

David Baer: About Books Unbelievable but true "Double Cross"

On June 6, 1944, 156,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy, 23,000 more landed from the air, and a sharp arrow was thrust into occupied France. Though the invaders suffered many casualties and 2,500 deaths in the landings, D-Day was a stunning military accomplishment.

The Nazi High Command had been totally convinced and misled that this major invasion would take place in the Pas de Calais, far to the northeast and much closer to the British coast.

The Germans were also convinced that a much stronger invasion force was poised in Dover, England, ready to invade France from there, and that the Normandy landings were merely a diversion to draw the German forces away from Calais.

The belief was so strong that the German commander, Gen. Erwin Rommel, who was in charge of the Channel defenses, was back at

home in Germany celebrating his wife's birthday. Further, other top Nazi generals had left the Normandy area to engage in other duties. Even German naval patrols in the English Channel were cancelled and troops were told to "get some rest."

The invasion was bloody but successful, and the Germans were totally deceived.

How could all of this have happened?

This deception was carefully created by the English "Double Cross" system, which turned German spies into double agents, deceiving the Nazis in believing that the attack would not take place in Normandy. It was the most sophisticated, successful deception operation ever carried out, ensuring that Hitler would keep an enormous force in Calais, awaiting a fake attack.

This week's book is an unbelievable and true account of spies who deceived the Germans into believ-

ing that the fictitious "First U.S. Army Group" (known as Fusag) would land far from Normandy. "Double Cross" (2012) subtitled "The True Story of the D-Day Spies," was written by Ben Macintyre, author of other fascinating stories of British deception of the Germans during World War II.

We know that the story of D-Day has been told many times from the military point of view, from the soldiers who fought in it, the generals who led it, and historians who researched it. But it's never been told from the perspectives of the five key individuals in the Double Cross system.

Hard to believe, but Macintyre has us concentrate on one of the oddest and strangest military units ever assembled, comprised of "a bisexual Peruvian playgirl, a Polish fighter pilot, a mercurial Frenchwoman, a Serbian seducer, and an eccentric Spaniard with a diploma in chicken farming" (and a

little dog who had an involvement in this deadly caper).

Those five, as you'll see, were the nucleus of the serious and deadly hoodwinking that convinced the Nazis to conclude that the main Allied force would not be landing at Normandy, which ultimately led to eventual victory.

You'll also read of the interesting Allied trickery in England, building a huge force of fake tanks, planes, and materiel around Dover, leading Nazi reconnaissance to certainly believe that these Walt Disney-like fakes were real invasion materiel.

This very fascinating, engrossing story is based on true historical events. The author has us follow each of the double agents from their initial involvement, and the book is carefully replete with their wild, unbelievable stories and escapades.

The entire project was founded on the idea that Allied success depended not only on the deception of the

enemy, but on the sincere influence on German thinking.

This is a very brilliantly put together story of strange, interesting spies who carried out their duties perfectly, and who saved thousands of Allied lives. Obviously, their stories are colorful and their actions bizarre and exceptional. If you saw it in the movies you wouldn't believe it, and think it was made up.

"Double Cross" is a captivating narrative of the people who wove such an intricate story that it ensnared Hitler's army and helped start "the beginning of the end" of WWII.

A terrific, intelligent read that could almost be a Monty Python episode but for the thousands of lives that were involved. I highly recommend this interesting book, you'll be taken in with this true story.

I'll see you next week with a totally different book.

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Santa's arrival and fireworks highlight Dublin holiday gathering

Joe Ferry

Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Dublin Fire House.

"It should be another memorable evening," said Eugene Miller, event organizer. "Our volunteers have put a lot of work into making this a special event for children and adults alike."

While Santa is expected to arrive at 6:15 p.m. to light the tree, the big mystery is how he will get there. There's no telling how the Jolly Old Elf will make his appearance this year, possibly

by helicopter or by horse drawn carriage. Either way, the elves will be there to accompany Santa and help him light the tree.

After the tree is lit, Santa will point to the sky to set off a spectacular fireworks display that will brighten the night sky. The show is the finale from the borough's 100th Anniversary Celebration in September that was cancelled due to rain.

"Fireworks in December is not something a lot of people have

experienced," said April Donahue, from QNB Bank. "It will be a special way to culminate our 100th year celebration as a town."

In addition to Santa and fireworks, the evening features: free horse and carriage rides; free hot chocolate and cookies; a live nativity with petting zoo; pictures with Santa (bring your own camera); a railroad train display (1 to 9 p.m.); and live music by local performers.

Fire engines carrying Santa's elves, Frosty the Snowman, and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer visit Dublin neighborhoods from 4:40 to 5:30 p.m. and end up back at the firehouse in time for Santa's arrival.

Visitors are encouraged to show their holiday spirit and bring a toy or non-perishable food item to help the less fortunate. Donations will go to the Dublin Food Pantry.

For information, call 215-249-1133 or visit DiscoverDublin.org.

St. Philip's Church hosts Christkindmarkt at New Hope-Eagle firehouse

Elizabeth Bowman

The long-anticipated Christkindmarkt is open at the Eagle Fire House in New Hope this weekend, Dec. 7, 8 and 9.

Friday, from 7 to 9 p.m., is the first opportunity to view and bid on all of the amazing Silent Auction items donated to St. Philip's Church for this event and to purchase Christmas gifts from the 32 vendors displaying their wares while we offer wine and munchies for your culinary delight.

The fun continues from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday and again from noon until 4 p.m. Sunday.

Many of the items available for bids are listed in our program, available throughout New Hope and Lambertville, as well as at the event.

Here are some of the great things you can bid on: a vintage hat collection of extraordinary women's hats; Jim Bean collectible train bottles; a full-day fishing trip for four at the Jersey Shore; an autographed book by Hillary

Clinton; and a Fox News package of four tickets to the "Mike Huckabee Show."

Also available are: two sessions with a personal trainer; a gardening consultation by The Compleat Gardener; and dinner for four cooked and served in your home courtesy of Chef Chris White.

Come, shop, enjoy live music and meet the wonderful people of St. Philip's Church as we raise money for our new Chapel House, a place where we can further serve the community.



Available for adoption

Dexter is a 3-year-old American bulldog that is seeking a forever home. Dexter was surrendered to the Trenton Animal Shelter and is now in foster care. Dexter would make an excellent family dog. He's easy going and happy to meet anyone who comes along. Contact Lisa at the Shelter Animal Project.

Peddler's Village

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