

Remembering WWII's Fallen

by Krista Finstad Hanson



1st Lieutenant Kenneth Francis Dutton

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese Imperial Air Force bombed the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan the next day. Once the U.S. entered World War II, the 24th Armored Engineer Battalion of the 4th Armored Division participated in major battles in the European theater of war. They landed at Utah Beach at Normandy France from July 11-16th, 1944. They participated in Operation Cobra in France with battles in Nantes, the Brittany Peninsula, the Loire River Valley, and the Moselle River during the summer of 1944. They captured Lunneville on September 16, 1944.

2nd Lieutenant Kenneth Dutton served with Company B of the 24th Armored Engineer Battalion and died of wounds received in action somewhere in France on September 24, 1944.

Kenneth Francis Dutton was born October 13, 1921 in Angelo to Walter and Pearl (Davis) Dutton. Father Walter was a veteran of World War I.

On the 1930 US census, Kenneth (8) lived with his family in Angelo, Monroe County, Wisconsin. Father Walter and mother Pearl lived on a farm they owned. Walter was a repair man in an auto shop working on his own account. Their children included Eldon, Pauline, Walter, Kenneth, Ralph, Laverne, Wayne, and Rollin.

Kenneth Dutton was a 1939 Sparta High School graduate.

From the Monroe County Newspaper index, there was a January 15, 1940 article in the *Sparta Herald* that Private Kenneth F. Dutton was in the Air Force.

From the October 12, 1944 *La Crosse Tribune* article titled "Lieut. Dutton Dies In Action: Parents Get Letter With Notification," the article stated that "First Lieut. Kenneth Dutton, 24, died of wounds Sept. 24, according to word received by his parents from the war department..."

Lieut. Dutton ... enlisted in the army air corps following his graduation.

Completing his training with the air corps at the air technical school at Lowery Field, Colo., he was retained as an instructor there for eight months before transfer to Alaska, where he spent one year.

Because of an injury to a finger and some ribs Dutton returned to the States and was commissioned



Kenneth Dutton

following graduation from Officers' Candidate school at Fort Belvoir, Va., Sept. 1, 1942. He was assigned to an engineer unit and left for overseas duty late in December 1943.

Dutton has three brothers in service. They are Chief Petty Officer Eldon of the naval air corps stationed at Oxnard, Calif.; Sgt. La Vera (sic: LaVerne) of the marine air corps in Miramar, Calif; and T. Sgt. Ralph, army air corps, who recently returned from service in Italy where he was wounded. He now is stationed Lincoln, Neb.

Other survivors are his parents, a sister Mrs. Minert (Pauline) De Voe of Angelo, and two brothers, Wayne and Rollin, at home. His wife, the former Margaret Stencie, resides at Cleveland..."

From the November 19, 1948 *La Crosse Tribune* article titled "Return 20 La Crosse Region War Casualties For Reburial," the article stated that "Twenty World war II dead from La Crosse and the Coulee Region are among the 7,572 bodies recently returned to the United States for reburial, according to an army announcement..."

Dutton was reburied in the Angelo Cemetery and was awarded the Purple Heart, posthumously.

Kenneth F. Dutton was listed on the Manitowoc, Wisconsin county WWII Honor List prepared by the National Archives. {Note: This researcher found no evidence of Kenneth F. Dutton in Manitowoc. However, the service number matches.}

Thank you, 1st Lieutenant Kenneth Francis Dutton, for your service to and sacrifice for this country. We honor you and remember you.

Krista Finstad Hanson is a 1989 Sparta High School graduate. She's a teacher, freelance writer and historian living in St. Paul, Minn. with her family. She has been compiling information for the Monroe County Local History Room on area WWII veterans who died in the war. This column, which spotlights one of those veterans each week, is an extension of that project.



The Spirit Of Giving

For the last weekend of Kriskindmarkt, Trail Magic Coffee Roasters of Black Earth, WI donated all their profits from hot coffee sales to the Bread Basket Ecumenical Food Pantry. Pictured is Maureen Sullivan receiving the bucket of cash from Gerald Poss of Trail Magic Coffee Roasters. It was estimated to contain no less than \$150. Contributed photo

From the past . . .

From the files of the *Sparta Herald*:
Monday, December 22, 2015

Eagle Scout project encompasses the heart and soul of Sparta: Biking, bridges and historical landmarks are expertly tied together in Nathan Janzen's Eagle Scout project. Janzen wanted to do something to bring people into downtown Sparta, and he wanted to incorporate Sparta's designation as the Bicycling Capital of America. He decided to make bike routes through the city, encompassing historical landmarks and other points of interest. "I wanted to bring people to downtown Sparta because I think it's a really beautiful place with a lot to offer," said Janzen. Janzen spoke with Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce Director Tim Hyma, who indicated the project would fit well with plans he already was working on with plans he was already working on with Sparta Parks and Recreation Director Brad Gilbertson. A billboard inside the Evan's Bosshard park, next to Ben' Bikin, now has an upgraded map highlighting the bike routes Janzen developed. He and fellow scouts from troop 7 utilized the Monroe County Local History Room to research old proper leases and other documents to compile historical data about points of interest in the city. In addition, Janzen made QR codes, which will direct the visitors to websites to learn more about Sparta's rich history.

Monday, December 29, 2005

Kendall teenager accused of strangling 10-year-old brother: A 18-year-old Kendall man is being held in Monroe County Jail on a \$10,000 cash bond after attempting to kill his 10-year-old brother. Avery J. Jacobson was charged this week with attempted first-degree intentional homicide. According to a criminal complaint, the alleged victim told authorities he and Jacobson were home alone the evening of December 20, and Jacobson asked him to go put wood in the furnace. The victim said no, and Jacobson allegedly got mad, hit the boy in the face twice, then picked him up by his neck and carried him into a bedroom. There, Jacobson reportedly deposited him on a bed and began choking him. The boy said he pretended to be dead in order to get Jacobson to stop. If convicted, Jacobson faces up to 60 years in

prison.

Monday, December 30, 1985

Pair escapes injury when tractor explodes: Two men escaped injury Friday afternoon when the tractor they were repairing exploded into flames, burning down a garage and extensively damaging a farmhouse. According to Wilton Fire Chief Duane Evans, the incident began shortly after 4 p.m. on the Edwin Sullivan farm in the town of Wilton, about 1 1/2 miles north of Hwy. 71, off Hwy. 131 along the Kickapoo River. He said two workers for Sullivan, Arden Brooks and Bobby Spiker, were working on the carburetor of the tractor in a garage attached to the house. The fire chief said the cause of the explosion was unknown, but it started a fire, which burned the garage to the ground and extensively damaged the roof and other parts of the two-story wooden home.

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Meetings

■Tomah Board of Education will hold a District Clerk's meeting Tues., Jan. 5, 5:15 p.m., at the Tomah School District Office, 129 W. Clifton St., Tomah.

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