



## BETTY GREENE – THE PILOT WHO BECAME A HERO TO MISSIONARIES

### BIG IDEA

*Heroes are made when someone's passion is linked with the will of God. Betty Greene's passion for flying led to a whole new way of doing missionary service – by air!*

### PREP *(Kids can help!)*

**Buy** a bag of aeroplane lollies

**Find** an A4 piece of paper per child

**Put everything into the Faith Box before you start**

### INTRO

Elizabeth Everts “Betty” Greene was born in Seattle, USA in 1920.

On Betty's 16th birthday, her father gave her and her twin brother the gift of an aeroplane ride. Flying was a new and exciting world in those days. Charles Lindbergh was the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927 and Amelia Earhart was a pioneering woman flyer who crossed the Atlantic in 1928. Betty followed each event with enthusiasm and saved every penny to take flying lessons for herself.

Her Christian parents supported her interests in aviation, but when it came to college, they encouraged her to enroll in a nursing program at the University of Washington. That did not suit Betty, and she dropped out after two years. Then an elderly Christian woman, who knew of Betty's interest in aviation, suggested that she combine her flying with missionary work. “Of course dear,” she said, “think of all the time – and sometimes lives – that could be saved if missionaries didn't have to spend weeks hacking their way through jungles.”



Suddenly, Betty had a direction for her life. She returned to school to study for missions and continued working toward her pilot's license. When World War II broke out, she signed up as a WASP (a Woman's Air Force Service Pilot) to get additional flying experience while also serving her country. As a WASP she ferried many kinds of planes – from fighters to bombers – from their factories to where they were needed. She also served as a high-altitude test pilot and towed targets for live ammunition anti-aircraft gunnery drills.

After the war, Betty helped found the Missionary Aviation Fellowship. Now 26 years old, Betty was finally doing what God had prepared her for. And she loved it! Hiking through the jungle to a missionary camp usually took 10 – 14 days. Now Betty could fly there in 1hr. and 45mins.

She flew over 4800 hours, bringing medical supplies and food to missionaries, ferrying sick and injured people to hospitals, and carrying missionary children to their schools or home to their parents for holidays. She served God with her plane in Mexico, Peru, Africa, and Indonesia.

## GAME

*TAKE A PIECE OF PAPER OUT OF THE BOX for each child to make their own paper plane. The design for the paper plane can be found in the appendix for session 12. This design holds the record (from the Guinness Book of Records) of 27.6 seconds flying. Try timing yourselves and see if you can make a new record!*

## READ

*A True Story.*

*HAND OUT AN AEROPLANE LOLLY TO EVERYONE TO EAT AS YOU READ...*

“ Two-year-old Loraine Conwell giggled as she popped another peanut into her mouth. She was playing on the porch of her house with some other children in the middle of the morning in June 1967. Three days earlier her mother had given birth to a new baby sister, and now Mrs. Conwell was inside resting.

The Conwells were missionaries at the Sudan United Mission leprosarium in the Nuba Mountains, some two hundred miles northwest of Malakal, Sudan, in Africa, where Betty Greene was stationed with her MAF airplane.

Suddenly, little Loraine began to cough. Then she began to choke and had trouble breathing. Running to her side, Loraine's mother realised that a peanut must have gone down the child's windpipe.

“Turn her upside-down and smack her back,” instructed one of the leprosarium nurses as she and Roy Conwell, Loraine's father, came running. But it did no good. They even tried dusting a little pepper in Loraine's nose to make her sneeze, but the peanut wouldn't budge. Fortunately, it was not completely blocking her windpipe, so Loraine could breathe with much effort and wheezing. But there was also the chance that the peanut might move the wrong way and completely block her windpipe.

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Roy Conwell could not stand around watching while his little girl gasped for air any longer. He had to go for help! But the closest telephone was thirty miles away, and in that time of the year – the rainy season – it could take a day or more to travel thirty miles. “I’m going to take the tractor,” he said. “It’s slow, but there’ll be less chance of it getting stuck in the mud.”

He got to a phone by seven that evening and immediately phoned the MAF house in Malakal. “Could you come quickly?” he asked Betty Greene. “We have a medical emergency. If I can’t get my little girl to the hospital soon, she’s liable to die.”

By first light the next morning, Betty was on her way. She picked up the child, her father, and a nurse at the leprosarium and flew them 320 miles to the hospital in Khartoum. There a specialist performed a delicate operation to remove the peanut, and little Loraine was on her way to recovery.

But God was watching over little Loraine in other ways that day. The specialist who removed the peanut was scheduled to leave for London the next day. Had Loraine not been brought to the hospital by air, she would have arrived too late to receive that doctor’s help, even if she had survived the slow overland trip.

Also, just a few hours after Loraine came out of surgery, a terrible dust storm struck the city of Khartoum. It was so severe that

everything turned as dark as midnight. The lights came on, but then the power failed, and everything was brought to a stop.

“Thanks,” Roy Conwell said to Betty. “If you hadn’t come as soon as possible after I called, the dust storm might have made it impossible for us to land in Khartoum – or the power might have failed while the doctor was trying to operate.”

Betty nodded, her own heart swelling with thankfulness. As an MAF pilot, being available was what it was all about. ))

## EXPLORE

### QUESTIONS

Have you ever heard your parents tell you how important it is to come when you are called?

Why was it important Betty Greene came when she was called?

What might God call you to do?

## PRAY

**God, please take care of missionaries who have to fly into far away or dangerous places.** *You may like to look in an atlas and find some places like Papua New Guinea, the Democratic Republic of Congo or Haiti – all places where MAF workers are busy flying and helping others.*

## LIVE

Have everyone go to their own bedrooms and be ready to come when they are called. Wait a few minutes then call out "Come to the bathroom straight away please" .

Whoever gets there first gets an aeroplane lolly. Try doing this at various times (when they don't expect it) later on in the day to different rooms in the house, each time awarding an aeroplane lolly to the first person there. The last time you do it before the children go to bed, call them to somewhere comfy and tell them that this time God is calling you all to pray together as a family. Ask God to help you all be ready to come when He calls – share another lolly each and then brush your teeth!

## FAITH BOARD



## OTHER IDEAS

**1** Read the story of Jonah from the Bible – did he come when God called him? What happened?

**2** Make a candy aeroplane – Thread a thin rubber band through the holes of two life saver lollies then balance the tube of lollies between them across the rubber band. Place the chewing gum on top for wings and pull the rubber band up and over each side of the gum to hold in place. Decorate the wing with stickers if you wish.

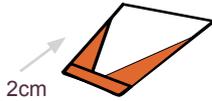




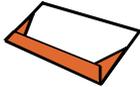
## MAKE A PAPER PLANE



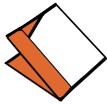
Fold 2 corners of an A4 sheet of paper about 5cm toward the centre, lengthwise, so they meet.



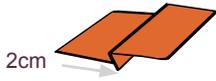
Make a 2cm fold on the bottom edge.



Repeat step 2, folding up the bottom 7 more times.



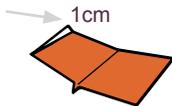
Flip the plane over so that folds are faced down, then fold the whole plane in half.



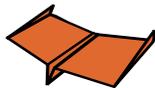
Keeping the plane folded, fold down the top wing about 2cm from the centre fold.



Flip the plane over so your beginning folds are face up and repeat step 5 with the other wing.



Flip the plane over again so that the folds are faced down, then fold up the edge of each wing tip about 1cm.



To launch your plane, throw it overhand and straight up in the air. Have a great flight!