

Preddy Memorial Foundation

September 2000 Annual Report



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Sixth Annual Meeting

This year we held a board meeting only. Next year we will have the Bi-Annual Meeting of Members. On May 8th of last year, as you may recall, we held a symposium in honor of World War II veterans. It was a celebration of *The Greatest Generation vis-a-vis* Tom Brokaw's book by that title. The symposium was a great success. Next year we are planning to hold our May 8th (VE Day) Bi-Annual meeting at the Peddycord Museum located at the Asheboro Municipal Airport in Asheboro, NC. You will receive more details about a month in advance of the meeting date. Please mark the date on your calendar now.

A number of significant events have occurred since our 1999 Annual Report. Most of the events have been noted in our Newsletters dated January 2000 and April 2000. Those Newsletters are published on the PMF web site (http://preddy_foundation.org). Those events will be summarized here, especially for those who aren't connected to the internet.

Bronze Plaque

Greensboro (now Grimsley) High School was the site of a ceremony designed to honor GHS alumni who served during WW II. Walker Rucker conceived this project, raised most of the funds necessary to acquire the duplicate plaque, and presided over the ceremony. The plaque is a replica of the original that hangs in the Sigmund Pearl Field House. It bears the names of 99 alumni (97 men and two women) who fought and fell for our country. The new plaque was hung in the main hall of the school, near the principal's office. It was unveiled by Mrs. Emily Preyer on December 8, 1999, and on December 12th we were saddened by her death. Our January Newsletter summarized the obituaries for Emily and for Oscar B. Teague who died on October 3, 1999. Emily Preyer served as a director of the PMF and O. B. served as director and

Treasurer.

After hanging the new plaque, we challenged one of the history classes to learn something about each person whose name is on the plaque. In addition, Walker Rucker got permission from Mrs. Teague, the principal, to place an exhibit next to the plaque. The exhibit will contain the bust of George Preddy and a model of his Cripes A'Mighty 3rd. The background will be the painting, *American Patrol* by Troy White, that appears on the dust cover of the hard back edition of the book, *George Preddy - Top Mustang Ace*. The exhibit will draw attention to the plaque. And the exhibit will display the person who established the most notable WWII records of any Tarheel: sixth ranking Air Force Ace, eighth ranking American ace (exceeded Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker's record), top Mustang ace, and first to destroy six enemy fighters in one mission. North Carolina should be very proud of it's native son – and so should Greensboro!

Mindy White's Magazine Article

The December 1999 issue of *Air Classics* contains an article written by Mindy White, Troy's wife. Her article, entitled *Bluenoser*, announced the release of Troy White's painting, *American Patrol*, mentioned above and shown on the cover page of this newsletter.

The article includes a photo of the portrait of George that now hangs in the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Troy donated the painting to the PMF, and we in turn donated it to the Heritage. Additionally, Mindy wrote a very nice story about the Preddy Memorial Foundation and it was included in the article.

Fund Raising

The original painting of *American Patrol* should be the property of the Preddy Memorial Foundation. We have set a goal this year to raise sufficient funds to buy the painting. It will cost us \$4,000. We are also looking for a place to have it displayed permanently. Museums cannot promise to do that, so we are looking for another appropriate spot. If you have any ideas, please let one of the board members know.

We also need funds to repair the exhibit we placed at the Piedmont Triad International Airport. The interactive CD screen is not working at all. Spin Communications, our contractor who developed the CD, is working on the problem.

George Preddy Bust Update

The PMF had a life-sized bust sculpted of George Preddy. The original bust was donated to the Greensboro Historical Museum. The PMF Board decided to have some copies made, so we borrowed the original to use for the mold. Twenty six copies were made by Concept Plastics of High Point.

As of this writing, we have placed one with each of the following: the US Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio; the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia; the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California; the American Fighter Aces Association in San Antonio, Texas; the Southern Museum of Aviation in Birmingham, Alabama; the Weeks Air Museum (home of a restored Cripes A'Mighty 3^d) in Miami, Florida; the Peddycord Museum in Asheboro, NC; the American Air Museum in Britain at Duxford, England; the San Diego Aerospace Museum in Balboa Park; the Morton Lester Museum in Martinsville, Virginia; Douglas International Airport in Charlotte, NC; the Maj. George Preddy VFW Post in Greensboro, NC; the Cavanaugh Museum in Dallas (soon); Col. Steve Hicks of the Virginia Air Guard (of 328th Fighter Squadron heritage); and the Museum of Aviation at Warner Robins, Georgia.

We have also ordered a bust of Bill Preddy to be displayed in the Greensboro Historical Museum along with the original bust of George.

Cripes A'Mighty 3rd Model

The PMF acquired 23 die cast models of George Preddy's most famous Mustang, Cripes A'Mighty 3^d. Only 500 of these collectibles were made. We had them for sale on the PMF web site for \$54.95 each, plus S&H. We also sold them on Ebay. They are now sold out.

Preddy, The Mustang Ace

John Lambeth has digitized the Preddy video.

This edition of the video has been published by the Preddy Memorial Foundation, given an ISBN number and a bar code so that it can be marketed through Amazon.com. The video and both the hard and soft cover editions of the book, *George Preddy, Top Mustang Ace*, are now sold through Amazon.com and eBay.

Peddycord Museum Exhibit

The Peddycord Foundation for Aircraft Conservation (PFAC) accepted the eight-foot wing span model of Cripes A'Mighty 3rd for display in their Museum. Otto Gaskins delivered a bust to PFAC and made news in Asheboro's *The Herald-Sun*, January 23, 2000.

Arnaud Bienat Honors Preddys

Arnaud Bienat placed flowers on the grave sites of George and Bill, and sent photos of the Lorraine American Military Cemetery. He also sent a newspaper from Lorraine which had an article about and a photo of George. The article was translated from French to English.

Morton Lester Appointed

The National Aviation Hall of Fame has appointed Morton Lester to their Board of Nominations. In 1996, the PMF officially nominated George Preddy for enshrinement in the NAHF. The NAHF said at the time that it often takes five or more years for nominees to be placed on the ballot. It certainly will not hurt to have a friend on the NAHF Board of Nominations!!

352nd Fighter Group History

Their famous history book has now been reprinted. The PMF financed one third of the cost, about \$6,000. We expect a good return on our investment. The books are selling quite well. And this edition was dedicated to Major George E. Preddy, Jr.

Spring Board Meeting

Bill Black, PMF President, opened the board meeting in Morton Lester's hangar at the Blue Ridge Airport in Martinsville, Virginia. Perhaps the most significant item on the agenda was the election of three new board members: Bill Craft, Louis Godwin and Curtis Laughlin. We thank them for agreeing to serve.

Other items discussed include the NC Aviation Hall of Fame, difficulty with our Airport Exhibit, the high school exhibit, the last 352nd Fighter Group Reunion to be held in Richmond, Virginia, the 352nd Fighter Group History book partially funded by the PMF, the newly published Preddy video (now digitized), and finally our financial status. We had about two thousand dollars in our checking account. Our other

financial assets had decreased sharply with the fall in the stock market. However, with the recent rise in the market, we are getting well! Our current assets now amount to about \$28,000. All donations are greatly appreciated.

