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*Ann's Choice Residents and Guests are invited to attend Veterans Group Programs and Events-
(Meetings are open to ALL with no charge)*

NEXT MEETING:

**April 16, 2019 at 7:30 pm,
Ann's Choice PAC**

Carl LaVO, former editor of the Buck County Courier Times, will bring us the story of the "Yellow Bird" aircraft built in the mid-1920s by the Keystone Aircraft Corp. in nearby Bristol. The Keystone K-47 Pathfinder yellow bi-plane, named "American Legion", had three engines - one on each lower wing and one on the nose. Its two-person crew of Navy fliers planned to fly the "Yellow Bird" non-stop across the Atlantic from New York to Paris and claim the Orteig prize of \$ 25,000 (worth about \$ 350,000 today).



Come to the program on April 16 and find out how close they came to beating Lindbergh!



New Members

A big welcome to Angelo Lorenzoni (US Army, 1960 - 1963, Germany), Ted Matlow (US Army, 1954 - 1956, Japan), John McSorley (1959 - 1962, US Navy, Pacific), and James Schwoob (1960 - 1980, US Army, Vietnam) who recently joined the Ann's Choice Veterans Group.

Memorial Day Service in the Chapel at 11:00 am on Thursday, May 30

On Thursday, May 30, the Veterans Group will present an annual service to honor all veterans at Ann's Choice. This memorial service will be in the Chapel.

The speaker will be Fred Ewald. Mr. Ewald was drafted into the Army in 1968, and after completing OCS in 1969 was an infantry platoon leader in Vietnam.

Program Committee Volunteers

The Veterans Group Board is seeking a few volunteers to help plan the monthly programs during the year. We have a program at each Veterans Group meeting in January through April, June, September and October. We have resources and contacts from previous meetings which can be used again for future meetings. And new ideas for program topics are always welcome. Contact Gordon Larson (215-672-3137) or Mary Hurly (215-420-7472).

Volunteer and Service Opportunities

There is a continuing need for help with the program to drive veterans to the Horsham VA Center. Volunteers do not have to be veterans themselves in order to assist veterans getting to their appointments. Call Judy Wright at 215-674-2328 for information about the program or to schedule a ride.

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

Veterans Group Meeting Tuesday, June 18 in the PAC

Save the date on your calendar for the meeting and program in June. Details of the program for June will be published in a future edition of *The Bugle Call*.

Planning for Operation Overlord

Operation Overlord was the codename for the Battle of Normandy, the Allied operation that launched the successful invasion of German-occupied Western Europe during World War II. The operation was launched on June 6 1944 with the Normandy landings (Operation Neptune, commonly known as D-Day). A 1,200-plane airborne assault preceded an amphibious assault involving more than 5,000 vessels. Nearly 160,000 troops crossed the English Channel on 6 June, and more than two million Allied troops were in France by the end of August.

In June 1940, Germany's leader Adolf Hitler had triumphed in what he called "the most famous victory in history"—the fall of France. British craft evacuated to England over 338,000 Allied troops trapped along the northern coast of France (including much of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF)) in the Dunkirk evacuation (27 May to 4 June). British planners reported to Prime Minister Winston Churchill on October 4 that even with the help of other Commonwealth countries and the United States, it would not be possible to regain a foothold in continental Europe in the near future. After the Axis invaded the Soviet Union in June



1941, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin began pressing for a second front in Western Europe. Churchill declined because he felt that even with American help the British did not have adequate forces for such a strike, and he wished to avoid costly frontal assaults such as those that had occurred at the Somme and Passchendaele in World War I. Two tentative plans code-named Operation Roundup and Operation Sledgehammer were put forward for 1942–43, but neither was deemed by the British to be practical or likely to succeed.

. Instead, the Allies expanded their activity in the Mediterranean, launching the invasion of French North Africa in November 1942, the invasion of Sicily in July 1943, and invading Italy in September. These campaigns provided the troops with valuable experience in amphibious warfare.

Attendees at the Trident Conference in Washington in May 1943 took the decision to launch a cross-Channel invasion within the next year. Churchill favored making the main Allied thrust into Germany from the Mediterranean theatre, but his American allies, who were providing the bulk of the men and equipment, over-ruled him. British Lieutenant-General Frederick E. Morgan was appointed Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander (COSSAC), to begin detailed planning. The initial plans were constrained by the number of available landing-craft, most of which were already committed in the Mediterranean and in the Pacific. In part because of lessons learned in the Dieppe Raid of August 19, 1942, the Allies decided not to directly assault a heavily defended French seaport in their first landing. The failure at Dieppe also highlighted the need for adequate artillery and air support, particularly close air support, and specialized ships able to travel extremely close to shore. The short operating-range of British aircraft such as the Spitfire and Typhoon greatly limited the number of potential landing-sites, as comprehensive air-support depended upon having planes overhead for as long as possible. Morgan considered four sites for the landings: Brittany, the Cotentin Peninsula, Normandy, and the Pas de Calais. As Brittany and Cotentin are peninsulas, the Germans could have cut off the Allied advance at a relatively narrow isthmus, so these sites were rejected.

Some of the primary constraints in being able to mount such an invasion were

- sufficient landing craft for the invasion;
- sufficient numbers of aircraft, trained crews, and supplies to be able to gain air superiority;
- sufficient numbers of trained soldiers with weapons, ammunition, uniforms and supplies;
- equipment to support troops during the landing operation and afterwards;
- crews and supplies to maintain everything needed for the invasion;
- fuel and other supplies for the landing and to support operations afterwards;

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- secure lines of supply across the Atlantic and transport ships; and the list goes on.

Also needed were

- accurate intelligence on the landing zone targets, enemy support and transportation infrastructure;
 - absolute necessity for secrecy about plans and intentions;
 - maintaining high level of morale among civilians and military during the preparations, etc.

Adding one item to this list results in the addition of one or two more.

The Allies had to find a balance in allocating resources to fight the war in the Pacific at the same time. After Hitler turned east and attacked the USSR, Stalin was demanding that Britain and its allies open a western front in Europe to take the pressure off the eastern German front.

The COSSAC staff planned to begin the invasion on May 1, 1944. The initial draft of the plan was accepted at the Quebec Conference in August 1943. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed commander of SHAEF. Gen. Bernard Montgomery was named commander of the 21st Army Group, which comprised all of the land forces involved in the invasion. On December 31, 1943, Eisenhower and Montgomery first saw the



General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General Bernard Montgomery

COSSAC plan, which proposed amphibious landings by three divisions, with two more divisions in support. The two generals immediately insisted on expanding the scale of the initial invasion to five divisions, with airborne descents by three additional divisions, to allow operations on a wider front and to speed up the capture of the port at Cherbourg. The need to acquire or produce extra landing craft for the expanded operation meant delaying the invasion until June 1944. Eventually the Allies committed 39 divisions to the Battle of Normandy:

22 American, 12 British, three Canadian, one Polish, and one French, totaling over a million troops all under overall British command.

Churchill recognized the dominant role that the United States would have in supplying troops, equipment, supplies and weapons. He and Roosevelt agreed that the overall commander in Europe should be American. U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower in assuming this role did not appoint only fellow US Army officers to top operational and planning positions. His rule was that a US Army or Navy officer in command of an operation would have a British officer as deputy, and vice versa.

Earlier in the war in North Africa, Air Marshall Arthur William Tedder served under General Eisenhower. In February 1943 Tedder took command of Mediterranean Air Command, serving under Gen. Eisenhower (the theatre commander), and in that role was closely involved in the planning of the Allied invasion of Sicily and then the Allied invasion of Italy.

When Operation Overlord came to be planned, Tedder was appointed Deputy Supreme Commander at SHAEF beneath Gen. Eisenhower, in January 1944. In the last year of the war, Tedder was sent to the Soviet Union to seek assistance as the



Supreme Command, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), London, February 1944, Tedder sits to the right of Eisenhower as Deputy Supreme Commander.

Western Front came under pressure during the Battle of the Bulge. When the unconditional surrender of the Germans came in May 1945 Tedder signed on behalf of Gen. Eisenhower.

Operation Fortitude

The Allies wanted to give Overlord the best chance for success they could. The planners thought it would be helpful to set up decoy operations to trick or confuse the Germans. The code name for this deception was Operation Fortitude and the operation consisted of many different parts. The main goal of Fortitude was to convince the Germans the cross channel invasion was to be aimed at Norway or Pas de Calais in Northern France.

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Operation Fortitude South was created to convince the Germans that the landing force was bigger than it actually was. Fortitude South created a fake US army group, First Army Group “based” out of southeast Britain. The Allies supplied this group with faux equipment such as inflatable tanks and gave fake radio signal and movement commands to make the Germans believe there would be a large invasion at Pas de Calais, Northern France. At night the men would play recordings of airplane engines starting up over a loud speaker. Automobile lights were also attached to carts and men would run up and down fake runways to make it appear like planes were taking off and landing. During the daytime the “planes” themselves were nothing but canvas and tubing. The Allies created eleven faux divisions, 40,000 to 60,000 imaginary men. Spies played a key role in sharing this information to Nazi command. Two agents named Garbo and Brutus played a key role in delivering convincing information to Hitler and his leadership.

Fortitude South also featured the well-known Gen. George Patton, selected largely due to the reputation he had among American and German leaders. Patton’s flamboyant character and philosophy of war earned him great respect among the German Army and greatly added to the success of Operation Fortitude.

Fortitude played a key role in the success of the D-Day landings. Hitler sent troops out of France into Norway, convinced the Allied invasion would take place there. Hitler would still be holding onto this belief on June 12; he was certain the main invasion would come from Norway.

Ike’s Concern About Spies

Allied Supreme Commander, Gen. Eisenhower, had a difficult time getting Winston Churchill to cooperate in closing the coastal areas to unauthorized visitors – a spy could easily slip in with a group of English tourists going to enjoy the seaside. It was not until Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery banned visitors from his training areas that Churchill submitted to the American request.

Eisenhower also had the British War Cabinet reluctantly ban diplomatic pouches (privileged diplomatic communications). He regarded these formerly sacrosanct international communiqués as “the gravest risk to the security of our

Operations.” The ban did not apply to the U.S. nor the USSR but applied to all the other allies, including the French, who protested furiously.

Loose Lips Sink Ships

Through the ages commanders have worried about loose lips, and Ike was no exception. Cocktail parties were notorious occasions for careless chatter.

Just such an occurrence happened at a party at Claridge’s hotel in London in April 1944. Purportedly after everyone had imbibed more than a few drinks, Major General Henry Miller, one of Ike’s classmates at West Point, boasted that he knew that the invasion would “come before June 15.” An incensed Eisenhower had Miller busted down to colonel and sent back to the U.S. for that one-sentence mistake.

In May, a similar episode took place with an inebriated Naval officer bragging that he knew specific launch sites, landing strengths and dates. He too was demoted and shipped back to the States. Ike wrote his boss in Washington, General George C. Marshall, that he became “so angry at the occurrence of such needless and additional hazards” that he “could cheerfully shoot the offender” himself.

Impact on Trans-Atlantic Mail

As early as 1941, Pan American Airways provided mail service across the Atlantic through Africa and extending east to Egypt, India and Singapore. Some of these routes were awarded to Pan Am in classified addenda to service agreements. Some of the secrecy was lifted in March 1944 with the publication by *The New York Daily News* of seven-day round trip service from the US to Northern India.

..During the weeks prior to D-Day mail service across the South Atlantic was interrupted. One-way transit times extended to as much as 34 days. While it is possible that some aircraft were transferred to assist with D-Day operations, military authorities had ordered the cessation of nearly all trans-Atlantic mail during the period preceding the Normandy landings as a security measure.

Article developed from articles on Wikipedia, www.dday.org, stephenambrosetours.com, www.mtholyoke.edu, and March 2019 issue of *The American Philatelist*. Also, editor’s recollections from a biography of Eisenhower.