

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ **Brandon Neal Letters, 1942-1944 and undated** ◀

MSS-280

Size: .25 linear ft.

Provenance: Received from Deborah Hall on December 12, 2013

Access: Open

Collection Summary: Collection consists of letters written to Brandon Neal's family members while he was in the armed forces in the 1940s, as well as miscellaneous photographs and memorabilia from his childhood and adult life.

Subject(s): [Social Life and Customs](#); [War, Soldiers, and Veterans](#)

Related Collections:

Processing Note:

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Completed by: Mark Troknya, July 2014; last updated: Arjun Sabharwal, November 2014

Brandon Neal
Letters, 1942-1944 and undated

Biographical Sketch

Brandon Neal was born in Toledo, Ohio to William and Hattie Neal on November 16, 1922. In 1927, his family moved to the suburb of Beverly. In 1940, Neal graduated from Libbey High School and then attended the University of Toledo. In the summer of his junior year of high school, Neal and 3 of his friends bought a 1929 Model T Touring and drove from Toledo, Ohio to California. This trip was mentioned in the local newspaper, The Toledo Blade. While at the University of Toledo, he studied Accounting.

He was drafted into the Army in 1942, the same year he met his future wife Ruthann. His basic training took place at Camp Robinson in Arkansas, and then was sent to Lake Forest College in Illinois to be trained as an army engineer. Eventually his services were called upon and he was sent to Oregon where he became a platoon runner for Lt. Dwight Brown, and eventually served his country in Hawaii and the Pacific. His letters home were from the years 1942-1944. While on furlough he came home and married Ruthann on February 21, 1945 and they honeymooned in Chicago. While serving he contracted "jungle rot" and was eventually discharged in 1946.

The Neals eventually found an apartment on Peck Street in Toledo, Ohio, and Neal got a job at Owens Corning. Their first child, Debbie, was born in June of 1946. Daughter Nancy was born in 1949, and was followed by a son named Brandon Jr. A job transfer took them from Toledo to Fort Worth Texas and eventually they settled in California. On June 29, 2013 Brandon Neal passed away.

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Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of letters written from Brandon Neal to his family members in Toledo, Ohio, while Neal served in the Army. The letters were dated from 1942-1944, however 3 of the letters were not dated. These undated letters are found at the end of the dated letters. The other materials are various personal family memorabilia including photographs, house deeds, Neal's death certificate, and copies of a homemade neighborhood newspaper that his sister wrote while living in Beverly that discusses local social life and neighborhood family news. Also included is a detailed account of Brandon Neal's biography written by Neal's grandson Trevor Merrill.

All original documents and photographs are encapsulated in mylar folders in order to preserve them and prevent further deterioration due to acid migration.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item
1	1	2013 (History of Brandon Neal written by Trevor Merrill)
		Brandon Neal Letters
		1942
1	1	November 11 (San Francisco, California)
		1944
1	1	August 29 (somewhere in the Pacific Ocean)
1	1	November 16 (unknown location)
1	1	November 21 (San Francisco)
1	1	December 26 (Dutch New Guinea Hospital)
		Unknown
1	1	Unknown date and location
1	1	Unknown date and location
1	1	Unknown date and location
		Miscellaneous Material
1	1	Copies of <i>The Beverly Breezes</i> written by Neal's sister Nancy in early 1930s
1	1	Government documents including Life Insurance Policy, Recognition of Service and Certificate of Eligibility for benefits
1	1	5 estate deeds for different properties
1	1	12 th Annual Owens Corning Fiberglass Service Award Program (1957) which mentions Brandon Neal
1	1	<i>Bend of the River</i> magazine for Maumee Valley area which discusses the George Ford estate where Neal's father worked
1	1	Copy of a letter sent to Neal's friends informing them of his passing including his obituary
1	1	Brandon Neal's death certificate
		Photographs
1	1	Neal's father in a bank in 1907
1	1	Camp Storer 1932
1	1	Beverly School Triangle Club April 1932
1	1	YMCA Camp, Stony Lake Napoleon Michigan, August 1934
1	1	Harvard School Class of 1936
1	1	Camp Storer Southside Section 1938
1	1	Photograph of Neal with his car that he took to California as well as the article in the newspaper

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| 1 | 1 | Family Reunion |
| 1 | 1 | Neal Home (3769 Beverly Drive) |
| 1 | 1 | Army ID and photograph of Neal and other army men |
| 1 | 1 | Family photograph in 1985 |
| 1 | 1 | Copy of a photography of Brandon and Ruthann Neal in 2011 |