

From Washington County to Taiwan, Hugh Grundy was the Perfect Front

Hugh L. Grundy (1916-2011), a Washington County native, is little recognized for his 20th century role in U.S. history, but in this discretion reflects his contribution. Grundy was the president of Air America (1950s-1970s), a C.I.A.-owned operation flying secret intelligence missions and delivering supplies for anti-Communist fighters to parts of Southeast Asia during a time when the U.S. was publicly staying



out of the Vietnam conflict. In addition to being this covert side for the C.I.A., Air America was also disguised as a private airline company with offices based in Taiwan.

As the president of Air America, Grundy was in charge of running a profitable private airline company whose income also supported classified C.I.A. missions. The dual existence was so secretive, Grundy's wife, Frankie, didn't find out about the more dangerous side of her husband's job until the C.I.A. honored him in 2001.

Air America pilots were known for their sense of adventure and daredevil talent, often risking equipment and life to covertly transport supplies and information throughout this region until the U.S. became officially involved in the Vietnam Conflict in 1965.

Oral history interviews with and about Huge L. Grundy can be found at <http://passtheword.ky.gov>.

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