



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2388

May 28, 2017

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

Memorial Day 2018



Wreath laying on Memorial Day at Rhône American Cemetery

From the Franco-American Society of Draguignan, France

<https://www.facebook.com/FrancoAmericanSociety/>



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Difference Between Memorial and Veterans Day

Memorial Day



Veterans Day



Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who died in battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle.

While those who died are also remembered, Veterans Day is the day set aside to thank and honor ALL those who served honorably in the military - in wartime or peacetime.

www.militarywithptsd.org

From:

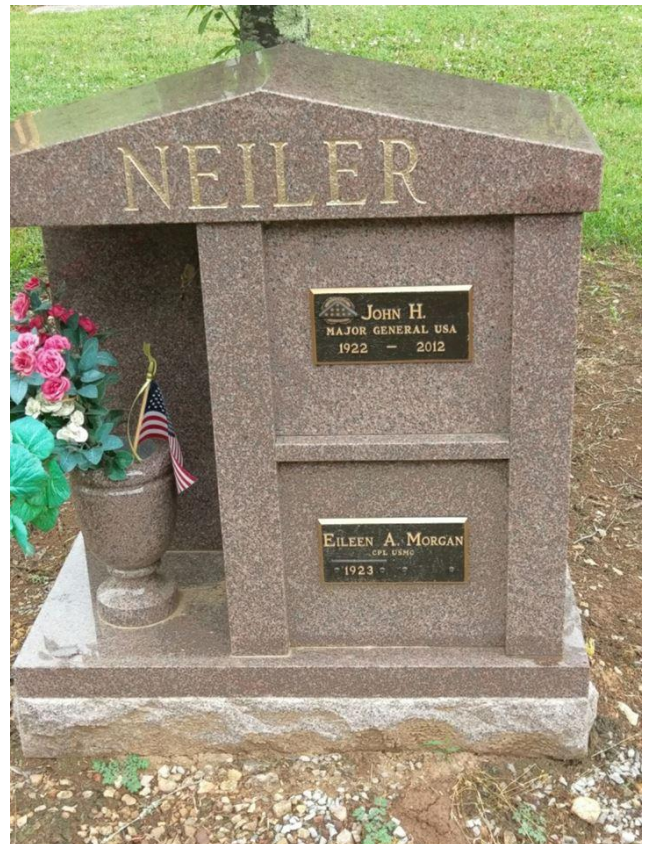
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1472895329686741/>

May 26 at 8:22pm

My son was placing American flags on veterans' graves today and ran across this one.

Ben Arnold

Major General John H. Neiler's gravesite is at Oak Ridge Memorial Park
Oak Ridge, Anderson County, Tennessee, USA





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Dr. John H. Neiler (Major General Retired), age 89, of Oak Ridge died Sunday, September 16, 2012 at his home. He was born December 21, 1922 in Mt. Oliver, Pennsylvania, the son of Clarence and Florence Kintz Neiler.

Dr. Neiler received his BS degree in Physics and Electrical Engineering from the University of Pittsburgh. He received his pre-commission training with the CMTC and Army Extension Courses during the period of 1937 to 1940. He was commissioned upon entering active duty in January 1943. After completion of several schools he was assigned to the 517th Parachute Infantry where a succession of duties included: Platoon Leader, Company Executive Office, Battalion S-2 and Regimental S-2*. The latter duty was performed during campaigns in Southern France, the Rhineland and the Ardennes when the 517th was operating as an independent combat team. Following a tour of duty with the 505th P.I.R. 82nd Ban. Div., he was released from active duty in August 1946. He holds the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Cluster and the Order of the Purple Heart. Dr. Neiler's Reserve assignments included S-2, 396 Infantry

Regiment; Instructor in Radiological Defense, 2201st Research and Development Training Unit; Instructor, C&GS Special Associate Course, 2nd Army; Instructor in Radiation Physics, 3161st Research and Development Unit; Instructor, C & GS, 3143 ARSU, Knoxville USAR School; (Mob Des) Physicist, OSWD, US CONARC; (Mob Des) Deputy Commander, US Army Nuclear Defense Laboratory; Director, USAR Nuclear Science Seminar, 3252 Research and Development Unit and Commanding Officer, 304th Mob. Des. Det. (DA-OCRD) with mobilization designation as Deputy Director-Test Operations, Nuclear Effects Laboratory, Aberdeen Army Research.

He served as an instructor and graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh and received the MS and PhD degrees, completing this work with the aid of an Atomic Energy Commission pre-doctoral fellowship.

Before joining ORTEC, which he helped found, Dr. Neiler was for nine years active in nuclear physics research at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he was a group leader in the Physics Division. His principal fields of investigation have been in neutron physics, including studies of neutron total and capture cross sections in the keV energy range and the energy correlations of fragments from neutron induced fission. He has specialized in the application of scintillation counters, semiconductor counters and ultra-fast techniques for nuclear spectrometry. His publication includes seventeen papers in nuclear physics measurements and techniques and chapters in two important books on nuclear techniques. During the last two years of his service at ORNL, he was a member of the group which organized and directed the early activities of Oak Ridge Technical Enterprises, (later ORTEC Incorporated, a subsidiary of EG&G.). In 1962, Dr. Neiler joined ORTEC, where, as Technical Director, he was responsible for the technical aspects of all operations of the corporation, which is engaged in the development, fabrication and marketing of research equipment, primarily for nuclear physics applications, but also for such diverse activities as X-ray spectrometry and Biochemistry research. Concurrently with his work at ORNL and ORTEC, he was a Lecturer in the University of Tennessee graduate program at Oak Ridge, teaching courses in nuclear physics and experimental atomic and nuclear physics.

Dr. Neiler was a member of the American Physical Society, American Association of Physics Teachers, Research Society of American and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sigma Pi Sigma, and Sigma Xi. His civic activities have been concentrated on the problems of civil defense.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Eileen Morgan Neiler; son, Eric Neiler and wife Alice; daughters, Morgen Biehler and husband Arthur and Lise Neiler and friend, Lance Dunaway; grandchildren, Otto Neiler, Keegan Pavlovic and wife Alice; Alicia Dittmer and husband James and great grandchildren, Quincy Pavlovic and Rebecca Dittmer.

* As a 1st Lieutenant and S2 (intelligence) with the 3rd Battalion, **John Neiler** would have served closely with **Howard Hensleigh**



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MailCall News

RE: **Pvt. George Ochoa**, Company G WWII

Hello,

I'm trying to learn more about my great uncle George Ochoa.

I understand he was in this regiment. He has passed and I am unable to find info about his history in the war.

His headstone says he received the purple heart and bronze star. I would love to know what happened.

My father say he was wounded parachuting into France.

Any info would be great.

Thank you,
Jordan Lovato
Great nephew of George Ochoa



Tomorrow, May 23rd, will be two years since I lost my friend **Earl Boone** from F company. Please remember him this Memorial Day.

On a lighter note, I do plan on going to Toccoa this October for their Military Days weekend. I'll be staying at the Toccoa Inn. So if anybody would care to go just know that you will know at least one person there.

Jim Kraus





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My name is Jason, a video producer who recently shot a local World War 2 reenactment. I am producing a 5 minute short film and would like to feature a photo of the 517th as one of the reenactors represented a soldier from the 517th. I would like to use the below picture from your site.

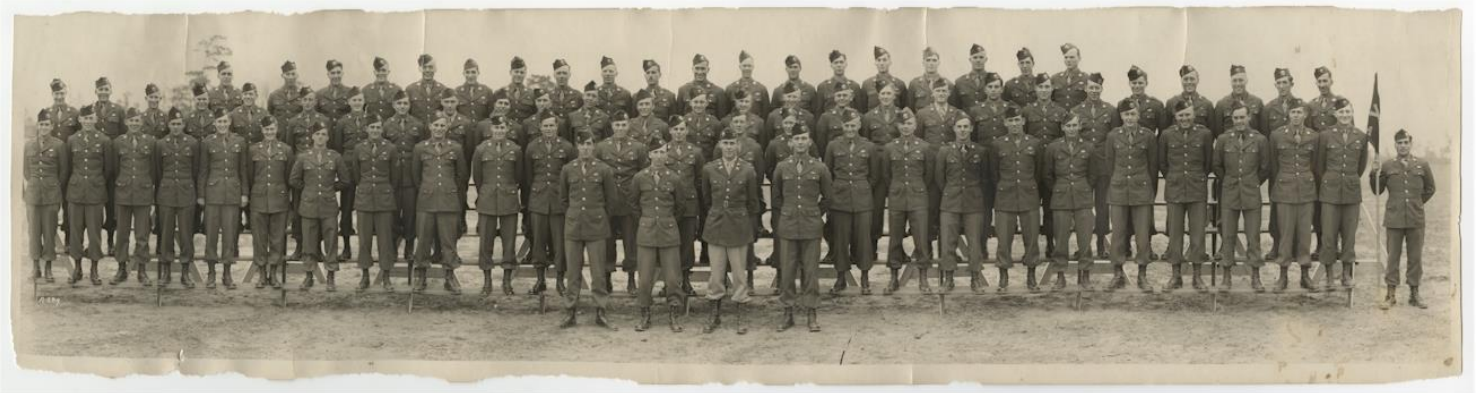
[A Battery, 460th PFAB at Camp MacKall 1944](#)

From **David Sturzenegger**

Do you know if this is public domain or if someone owns the copyright? If someone owns the copyright, do you have their contact information so I can ask for permission to use it?

Thanks for your help.

Jason



Hi Jason,

Re: The picture of A Battery, 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion at Camp Mackall, NC

This photo is an "official" photo of the unit, taken by the US Army. I'm pretty sure that makes it public domain.

If you could, send us some info and pics of the re-enactment for our newsletter.

Bob Barrett

I hope things are well with you and the 517 PRCT members. I have here an updated Gruwell paper based on information I received from LTC Tom F. Finley III, U.S. Army (Ret.) and from Jean-Loup. I will leave it to you to decide if you want to post it. I hope that within the next few months it will be posted to the USAHEC web site. I hope they do not edit it too much.

Best wishes,

Joe Figueiredo



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To all 517 PRCT Veterans and family and friends, wishing all a glorious Memorial Day.

All the best,
Paul Abbene

Ps- enjoy the clip.

[Guard Commander Inspection - Arlington National Cemetery](#)

An impeccably uniformed relief commander appears on the plaza to announce the Changing of the Guard at Arlington National Cemetery. Soon the new sentinel leaves the Quarters and unlocks the bolt of his or her M-14 rifle to signal to the relief commander to start the ceremony. The relief commander walks out to the Tomb and salutes, then faces the spectators and asks them to stand and stay silent during the ceremony.

The relief commander conducts a detailed white-glove inspection of the weapon, checking each part of the rifle once. Then, the relief commander and the relieving sentinel meet the retiring sentinel at the center of the matted path in front of the Tomb for the commencement of the changing of the guard ritual.

My name is Thomas Hertzell, and my uncle was **Lt. Paul Eastman Craig, Jr.** of the 517 paratroopers (1st Abn. Task Force (460th PFA, 463rd PFABn.; 509th PIB; 517th PCT; 551st PIB; 596th PCEng. Co.)). His service number was 1691937, and he was killed in action on January 6, 1945 in Trois Pont, Belgium.

He received the Silver Star posthumously, and I have that citation. But he also received a Bronze Star (maybe two), a Purple Heart, and a battlefield promotion from Sergeant to Lieutenant. I have no idea why.

I've been trying for almost three years to find the citations or the paperwork that might tell us (my mother is his sister; she's 91 this year) what happened; what he did for those Bronze Stars, Purple Heart, and Battlefield Commission. We know he was wounded at some point in 1944 and hospitalized, but he went back to battle upon his discharge. We don't know how he was injured either.



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I've written everyone; every department (St. Louis, the Veterans' Association, the National Archives) and no one seems to know how to find this information. I understand there was a fire, but I've also been told that these records exist elsewhere, and it's just a matter of reconstructing them from other sources.

Do you have any idea whom I could write, or what I could do? A guy named Keven Pratt (Assistant Director for Military Records, National Personnel Records Center) was assisting me, but that eventually turned up nothing. I've run out of ideas, and my mother is running out of time.

Any suggestions you might have would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Thomas Hertzell

Hi Tom,

I've started to dig around my (incomplete) files. Here are a couple of items that I found.

First is an old note from Gene Brissey (now deceased), who served with your uncle in E Company:

Entry of May 27, 2002 at 17:40 [EST]
From: Gene Brissey , E Company
Subject: What did you do in the war Daddy?

Subj: Memorial Day 2002 I want to ramble on a bit about our veterans and their families. Many times I have read letters from family members who say that their husband, father, grandfather or whomever don't, won't or whatever, talk about their experiences during their military service. Why? Why? Why? Are we afraid that we might cry or something? I've been there and it feels good sometimes. If there's anyone who reads this, refuses or hesitates to talk about their military time I say go for it. You don't have to go into gory details. Sure, there are probably more bad times than good times but we can handle that. Our wives, children, grandchildren and others are interested in what we did. Could it be that no one seemed interested years ago. If so they apparently do now considering all the mail to Mail Call asking for information about their whomever. The latest being Lori asking for info on her father, Orville Stubbs. I knew him from Toccoa onward, but only he can relay what he did during any time period. I know that he was with the outfit after bloody Bergstein because I have a picture of 40 E Company men who were able to be with the company after Feb. 8, 1945 after departing Bergstein. As for me I was unable to get through Feb. 8th. I missed by three or four minutes. I probably have the "battle rattles" as badly as the average veteran and I didn't talk much about my experiences probably because I thought people weren't interested. After I was married and fathered three children I still didn't talk about it because I wasn't asked. Many years ago I decided to write my story for my children. I found it was rather easy to do so without writing too much about death and those who were wounded around me. I called the story, A DEVIL IN BAGGY PANTS or What Did You Do in the War Daddy? The primary part started at Camp Toccoa and ended in Bergstein. The kids and now the grandkids think it's a great thing. One paragraph that still nearly brings tears to my eyes concerns my writing about my good friend **Paul Craig**. Soon after we went to Europe his wife had a baby. Paul never saw it. He was killed in Trois Ponts. I wrote that the child probably asked her mother, what did daddy do in the war mommy? This is becoming too long so, I'll just urge all who have not done so already, talk about it or write about it. Those who you will leave behind want to know what you did in the war daddy. While we are at it lets not forget those family members and friends who we left behind. Some may have had a worse time than some of us.



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Gene Brissey, E Company

So we know he was in E Company. I do have some Morning Reports, including an AWOL on 13-Jul-44, a Non-Battle Casualty on 21-Oct-44, and his promotion from S/Sgt to 2nd Lt. on 25-Oct-44. I have attached a copy of the morning report from 6-Jan-1945 when he was KIA.

And in Gene Brissey's biography, he does make several notes about his friend, Sergeant Craig, as well as a short description of how he was killed on Jan 6, in the section "Battle of the Bulge".

See: http://www.517prct.org/documents/brissey/brissey_history.htm

There is also a battle analysis of the attack on Trois Ponts at

http://www.517prct.org/documents/infantry_school/SmithBill_G_CPT.pdf,

but I do not see any specific mention of Company E in that report.

The commander of the 2nd Battalion, Dick Seitz, often describes the early January battles as his worst experiences ever in battle.

I hope this helps.

Bob Barrett

COMPANY MORNING REPORT END. NO. 2400 6 Jan 1945 (DATE) (MONTH) (YEAR)

STATION Trois, Ponte, Belgium

ORGANIZATION Co E 517th Para Inf Regt Inf. (CO. DET. ETC.) (PRESENT UNIT) (ARM OR SERVICE)

SERIAL NUMBER	NAME	GRADE	CODE
11891937	Craig, Paul E. Jr.	2nd Lt	MIL
fr duty to KIA.			
5292660	Higley, Donald L.	7745 Pvt	AG
18027000	Carter, Edward A. Jr.	7745 Pvt	X
35861482	Mawjaki, Herb A.	7745 Pvt	
18016614	Kayton, Chester E.	7745 PFC	
34732536	Haight, Raymond T.	7745 PFC	
above (5) E. fr duty to ab sk in Hosp MHC LD			
basic status changed fr asgd to atchd unsgd.			

RECORD OF EVENTS.
Company in defense of town. Sent most of day clearing vicinity of snipers. 1 officer killed by snipers. - 1

OFFICER STRENGTH	PLD O R CAPT		1ST LT		2D LT		WO		PLTC	
	PRESEN	ABSEN	PRESEN	ABSEN	PRESEN	ABSEN	PRESEN	ABSEN	PRESEN	ABSEN
ASSIGNED			4		2					
ATTACHED UNDESIGNED		1		2						
ATTACHED FOR OTHER ORGN										
TOTAL		1	4	3	2					

AVN CADET & ENLISTED STRENGTH	AVIATION CADETS		ENLISTED MEN			
	PRESENT	ABSENT	PRESENT FOR DUTY	PRESENT NOT FOR DUTY	ABSENT	PRESENT AND ABSENT
ASSIGNED			87	3	22	111
ATTACHED UNDESIGNED					58	58
ATTACHED FOR OTHER ORGN			3		1	4
TOTAL			90	3	81	173

RA TION REPORT

R 1 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DAY OF WEEK
A 1 RATIONS REQUIRED FOR DATE
Y 1 MESS ATTENDANCE FOR DAY OF THIS REPORT
I 2 BREAKFAST DINNER SUPPER
O 3 MEN AUTHORIZED TO MESS SEPARATELY
M 3 MEN ATTCH FOR OTHER ORGN FOR RATIONS
S 3 MEN PRESENT LESS

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S 3 MEN PRESENT LESS

PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES
I CERTIFY THAT THIS MORNING REPORT IS CORRECT AND THAT ALL INFORMATION IS AS REPORTED AND NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

SIGNATURE *Maxwell J. Salsala*
MAXWELL J. SALSALA CAPT INF.
U.S. A. G. O. FORM NO. 1 (MAY 1944)
WD COPY THRU MRN OR SCU



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Happy Birthday, Merle NcMorrow!

Three weeks ago a very pleasant and surprising event took place. Normally my birthday is just another ordinary day. However on this day three members from what I call the "European Tour Group" showed up to wish me a Happy Birthday. I can only imagine the amount of time it must have taken to coordinate all their work items and personal events that had to mesh in order for all to arrive from three different States (Massachusetts, New York and Illinois) at the same time. Eisenhower could have used them 74 years earlier.

Joanne Barrett, Miriam Kelly and Nancy Armand arrived at a restaurant prearranged with my family. After lunch we spent the rest of the day in Fargo. The next morning the four of us drove 200 miles West to Bismarck where I had spent most of my adult life. It was a sentimental journey for me. We sat in the car in front of the house I built in 1954, It was a new area of the city and was called Highland Acres.. As the three asked questions,, my life began to flash before me. My two sons were born there and attended the grade school one block, to the north. Their friends that they grew up with moved on with them to high school. Soon they were in college but they always came back to Highland Acres for holidays and other special events. Those kindergarten kids were still friends and playing Touch football. After college most scattered to different parts of the country but they try to meet at least once a year Now these kids I am telling these three women about are in their late sixties: older than they are.

During the two days in Bismarck we viewed the ND Veterans Cemetery ,lying adjacent to the Missouri River, Fort Abraham Lincoln n from where General Custer left on his ill-fated trip, Heritage Center, Capitol and Museum. So many memories and so little time left but it is a birthday i won't forget because of these three unselfish women.

Merle McMorrow





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Merle McMorrow's 95th Birthday April 22

A few weeks ago, **Mimsey Boyle**, **Nancy Frasier** & I traveled from our respective states to Fargo ND to celebrate **Merle McMorrow's** 95th birthday. In Fargo, we had a birthday lunch with Merle's sister Judy, his brother Bob, his son Tom & daughter in law Patty and his daughter in law Diane (Merle's son Mark was away on business). Toasts were made & cards were exchanged.



The house that Merle built

We ate our way thru Bismarck. We started with a lovely 95th birthday dinner celebration. Millennial restaurant staff came over to our table to thank Merle for his service & wish him a Happy Birthday. We dined at the Elks Club where Merle was a long time member and the Radisson, the site of the 2001 Bismarck ND 517th PRCT Reunion organized by Merle & Mardy. Merle and Mardy were married shortly before the reunion. Mardy always claimed Merle married her so she would help him with hosting the big event. We continued on, eating at many of Merle's favorite dining spots. At the end of the four days Merle, who weighs himself daily had put on 6 lbs.

Merle is very proud of his home state of North Dakota and a terrific knowledgeable tour guide. Merle was an engineer employed by the Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation and instrumental in bringing electrical power from Bismarck to Jamestown to Fargo. Dam Garrison had just been completed and the power was being distributed to the then rural area of North Dakota and Montana. Merle educated us about the agriculture, the oil fields, the indigenous Affiliated Tribes and the immigration of Norwegians & Germans (from Russian) who settled in North Dakota in exchange for land. The Missouri River and the Prairie land was so beautiful.

The next day we headed to Bismarck, where Merle spent most of his adult life and raised his family. It was an absolute pleasure traipsing down memory lane with Merle. We sat outside the house he built for hours and he talked about his life with his wife Kay & his boys. We visited Kay's grave at the VA cemetery, Fort Abraham Lincoln with the Indian Village and Custer's house, the Heritage Museum, the Capitol where Merle was once employed and allegedly dated a number of the employees' grandmothers!





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Merle is doing great. His brother Bob lives down the hall in the same apartment complex. Merle works out twice a day, writes for his book and is as witty as ever. He repeatedly threw Mimsey, Nancy & me under the bus telling the locals that all we knew about Fargo was from the movie "Fargo". Merle then coaxed every Midwesterner we encountered to say "You Betcha". They all graciously complied. We followed up with our apologies.

I am honored to call Merle my friend. I love him dearly and I will be forever grateful for his friendship & kindness to my dad & me. I thank him for his selfless service for our country.



Joanne Barrett



Merle, his wife Kay and sons Tom and Mark

brother Bob, Mark's wife Diane, Tom's wife Patty, son Tom, Merle, sister Betty





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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.

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