

North Iowa man to fly WWII plane from U.S. to Normandy to mark 75 years since D-day invasion

Clear Lake resident will pilot a plane used in the D-day invasion across the Atlantic Ocean to remember those who fought for our freedom.

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KIMT News 3 - A north Iowa man is about to embark on the adventure of a lifetime. He'll pilot a plane used in the D-day invasion across the Atlantic Ocean to remember those who fought for our freedom.

"The enormity of this operation is just off the chart. It's just unbelievable to think about the scope and magnitude of what happened on that day."

Clear Lake resident Doug Rozendaal is talking about D-day. The day thousands of allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy. Leading the charge was this airplane named "That's All...Brother".

"When Eisenhower made the decision to go forward with Operation Overlord he knew that thousands of men would perish that day," says Rozendaal.

Now Rozendaal gets to fly it across the Atlantic Ocean to Normandy to mark the 75th anniversary of D-day. He's currently in Connecticut getting ready and training for the flight that has a deep meaning.

"The sacrifice is just incredible and the greatest way we can honor those who made that sacrifice is by making sure it wasn't in vain. These people are doing it because they know the story needs to be remembered," he says.

Rozendaal will spend 100 hours in the C-47 aircraft. We asked him if he has any worries about this transatlantic trip.

"What you have to remember is thousands of these airplanes are flying the same route, we are flying and they did it as 19-year-olds with 200 hours total time and they didn't have GPS or satellite weather pictures," says Rozendaal.

He says it is going to be a long journey but it will be well worth it.

“I've done some incredibly neat things in my life but this is definitely way high on the chart.”

Rozendaal is a longtime pilot, flying since 1986. He is part of the Commemorative Air Force that collects, restores and flies world war two planes.