

A Few Good Men

The United States Marines are universally considered to be an elite fighting force, so often on the frontlines of our nation's conflicts. Clemson alumni have helped fill the ranks of the Corps from the college's early days to the present. Twenty-five Clemson alumni have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the Marine Corps, including Albert Marshall La Bree, Jr., a Marine Corps fighter pilot during World War II.

La Bree spent some of his early years in Bishopville, his mother's hometown before moving farther south. He attended high school in Hollywood, Florida and enrolled in Clemson College in 1940. An industrial education major, La Bree was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment in the Cadet Brigade. As a sophomore, he was appointed a cadet corporal. That's as far as La Bree advanced as a cadet. In 1942, he left Clemson and volunteered for the Navy's flight training program.



La Bree was sent initially to the University of Georgia for training. He was subsequently ordered to Saint Louis, Missouri and then to Pensacola, Florida where he earned his pilot's wings in May 1943. La Bree opted to serve in the Marines.



Such was the demand for pilots to fly the planes to carry the war to enemies spanning the globe, that the new pilot was soon appointed an instructor pilot. First Lieutenant La Bree was assigned to Barin Field, an auxiliary airfield just across the Alabama state line from the Naval Air Station at Pensacola, Florida. Despite the pace of training and the demands of his new duties, Lieutenant La Bree found time to marry Anne Baskin of Bishopville on November 16.

On Saturday, December 18, Lieutenant La Bree took off a nighttime training flight. La Bree was killed when his aircraft crashed near Barin Field. He was 21 years-old and had been married 32 days.

First Lieutenant La Bree was survived by his wife, his parents, and his sister. He was buried in the Dania Memorial Park, Dania, Florida. The American Legion Post in Dania is named in his honor, as he was the first resident of that community to die in service to our country during World War II.

For more information on Albert Marshall La Bree, Jr. see:

<https://soh.alumni.clemson.edu/scroll/albert-marshall-labree-jr/>

For additional information about Clemson University's Scroll of Honor visit:

<https://soh.alumni.clemson.edu/>

