
Preddy Memorial Foundation Newsletter

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GHS Bronze Plaque Unveiled by Emily Preyer

Greensboro (now Grimsley) High School was the site of a ceremony designed to honor GHS alumni who gave their lives during WWII. This ceremony was described by Dina Ackerman, Editor-in-Chief of *High Life*, 14 December 1999 issue:

There was something special about these men and women, something different as they congregated on the day after the 58th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Because of the efforts of Joe Noah and the Preddy Memorial Foundation, this group was able to unveil a plaque in the main hall, to honor the memory of their classmates who died in World War II.

Following the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the presentation of the colors, Walker Rucker, Class of 1941, addressed the assembled crowd. Those present included GHS graduates, members of the ROTC, and distinguished members of the Grimsley community, such as Lody Glenn, who was principal of Grimsley from 1969-1981.



Mr. Rucker said, “We entered Greensboro High School under the ascendant star of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. We thought if he can make it, we can. By striking out three letters, he changed the word Depression

to press on.”

As Mr. Rucker reminisced, he evoked images that transformed these men and women in their seventies and eighties into young teens who at one time “considered a Whirlie trip to Winston Salem an adventure and the graduation jaunt to DC a dream fulfilled” but “who saw the four corners of the earth, obscure places with names like Aleutian Islands, Port Moresby, Point du Hoc and the Zugspitz,” said Mr. Rucker.

Mr. Rucker added humorous stories recalling the metamorphosis of his classmates from students to soldiers. “Pernell ‘Pinkie’ Kennedy might have had trouble finding

his Model A Ford in the School parking lot, but he was unerring in locating the Herman Goering works in Lintz,” said Rucker. Unfortunately, many men like Kennedy, graduates of Grimsley, did not return.

It is for this reason that the ceremony took place: to honor these men and to remember their sacrifices. Moving from the Media Center to the Main Hall, the crowd stood in silence as Reverend Harold Sherrill gave an invocation, **and then Emily Preyer unveiled the plaque.** The plaque, which will be bronze in the near future, is a replica of the original that hangs in the Sigmund Selig Pearl Field House. It bears the names of 99 men, all Grimsley students, who fought and fell for this country.



Mrs. Teague told these men and women, who graduated in the late thirties and forties, that Grimsley has not changed too much since they were students. Though the name is different, “the tradition continues,” said Mrs. Teague. Mr. Rucker, however, mentioned some differences between the culture in which he grew up and the world in which today’s Whirlies live. “In this age of cynicism, when patriotism is passe’, morality suspect, and our chief executive our chief criminal, what different state of affairs existed over a half century ago which propelled this nation’s youth to put their lives on the line?” Said Mr. Rucker.

Now as students run through the Main Hall, rushing to arrive to class on time, they should take a moment to notice the plaque that honors the memory of fellow Whirlies. As the plaque reads, “Greater love hath no man than this — that a man lay down his life for his friends,” St. John XV.13. These are the people who sacrificed their lives for ours. To paraphrase Mr. Rucker, they fought the fight, they kept the faith, what more can we ask of their generation?

Emily Preyer

Emily Harris Preyer, wife of former U. S. Congressman Richardson Preyer, died suddenly Sunday morning the 12th of December 1999.

The Board Members of the Preddy Memorial Foundation are proud that they had the opportunity to serve with Emily Preyer. Perhaps her last official act was the unveiling, on December 8th, of the bronze plaque described above.

Emily was active in her husband's political campaigns, as a homemaker, as a philanthropist, and as a proponent of culture and education in the community. Last year she received the North Carolina Award in Public Service, the state's highest honor, in recognition of her leadership and philanthropy in Greensboro.

During her life, Emily Preyer served on and chaired the boards of dozens of non-profit and charitable organizations. At the time of her death, she was active on the board of the Guilford Battleground Company, the Shepherd Center, the N. C. Nature Conservancy, the N. C. Zoological Society, and the Preddy Memorial Foundation, among others.

In the mid thirties, Emily graduated from Greensboro High School with George Preddy. She had helped George "Mouse" Preddy tend his cold drink stand called "Mouse Hole" at the World War I Memorial Stadium where they both played tennis often! In 1958, Mrs. Preyer was named Greensboro Woman of the Year. Four years later, she won the women's singles and doubles titles in tennis in Greensboro. In 1976 she led a drive to raise \$100,000 to build a small clubhouse at the J. Spencer Love Tennis Center at Jaycee Park.

Most recently, Jim Rouche, an Honorary Member of the PMF, wrote a fond tribute to the memory of Emily. In part, he said, "Fortunately, I was able to give her a hug and a kiss at the Preddy Memorial Foundation program at Grimsley High School a couple of days before her death. Thanks, Rich, for sharing her with us. Game, set, match, Emily. You were the greatest."

We certainly echo those sentiments.

Oscar B. Teague

O. B. Teague died Sunday October 3, 1999 in Patrick County, Virginia. O. B. had served as a Trustee and then a Director of the Preddy Memorial Foundation since its inception in 1993. He served as treasurer and chairman of the fund-raising committee. O. B. befriended Mr. Earl

Preddy, father of George and Bill, after World War II. He became a fan of the Preddy family.

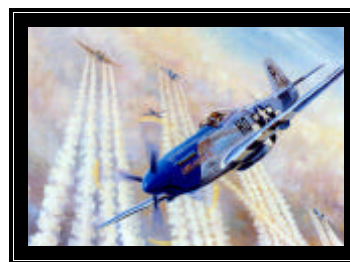
O. B. served in the United States Marine Corps in the Pacific Theater during World War II. He was a past member of the Board of Directors for Hargrave Military Academy in Chatham, Virginia, and was currently serving on the board of the Marine Military Academy, Harlingen, Texas.

The Foundation will miss both Emily and O. B. immensely.

Air Classics Magazine Article

The December 1999 issue of *Air Classics* contains an article written by Mindy White, the wife of the artist who painted Cripes A'Mighty 3rd for the dust cover of the hardbound edition of *George Preddy, Top Mustang Ace*. Her article, entitled *Bluenoser*, announced the release of Troy White's painting which is called *American Patrol*.

This painting depicts Preddy on his 29 July 1944 mission to Merseburg, Germany. The scene unfolds as Preddy turns his attention to an Me 109 as it streaks through the bombers of the 100th Bomb Group. The chase happened during the 8th Air Force mission to the Halle-Leuna synthetic oil refineries. It was the second day in a row that the bombers of the 8th had visited the oil refineries near Merseburg. More than 500 flak guns ringed the refineries. The lethal flak and Luftwaffe fighters surrounding Merseburg continued to lay waste to high numbers of American bombers and fighters attacking the area in late July.



American Patrol shows Preddy's Cripes A'Mighty 3rd slicing through the bomber formation and their vapor trails. Preddy's 487th Fighter Squadron accounted for four victories over Me 109s on this mission; Preddy got one.

A beautiful painting!

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. Fifteen 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



(not yet delivered); the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California; the Southern Museum of Aviation in Birmingham, Alabama; the Weeks Air Museum (home of a restored Cripes A'Mighty 3rd) in Miami, Florida; the Peddycord Museum in Asheboro, NC (soon); the American Air Museum in Britain at Duxford, England; the Morton Lester Museum in

Martinsville, Virginia; the Carolinas Historic Aviation Museum in Charlotte, NC.; the Shuttleworth Museum (soon); and the Museum of Aviation at Warner Robins, Georgia (not yet delivered).

We have promised one to the Greensboro High School to be placed near the bronze plaque with a print of American Patrol as the background. That leaves three to be assigned.



Cripes A'Mighty 3rd Model

The PMF has acquired 18 die cast models of George Preddy's most famous Mustang, Cripes

A'Mighty 3rd. Only 500 of these collectibles were made, and the PMF was able to get just 18 of those. We have them for sale on the PMF web site for \$54.95 each, plus S&H. And they are being auctioned on eBay one at a time. To date we have sold four of them; they will not last long.

Preddy, The Mustang Ace

Sam Sox and John Lambeth are in the process of digitizing the video the rights to which belong to the PMF. This edition of the video will be published by the Preddy

Memorial Foundation, given an ISBN number and a bar code so that it can be marketed through Amazon.com. 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 plans to add a bust very soon. See article in 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 me a newspaper from Lorraine which had an article about and a photo of George. I have had the article translated. I'll bring a copy to the May 8th meeting.

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!!

Bill Mills Contacts Rep. Coble

Bill Mills has made another plea to have Pope AFB renamed for the Preddy brothers. He met with Rep. Coble at the Service Academy Screening Committee meeting held on 29 December 1999. As a result, Rep. Coble plans to introduce a bill in Congress to have Pope AFB renamed. Previous requests from Senator Irvin, Senator Helms and Congressman Coble received negative form letter replies from the Air Force. A Bill, if passed, would give the Air Force no choice in the matter. That appears to be the only way this will ever happen!

PREDDY MEMORIAL FOUNDATION Minutes of Board Meeting of November 11, 1999 Greensboro Historical Museum

Meeting was called to order by President Bill Black at 10:30 AM.

Board Members present were: Carson Bain, Bill Black, Otto Gaskins, Horace Kornegay, Morton Lester, Harold McCollum, Bill Moore, Joe Noah, Dolph Overton, Emily Preyer, Bob Powell, Jim Rucker, Walker Rucker, Harding Shinn and Sam Sox. Guests included Marc Hamel, Bill Teague, Walter Hannah, and Larry East.

Sam Sox offered the invocation. In the absence of Secretary John Faircloth, the Minutes of the last meeting were dispensed with. The 1999 Annual Report was provided in place of the minutes. Marc Hamel agreed to serve as Acting Secretary and record the minutes of the present meeting.

Joe Noah explained the financial report stating that there was approximately \$6,000 in the checking account, about \$41,000 in Other Assets, and almost \$30,000 invested in the Fidelity Dividend Growth Fund and CMGI stock. Joe noted that there is a liability of \$1,000 earmarked for donation to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Total equity in the Foundation is about \$75,000.

Otto Gaskins made a report on the Preddy exhibit located at the airport. He reported that it is working fine and he is cleaning and caring for it periodically.

It was noted that Mindy White has a nice article in Air Classics covering the PMF Symposium held in Greensboro on VE Day, 1999. (See above)

Joe Noah presented the canvas print of "American Patrol" by Troy White. The rendering was initially painted to provide the artwork for the dust cover used on the hardbound copies of "George Preddy, Top Mustang Ace". The members noted that the painting is a beautiful piece of artwork.

Bill Moore announced that Dolph Overton is the featured speaker at the 1999 Veteran's Day program at the Greensboro Historical Museum.

Bill Black thanked Otto Gaskins for his assistance in setting up the Preddy display presently located at PTIA.

It was discussed that there is a possibility of using the display for the 352nd Fighter Group Reunion in Richmond. Concern was expressed that if the display is temporarily removed from the airport, the Foundation may not be able to get it placed there again. Bob Powell stated that it was not imperative that the display be on hand for the scheduled last reunion. The decision on whether or not to allow the exhibit to be moved temporarily to Richmond was delayed until the Spring Meeting on May 8, 2000.

Sam Sox provided an estimate of \$250.00 to \$300.00 for the required one million dollar liability insurance policy required in order to hang the large-scale "Cripes A'Mighty" model of George Preddy's Mustang in the airport. It was agreed

that Otto Gaskins should ask Ted Johnson if we provide the necessary insurance, can we hang the model near the Preddy exhibit.

No real progress was reported on getting an airport named for the Preddy brothers. Emily Preyer suggested the Foundation try contacting Senator John Edwards for his help. (OBE)

Discussion was held about a NC Aviation Hall of Fame. Morton Lester noted that the First In Flight Museum was a possibility. There has been no response from Charlotte's museum so far on this matter. Dolph Overton says there will be a NC Aviation Museum and a NC Aviation Hall of Fame! He will see to it. Thanks, Dolph.

It was noted that long-time member O.B. Teague had passed away since last meeting. Sam Sox agreed to draft a resolution letter from the Foundation to O.B.'s family in appreciation for all his work on its behalf.

The possibility of pursuing the Medal of Honor for George Preddy was discussed. The Foundation is to provide Emily Preyer with information that she can use on this matter when she has a conversation with Senator Edwards. (OBE)

It was reported that Aaron McCall distributed Preddy Brochures at the Stalag Luft III reunion recently. It was also noted that The Foundation needs to acquire a new supply of the brochures. Motion made and approved to make the acquisition. (20,000 have now been acquired)

For information, discussion was held regarding Bob Reese and his plans for a movie about George Preddy's life. Also discussed was a possible Discovery Channel documentary based on the 352nd Fighter Group interviews at their reunion in Nashville and the one to be held in Richmond in 2000.

Joe Noah reported that the Preddy books are selling well on the internet sites Amazon.com and eBay.com.

The Chamber of Commerce has considered and may authorize an annual Preddy Service Award for an outstanding citizen who puts "service above self". If approved, the award will be presented for the first time in 2000.

The meeting was temporarily adjourned to hear Dolph Overton's speech for Veteran's Day.

The meeting was reconvened after the speech to consider a site and date for the 2000 Annual Meeting. **The site/date selected: the Blue Ridge Airport in Martinsville, Virginia on May 8, 2000. Morton Lester will host the meeting.**

Meeting adjourned.



