

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

CHARAIT, Albert Alfred "Skip"

Date of birth

18 April 1920

Age

24

Place of birth

Nashua, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire

Hometown

Nashua, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire

Military service

Service number

O-10039279

Rank

First Lieutenant

Unit

**HQ & HQ Company,
507th Parachute Infantry Regiment,
17th Airborne Division**

Awards

Purple Heart

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

24 March 1945

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Margraten

Plot	Row	Grave
F	13	20

Immediate family

Members

Albert A. Charait (father)

Genevieve (Parker) Charait (mother)

Shirley E. (Evans) Charait (wife)

More information

Albert A. Charait graduated from the University of New Hampshire.

He volunteered for the Army of the United States in Manchester, New Hampshire on 19 May 1942.

The following is a biography, written by a relative, called Janice:

"Skip (a common nickname for young boys, likely short for Skipper) was an only child, whose father, Albert Alfred, Senior, was a first generation US citizen. His grandfather, David, emigrated from Canada to Massachusetts, USA, in 1882 at the age of 20. Skip's father died when he was 19 years old. His mother, Genevieve, died when he was 6.

Despite having no immediate family, Skip was able to further his education and was a 1942 graduate of the University of New Hampshire. While at UNH, he met his future spouse, Shirley Eliza Evans. Shirley was a first cousin to my mother, on her father's side of the family. Both Skip and Shirley aspired to be writers.

Skip's draft registration card, dated 1 July 1941, describes him as 6 feet, 1 inches tall and weighing 139 pounds, brown hair and blue eyes. He enlisted in the US Army right out of university on 19 May 1942. He and Shirley were married 8 September 1943 in Salt Lake City, UT, where he was stationed for military training as a paratrooper. There they lived in military housing with their 2 cats. The attached photo was taken in front of their housing quarters. (After much thought, I decided to send this electronic version of the only photo I have of Skip and Shirley. It seems the safest and fastest way to share this with you. Please let me know if this comes through well...I can resend it from my phone if not.)

From Shirley's niece, my second cousin, I learned that Skip was overseas long enough to write more than 75 letters to her. I also learned that he died saving the life of another paratrooper. That gentleman lived in the same state as Shirley, and later visited her to express his gratitude. After Skip's death, Shirley abandoned her dream of becoming a writer and took training to become an occupational therapist, with the hope of helping injured soldiers who returned home. She practiced this vocation until her retirement. She never remarried.

I had the privilege of knowing Shirley when I was in my 40s. She lived in a suburb of Boston, Massachusetts, and we discovered common interests at a family gathering. I would drive the hour+ to Boston, she would take public transportation, and we would rendezvous at one of her favorite high-end restaurants. She had a twinkling eyes, a delightful sense of humor and was a marvelous conversationalist. We never discussed Skip's death, but she did tell me about his talent as a writer and shared with me a piece of his writing that revealed a sensitive soul, who expressed himself well.

Shirley was close to her sister's daughters, and the older moved to Missouri when her health declined so as to help her with end of life issues. The younger one is my age. She has told me that even though her Uncle Skip died 5 years before she was born, she has always felt a connection to him."

1st Lt Charait was a passenger on board a C-47 of the 438th Troop Carrier Group that was scheduled to drop paratroopers on Drop Zone W, west of Flüren, Germany. The airplane lost its way in the smokescreen, which caused the men being dropped on the western edge of the Diersfordt Forest. Lt Charait was killed in this forest the same day.

Documents

- 59 KB

Photos



Source of information: Peter Schouteten, Terry Hirsch, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.archives.gov, www.ww2-airborne.us, www.ancestry.com - Headstone and Interment Record / 1920 Census / U.S. City Directories, 1917-1923, Nashua, New Hampshire, 17th Airborne Division Historic Report of Operation Varsity, Book: The Last Drop, Operation Varsity March 24-25, 1945 by Stephen L. Wright.

Photo source: www.findagrave.com - Des Philippet, <http://www.library.unh.edu> - University of New Hampshire - Yearbook 1942, Luke Whissel, Hubert Loo