



For Immediate Release

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Piatt Plane Crash Memorial Built by SI Memorials is Dedicated

On Saturday, July 14, the SI Memorials built Piatt Plane Crash Memorial was dedicated in Piatt Memorial Park, 20th and Piatt St., Wichita, Kansas. The memorial commemorates the tragedy which occurred January 16, 1965, when a fuel-filled US Air Force KC-135 Tanker jet crashed into the neighborhood at 20th and Piatt, killing the seven member air crew and 23 residents on the ground. This was the worst non-natural disaster in the state of Kansas,

The airplane-shaped memorial is made of Imperial Black Granite and consists of a capped entry with round columns, flanked by wings on either side. The two 12-ft. high x 22-ft. wide x 1-ft. thick granite wing-shaped tablets bear the victims' names. A contrasting paver area surrounds the memorial, with benches placed in the park for quiet reflection.

As part of the same project, SI Memorials installed the refurbished recognition plaque for Lynette Woodard, female basketball star at the University of Kansas, who went on to star with the Harlem Globetrotters. She grew up in this Wichita neighborhood and had been recognized previously for her achievements. The original recognition plaque had become tarnished and was in need of repair. The plaque was refinished and mounted on Imperial Black Granite that duplicates the original design, which was made of concrete. A new ceramic color photo was added.

SI Memorials of Parsons, Kansas, one of the nation's leading monument builders, designed and began construction on Friday, May 18, 2007. SI Funeral Services of Wichita assisted in this \$86,000 monument construction project.

Funding for the monument came in large part from a federal Community Development Block Grant controlled by the city that totaled more than \$70,000. Community donations totaled about \$25,000, according to the project committee's treasurer, Inga Taylor. State Representative Oletha Faust-Goudeau was chairman of the monument committee and Dr. Carla Lee was memorial coordinator.

"We are so honored to be given the opportunity to create the Piatt Memorial," stated Mike Forbes, General Manager for SI Memorials. "Many of the families and friends of the crash victims still live in the area and have been waiting 42 years for a way to honor their loved ones. With every memorial we create, SI tries to make each one special and meaningful. Based on the reaction of over 200 people attending the dedication, it was a time for closure, healing, remembering and a dream come true."

SI Memorials has helped create hundreds of monuments since 1968, including the Pittsburg State University Veterans Memorial Amphitheater and over 20 Korean War Veterans Memorials including Little Rock, Arkansas and Overland Park, Kansas. Parent company Suhor Industries, Inc. is the nation's largest burial vault manufacturer and one of the leading funeral service providers in the country.

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