



# ADEL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1937 BENJAMIN KINNICK

APRIL 1, 1919 – SEPTEMBER 16, 1944  
25 YEARS, 5 MONTHS, 16 DAYS



SEVENTH GRADE, A Section  
Back Row: Percut Westenberg, Carl Smith, Harry Grand, Jack Lawton, Clifford Oski, Marjorie Bell, Mary Gross, Mary Fawcett, Christine Rose.  
Middle Row: Thomas DeVore, Richard Bates, John Kautz, Ray West, Fred Ray McWaters, Wash Collins, Bruce McLain, Ethel Smith, Jurgens McMillan.  
Front Row: Richard Hosen, Harry Pollock, Richard Russell, Larry Hill, Alva Hill, Pauline Sklar, Fred ...  
Not in Picture: Elizabeth Beattie, Betty Hays, William May, Eugene Tomp...



Manila American Cemetery, Taguig City, Philippines



1ST LIEUTENANT BENJAMIN GREENE KINNICK WAS CAPTAIN OF FIVE MEMBER CREW ON A B-25 MITCHELL BOMBER HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE VBM 433 SQUADRON, KNOWN AS THE FORK-TAILED DEVILS, AS PART OF THE 14TH MARINE AIR GROUP.

ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1944 1ST LIEUTENANT KINNICK AND HIS CREW TOOK OFF FROM EMIRAU AIRFIELD WITH THE MISSION TO BOMB JAPANESE STRONGHOLDS ON NEW GUINEA AS PART OF THE ISLAND HOPPING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED BY THE US MILITARY LEADERS. HIS PLANE WAS SHOT DOWN BY ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE OVER KEVIENG. WHEN IT FAILED TO RETURN THIS AIRCRAFT WAS OFFICIALLY LISTED AS MISSING IN ACTION (MIA).

THE ENTIRE CREW WAS OFFICIALLY DECLARED DEAD ON JANUARY 26, 1946 AND MEMORIALIZED ON THE TABLETS OF THE MISSING AT MANILA AMERICAN CEMETERY.

*Ironically, Benjamin's classmate Jesse Hague, third from the left, middle row in the 7th Grade class picture above, was Adel High School's first WWII casualty when he was shot down in the same vicinity of New Guinea two years earlier on August 2, 1942. Hague was initially listed as missing in action and finally declared killed in action at the war's end. You can read Jesse's story on his panel at this display.*

Benjamin was the second of three boys born to Nile Kinnick, Sr., and Frances Clarke Kinnick. Both Nile and Frances graduated from Adel High School in 1911. Frances' father, George W. Clarke, graduated from the University of Iowa in 1878 and served for four years as the Governor of Iowa from 1913-1917. Benjamin was born in 1919, one year after his older brother Nile Jr. (born 1918) and five years before his younger brother George (born 1924).

Ben played pick-up football with his brother, Nile, on a lot north Governor Clarke's home at 297 N. 15th St in Adel. Ben and Nile were constant companions and fierce athletic competitors.

All three brothers served in the military: Benjamin attended Iowa State University and graduated with an engineering degree in 1942. He then joined the Marine Corps, became a B25 bomber pilot and was stationed in the South Pacific. At the time of his death he was married to Lt Eleanor White Kinnick who was stationed at Staten Island, New York.



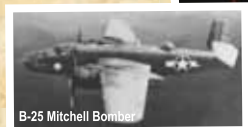
L - R: Nile, Jr., Ben and George Kinnick

**Ben Kinnick Is Missing**  
Lost After Flight in South Pacific  
Lieut. Ben Kinnick, Marine Corps pilot and brother of Nile Kinnick, All-American quarterback at Iowa in 1939, is missing his action in the south Pacific. The Navy abandoned his flight over Kavieng, New Guinea, the Navy said. Lieut. Kinnick, a Navy aviator, was killed in a plane crash in the Gulf of Paria, in the Caribbean, June 2, 1943.  
George, another brother, is a student at Colorado College, where he is in training to be a deck officer in the Navy.  
All three brothers participated in athletic at Brown High. Their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nile Kinnick, Sr., live at 2134 South Seventy-ninth Street.  
"Hope and expectation" had kept the family from making any announcement when the Navy Department's telegram reached them October 26. Mr. Kinnick said they had just heard from their 17-year-old son, that he had been shot down on Sept. 16, 1944.



Nile Kinnick Jr.

Nile Jr played football for the University of Iowa and in 1939 won the Heisman Trophy. He became a Navy pilot and was stationed on the USS Lexington. On June 2, 1943, Ensign Kinnick was on a routine training flight from the aircraft carrier USS Lexington (CV-16) which was off the coast of Venezuela in the Gulf of Paria. His plane, the Grumman F4F Wildcat, developed engine trouble and Nile was forced to do an emergency water landing but died in the process.

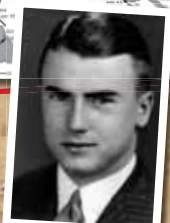
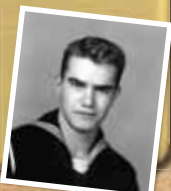


B-25 Mitchell Bomber



George attended Colorado College where he played football and trained to be a Navy Deck Officer.

George Kinnick



Benjamin Kinnick