

Story #372a Herbert Sternhagen

Petty Officer Herbert Sternhagen (1910-1978) was a Mazomanie World War II veteran and a charter member of the Mazomanie Greening – Buelow American Legion Post #437. He was Post Commander during 1950 and 1951.

Herb enlisted in the Navy on July 22, 1943, with SN 8690254 (6890254?) and mustered out on September 25, 1945, having served three years. He was in the 89th Construction Battalion as a Seabee. His unit constructed naval facilities in the South Pacific. Herb was on the USS Bolivar from May to June 1945 after spending six months in a Guam hospital.

Herbert Henry Sternhagen (1910-1978) was born in Berry Township on December 14, 1910, the son of Mazomanie cobbler Otto Sternhagen and Ella Riebe. Otto was born in Germany, immigrating in 1886 and Ella was born in Milwaukee. Herbert is first found with his family as a nine year old school boy living on Webb Street in Black Earth at the 1920 US Census.

Herbert married Emma Freda Zaugg (1916-2008) on June 10, 1937 at the First Reformed Church in Sauk City. She was born in New York State, the daughter of Swiss born Mazomanie farmers Eugene Zaugg and Bertha Thaden. The young couple is found in Mazomanie at the 1940 US Census. Listing is lumber company truck driver Herbert 29 and Emma 24. His October 16, 1940 Draft Card listed him as 5'-9½", 170 # with a ruddy completion, brown hair and blue eyes. He was working for the Dresen Brothers.

After service, Herbert started working for the railroad in Mazomanie as a switchman. In August of 1948 he fell from a freight car while switching in the Madison classification yards. He suffered vertebrae fractures that kept him in a cast for several months and off work for a year. They moved from Mazomanie to Madison in 1950, living at 717 North Blackhawk Avenue the rest of their lives. Emma worked in Madison at an A&P Supermarket and retired from Del Farm grocery in 1973. Herbert retired about 1975 after working for 30 years with the Milwaukee Road.. Both passed away in Madison and are buried in the Sauk City Cemetery. They had no children.



