

PREDDY MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2003

Franti Hokr with Bill's Seat



Kohout/Lester/Parts



Euro Trip's 352nd FG Vets



P-47/P-51 over Bodney



Cripes in PTI Airport



NC Museum of History



Col. Hicks at VA ANG Base Ops



Spirit of Bodney



Guilford Veterans Memorial



Preddy Memorial Foundation

September 2003 Annual Report



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A Memorable Reunion: October 2002

Bill Preddy's fighter group, the 339th, held their reunion in Charleston, SC last year. Joe & Betty Noah attended. It was a great reunion, and the Noahs met some of Bill's squadron mates who remembered him well. One day was spent on the Yorktown Carrier where we had a tour and lunch. The most recent 339th Newsletter included an article by a pilot, David MacKenzie, whose wing Bill was flying on April 7, 1945. On that mission to Hamburg, David was shot down by friendly fire from a B-17, and was taken prisoner. Bill may have filed a Missing Aircrew Report, a report Steve Ananian of the 339th is trying to find for us.

Ceremony at Burlington, NC Airport

A member of the PMF and relative of the Preddys, Paul Holt, arranged a ceremony in memory of the brothers. It was held at the Burlington Airport. The event was reported in the Burlington newspaper with photos.

The Commemorative Air Force

In the July 2003 issue of *The Carolinas Flight Line*, Col. John Bogart was kind enough to include a copy of John Frisbee's 1987 Air Force Magazine article entitled "The Complete Fighter Pilot." The article is a top-notch summary of George Preddy's career! Thank you, John & John!

Charlotte's Douglas Airport

Jennifer Shouse is searching for a prominent place in the terminal building to display our original painting of *American Patrol*, the painting that was done by Troy White and used on our dust cover of the hard back book, *George Preddy - Top Mustang Ace*. Also, we have a bust and an *American Patrol* print on canvas displayed in the Carolinas Aviation Museum.

352nd Fighter Group Association

The one-hour 352nd documentary

for PBS-TV is complete except for the musical scores which will feature the Orlando Symphony Orchestra. *Bluenoser Tales*, now being compiled by Bob Powell, Marc Hamel and Sam Sox, is now scheduled for publication in late Fall. The 352nd FG is featured in several magazines recently. These include a 3-part article on the Legend of Y-29 in *Air Classics* (Sept/Oct/Nov issues), a story on the production of the 352nd documentary in Kissimmee, Florida in *Warbirds International*, and a fantastic story on Editor/Historian Robert H. Powell, Jr. in *AutoPILOT Magazine*.

The Combat Airmen of WW II

The Combat Airmen of WW II are writing and publishing a book on about 60 heroes from the area near Guilford County. George Preddy, Jr. and Bill Preddy each have a story included in the new book, *Freedom's Heroes*, that will be published later this month (September, 2002) in Greensboro, NC (Writers' Group of the Triad, Publishers). A painting by Russell Smith of *Cripes A Mighty 3rd* piloted by George is on the cover of the book, depicting the moment that George shot down his sixth Nazi plane during aerial combat on August 6, 1944. The title of the painting is "Sixth on the Sixth" and limited prints will be available for purchase through the artist and the PMF. The painting is shown on the cover of this report, and listed in our web site's Gift Shop:

<http://www.Preddy-Foundation.org>

There are 59 veterans' stories in the book, each illustrated with a photo of the veteran. The book is to go into school libraries throughout Guilford County. Interesting illustrations by Bill Mauldin lighten the content and show how it is possible to survive great tragedy with a touch of humor. All military services are represented.

NC Aviation Museum

Our good friends in Asheboro have incorporated their museum under a new name: North Carolina Aviation Museum. In February the NCAM hosted the George Preddy Day, a day close to George's birthday (the 5th) and 16 close friends and relatives of the Preddy brothers attended to answer questions folks may have had about them. It was a great day, and the PMF is most grateful to the NCAM for what they do in memory of the Preddys. The PMF donated a flag to the NCAM, a flag given to us by W. Dan Jones, a Vietnam veteran who had the flag signed by members of the 352nd Fighter

Group at the Last Reunion held in Richmond. You may recall that the NCAM has an exhibit on the Preddy brothers; included is a 1/5th scale model of Cripes A'Mighty 3rd built by Jeff Foley. We also have a bust of George in the display, a painting of George's P-47 by Billy Garmon, and a part from Bill Preddy's Mustang obtained from one of our Czech friends, Frantisek Hokr. The Museum staff have finished the restoration of their B-25, *Carolina*

Girl, and have started work on an F4U Corsair. In short, they have great plans for the future, plans that include the NC Aviation Hall of Fame.

Pope-Preddy Air Force Base

The PMF has been trying valiantly to show a ground swell of public opinion in favor of re-naming Pope AFB by petition. The petition is on the internet, and we have had several folks collect names on paper. Otto Gaskins, Ben Marion at the NCAM, the VFW and others have worked on this issue. We now have about 850 signatures online, and another 250 on paper. This is far short of a ground swell. Although this effort appears to be doomed to failure, the Preddy brothers have gotten some badly needed publicity out of the effort. *Warbirds International* and three issues of *Air Classics* gave us free ads that included a plea for signers of the petition. We have had a number of articles and letters to editors published seeking signers.

Walls of Honor

We have entered the names of both George and Bill Preddy on several Walls of Honor: the Air & Space Museum at Dulles Airport, the Cradle of Aviation Museum on Long Island, NY near Mitchel AFB, the NCAM at the Asheboro Airport, and others. Rachel Preddy Harris and the PMF have also entered both in the World War II Memorial site's Registry of Remembrances. You may see them at the site below, and you may also enter yourself if you served in WW II and made a donation to the Memorial:

<http://www.wwiiregistry.org/>

The Commemorative Air Force (CAF)

Many of you know the CAF as the Confederate Air Force, but last year they changed their name. Joe Noah

joined two years ago because the Carolinas Wing based in Southern Pines agreed to sell Preddy items at the various air shows they attend. It is a great organization, and Joe has met some fine people. They are helping to get George enshrined in CAF's American Combat Airman Hall of Fame. He was nominated in December 2001. George has not yet been selected for enshrinement in the National Aviation Hall of Fame, but we continue to work on it.

Guilford County Veterans Memorial

The Guilford County Veterans Memorial was dedicated on September 14, 2002 in Greensboro at the Country Park. It is a memorial to those who served in the armed forces and on the home front. Around the 24-foot obelisk are 14 panels each telling a story with text, maps and photos. There are six bronze plaques representing the six military and merchant marine services. There are also six plaques along the wooded Path of Memories. They contain 36 quotes from letters written home. They are very moving, and some are humorous. The memorial also honors members of the Red Cross and USO, teams who offered our service personnel a welcome diversion from the horrors of war. A donation of \$200 secured a memorial brick at the Memorial while a \$1,000 donation made one a Charter Member with one's name on the plaque at the Memorial. The cost of the project was estimated at \$400,000. The PMF is listed among the major contributors thanks to all of you.

Greensboro Historical Museum

Construction at the Museum has been completed and new exhibits are back in place. The Preddy brothers have a great exhibit close to where it was located before the construction began. Please visit.

Book Sales

Bob Powell continues to make money for the PMF through sales of the 352nd History book. And the PMF continues to sell books, videos and prints through gift shops and online (Ebay, Amazon and our web site).

Euro Trip Plans

At our spring Board meeting, Morton Lester suggested to Bob Powell that another trip be arranged for those who would like to visit Bodney, England, and Asch and Chievres in Belgium, and other places to include Lorraine American Cemetery in France. The trip has been arranged by Charlotte Carpenter, European Holidays. She has a bus load of 45 people lined up so far!

Bob Reese, Split S Productions

“As of early September, if the timing of the score goes well, we should be complete by mid-September. I would like to have a premier in Washington, D.C. with a concert. This production will cost about \$100,000.” Some donations to the effort have been made through the PMF, but as of now, Split S is short by about \$18,000. Major donations to this effort were raised by Col. Steve Hicks, VA ANG 192nd Fighter Wing, from Sidney Gunst, Jr. and Alan Lingerfelt. Other major donations to this documentary made through the PMF were from Ken Wagnon, Florence Reese, Todd Gehrke and the PMF. Bob Reese and Rene Mestagh have made major direct contributions to the effort.

PMF Finances

As of mid-September 2002, the PMF has about \$3,000 in it's checking account, and about \$12,000 in mutual funds. We hope to raise more funds through this mailing so that we can give further help to the 352nd documentary and continue our projects. This year we have donated \$5,000 to the Veterans Memorial, and \$4,000 to the 352nd documentary.

Board Meeting

The PMF will hold it's fall board meeting on Sunday, November 10th, at 2:00 PM in the Major George Preddy VFW Post 2087 in Greensboro. Guests are invited.

PLEASE JOIN US