



The Legion D'Honneur ceremony, Gordon Holland, William Jacobs, Joan Price, William Adams, Kenneth Drury, David Norris, and Edward Snow with Honorary Consul James Ryeland

'Their valour then means we are free today' Highest honour for wartime bravery

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Veterans have received France's highest military honour for their bravery at Dunkirk and D-Day.

David Norris, 97, of Dover, and Edward Snow, of Staple, were presented with the Legion D'Honneur at Capel-le-Ferne's Battle of Britain Memorial last Friday.

Mr Norris was on board the King George V, helping rescue thousands of British soldiers during the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940, for which he was awarded the Dunkirk Medal.

Mr Norris was also involved in the D-Day landings in Normandy in 1944. He served as a greaser in the engine room of supply vessel Jesse G Cotting, making four trips to Utah and Omaha beaches carrying vital supplies.

Mr Snow was in the Merchant Navy where he was both a steward and gunner on ships transporting troops to the Juno, Gold and Omaha beaches. He manned Bofors anti-aircraft guns on his ship.

The men were among seven heroes and heroines being recognised at the ceremony for their part in helping to win the Second World War. Their awards were presented by James Ryeland, Honorary Consul for France.

President François Hollande, on the 70th anniversary of D-Day in 2014, announced that all British veterans who fought to liberate France during the Second World War would get his country's highest decoration.

Eligible servicemen and women took part in military operations in France between 1944 and 1945, and so the recipients are now in their nineties.

The Honorary Consul presented about 25 veterans with the award in 2016, but this is the first time the Battle of Britain Memorial, home to the National Memorial to the Few, has been used as the venue.

Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke was at the ceremony and he spoke to a number of the veterans including Mr Norris.



War veteran David Norris with MP Charlie Elphicke



D-Day veteran Edward Snow



The Legion D'Honneur medal

Mr Elphicke said: "Not only did he help rescue our Army from Dunkirk, he also carried vital supplies across the Channel on D-Day to troops on the Normandy beaches - from where they battled through France and to the eventual victory that ended the war."

He said of all seven veterans: "Their valour then means we are free today. They were the

survivors. We must never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice."

The others honoured were hospital sister Joan Price, of Gillingham, RAF pilot Kenneth Drury, of Sittingbourne, Able Seaman William Jacobs, of Kennington, Ashford, Able Seaman William Adams, of Maidstone, and Platoon Sgt Gordon Holland, of Sittingbourne.

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