

PFC Henry Andrew Sukowatey

This is the twenty second in a series of articles that we hope to publish for years to come. With this series we want to honor Service Members that served our great Nation. As I mentioned in the last article we need your help to honor these fine Americans. If you have someone you would like us to include, please help us research and develop articles. Our email address is mhamlegionpost113@gmail.com

Mount Horeb has such a long history of service and sacrifice to our Great Country.

Henry Andrew Sukowatey was born 3 February, 1918 to Mathias (Matthew) John and Rose T. (Haag) Sukowatey. He had four siblings, a brother Arthur who was three years older, a sister that was two years younger, Della Rose, a younger sister Theresa, and a brother Joe, who was seven years younger.

Henry grew up on the family farm on Highway J near Pine Bluff. He attended grammar school in Pine Bluff and went on to work on the family farm until he was drafted.

Henry was drafted 10 March 1941. The draft for WWII started in 1940 to fill positions that could not be filled. When the draft started in 1940 it was the first peace time draft in US history. Henry was drafted by a draft board in Madison along with 32 other Dane County residents, 8 of the 32 were from Mount Horeb: Eugene and Walter Post, Richard Gudgeon, Purely Collins, Sterling Hardin, Amos Gaylord Overland, Gaylord Mickelson, and Henry, Alvin Rear of Blue Mounds was also drafted on the 10th. Henry was entered service on the 17th of March and went off for Basic Training.

After completion of his training Henry was stationed at Fort Gordon, in Augusta Georgia until March 1943. Henry was reassigned to the 4th Infantry Division in April and moved to Fort Dix New Jersey. That summer he proposed to Virginia Kaltenberg and she accepted. The 4th Infantry Division left Fort Dix for England late in 1943 to train for the invasion of France.

Henry was part of the D-Day Invasion Delta Company 8th Infantry Regiment, which was a part of the 4th Infantry Division. The Division landed a couple thousand yards from their designated landing zone but that was better because the Germans were heavily entrenched and ready for

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the Division had they come ashore at their original landing site. Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt Jr., the Assistant Division Commander volunteered to lead the first wave of the Division ashore and he was the one that decided to fight from their position where they came on land.

The beach landing for the 4th Infantry may have been easier because of the error in the landing site but the days to come would see the 4th in some of the heaviest fighting. Henry was killed 17 June 1944 in Normandy shortly after the D-Day Invasion, he was awarded the Bronze Star posthumously. Before Henry left to go off to Europe, he told Joe that that would be the last time they would see each other. Joe explains that Henry knew the life expectancy of a machine gunner was very short, so he knew as the US Army fought our way across France and into Germany, he would not stand a very good chance of survival. Unfortunately, Henry was right and was killed as the allied forces were fighting their way into France.

The family requested that his body be brought back home for burial. His body had initially been buried in France in 1944. Henry's body along with those of eight other service members killed in Europe were sent home in 1948. His family held a funeral for Henry in November 1948 at St. Mary's Catholic Church. After the funeral he was buried at the St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery at the church in Pine Bluff.

Let us Never Forget that Freedom is NOT Free

Compiled by Jerry Hook with Research by Jerry Hook and Kathy Hanna