

GRADY LAW

1924 - 2023

Every day we lose 245 veterans of World War II. On Monday, September 11, 2023, Grady Law joined that group. Grady is much more than a statistic though.

Grady was born in Alabama and moved to South Florida as an infant. As a boy he enjoyed harvesting and eating the grapes, mangos and other wild fruit that was plentiful. This dietary preference lasted through his life and probably contributed to his long and healthy life.

Once he acquired a bicycle, he became an entrepreneur and operated a morning and evening paper route. He quickly learned that tips were better when the paper landed near the front door rather than the porch roof or bushes. A lesson that Grady would carry through life...always strive to do your best.

Grady graduated from high school in June, 1942. Like so many other young Americans he answered the call to duty and enlisted in the Navy. His aptitude testing identified him as a candidate for flight training. He hopscotched from base to base and completed his flight training by carrier qualifying on a converted cruise ship on Lake Michigan. Then it was off to the Pacific war front on the USS Cowpens and a part of Task Force 58.

Grady saw action in all the great Pacific battles and participated in the destruction of the IJN Nagato. The Nagato attack plan was for the dive bombers to dive under the fighters assigned to suppress anti-aircraft fire and launch their bombs and torpedoes. The dive bombers modified the plan and dropped their ordnance from above the fighters. Grady indicated he was startled to see bombs falling from above and narrowly missing the wings of his F6F. Upon returning to the carrier, a flight deck meeting was held and the plan clarified. Subsequent attacks had the dive bombers below the fighters.

Grady's squadron was assigned to secure the airfields around Tokyo in advance of the surrender ceremonies on the USS Missouri. The squadron chose to land on the grass in between runways, fearful that the Japanese had mined them. As Grady climbed from his



aircraft, a Japanese soldier appeared with a rifle in hand. Grady unholstered his revolver but recognized the soldier was surrendering and he accepted this prisoner of war.

Grady retired from active naval service and joined ARCO as a Sales and Real Estate Executive. He often put his flying skills to use by flying to various Florida cities and picking up payments that were due. Many times these stops would also involve a round of golf with customers. On one such occasion, the customer and Grady teamed up against two of the customer's golfing buddies. As golfers are wont to do, a bet was established for a Nassau of 1-1-1. Grady agreed to the bet thinking it was a \$1-\$1-\$1. Grady and his

customer won the bet three ways in addition to several "presses". Walking off the green Grady was handed \$600. A bit befuddled, Grady inquired what the \$600 was for and the answer was the bet. The 1-1-1 was in fact \$100-\$100-\$100. Grady confessed that he thought the bet was for \$1 and if he'd known it was \$100 he would have been too nervous to pull a club from his bag.

Grady played many, many golf courses throughout the United States. He was most pleased to have played Augusta National Golf Club. An experience that every golfer wishes they could claim.

Grady was proud to be the first resident of Magnolia Point. In addition to playing lots of golf at the club and other courses in the area, he served the City of Green Cove Springs as a Planning and Zoning Board

member for many years. Other civic involvement included being an active Mason and past Grand Master in the Green Cove Springs Cabul Lodge 116, Knights Templar, Scottish Rite, Shriners and OES Orange Park Chapter 226.

Grady was a great American who always answered the call to duty. He was a true friend and treasured golfing companion to many.

Rest in peace, Grady. We have the watch.

- BOB PAGE

