



News About The George Bledsoe Medal

The Old Primero Historical Foundation continues its work to keep the memory of George Bledsoe alive in the minds of the American people by honoring those across the world who have made significant contributions to the preservation of American military aviation history.

The George Bledsoe Award is presented to those who make significant contributions to the preservation of the history of the air war in World War II. This award is named in honor of George Bledsoe who devoted his lifetime to service to mankind, first as a B-24 Liberator pilot flying dangerous low level night missions with the Carpetbagger operations in England and Scotland during World War II. Later as a teacher to thousands of students, Bledsoe became a role model for living life with integrity and a commitment to excellence. His legacy and his memory continues to live on in the lives of his students to whom Bledsoe made a lasting impact.



Plans are underway for three additional Bledsoe Medal presentations in 2020, two in England and one in the United States. See below for preliminary details.



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 31, 2019

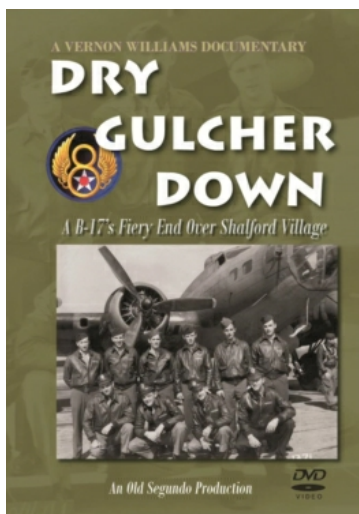
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The East Anglia Historical Project and the Old Primero Historical Foundation Remembers Dr. Sally Reid

The Old Primero Historical Foundation regrets to announce that Dr. Sally Reid died on Monday, December 21, 2019 in Nashville, Tennessee. Dr. Reid was an award-winning composer, known across the globe for her compositions and leadership in the music world. She was awarded the George Bledsoe Medal in 2008 for her original score for the documentary film *Dry Gulcher Down*. She was the first American to receive this award, along with two British air museum founders in Bedfordshire, England. Her commitment for preserving the story of the Dry Gulcher Flying Fortress and her crew contributed greatly to producing a film that will sustain the legacy of the George H. Cupernall crew for future generations. Her musical score was moving and dramatic and brought the story of the ten crewmen to life.

George Bledsoe was a life-long professional symphony musician and director. Even when he was flying combat in Europe, he was the only one onboard the aircraft with a music

degree and experience playing trumpet in symphony orchestras. It was not the usual background for most command pilots in the Eighth Air Force. For those of us who knew him, we know that Mr. Bledsoe would have been pleased to have known that Dr. Reid had composed the soundtrack for the *Dry Gulcher* film, and he would have been very interested, indeed, in the musical score. Even during the war, long before he became the Assistant Conductor for the Amarillo Symphony in later life, he took every chance to hear serious music, even on the combat trail. On September 6, 1944, "Lt. Bledsoe and crew were scheduled to fly down to London this afternoon to get some Joes [agents to be dropped behind enemy lines] and some material for a very special job. Since Lt. Bledsoe wanted to hear the concert in Dundee, he got Lt. O'Hare to go in his place so he could hear the concert. Lt. Bledsoe and I [William Alexander, his flight engineer] attended the concert by the National Symphony Orchestra and came home on the 10:35 train." The next evening, Bledsoe and his crew flew into occupied Norway and had a close call with the German defenders. We are very pleased that Dr. Reid became the first recipient of the Bledsoe Medal in 2008 and that her music will live on forever as part of the story of ten young Americans who served our nation with valor in World War II.



Sally Reid, ASCAP

Original Score and Arrangements
Dry Gulcher Down

- Fortress Fanfare (2:27)
- Fanfare Extended (3:38)
- Takeoff Prelude 1 (4:52)
- Takeoff prelude 2 (4:35)
- Ridgewell Night (2:20)
- Wings of Sorrow (1:44)
- Dry Gulcher Lament (1:15)
- English Lament (1:16)
- Obligato 1 (3:58)
- Obligato 2 (3:02)
- Danger Sequence 1 (5:44)
- Danger Sequence 2 (4:52)
- Fire Sequence 1 (3:18)
- Takeoff (5:44)
- Ridgewell VI 4 (2:21)
- Ridgewell VI 4 with Horns (2:11)
- Soaring (5:35)
- Soaring Flute (5:35)
- Soaring Flute and Horn (5:25)
- Credits (5:35)

Three additional Bledsoe awards are scheduled for 2020



Dave Osborne

For his work building an impressive research archive of 381st



Gary Moncur

For his work in developing and maintaining a comprehensive research



Roger Freeman

For a lifetime of scholarship, his 60 books on the air war and his

Bomb Group materials
over the course of a
lifetime.

website on the 303rd
Bomb Group in World War
Two.

massive historical
collections now in
museums and archives
across the globe.

Press releases coming soon for two presentations in England and one in the United States

The Old Primero Historical Foundation has announced that three Bledsoe awards will be presented in 2020, one in the United States and two in England.

Dave Osborne

Dave Osborne played a major role in preserving the history of the 381st Bomb Group: transcribing microfilm, collecting archival materials, and publishing books on the air war based in England.

Dave Osborne grew up in Halstead, 8 miles from the Ridgewell airdrome. His interest in the B-17 began when making models for his son Corin. His son outgrew the passion but Dave's interest and involvement in the 381st Bomb Group led to many years of service dedicated to preserving the history of that group and men who served at Ridgewell.

By the time of his death in 2016, Dave Osborne had contributed a significant amount of historical documents to a 381st research website that quickly became a significant resource for scholars and students alike. Osborne spent thousands of tedious hours transcribing microfilm and other documents to make them accessible to a vast group of researchers who will be forever in his debt.

Gary Moncur

Gary Moncur's father, Vern L. Moncur, was a first pilot in the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth, England during World War II. He remembers the impact of his father's experience on the family, "I saw how his experiences changed his life and ours. I grew up in a home without a driveway . . . it was the 'runway.' The patch of cement next to the runway where we played basketball was the 'ramp.' I was an adult before I knew "ramp" was an aviation term. Almost all our family rides were to the airport, a tradition that has carried on to my family."

Throughout much of his adult life, Gary Moncur has dedicated much of his time to developing a comprehensive website to preserve the history of his father's war service and the bomb group in which he served. The 303rd Bomb Group website is his brainchild, building it into one of the most wide-ranging research sites available. Any scholar or student looking at the history of the air war must spend time in Moncur's digital archives. As with any website archival endeavor, the beauty of it is in the access that is available to anyone doing research, regardless of where the researcher is. The archives is never closed, it is open 24/7.

Although the 303rd Bomb Group Association has closed its operations, Gary Moncur continues to update and maintain the website. He continues to honor those who have passed into history and continues to build new data so that it is a living, breathing place.

Roger Freeman

Freeman, who grew up on a farm in East Anglia, had a boyhood obsession with aircraft which developed into a historical interest in the airmen and operations of the Eighth Air Force, a force with some 3,500 bombers and almost 1,000 fighters occupying some 60 airfields in the area.

Roger Freeman died in 2005 at the age of 77, but during his lifetime he became one of the world's foremost military aviation historians while making his living as a farmer. He specialized in the history of the USAAF Eighth Air Force, the largest air striking force ever committed to battle. He eventually produced more than 60 books and countless articles dealing with the USAAF and RAF air offensive over Europe. He was in great demand on both sides of the Atlantic as a lecturer, and he made many visits to America to meet the veterans.

The Roger Freeman Collection of 15,000 photographs is the foundation of his personal research. That is now a part of the Imperial War Museum's online footprint and is an important part of the educational program available via the web to researchers and students across the globe.

Keep pace with the Bledsoe Award news by regular visits to the Old Primero Historical Foundation website.

Please consider a donation to the Old Primero Historical Foundation.
OPHF is a 501 (c)3 and all donations are tax deductible.

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