

**«Герой без ног.
Герой Советского Союза летчик-
истребитель Алексей Петрович
Маресьев»**

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**“People not knowing its past
has no future”.**

Plato

**(Народ, не знающий своего
прошлого, не имеет будущего).**

Платон

THE HERO
WITH NO
LEGS –



**the Hero of the Soviet Union
Aleksei Petrovich Maresyev**

Aleksei Petrovich Maresyev was born in Kamyshin, Russia in 1916. Although his three elder brothers were strong healthy boys, Aleksei's own health was not so good. He always wanted to become a pilot but with such problems there was no chance.



- Aleksei became an active Komsomol member and after finishing school he was sent to the Far East to built Komsomolsk-upon-Amur.



- Much to Aleksei's own surprise, after a few months of being in the Far East his health started to improve. He joined an air club. After serving in the army in the army in the Russian Air Force, Maresyev went to study at a professional college for military pilots.



In 1940, he graduated from Bataysk Military School of Aviation just in time to put his newly learnt skills into practice. When the Nazis invaded Russia he began his flights as a fighter pilot in August 1941.



He was sent to South Western Front The first sortie Maresyev held 23 August 1941 in Krivoy Rog. In March 1942, he was transferred to the North-Western Front



Maresyev had shot down **four German aircraft** by March 1942. However, on the 4th of April his luck ran out. He was shot down over German-occupied territory and had to make an emergency landing. He tried to land on a frozen lake but lost control of the plane.



Bleeding from several wounds, it took him 18 days of creeping through forests to reach the Russian frontlines. By that time, his legs had become badly frostbitten and had to be amputated.

But Maresyev refused to give up. After a long and painful struggle he learnt how to fly with prosthetic legs.



In 1943, he became a squadron leader. **During one mission Maresyev shot down 3 enemy planes.** In total, he completed **86** combat flights and shot down **11** German warplanes.



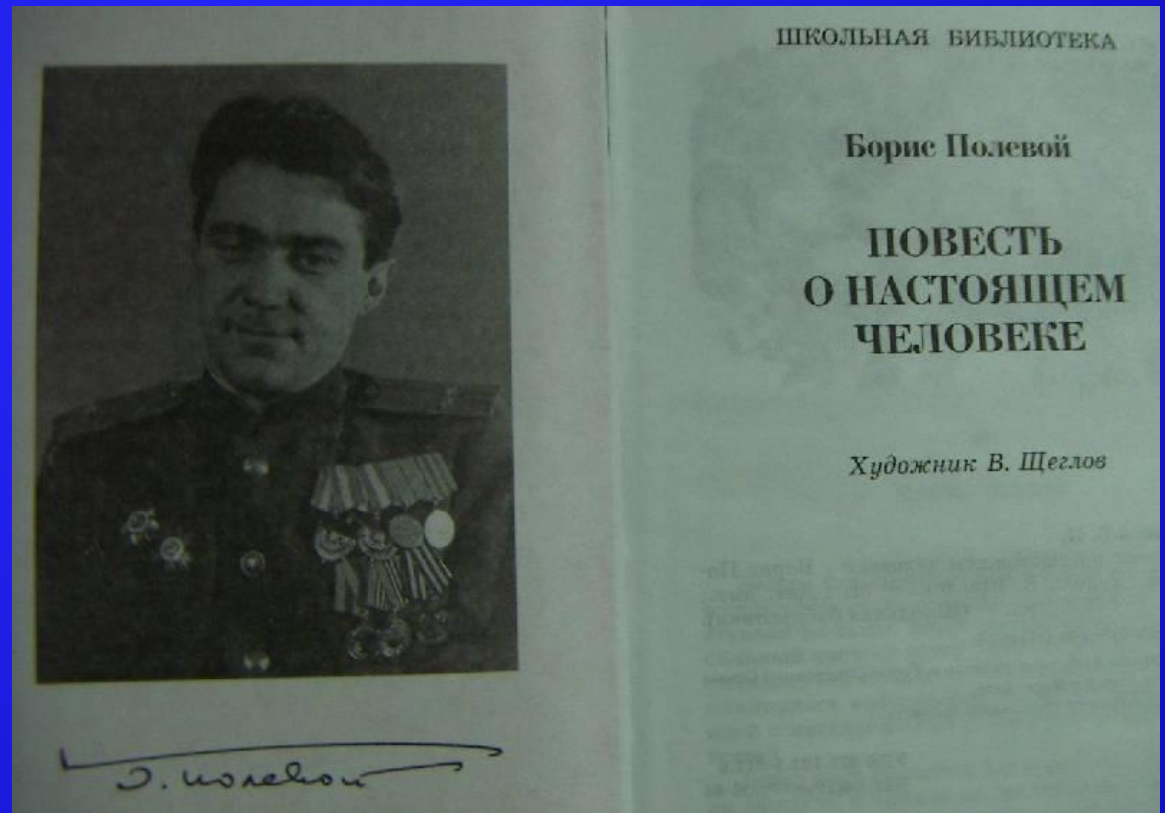
*Летчики готовятся к боевому вылету.
Крайний слева - Герой Советского Союза летчик Алексей Маресьев.*

In August 1943, Aleksei Maresyev was awarded *the Hero of the Soviet Union* medal, the highest military award in the Soviet Union.

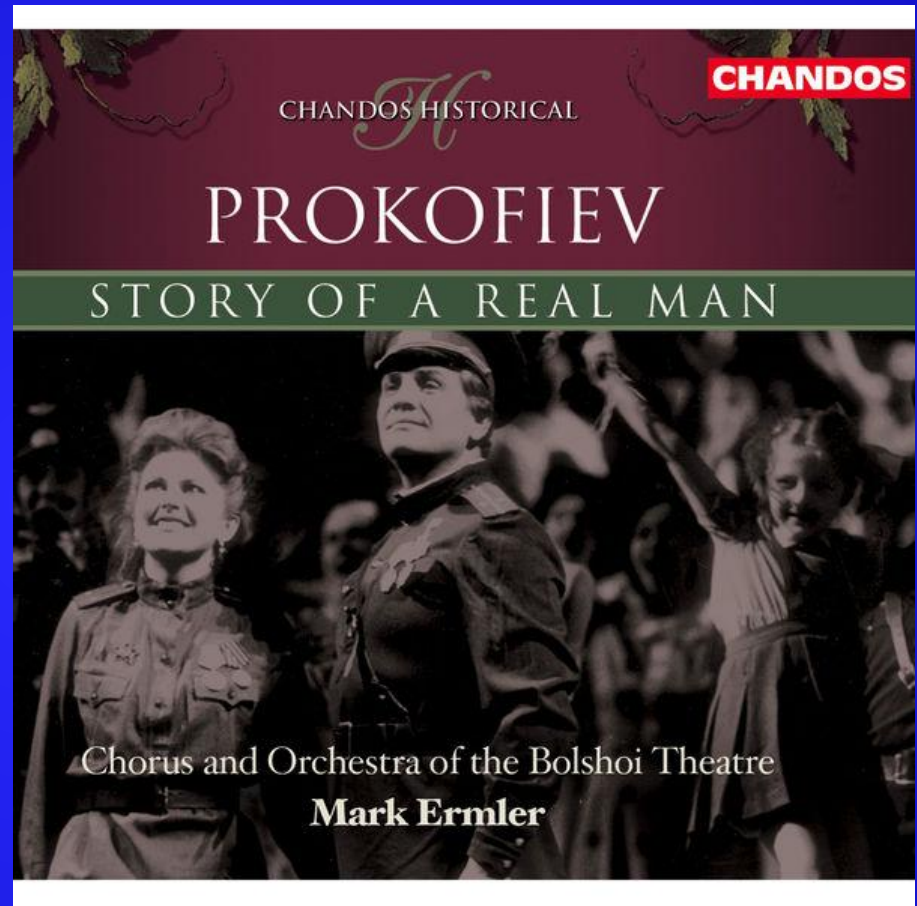


A. Maresyev, Heroic Russian Pilot

When *'The story of a Real Man'* by Boris Polevoy (where his name was changed to Meresyev) came out after the war in 1946, Maresyev became a national hero.



After the book, there was a film and an opera.



For many years every generation of Soviet children read Aleksei Maresyev's epic story.

- But Maresyev didn't like the title of a living legend. "I'm a man, not a legend," he said. "There is nothing special in what I did." In 1944, Maresyev joined the Communist Party and two years later retired from the army.



In 1952 Maresyev graduated from the Higher Party School. In 1956 he started working in the Soviet War Veterans Committee. He later became a member of the Supreme Soviet, and in recent years served as first deputy chairman of the Union of Veterans and Disabled People of Russia. He was awarded

- the Order of Lenin,
- Order of the October Revolution
- Order of the Red Banner of Labor,
- Order of the Red Star and numerous medals.



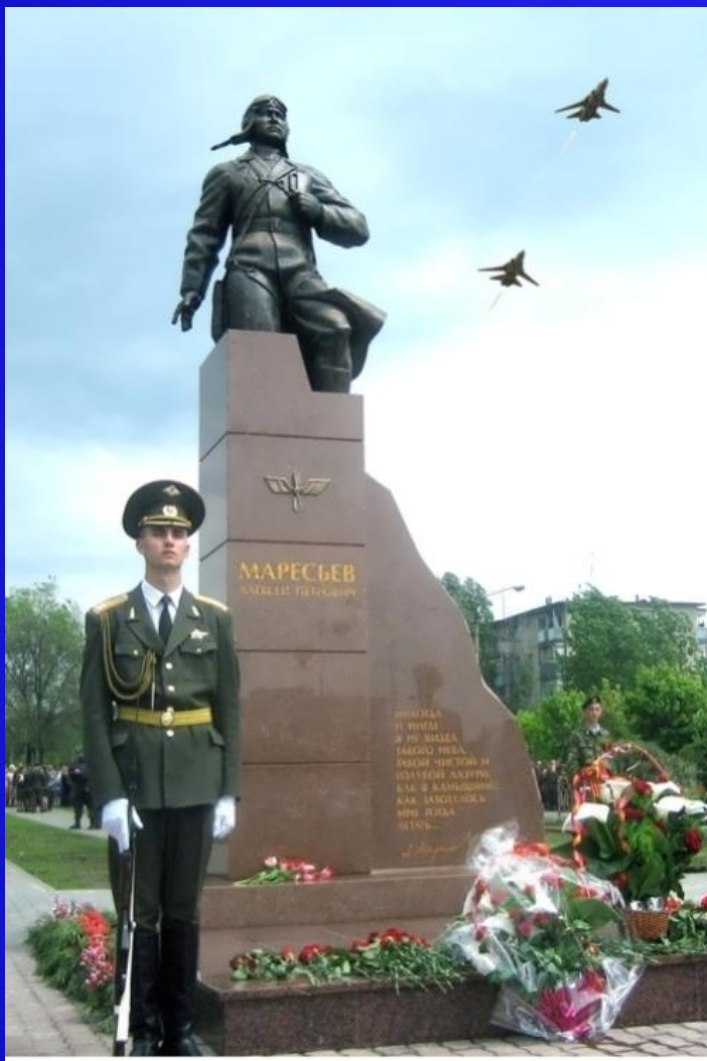
Aleksey Petrovich died in 2001, just 2 days before his 85th birthday. In one of his last interviews he said: **“I think young people can learn a lesson or two from what I went through in my life. First of all, never be scared, go for it and hold out whatever happens.”**



Alexei Petrovich Maresyev was buried at Novodevichy cemetery in Moscow.



Monuments in honor of the pilot



In the homeland of Alexei Maresyev, in Kamyshin (About 180 km from Volgograd), a monument was recently erected in his honour.



In Moscow



Герою
Советского Союза
первостроителю
Алексею
Маресьеву
от
комсомольчан

In Komsomolsk-upon-Amur

There are streets named after Aleksei Maresyev in different Russian towns and cities. We can see his face on the medal



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