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Don Lawrence
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PROGRAM
Bob Swan
215-674-1935

VALET SERVICES
Russ Neiger
610-930-3077

ANN'S CHOICE RESIDENTS AND GUESTS ARE INVITED TO THIS FREE PROGRAM -
(Club membership is not required)

NEXT MEETING:

**Tuesday, March 20, 2018
at 7:30 pm, Ann's Choice PAC**

The March meeting of Ann's Choice Veterans Group in 2018 will feature Michael "O'Jesberg" presenting a program about the role of Irish in the American Civil War.

Valet Service Volunteer Opportunity

The Valet Services group assists residents with seating at events in the PAC and at the Chapel. With the monthly RAC and Executive Town Hall meetings, additional volunteers are welcome to assist with this service. Contact Russ Neiger at (610) 930-3077 for more information.

Bucks County Tour of Honor

On Monday, October 1, 2018 there will be a Bucks County Tour of Honor to Washington, DC, for World War II and Korean War veterans. Sign up early to be sure of a seat on one of the buses. Bob Swan will have applications at the February Veterans Group meeting.

Save These Dates in May

On Wednesday May 30 at 11:00 am in the Chapel, we will have the annual Memorial Day service open to all residents and families of veterans.

On Tuesday May 15 at 7:00 in the PAC the Veterans Group will present *Island in the Sky* starring John Wayne. The movie is under two hours in length. A suggested donation of \$3 will help support projects such as lining the campus drives with flags for patriotic holidays.

New Member

A big welcome to Stephen Morgan (US Navy, 1945 - 1949; and US Navy Reserve, 1949 - 2000) who recently joined the Ann's Choice Veterans Group.

Save the Date - April Meeting

The April meeting will be on Tuesday evening, April 17 at 7:30 in the PAC. The program on funeral planning and scams will be presented Bucks County Department of Consumer Protection.

These Immortal Chaplains

On Feb. 2, 1943, the U.S.A.T. Dorchester was crowded to capacity, carrying 902 service men, merchant seamen and civilian workers. Once a luxury coastal liner, the 5,649-



ton vessel had been converted into an Army transport. The Dorchester, one of three ships in the SG-19 convoy, was moving steadily across the icy waters from Newfoundland toward an American base in Greenland. SG-19 was escorted by Coast Guard Cutters Tampa, Escanaba and Comanche.

Hans J. Danielsen, the ship's captain, was concerned and cautious.

Danielsen knew he was in dangerous waters. U-boats were constantly prowling these vital sea lanes, and several ships had already been sunk.

The Dorchester was now only 150 miles from its destination, but the captain ordered the men to sleep in their clothing and keep life jackets on.

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These Immortal Chaplains, continued

Many soldiers sleeping deep in the ship's hold disregarded the order because of the engine's heat. Others ignored it because the life jackets were uncomfortable.

At 12:55 a.m., a periscope broke the chilly Atlantic waters. An officer aboard the German u-boot U-223 spotted the Dorchester. The U-223 approached the convoy on the surface, and after targeting the ship, he gave orders to fire torpedoes. One struck the starboard side, amid ship, far below the water line.

Captain Danielsen, alerted that the Dorchester was taking water rapidly and sinking, gave the order to abandon ship. In less than 20 minutes, the Dorchester would slip beneath the Atlantic's icy waters.

Tragically, the hit had knocked out power and radio contact with the three escort ships. The CGC Comanche, however, saw the flash of the explosion. It responded and then rescued 97 survivors. The CGC Escanaba circled the Dorchester, rescuing an additional 132 survivors. The third cutter, CGC Tampa, continued on, escorting the remaining two ships.

Aboard the Dorchester, panic and chaos had set in. The blast had killed scores of men, and many more were seriously wounded. Others, stunned by the explosion were groping in the darkness. Those sleeping without clothing rushed topside where they were confronted first by a blast of icy Arctic air and then by the knowledge that death awaited. Men jumped from the ship into lifeboats, over-crowding them to the point of capsizing. Other rafts, tossed into the Atlantic, drifted away before soldiers could get in them.

Through the pandemonium, according to those present, four Army chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed.

Quickly and quietly, the four chaplains spread out among the soldiers. There they tried to calm the frightened, tend the wounded and guide the disoriented toward safety.

"Witnesses of that terrible night remember hearing the four men offer prayers for the dying

And encouragement for those who would live," says Wyatt R. Fox, son of Reverend Fox.

One witness, Private William B. Bednar, found himself floating in oil-smeared water surrounded by dead bodies and debris. "I could hear men crying, pleading, praying," Bednar recalls. "I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going."

Another sailor, Petty Officer John J. Mahoney, tried to reenter his cabin but Rabbi Goode stopped him. Mahoney, concerned about the cold Arctic air, explained he had forgotten his gloves. "Never mind," Goode responded. "I have two pairs." The rabbi then gave the petty officer his own gloves. In retrospect, Mahoney realized that Rabbi Goode was not conveniently carrying two pairs of gloves, and that the rabbi had decided not to leave the Dorchester.

By this time, most of the men were topside, and the chaplains opened a storage locker and began distributing life jackets. It was then that Engineer Grady Clark witnessed an astonishing sight. When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men.

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains – arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers.

Of the 902 men aboard the U.S.A.T. Dorchester, 672 died, leaving 230 survivors.

The chaplains were honored in 1948 with a commemorative stamp. Normally, people were not honored on stamps until at least ten years after his or her death. This rule was side-stepped by not including the chaplains' names on the stamp. Instead, the words on the stamp were "These Immortal Chaplains ... Interfaith in Action." The Chapel of the Four Chaplains was dedicated in Philadelphia by President Truman on February 3, 1951. On February 15, 2001, the Chapel of the Four Chaplains moved to 1201 Constitution Avenue, Philadelphia Navy Yard. In 2015, Executive Director Christine Beady spoke at the Memorial Day service.



Taken from www.fourchaplains.org and Wikipedia articles.