

Jireh Swift School Dedicates Garden to WWI Ace Baylies

Undeterred when rain clouds threatened, the entire student body of Jireh Swift Elementary School crowded into the auditorium to commemorate the centennial of their school's famous graduate, Lieutenant Frank Leaman Baylies, considered to be one of the greatest flying aces of World War I. Baylies died in aerial combat over France on June 17, 1918.

A relative and namesake of the famous flyer, Frank Baylies, age 84, spoke to the students about the Ace and thanked them and their teachers for the program and for dedicating their new schoolyard garden, to Lt. Frank L. Baylies (1895-1918). Mr. Baylies showed students the many medals and honors received by the Ace. Mr. Joseph Langlois, president of the Ft. Taber/Fort Rodman Military Association invited students to visit the group's military museum located at Fort Taber Park in the city's south end.



Sending greetings on the schoolwide project, Mayor Jon Mitchell said "Congratulations to Swift students and staff for your excellent work to honor one of New Bedford's greatest

heroes, Lt. Frank Baylies. Across America and Europe this year, people are commemorating the centennial of the end of World War I, and your tribute here today is as important and as heartfelt as any that have been planned around the world."

Principal Vitorino noted, "It is my pleasure to say that our students here at Swift demonstrate the same outstanding character traits as Lt. Frank L. Baylies: tenacity, bravery, and perseverance, and I am so proud of our students."

Before family members and special guests, all grades participated in the program. Mrs. Michel's and Mrs. Fernandes' Fifth Grade classes offered a 1918 history presentation and "Life 100 Years Ago." Mrs. Aldrich's and Mrs. Lawrence's Fourth Grade classes recited poetry. Mrs. Telles' and Mrs. Souza's Second Grade classes performed patriotic songs. And the Kindergarten and First Grade classes of Mrs. Nosul and Mrs. Dressel performed "What I Love About Swift School."

The program concluded with the dedication of the Lt. Frank Leaman Baylies Garden by Mrs. Blanchard and Mrs. Conde's Third Grade classes.

In closing, Principal Vitorino thanked the community donors whose generosity made the garden and the centennial celebration possible, including the Swift School PTO, the L'Heureux and Autry Families, Olde Dartmouth Farm, Mr. Jose Rivera, Donors Choose, and the many Swift School families who donated materials and plants for the vegetable and flower garden.

The Swift School Baylies Centennial Event Committee included Ms. Louise Mahoney, Ms. Lee-Ann Jupin, Ms. Joyce Spooner and Principal Tonya Vitorino.