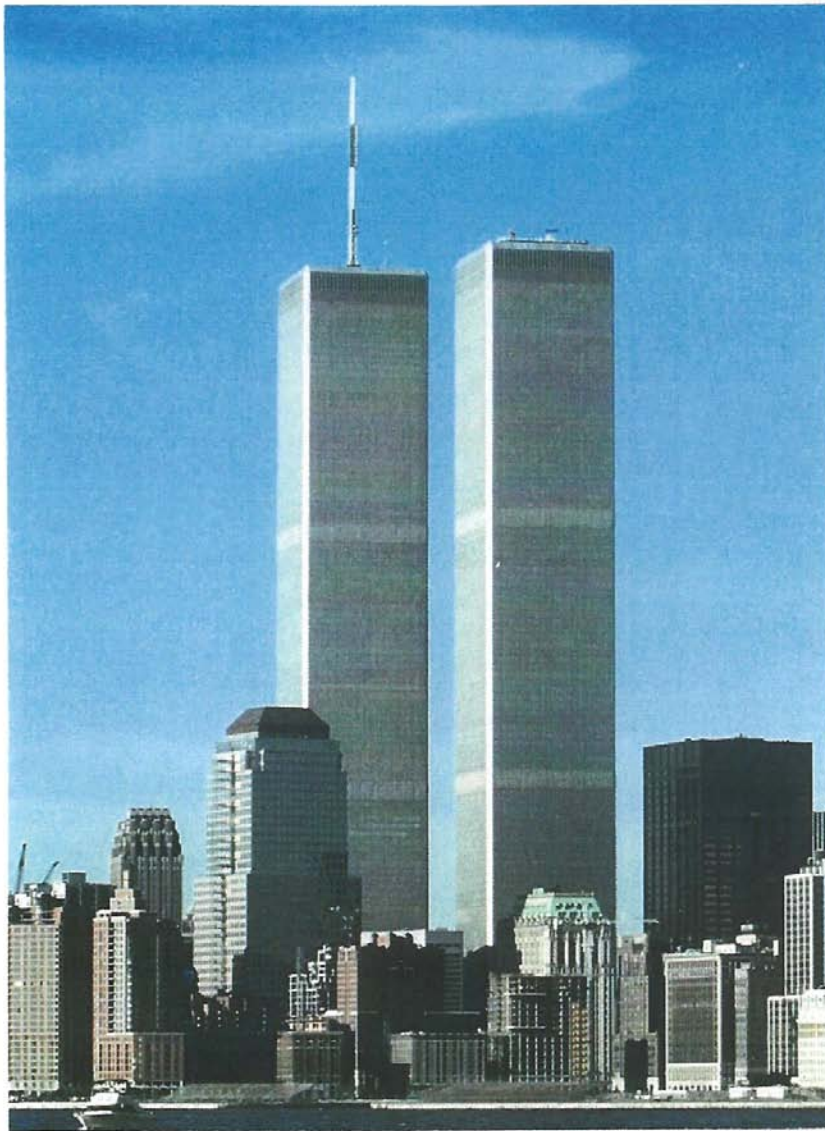


# **SIRIUS, THE HERO DOG OF 9/11**

**By**  
**Hank Fellows**

**9/11 Songs and Books**  
**New York**



The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center

Hello, my name is Sirius. I was a patrol dog at the World Trade Center. I died on September 11, 2001, the day that America was attacked.

Before I tell you my story, I need to tell you a little bit about the World Trade Center and New York City. These are things I learned by listening to the people around me.

When the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center were completed in 1973, they were the two tallest buildings, not just in New York City, but in the entire world.



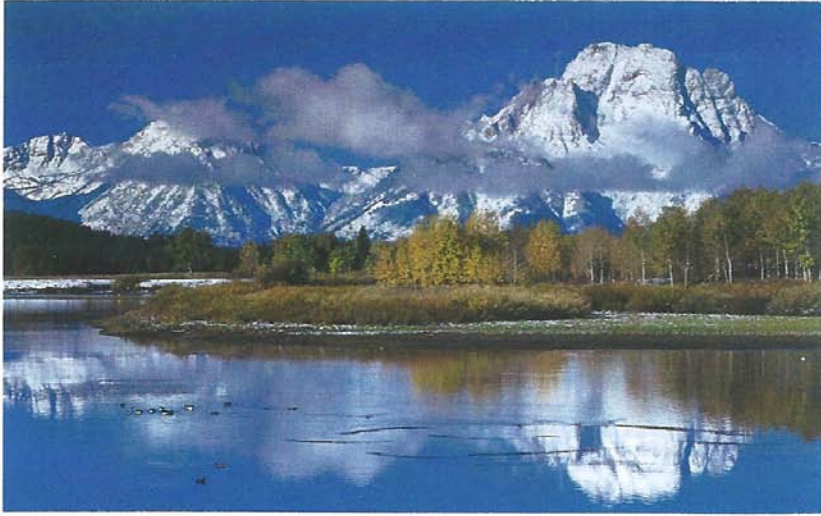
An Immigrant Family Arrives in New York City in 1905

The gleaming North and South Towers, soaring high above Manhattan, showed the world that New York was proud to be a great city.

And everyone who lived in New York knew why it was a great city. It was great because over the years, people from more than 200 countries had come here to make a better life for themselves and their families.

Here in New York City, here in America, everyone had the chance to dream.





The Grand Teton Mountains in Wyoming



In America, everyone has the chance to dream

But there have always been people who hate America. They hate the beauty of our land. They hate the freedom to speak and work and pray without fear of punishment.

Most of all, they hate the belief that every person is special, and deserves that chance to dream.

And so, some of these people who hate America looked up at the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center and said, "If we destroy the World Trade Center, then America will not be so great anymore."



The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey  
Protected the World Trade Center



The job of protecting the World Trade Center belonged to a part of the government called the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which also protects the ports and harbors around New York City. Everyday, the Port Authority police officers searched packages and trucks coming into the Twin Towers, checking for anything that could hurt people or damage the buildings.

But some of the most important work was not done by the police officers. Some of the most important work was done by dogs. These dogs were part of the specially-trained Police K9 Unit. The letter and number "K9" was a short way to spell "canine", which means "dog".

Each dog in the Police K9 Unit was carefully trained to smell dynamite and other dangerous things that might be brought into the Twin Towers.



This is one of my favorite photographs of David and me

I was one of these special dogs. My name is pronounced "Seer-us". Sirius is the name of the brightest star in the evening sky. I was a light-brown Labrador Retriever, a breed of dog known for its intelligence and courage. I was born in a small town in Pennsylvania. I became a member of the Police K9 Unit at the Twin Towers when I was 4 1/2 years old.

I had a police officer partner, a man named David. Everyday, David and I patrolled the Twin Towers.

And each night, at the end of our long day's work, I went home with David, because I was also David's friend, and I was a member of David's family.



David and I loved to spend time in the park



Here I am relaxing on a warm afternoon

David and I also had a lot of fun together. One of our favorite activities was walking in the park so I could sniff the flowers.

Sometimes, I liked the flowers so much that I would start to eat them! But David would gently say, “Sirius, if you eat the flowers, they won’t be here for other dogs and people to enjoy.”

At other times, I just wanted to be an ordinary dog, and relax in the sun.

There’s nothing like a good nap!



The World Trade Center at dawn



September 11, 2001 started out like any other day. Shortly after dawn, David and I arrived at the South Tower of the World Trade Center. Suddenly, there was a loud bang, like thunder, only much louder. I looked at David and I began barking. David soon learned that a plane had crashed into the top of the North Tower, and the building was on fire!

David knew that he had to help rescue the people working there. He left me in the safety of the K9 kennel in the South Tower.

I will never forget his words to me. He said, "Sirius, I promise I will come back for you soon." He patted me on the head, and scratched me behind the ears, which I always liked.



September 11, 2001

David and many other brave police officers and firefighters began rescuing people from the burning North Tower. Suddenly, a second plane hit the South Tower, which also burst into flames.

It was at that moment that David and everyone else knew that the first plane crash had not been an accident – this was part of the plan by the people who hate America!



Four passenger planes, like these, were used to attack America

David later learned that early that morning, some of the people who hate America had taken control of four planes filled with passengers, soon after take-off.

Two of these planes were steered into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center. One of the other planes was crashed into a government building in Washington DC, called the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, as its brave passengers tried to regain control of the plane.

All of the people in these four planes were killed.



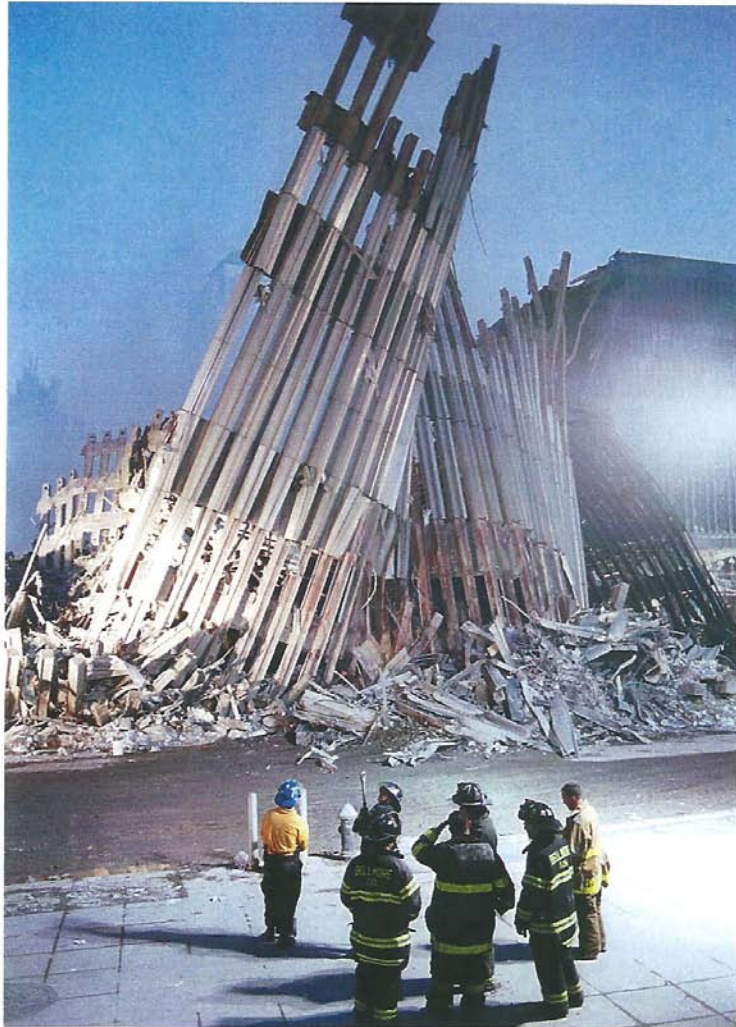
Firefighters rushed to battle the flames



From my kennel, I could hear the fire engine sirens. I could hear police officers and emergency workers shouting orders to each other, as they rescued thousands of people from the two burning Towers.

The air was heavy and black with smoke. I started choking. I was afraid. I wished that David was there to tell me what to do. All I could remember were his words to me: "Sirius, I promise I will come back for you."

Suddenly, there was a terrible rumbling above my head. The ceiling started to crack, and then it crashed down on my kennel. Everything went black.



The ruins of the World Trade Center

When I awoke, I wasn't in my kennel anymore. I was walking where the World Trade Center used to be. But the Twin Towers were gone.

Everywhere there were mountains of smoking rubble. The great heat of the fires had weakened the strong steel holding up the Twin Towers.

Less than two hours after the planes had hit the buildings, the Twin Towers had tumbled down to the ground.

Firefighters and police officers were everywhere. But something was very strange: they would look right at me and not see me!

I was invisible. I was dead. I was a spirit walking among the ruins of the World Trade Center.



The search for survivors

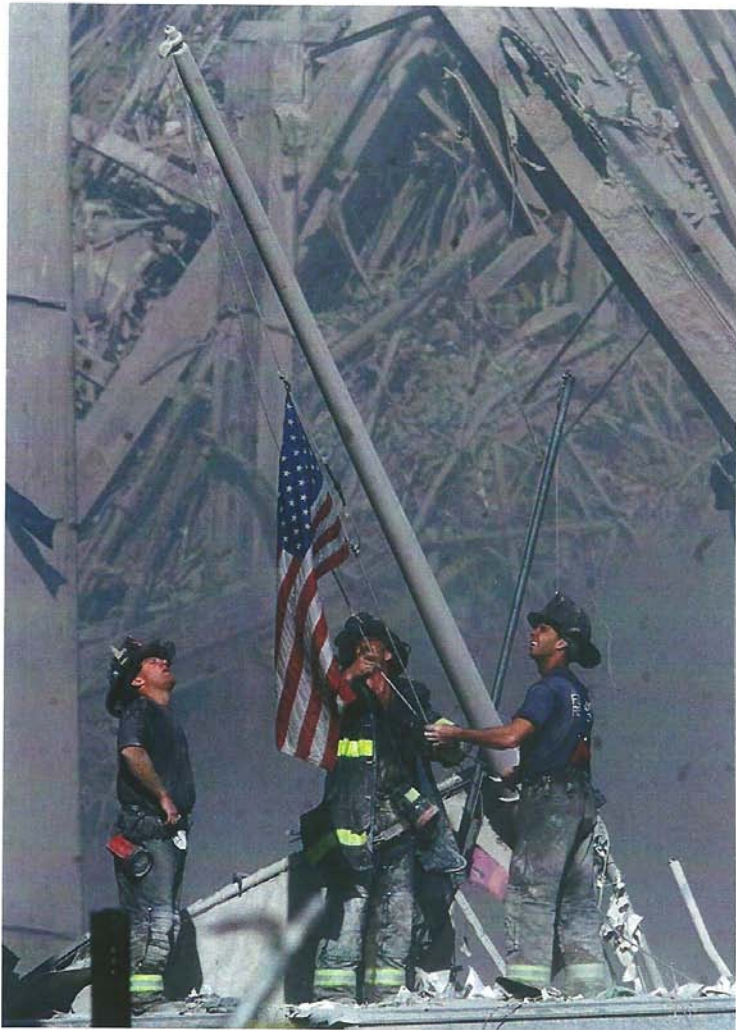
I wandered through the rubble, lost and afraid and confused. I didn't know what to do. Then all of a sudden, I heard David's voice! He was calling out for help!

I ran to the ruins of the North Tower where I heard his voice. He was trapped under some of the rubble. I could hear him right below me – he needed my help!

I started barking as loud as I could. I had to save my friend! For hours, I stood over the spot where David was buried, barking, but no one seemed to hear me!

Finally, some firefighters pulled David from the rubble – he was alive and safe! I ran up to him and jumped on him, barking with pure joy! But David couldn't see me or hear me. We would never walk in the park together again.





The Spirit of America – Firefighters raise our flag over the ruins



I wandered around the ruins of the World Trade Center for four months. I was never hungry or thirsty.

Sometimes I would see people crying. They were family members or friends of the 2,751 people who died in the Twin Towers on that terrible day, people who were citizens of 95 different countries. I tried to nuzzle them and comfort them, but they couldn't see me either.

Finally, after four months, some workers found my kennel under the ruins of the South Tower. They must have told David, because he was there on that day. He was crying. He gently wrapped me in an American flag, and carried me away from the ruins. A full Police Honor Guard was also there. They all saluted as David and I passed by.

David had kept his promise. He had come back for me.



Part of the Memorial Garden



My Monument

If you ever visit a quiet part of New York City, across the East River from where the World Trade Center once stood, you will see a beautiful memorial garden. It is there to honor many of the 403 firefighters, police officers, and emergency workers who died in the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001.

Each one of them was a hero, for they died protecting the lives of others.

And in front of that beautiful memorial garden, there is a small granite monument with these words:

POLICE K9 SIRIUS  
BADGE #17  
ALWAYS HONORED, NEVER FORGOTTEN  
PORT AUTHORITY POLICE DEPT.  
SEPT. 11, 2001

Sometimes children come and put flowers near my monument. That makes me very happy. I just wish that I could be there too, so they could pet me, especially behind the ears.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hank Fellows, “America’s Songwriter”, was born and raised in New York City. On September 11, 2001, Hank was living in Guttenberg, New Jersey, across the Hudson River and north of Ground Zero. Hank was an eyewitness to the immediate aftermath of the destruction of the World Trade Center. In the hours, days and months following the attacks, Hank watched the black smoke rising from the ruins of the Twin Towers. It was during these dark days following 9/11/01 that Hank Fellows wrote “The Spirit of America”, a love song to his grief-stricken country. His song “Halfway To Heaven” followed soon after, as Hank and the nation began to comprehend the terrible loss of life on that fateful September day.

Hank’s two 9/11 songs have been sung by school children across America as they learn to understand the events of that terrible day. Hank also has had the opportunity to speak to audiences across America about how he was inspired to write his 9/11 songs after the Twin Towers fell. Hank’s 9/11 songs have been performed at official 9/11 ceremonies in all five boroughs of New York City. On September 10, 2006, Hank received a Citation from the New York City Council for his “continued generosity and devotion to the remembrance of September 11th.” Please visit Hank’s website, [www.9-11Songs.com](http://www.9-11Songs.com).

Hank wishes to thank Sgt. David Lim of the Port Authority Police Department for his careful reading of the manuscript about him and his partner and friend, Sirius, and for permission to use his photographs.

Dedicated to the Victims and Heroes of September 11, 2001.

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For my family, for always believing in me.