



## **Long Island Early Fliers Club, Inc. Special Edition Memorial Day 2017**

**Memorial Day has varied meanings based upon each person's experience and background. As a child, I remember my grandmother calling it Decoration Day. It was a day when we packed up the car with garden tools, a watering can and flowers and off we went to the cemetery to visit my grandfather's grave. The day used to be May 30<sup>th</sup>. It didn't matter what day of the week May 30<sup>th</sup> fell on. It was a day set aside to remember. It was a day to say thank you within our hearts to those who have made us who we are as a country, as a family and as individuals. For families who have lost someone in defense of our country, every day is Memorial Day.**

It's easy for many to overlook the sacrifice of our military when it's some far off soldier who died in some far off land. That's why it is so important for us to take the time out to notice; to remember.....

The next time you drive up to the terminal at Long Island MacArthur Airport, take the time to notice a memorial that has been put in place to honor the life and sacrifice of a local resident and recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor.



**LT. Michael Patrick Murphy** grew up in Patchogue. After graduating from Patchogue-Medford High School, he attended Penn State, graduating with honors and dual degrees in Political Science and Psychology. LT. Murphy became a Navy Seal in July of 2002. We remember him for his courage and leadership of which he gave his full measure on June 28, 2005.

Please take a moment to stop by the memorial to LT. Murphy on the east end of Arrival Avenue as you pull up to the terminal at L.I. MacArthur Airport. Here is his story as told on the memorial:

## Operation Red Wings

*This is the true story that inspired the movie "Lone Survivor."*

On June 28, 2005, a four-man Navy SEAL Team (LT Michael P. Murphy, PO1 Marcus Luttrell, STG2 Matthew G. Axelson and GM2 Danny P. Dietz) was conducting a recon mission in the Hindu Kush mountain region of Afghanistan when three local goat herders, including a young boy, stumbled upon them. Confronted with having to decide whether or not to release the villagers, LT Michael Murphy made the moral decision to free them. Unbeknownst to the Team, the Taliban fighters were quickly notified of the SEALs location and surrounded them in the steep mountainous terrain.

A fierce gun battle ensued between the four SEALs and the Taliban fighters, lasting for two hours. All of the SEALs were severely wounded but continued to fight. Knowing that the Team was outnumbered, and realizing that they were in need of support, LT Michael Murphy decided that he needed to contact Bagram Air Base for assistance. In order to make this call, Murphy climbed to an open, exposed area in order to gain better radio signal. He knowingly and willingly exposed himself to intense enemy gunfire. The Lone Survivor, Marcus Luttrell, described LT Murphy's actions as walking into "an avalanche of bullets." Despite being shot in the back, LT Murphy was successful in requesting support and relaying the Team's position to the air base. He concluded this call with his final words, "Roger that, Sir. Thank you." LT Murphy continued to fight but eventually succumbed to his wounds.

An MH-47 Chinook Helicopter, carrying 8 Navy SEALs and 8 Army Night Stalkers, was sent to extract the embattled four-man SEAL Team. In an effort to expedite the rescue mission, the MH-47 raced ahead to rescue the SEALs. The helicopter was stuck by a rocket-propelled grenade, causing it to crash. All 16 servicemen on board were killed.

Danny Dietz and Matt Axelson continued to fight the Taliban militants, but eventually succumbed to their many wounds.

Despite being wounded and blown off of a mountain, Marcus Luttrell was able to evade the Taliban and drag himself 7 miles before being found by Mohammad Gulab. Luttrell was protected by the local villagers for three days. During that time a villager notified personnel at a Marine outpost of Luttrell's location, which resulted in his rescue by U.S. Forces on July 2, 2005. In 2007 President George W. Bush awarded LT Michael Murphy with the Navy Medal of Honor for his undaunted acts of courage and devotion to his teammates. LT Michael P. Murphy exemplified true character, heroism and love of country. All three of LT Murphy's

men were awarded the Navy's second highest honor, the Navy Cross, for their part in the battle, making theirs the most decorated Navy SEAL Team in history.



**The SEALs of Operation Red Wings**

Burial At Sea 72 years ago.

Loyce Edward Deen, an Aviation Machinist Mate 2nd Class, USNR, was a gunner on a TBM Avenger. On November 5, 1944, Deen's squadron participated in a raid on Manila where his plane was hit multiple times by anti-aircraft fire while attacking a Japanese cruiser. Deen was killed. The Avenger's pilot, Lt.; Robert Cosgrove, managed to return to his carrier, the USS Essex. Both Deen and the plane had been shot up so badly that it was decided to leave him in the plane. It is the only time in U.S. Navy history (and probably U.S. military history) that an aviator was buried in his aircraft after being killed in action.

Control, Click on these links:

<http://loycedeen.webstarts.com/uploads/GoingHome.mp4>

Eternal Father, Strong to Save (The Navy Hymn)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ic8zMkYwng8>

***God Bless America***

