



# Memorial Day Special Edition Parkman Paragraphs

Created by Cory Anderson

Parkman Paragraphs is published in Spring and Fall of each year.

This limited edition issue is printed specifically for the

## 2002 Parkman Memorial Day Parade.

We wish to thank all of our Active Duty and Veterans throughout all eras of our country's existence for all of the sacrifices that they have made to give us our freedoms and continue to make our country a safe place to live. May our future generations understand these sacrifices from our Veterans and appreciate the quality of life created for them.

On behalf of the Parkman Trustees and the Parkman Chamber of Commerce

### Special Thanks for the continued support of the:

Geauga County Sheriff Department  
Middlefield VFW Post 9678

Parkman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Team  
Parkman Boy Scout and Cub Scout Troops #76  
Cardinal Marching Band

Parkman Congregational Church SS Edward Lucy Catholic Parish  
and the various participants who helped to make our  
2002 Parkman Memorial Day Celebration a success.

Barnett Family (thanks for the story of Robert Barnett)

Father John Burkley, SS Edward Lucy Catholic Parish

Jeff Gardner, Commander, V.F.W. Post 9678

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Wayne Komandt, Chief, Parkman Volunteer Fire Department

Scott Villers Parkman Boy Scout Liaison

Best wishes to everyone for a fun and safe summer  
and don't forget to give THANKS to a Veteran.



# Parkman Paragraphs Memorial Day 2002



PARKMAN MEMORIAL DAY 2002 TRIBUTE TO

## Robert F. Barnett

Community Website: [www.ParkmanOhio.com](http://www.ParkmanOhio.com)  
Newsletter E-mail: [ParkmanOhio@gmail.com](mailto:ParkmanOhio@gmail.com)



# Robert (Bob) F. Barnett

## 1922 - 1996

Robert (Bob) F. Barnett enlisted in the U. S. Army in October of 1942 and was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas.

On June 1, 1943 he departed for England on the Queen Mary, where he joined the 832nd Engineer Aviation Battalion near Petersborough, England. The battalion's mission was to build, maintain and expand Air-drome facilities in England. Glatton airdrome and Abbots Ripton Air Depot near Alconbury Airdrome were projects handled by the 832nd Engineers Aviation Battalion.

After the invasion of France on June 6th various units of the Battalion arrived on the continent between the first and fifth of July 1942. Its first location after landing in Normandy was at Neuilly la Foret a few miles south of Isigny, Normandy, France.

Robert "Bob" Barnett was a member of an airfield reconnaissance team from Co. B. 832nd Engr. Av. Bn., United States Army. As a result of the duty to be performed as a member of this team, Bob Barnett was selected because of his reliability, courage and loyalty.

The recon team acted on orders received by the Battalion from Regimental Headquarters. Normally, these orders were for a recon team consisting of a manned jeep and half-track to inspect and report back on the possible use of a facility, in this case a German airfield. Often these facilities were still in the enemy territory, but this information was not available until the recon team had pursued its orders. Thus, as a member of the recon team, despite being on constant alert, sudden exposure to the enemy was a constant threat.

It was on a mission to inspect a German airfield near Lorient, France when Bob Barnett was captured and became a prisoner of war.

The airfield was still in German control. Alerted, the reconnaissance team went to the nearby town of Quimperle, France, needing supplies to continue their mission. Bob Barnett, as the half-track driver was instructed to go to the town of Arzam. It was on the mission that Bob and some members of the recon team crossed into enemy held territory. Suddenly, Bob and the crew found themselves in a gun battle with overwhelming German forces. Recognizing the insurmountable odds, the team surrendered.



It was during the gun fight that Bob suffered serious wounds to his leg. After treatment of his wounds at a German hospital he was assigned a bed and was now a Prisoner of War as a patient in a German hospital. You can imagine his dismay, and surprise, when he learned that the patient in the bed next to his was the German officer that he had wounded in the exchange of fire.



Once he was out of the hospital he was taken to prison camp on an island off the coast of France. Food was scarce at the prison camp. Bob said once a week they had sweet soup, which consisted of a few prunes stewed in a lot of water. The guard's meals were not any better. He was at the prison camp for six (6) weeks before he was released during a prisoner exchange.

Because his ankle injury did not heal he was sent back to the United States on a medical plane where he was transferred to a Veterans Hospital in Cambridge, Ohio. After several unsuccessful operations, he was measured for an artificial leg. A German doctor working at the hospital informed Bob of a new surgical technique (a bone transplant) that might save his leg. Bob consented to the operation and it was successful.

He was at Cambridge for six months, before being discharged from the army with 100% disability. Once he was home he decided that he could not sit around for the rest of his life, so he got a job. His disability was reduced, but he was happier.

In 1970, with a group of veterans and their wives, Bob and Donna went back to England. At that time Glatton was no longer in use, but Alconbury was still a very active U. S. military base.

An annual reunion has been held for the 832nd since 1957. Donna accompanied Bob to the reunion for the first time in 1965. The reunions have been held in several different cities. The 832nd veterans enjoyed getting together once a year and this was the highlight of the year for Bob. The last official reunion was held in 2000.

These men had bond that cannot be explained. They fought for their country's freedom and to protect each other.

Mr. Robert Barnett is our 2002 Parkman Veteran Memorial Day Honoree and was included at the Overlook Cemetery in 1996. He joins many of our local Veterans in our community tradition to salute those who honorably served our country.

Many thanks to all of our selfless Veterans!

