

Norman Berenbeck

- Documented by Kyle DeSantis

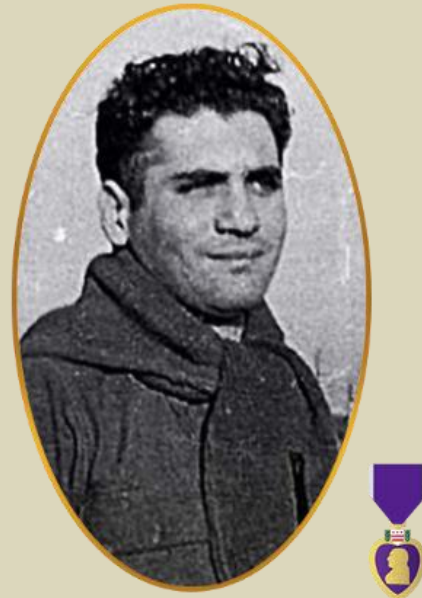
Branch: Army

Rank: Staff Sergeant in US Army, Flotilla Commander in US Coast Guard

Years of Service: 1942-1945, 1987-2013

Locations of Service: England, Belgium, World War II

Medals: Good Conduct Medal, WW II Medal, EAME Service Medal, Purple Heart Recipient



Norman Berenbeck served the United States for many years starting in World War II. He was originally sent to North Africa, but just before it left, he was reassigned to the Queen Mary for transport to England. The first ship that Norman was reassigned from went on to be destroyed in a torpedo attack with all lives lost.

In London, Norman's primary job was as a code breaker where he worked on code breaking and invented power adaptors in the basement of a building. While he was working on the power adaptors in the basement the building was bombed, Norman was the only survivor from the attack and he was left deaf from the incident.

During D-Day, Norman worked behind enemy lines with the French underground, helping them set up communications for weeks before and during the invasion that monitored enemy positions, which saved thousands of lives.

In Belgium, Norman was charged with restoring a power plant with a captured enemy crew. He also assisted liberating a concentration camp where unfortunately many of his family members had perished.

Norman was honorably discharged from the US Army on Christmas Day 1945. One year later, he married Shirley Riesenbergl and together they moved to Brewster, NY in 1958 to raise their children.

Norman began serving in the Coast Guard in 1987 and rose to the rank of Flotilla Commander while working with Putnam County Emergency services as an Amateur radio operator. He was also an Electrical Engineer with NY Telephone for over 38 years before his retirement.

Outside of serving his country, Norman spent his time with his family and helped around the community. He was an active member of Temple Beth Elohim and an honored Sunday School teacher. He also founded Boy Scout Troop #252 in Brewster and served as a Cub Scoutmaster. Norman was an incredibly loving husband, father, and grandfather. His family was everything to him.

Norman received the Good Conduct Medal, WW II Medal, EAME Service Medal during his time serving in World War II. He also was a recipient of the Purple Heart, but did not accept it, as he believed that there were other people more deserving of the award.

Norman passed away peacefully at his home on Independence Day July 4, 2020. He was 96 years old.