



## Norman Henry Drewes

July 26, 1919 - June 15, 1944

Norman Henry Drewes, age 24, of Hamler, Ohio was killed in action on June 15, 1944, in the World War II Battle of Saipan, during Operation Forager, pushing the Japanese forces out of the Northern Mariana Islands. Sergeant Drewes was a member of the U.S. Army's 708th Amphibious Tank Battalion. His Company D "LTV" force was provided to the 25th Marines, Fourth U.S. Marine Corp Division, as part of their beach landing assignment.

The amphibious tank Sgt. Drewes commanded was hit by heavy enemy fire when his company's progress was stalled beyond the beach, having encountered impassable terrain, resulting in his death. Once recovered, his remains were not identifiable and were subsequently interred in the Fourth Marine cemetery, Saipan, and marked as Unknown X-58.

In 1950, his remains were disinterred, examined and reburied in the Ft. William McKinley Cemetery in Manila, Philippines. In 2022, his remains were again disinterred and sent to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) laboratory in Honolulu, Hawaii for DNA analysis, comparison to several family-donated DNA samples, and subsequent positive identification; thereby, Sgt. Drewes was officially accounted for on September 13, 2024.

Sgt. Drewes' name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific inside Punchbowl Crater in Honolulu, along with those who are still missing from World War II. A rosette is being placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Norman was born on July 26, 1919, to William and Katherine (Kestner)

Drewes. He was the last member of his family to be born in their log cabin before moving to the new farmhouse. In fact, he was born the very day the foundation was poured. Norm was a member of Hope Lutheran Church where he was baptized on August 17, 1919 and confirmed on April 23, 1933. He had many friends, had a wonderful smile, charismatic personality, and enjoyed interacting with others. Norm continued working on the family farm until answering our nation's call to arms, enlisting in the Army on April 11, 1942. Norm was survived, at the time of his passing, by his parents; his brothers, George (Mildred) and Lawrence; and sisters, Emilie (George) Schwiebert, Helen (Richard) Enz and Bernita Drewes. He was preceded in death by his infant brother, Louis.

Today, Norm is survived by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. The family is extremely grateful to the DPAA for their pivotal assistance over the past few years, in facilitating the return of our family hero home to us for an honorable and heartfelt burial.

The family will receive visitors on Friday, May 23, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Rodenberger-Gray Funeral Home, 1010 Westmoreland Ave, Napoleon OH, ending with a prayer service at 5:30 p.m. On Saturday, May 24, 2025, family, friends and community may gather at 1:00 p.m. at Rodenberger-Gray and form a procession to Hope Lutheran Church cemetery, 10-016 State Route 18, Hamler, OH, where at 2:00 p.m., Norm will be laid to rest with full military honors. The family suggests interested individuals and organizations consider paying their respects at the Visitation, if possible, rather than the burial, due to easier access and more adequate parking.

Contributions, in Norm's honor, may be made to the family in care of Rodenberger-Gray Funeral Home to be donated to veterans' services, such as Wounded Warrior Project, Disabled American Veterans, and the Gary Sinise Foundation.

# Cemetery Details

## Hope Lutheran Church Cemetery

10-016 State Route 18  
Hamler, OH 43524

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY **23**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon  
1010 Westmoreland Avenue  
Napoleon, OH 43545

*Prayer service at 5:30 PM. Those wishing to present honors may do so during this time.*

## Graveside Services

MAY **24**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Hope Lutheran Church  
16 OH-18  
Hamler, OH 43524  
(419) 274-5765

# Tribute Wall

ML

“ From the fields, forests, plains of Africa and war-torn Europe, to the frozen tundra of Korea, to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the deserts of Kuwait and Iraq to the mountains of Afghanistan, brave patriots have protected our nation’s ideals, rescued millions from tyranny, and helped spread freedom around the globe. America’s veterans answered the call when asked to protect our nation from some of the most brutal oppression the world has ever known. Military service demands a special kind of sacrifice. The places where you are sent to live and serve bring risk every day. From the time you put on that uniform for the first time, the interests of the nation move to the forefront and define your life. Those duties are shared by family members who make many sacrifices of their own, sometimes bearing the burden of losing a loved one. Service brings rewards as well. There is pride in developing one’s own character, serving a cause far greater than self-interest. Every person who wears America’s uniform is part of a long, unbroken line of achievement and honor. No single military power in history has done greater good, shown greater courage, liberated more people or upheld higher standards of decency and valor than the Armed Forces of the United States of America. That is a legacy to be proud of and those who contributed to it must never be taken for granted. To honor our veterans, we must keep the promises we have made to them. We must care for those who have been injured in the service of our country. We must honor and remember those who have died. And we must remember those whose fate is still undetermined. We fly the Prisoner of War flag on Veterans Day for a reason, to show that this nation will not relent until we have accounted for every one of our missing Americans. Thank you for your service. Thank you for all that you have sacrificed for this great nation. Thank you for being the backbone of America.

*Major General (Retired) Mark W. Lee, United States Army*

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MG (R) (Dr.) Mark W. Lee - May 20, 2025 at 07:18 AM

DH

“ *Not a memory but a prayer that this helps the family with closure to finally have their uncle home. God bless and may he rest in peace.* ”

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**Diane Herman** - May 14, 2025 at 09:39 AM