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## Operation Benjamin by Davie Lou Solka



Operation Benjamin is an organization that is dedicated to identifying Jewish soldiers

who were buried under a cross at American military cemeteries all over the world. The identification of these soldiers ensures correct recognition of the soldier's identity, while giving comfort and closure to their loved ones. It also gives the millions of visitors to the American Military cemeteries here and abroad the ability to visually understand the Jewish sacrifice for democracy and freedom. Shalom Lamm, who now lives in Israel, is the founder and Chief Historian of Operation Benjamin.

The project is named for Private Benjamin Garadetsky, a Jewish soldier who was buried under a cross at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. Private Garadetsky's case was the first to lead to a successful marker change. His grave was correctly marked with a Star of David in an emotional ceremony at Normandy in the summer



*PFC Benjamin Garadetsky, namesake of Operation Benjamin, KIA, August 23, 1944, Normandy American Cemetery. Photo courtesy Operation Benjamin*



*The interment of 1LT Nathan Baskind, June 23, 2024, Normandy American Cemetery, France. Photo courtesy Operation Benjamin.*

of 2018, with family members and other dignitaries in attendance.

Obtaining the change begins with the family contacting Operation Benjamin with their request. Mr. Lamm and his staff will then aid them through the process. They will prepare a dossier to present to the federal government with a cover letter to be signed by a family member. An iron-clad rule of the American Battle Monuments Commission requires both incontrovertible proof of the serviceman's religion and the family's support of a marker change. Mr. Lamm has a partnership with the American Battle Monu-

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