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215-443-5782

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215-672-3137

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215-444-0140

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215-674-2328

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Chuck Donnelly
215-675-3307

SHIRTS / MEMBERSHIP
Don Lawrence
215-572-5654

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, April 17, 2018
at 7:30 pm, Ann's Choice PAC**

The April meeting of Ann's Choice Veterans Group in 2018 will feature a program on funeral planning and scams presented by the Bucks County Department of Consumer Protection. Members are encouraged to wear their Ann's Choice Veterans Group shirts to the meeting.

Your Opinions Wanted

The Veterans Group is conducting a survey and would like to hear from you. See pages 3 and 4 for the survey.

Volunteer and Service Opportunities

There is a continuing need for help with the program to drive veterans to the Horsham VA Center (call Judy Wright at 215-674-2328).

Volunteers are also needed to help with the Deployable Flags Program. For more information or to volunteer call Jerry Wright at 215-674-2328.

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 April Veterans Group meeting.

Save The Date in May

On Tuesday May 22 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.



Save the Date – Memorial Day Service

The Memorial Day Service will be held on Wednesday, May 30 at 11:00 am in the Ann's Choice Chapel. The Ann's Choice Chorus will participate in the service. The speaker will be Col. (ret) Philip DeHennis. Col. DeHennis retired in 2006 after 30 years of service in the US Army. He and his wife Laura reside in Warminster.

New Members

A big welcome to Edwin Bates (US Army, Philippines, 1944-46), Joseph Melvin (US Army, 1960-66), and Lou Bower, Jr. (US Coast Guard, East Coast, 1964-68) who recently joined the Ann's Choice Veterans Group.

Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Lapel Pin

This info is from State Representative Tom Murt, whose office is in Hatboro. If you would like to apply for the pin, contact his office at 215-674-3755.

"The Vietnam War will always be



remembered as a time of division, but also of great sacrifice," Murt said. "The pin is part of the national commemoration

authorized by Congress to recognize those sacrifices, and to thank Vietnam veterans and their families for their service."

Veterans who served on active duty between Nov. 1, 1955 and May 15, 1975, regardless of location, are eligible to receive a commemorative lapel pin acknowledging their sacrifice.

The commemoration provides the Vietnam veteran lapel pins to their commemorative partners, who present the pins during public presentations to living U.S. military veterans who served during the Vietnam War period as a lasting memento of our nation's gratitude.

Contact Rep. Murt's office to apply.

Lady Be Good

Lady Be Good was a USAAF B-24D Liberator that disappeared without a trace on its first combat mission during World War II. The plane, which was from 376th Bomb Group, was believed to have been lost – with its nine-man crew – in the Mediterranean Sea while returning to its base in Libya following a bombing raid on Naples on April 4, 1943. However, the wreck was accidentally discovered 440 miles inland in the Libyan Desert by an oil exploration team from British Petroleum (BP) on November 9, 1958.



In 1943, the *Lady Be Good* was a new Liberator bomber that had just been assigned to the 514th Bomb Squadron on March 25. The squadron was part of the 376th Bombardment Group (Heavy) based at Soluch Field in Soluch in Libya. The plane,

which had the AAF serial number 41-24301, had the group identification number 64 stencil-painted on its nose. Its given name, *Lady Be Good*, was hand-painted on the starboard, front side of the forward fuselage.

The *Lady Be Good* crew were also new as they had only arrived in Libya a week before on March 18. On their first mission together, they would be flying one of the twenty-five B-24s assigned to bomb the harbor of Naples late in the afternoon of April 4 in a two-part attack. A flight of twelve B-24s would go first followed by a second wave of 13 planes, including the *Lady Be Good*. After the attack, all planes were expected to return to their bases in North Africa. The crew of the *Lady Be Good* on the Naples mission were:

- 1st Lt William J. Hatton, pilot — Whitestone, NY
- 2nd Lt Robert F. Toner, co-pilot — North Attleborough, MA
- 2nd Lt D.P. Hays, navigator — Lee's Summit, MO
- 2nd Lt John S. Woravka, bombardier — Cleveland, OH
- T/Sgt Harold J. Ripslinger, flight engineer — Saginaw, MI
- T/Sgt Robert E. LaMotte, radio operator — Lake Linden, MI
- S/Sgt Guy E. Shelley, gunner — New Cumberland, PA
- S/Sgt Vernon L. Moore, gunner — New Boston, OH
- S/Sgt Samuel E. Adams, gunner — Eureka, IL

The plane, one of the last to depart, took off from Soluch Field near Benghazi not long after 3 pm. Almost

immediately, high winds and obscured visibility prevented it from joining the main bomber formation so it continued the mission on its own.



The crew of Lady Be Good. Left to right: Hatton, Toner, Hays, Woravka, Ripslinger, LaMotte, Shelley, Moore, Adams.

The sand-storm led to nine B-24s returning to Soluch leaving four aircraft to continue the operation. But when the *Lady Be Good* arrived over Naples at 7:50pm at 24,900 ft, poor visibility was obscuring the primary target. Two B-24s attacked their secondary target on the return trip while

the other two aircraft dumped their bombs into the Mediterranean to reduce weight and save fuel.

Lady Be Good flew back alone from Italy on its return trip to its home base in Libya. At 12:12 a.m. the pilot, Lt. Hatton, radioed to say his automatic direction finder was not working and asked for a location of base. The plane apparently overflew its base, failing to see the flares fired to attract its attention. It continued into the interior of North Africa deeper into the Sahara desert for the next two hours. At 2 a.m. the crew parachuted to the ground as the abandoned *Lady Be Good* flew a further 16 miles before it crash-landed into the Calanshio Sand Sea. A subsequent search and rescue mission from Soluch Air Base failed to find any trace of the aircraft or its crew. The disappearance of the *Lady Be Good* became a mystery, presumed lost in the Mediterranean.

After the crew abandoned the aircraft, it continued flying southward. The mostly intact wreckage, and evidence showing that one engine was still operating at the time of impact.

The first reported sighting of the crash site was on November 9, 1958 by a British oil exploration team in the northeast of Libya's Kufra District. The team contacted authorities at Wheelus Air Base, but no attempt to examine the aircraft was made as no records existed of any plane believed to have been lost in the area. The location of the wreckage was however marked on maps to be used by oil-prospecting teams that were due to set out to explore the Calanshio Sand Sea the next year. On February 27, 1959, British oil surveyor Gordon Bowerman and British geologists Donald Sheridan and John Martin spotted the wreckage 440 miles southeast of Soluch. A recovery team made initial trips from Wheelus Air Base to the crash site on May 26, 1959.

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Although the plane was broken into two pieces, it was immaculately preserved, with functioning machine guns, a working radio, and some supplies of food and water. A thermos of tea was found to be drinkable. No human remains were found on board the aircraft nor in the surrounding crash site, nor were parachutes found.



Intact cockpit and nose with machine guns still in place.

Evidence aboard the plane indicated that the men had bailed out. Records in the log of navigator Lieutenant Hays, who was on his very first combat mission, ended at Naples.

In February 1960, the United States Army conducted a formal search of the area for the remains of the crew. Five were found (Hatton, Toner, Hays, LaMotte and Adams) on February 11. The team concluded that other bodies were likely buried beneath sand dunes after finding evidence that at least three of the surviving crewmembers had continued walking northward.

The next body was found by a British Petroleum (BP) exploration crew. They found the remains of S/Sgt

Shelley on May 12, 1960, 24 miles northwest of the recovered five bodies. A U.S. helicopter found T/Sgt Ripslinger on May 17, 1960. His remains were located 26 miles northwest of Shelley over 200 miles from the crash site but still 99 miles from Soluch. Another BP exploration crew discovered the remains of 2nd Lt Woravka in August 1960. His body was then recovered by the U.S. Air Force. The only crewman not to be found was the last gunner, Staff Sergeant Moore.

Subsequent examinations of the remains and personal items showed that eight of the nine airmen managed to parachute safely down to the desert from the aircraft. They then located each other by firing their revolvers and signal flares into the air. However, the ninth crewman, Bombardier Lt. John Woravka, was not found. Unknown to the survivors, it appeared his parachute only partially opened and he died from the fall.

A diary recovered from the pocket of co-pilot Robert Toner recorded the crew's suffering on the walk northward. It indicated none of the men were aware they had been flying over land when they bailed out or were were fairly close to the Mediterranean coast. As they walked, the group left behind footwear, parachute scraps, Mae West vests and other items as markers to show searchers their path.

Continued on page 4

Please complete this short survey, detach it from the newsletter, and return it to Josie Larson, MS404 (Liberty); Jack Robbins, HR205 (Village); Jerry Wright, MC122 (Village); Keith Lawrence, ML408 (Keystone); or Don Leypoldt, IG301 (Keystone). You only need to include your name and contact info if you would like a response.

Ann's Choice Veterans Group Survey

The Ann's Choice Veterans Group would like to hear from you and ask you to take a couple of minutes to respond to this survey. You only need to include your name and contact information if you would like to receive a reply. The results of this survey will help us plan programs and activities in the future. Thank you for your time. Please return this survey by April 30.

- 1 Do you come to the meetings and programs on the third Tuesday evening of each month (January to April, June, September, October, and December)? (Please check one response.)
 - a. Yes. I come as often as I am able.
 - b. Yes. I attend a few which I am interested in.
 - c. Yes. I come if I remember to come.
 - d. No. I am not able to attend the meetings and programs.
 - e. No. I do not find the program topics interesting.
 - f. No. I do not attend because _____
- 2 What types of programs for the Tuesday evening meetings do you enjoy the most? (Please check one or more)
 - a. Military and military-related history of past wars in which the United States was involved.
 - b. Information related to benefits and opportunities for veterans and their families.
 - c. Current events and developments pertinent to veterans and senior citizens.
 - d. Other _____

The diary also says the group survived for eight days in the desert with only a single canteen of water to share. After walking 81 miles from the crash site, the location of the remains of the five airmen shows they had waited behind while the other three (Guy Shelley, "Rip" Ripslinger and Vernon Moore) set off north to try to find help. The body of S/Sgt Shelley was found 20 miles away while 27 miles further on were the remains of T/Sgt Ripslinger.

The body of S/Sgt Moore has never officially been found. However, his remains may have been recovered and buried by a desert patrol of the British Army in 1953. As they were unaware that any Allied air crews were missing in the area, the human remains were recorded but then buried without further investigation.

The official report in the American Graves Registration Service states:

The aircraft flew on a 150 degree course toward Benina Airfield. The craft radioed for a directional reading from the HF/DF station at Benina and received a reading of 330 degrees from Benina. The actions of the pilot in flying 440 miles into the desert, however, indicate the navigator probably took a reciprocal reading off the back of the radio directional

loop antenna from a position beyond and south of Benina but 'on course'. The pilot flew into the desert, thinking he was still over the Mediterranean and on his way to Benina.

The navigator on the *Lady Be Good* thought he was flying on a direct path from Naples to Benghazi. But the base's radio direction finder only had a single loop antenna. As the plane's direction finder could not distinguish between a signal in front or behind the aircraft, there was no way to identify reciprocal readings. The same bearing would be returned whether the plane was heading inbound from the Mediterranean or outbound inland.

The crew might have survived if they had known their actual location. If they had headed south the same distance they walked north, the group might have reached the oasis of Wadi Zighen. After the crew bailed out *Lady Be Good* continued flying south for 16 miles before coming to land, and there was also a chance that the crew might have found the aircraft's relatively intact wreckage, with its meager water and food supplies. The aircraft's working radio could have been used to call for help.

[This article was taken from materials on Wikipedia.](#)

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3 Are you a member of the Ann's Choice Veterans Group? Membership is open to residents and employees of Ann's Choice who are US military veterans or currently serving.

- a. Yes.
- b. No. I would like information about becoming a member.

Name: _____
 Resident Phone: _____
 Resident Apartment: _____,
 or Employee Department: _____

4 Would you be interested in volunteering, if you are not already helping? (Please check as appropriate.)

- a. Provide transportation to / from Horsham VA Center.
- b. Deploy and retrieve flags lining the campus drives and the memorial flags in front of the clubhouses.
- c. Audio / visual technician for Veterans Group events and programs.
- d. Be a Guardian for a WW II or Korean War Veteran on a Tour of Honor trip.
- e. Other _____

5 Please add additional comments or questions here: _____

Optional information only if you would like a response:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Cubby: _____