues are current. Had a Birthday, January 8, turned 88. Just turned 18 before I got to Toccoa so maybe was one of the youngest in the outfit.

Thanks for your help

G. Rumsey



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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