

In Memory of  
U.S. Army Air Force Technician Fifth Grade

## **Douglas F. Kiewel**

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

July 31, 1919 - July 24, 1942

Died in Cabatuan Prison Camp in the Philippine Islands



Douglas F. Kiewel was born July 31, 1919, in Granite Falls, Minnesota. His family consisted of his father William E. and his mother Alma, five brothers, two of whom were Lawrence and James, himself and three sisters. Douglas grew up to be a fine young man. He was confirmed in the Lutheran faith on June 11, 1933. When Douglas was 16, his family moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota where he attended Washington High School and graduated in 1937 as an honor roll student. At the time of his death the family lived on a farm located near Ellis, South Dakota. Although an appealing young man, Douglas never married before his enlistment in the army. He was considered by his family and teachers to be a man of great potential.

It was in December of 1940 that Mr. Kiewel enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps. Mr. Kiewel received his aviation training at Hamilton and March Fields in California. After being well-trained, he was then ordered to duty at Nichols Field, near Manila, Philippine Islands, as part of the 34<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron, 24<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Group, where he was stationed at the time of the war's outbreak. In a letter Pvt. Kiewel sent home to his mother and family dated October 16, 1941 he shares some of his concerns.

I am leaving for foreign service the 25th of this month. Where I am going, or how long I'll be there, I haven't the slightest idea. As no one of this group that is going signed up for foreign service I don't get it. They picked out ten of us from this squadron. I started taking my shots all over again this morning, which is the first time I learned anything about it.

The last letter that Pvt. Kiewel's family received from him was dated November 19, 1941, and November 21, 1941, written in two sections. The first section he was on the ship headed to Manila and the second section he had arrived. His words are so descriptive of his experience.

(Nov. 19, 1941) Dear Mother and all, If hell is any hotter, there's no use sending me there- I can't stand it...

(Nov. 21, 1941) Even these crickets and frogs croaking all nite sound good after confined to that boat for practically three weeks. Although we are sleeping with wooden floors in what looks like a cow pasture with these water buffalo treading around...it is really too hot to move, even a single sheet is practically too hot. I wish they would have told us that we were coming to such a torrid climate before I packed my civies. Maybe someone at

home could use them -it's a cinch I can't...I'll send some money to take care of my insurance. However there wouldn't be any object of sending Christmas gifts across that ocean. Love to all, Doug

On May 7, 1942, Pvt. Kiewel was reported missing in action in the fall of the Philippines. Over three years passed before the family received verification of his death. On June 23, 1945, Pvt. Kiewel's mother, Alma, received a Western Union telegram notifying her that her son who had been reported missing in action had died July 24, 1942 in the Philippine Islands. He died as a prisoner of war in Cabantuan Prison Camp, in the Philippine Islands. Adjutant General Ulio received an official message that Douglas F. Kiewel died as a result of dysentery and malaria.



On the official letter from Quartermaster General H. Feldman dated November 7, 1949, Douglas's family was notified that Tec 5 Douglas F. Kiewel, ASN 17011028 was buried in Plot B, Row 13, Grave 2 with a cross headstone at the Manila American Cemetery, Manila, Philippines Islands. The family was comforted when they were given Douglas's cross and name card at the World War II Memorial Dedication in Pierre, South Dakota in the fall of 2001.

Douglas F. Kiewel was a fine young man, and an esteemed hero. This man will be remembered throughout history as one of the great Fallen Sons of South Dakota.

This entry was respectfully submitted by Neal L. Bertelsen, 10th Grade, Roosevelt High School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, February 28, 2002. Information for this entry was provided by Mrs. Darlene Kiewel, and Mrs. Ruth Kiewel, sisters-in-law of Douglas F. Kiewel.

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### Army Man Feted at Parties During Furlough—

Douglas F. Kiewel has concluded a furlough here and left Sunday evening for March Field, Calif., where he is in the air corps, since enlisting last December. He motored to Sioux Falls with the H. J. Harder family from Grand Island, Neb., when coming and his brother Edward Kiewel and Misses Shirley Harder and Lois Swanson accompanied him as far back as Omaha.

Social functions given for him during his stay were at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Krambeck, a dinner at the H. J. Harder home, 513 South Walts ave., and a dancing party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Kiewel, Ellis, S. D., where he shared honors with Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Krambeck, who were recently married.

# MacArthur Offers Sympathy to Parents of PFC. Kiewel

Gen. Douglas MacArthur has extended his sympathies to Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Kiewel, Rt. 4, Sioux Falls, on the death of their son, Douglas.

Since the discovery by the allies of an abandoned prison camp in the Philippines, Kiewel is believed to have died as a prisoner of the Japanese. He has been listed as missing in action since May 7, 1942.

MacArthur's letter, dated May 27, 1945, reads as follows:

"My deepest sympathy goes to you in the death of your son, PFC. Douglas F. Kiewel, while a prisoner of war of the enemy.

"You may have some consolation in the memory that he, along with his comrades-in-arms who died on Bataan and Corregidor and in prison camps, gave his life for his country. It was largely their magnificent courage and sacrifices which stopped the enemy in the Philippines and gave us the time to arm ourselves for our return to the Philippines and the final defeat of Japan. Their names will be enshrined in our country's glory forever.

"In your son's death I have lost a gallant comrade and mourn with you."

Douglas Kiewel was born July 31, 1919, at Granite Falls, Minn. He has graduated from Washington high school in 1937 and enlisted in



**PFC. Douglas Kiewel**

the Army Air Forces December 4, 1940. After training at Hamilton and March Fields, in California, he was ordered to duty at Nichols Field, near Manila, P. I., where he was stationed at the time war broke out.

He is survived by his parents; five brothers, PFC. Roy, now in

Germany; Seaman 2/c Lawrence, USN; James, Trent, S. D.; Edward, Akron, Ia., and Robert of Sioux Falls; and three sisters, Kathryn Kranbeck, Lajla and Betty Kiewel, all of Sioux Falls.



## Believed Missing



**Pfc. Douglas Kiewel**

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Kiewel, Rt. 4, have been informed by the war department that their son, Pfc. Douglas F. Kiewel, is listed as missing in action.

Kiewel was stationed in the Philippine Islands at the time of the surrender of Bataan and Corregidor. Information concerning him and others similarly listed awaits an exchange of information in regard to prisoners of war.

He enlisted in the air corps in the spring of 1940.

Thursday, August 2, 1945.

## Kiewel Memorial Services Sunday

Memorial services for T/5 Douglas F. Kiewel, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Kiewel, Rt. 4, will be held at Emmanuel Lutheran church, Akron, Ia., at 2:30 p. m. Sunday. Rev. David Roy will officiate.

Kiewel, previously reported missing, died on July 24, 1942, in a Japanese prison camp in the Philippine islands.

Born at Granite Falls, Minn., July 31, 1919, he was graduated from Washington high school in 1937 and continued to assist his father on the farm until enlisting in the air corps in December, 1940. He went overseas in November, 1941, and was stationed at Nichols Field near Manila on Luzon. On May 7, 1942, he was reported missing in action.

Survivors include the parents; five brothers, Edward Kiewel, Akron, Ia., James Kiewel, Trent, S.

D., T/5 Roy Kiewel, recently returned from Europe, S 2/c Lawrence Kiewel, Norman, Okla., and Robert Kiewel, Sioux Falls, and three sisters, Mrs. Kathryn Kiambeck, Betty Kiewel and Lajla Kiewel, all of Sioux Falls.