



# CAF RISE ABOVE®

Inspiring young people to RISE ABOVE adversity using the lessons and stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).



If there is anything 2020 has taught us it is that we never know what is going to happen. Times of uncertainty, challenges and adversity, are a great time to get our a [RISE ABOVE Squadron dog tags](#) that have the Six Guiding Principles:

**Aim High, Believe in Yourself, Use Your Brain,  
Be Ready to Go, Never Quit, Expect to Win**

By any measure our 2020 season was not what we expected or hoped for, but like the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP we have risen to the occasion and made the most of what 2020 had to offer.

We had some down time with the our RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and that gave us a chance to upgrade the projector and sound system. Going forward we will have higher resolution graphics and better sound!

We installed new exterior graphics to reflect the WASP and well as the Tuskegee Airmen and freshen up the look of the Exhibit.

We have created some innovative educational content in cooperation with some world class education organizations that are being utilized by several schools all across America.

We have created some online content in the form of Webinars and Facebook live stream interviews with WWII veterans who tell their stories of Rising Above Adversity in their own words.

And between the events that have postponed until next season and new bookings, our 2021 schedule promises to be busier than ever!

No it is not the season we hoped for, but we have embraced our motto RISE ABOVE and made the most of it. And in doing so we have learned new and better ways to carry the stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP to a wider audience and we will continue to do that long after this horrible virus is a distant memory.

Thank you to all of our supporters who have helped through these difficult times. We appreciate it more than you can know. We have and we will "RISE ABOVE."

Tail Winds,

Doug Rozendaal  
CAF RISE ABOVE Leader



*Photo courtesy Thomas Meneguini*

## In This Issue - November 2020

- [Leaders View](#)
- [Brigadier General Retired Charles E. McGee Veterans House Dedication](#)
- [Mark your calendars for GIVE TO THE MAX DAY!](#)
- [Tour schedule at a glance](#)
- [Our mission in action](#)
- [Greetings from the Ambassador team](#)
- [Event photos](#)
- [Volunteer Spotlight: Natalie Kelley](#)
- [Shop with a purpose & Join the Top Flight Club](#)
- [Educational resources](#)
- [Tuskegee Airmen: Did you know](#)
- [Tuskegee Airmen Profiles: Charles Dryden](#)
- [And then there where women! Irma Cameron Dryden](#)
- [Tuskegee Airmen: Virtual Museum artifact spotlight](#)
- [Tuskegee Airmen: Archive photos](#)
- [WASP Profile: Mildred Inks Davidson Dalrymple](#)
- [WASP: Did you know](#)
- [WASP: Archive photos](#)
- [Thank you supporters](#)
- [For more information](#)





## **Brigadier General Retired Charles E. McGee Veterans House Dedication**

This December 7, 2020, Columbia College is honoring one of their most cherished alumni and one of our nation's heroes, retired United States Air Force Brigadier General. Charles E. McGee. We would like to enlist your help in honoring him.

On that day, Columbia College will formally dedicate the Brigadier. General. Charles E. McGee '78 House, which serves as the new home of the Ousley Family Veterans Service Center on their campus. That date also happens to fall on General McGee's 101st birthday.

### **How you can help**

There are two specific ways you can assist us in celebrating Brig. Gen. McGee.

#### **1. A video message for their December 7 virtual dedication**

Their dedication ceremony on December 7 will take place virtually. As part of the dedication, they'd like to play select clips from various dignitaries, and therefore encourage you to submit your congratulations, memories, or other comments about and for Brig. Gen. McGee. Please record video of yourself via your smartphone or other video recording device. Comments can range from a few sentences to several minutes.

#### **Technical considerations for your video**

1. Make sure your camera is sideways/landscape. Please do not record with your phone straight up and down.
2. Most phones' default video record settings are not the highest. Please review your phone's Camera settings to ensure they are at the highest-quality setting available (e.g. 4K, 1080, 60 frames per second).
3. Always try to have your camera at the same height as your eyes.
4. Lighting: Make sure you're not sitting directly under a light or in front of a window. Try to find a balance where your whole face is well-lit, and lit better than your background.
5. If you have a tripod for your phone, try using the rear camera to take video. The camera on the outside of your phone is generally of higher quality than the "selfie" camera.

They will be unable to play every submission during the dedication ceremony, but all submissions will be made available in a special display at the McGee House for all visitors to enjoy for years to come.

#### **2. A personal message to Brig. Gen. McGee on the Red Tail paper airplane ([click here to download the PDF template](#))**

Write a personal message for Brig. Gen. McGee and return it to the following address:

Columbia College  
Attention CCG-Military  
1001 Rogers Street  
Columbia, MO 65216

They'll fold all of the messages into paper airplanes, reminiscent of the P-51B Mustang "Red Tails" that McGee and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen flew during World War II.

We're proud of Brig. Gen. Charles E. McGee and his service to our country, and we hope you can join us in one form or another in celebrating his tremendous life and accomplishments. Thank you for your consideration.

***We're asking for you to provide either or both of the following by November 15th.***

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence please contact LTC (RET) Rob Boone, Associate Vice President, Columbia College Global – Military at [rboone@ccis.edu](mailto:rboone@ccis.edu) or 573-875-7663.

# Mark your calendars! GIVE TO THE MAX DAY November 19!



We are happy to announce that we are participating in the [Give to the Max Day](#) 24-hour extravaganza of generosity, a nationwide fundraising initiative for schools and non-profit organizations.

Give to the Max Day takes place Thursday, November 19, with Early Giving beginning Sunday, November 1 through the end of November!

Funds raised goes to support our educational outreach programs, maintenance of the P-51C Mustang **Tuskegee Airmen** and the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit.

Please give [online](#), by calling 888-928-0188, or by mail at:

CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron  
971 Hallstrom Drive  
Red Wing, MN 55066

Please be assured that the CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron responsibly and carefully allocates donation dollars to further our mission. If you believe, like we do, that the values based educational potential of these two initiatives are relevant and important for young people today, we would appreciate your continued support. We are also interested in your comments and suggestions about the program and will [welcome any input](#) you have to offer.

The CAF RISE ABOVE® is an educational outreach program of the [Commemorative Air Force](#), (CAF) a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. [Your contribution](#) is tax deductible less the value of the benefits given in return for your contribution noted above, if any. CAF FEIN # 74-1484491

AIM HIGH  
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF  
USE YOUR BRAIN  
NEVER QUIT  
BE READY TO GO  
EXPECT TO WIN





As we all know, this has been a tough year for events due to the pandemic, but there is always a silver lining! We have had numerous events move from 2020 to 2021, as well as many new events being planned for 2021 locking in their dates at a rapid rate. We will be covering a lot of ground next year with events in Florida to Oregon, Maine to California, and everywhere in between! We wrapped up our 2020 season with two events this past month, and although they looked a little different than those in the past, it was wonderful getting to be back out on the road sharing our inspirational message! We are looking forward to a great 2021 season, and finalizing more of our schedule over the coming weeks and months. If you are interested in hosting us for an event next year, please reach out soon, our schedule is filling up quickly!



To book RISE ABOVE for your event contact Kristi Younkin,  
Senior Logistics Coordinator, at  
[logistics@cafriseabove.org](mailto:logistics@cafriseabove.org) or call (479) 228-4520



*"In great company!"*

*Batavia, Ohio October 6-11, 2020*

*Photo courtesy P-51C Mustang pilot Paul Stojkov*

## OUR MISSION IN ACTION

Enjoy an essay submitted from a student who competed in the annual essay competition Tuskegee Airmen.

Dear Brigadier General Charles McGee, Thank you for everything you have done for this country and protecting us from danger! I've learned a lot after watching about the Tuskegee airmen. I learned that African-Americans didn't have as many rights as whites. They wanted to fly and serve just like you did, but when they asked they said no! That didn't stop them to try to achieve their goals. I learned an important lesson too. To not give up your dreams and try to achieve them. That means that I'm going to achieve my dreams and not let anyone tell me I can't do something. The only person that can stop me is myself. Thank you so much for everything and have a good rest of your life as the best man I have heard of! Hope I get to see you!

Sincerely,

Nakayla M.





## GREETINGS FROM THE AMBASSADOR TEAM!



*Volunteer Coordinator  
Melanie Burden*

We wrapped up October with two events including one in Batavia, OH and one in Terrell, TX. Thank you to our Ambassador, Natalie Kelley, for volunteering at the Tri-State Warbird Museum in Ohio.

And just like that, the season has come to an end! We are already very busy preparing for 2021.

We are currently looking for volunteers with technical skills to help us with our resource kits and anyone who has an interest in creative design to help develop our new Top Flight Club pin. If you are interested in helping out in either of these areas, or maybe you have an interest in joining us on the road next year, please go to our [website](#) and find out how you can volunteer and become part of the CAF RISE ABOVE team!

## THANK YOU TRI-STATE Warbird MUSEUM!

Tri-State Warbird Museum excitedly welcomed the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit on October 6, 2020. TSWM planned a number of programs featuring the Rise Above Exhibit. On Wednesday, we hosted a Teacher Professional Development Workshop. This workshop featured Judy Miller of the Student News Net and included a live interview with Tuskegee Airmen, Harold Brown.

On Thursday and Friday we offered Homeschool Days that included the Traveling Exhibit, makerspace, interactive stations and programming by Judy Miller of the Student News Network. Over 300 students and parents attended!

On Saturday morning, we launched our Super Soarin' Saturday's children's program that included the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and learning stations! Saturday afternoon we offered another segment in our Lecture Series featuring Darryl Shirley of the Cincinnati Area Tuskegee Airmen Chapter. Darryl spoke on "The Tuskegee Airmen Experience".

We were opened extended hours on Saturday and Sunday and were excited that over 500 people had the opportunity to visit!

Stephanie Felts  
Director of Education & Public Programming  
Tri-State Warbird Museum



CAF RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit



## EVENT PHOTOS

To see more photos visit the [CAF Red Tail Squadron](#) and [CAF RISE ABOVE WASP](#) Facebook pages. Be sure to LIKE and SHARE!

The CAF RISE ABOVE at the Tri-State Warbird Museum in Batavia, OH. *Photos courtesy Stephanie Felts*



Rise Above Super Soarin' Saturday



The P51-C Mustang on display with other warbirds.



Rise Above Teacher Development workshop



Rise Above Homeschool Days



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Natalie Kelly



The CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron recently flew into my neck of the woods! The air show circuit has been basically non-existent this year due to COVID-19, so it was very exciting to have the team come to my city so that I could be around one of my favorite airplanes again, the P-5C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen*!! It was fantastic to see the team once again and to invite my local friends and family!

The event was hosted by the Tri-state Warbird Museum in Batavia, Ohio, just outside of Cincinnati. The museum happens to be on the other side of the runway from the world-famous Sporty's Academy and Sporty's Pilot Shop. My private pilot's certificate was earned right here

just a few years ago! The Warbird Museum has been a favorite museum of mine for years. I've witnessed many flights from their airplane collection (of which I am always in awe). They have quite an assortment of warbirds and planes. Their assembly includes a restored P-40, a B-25 Mitchell, a Grumman TBM-3 Avenger, along with a Boeing Stearman, and a rare Focke-Wulf Fw 190, as well as several other impressively restored planes and a variety of other vehicles.

This privately-owned, not-for-profit aviation museum opened in 2005 and their collection of airplanes have been seen by about 10 million people! They are "dedicated to remembering those who fought for our freedom, and honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice." Their mission aligns well with the CAF. One of the coolest sights during the week was seeing the Tuskegee Mustang parked next to the museum's own P-51, "Cincinnati Miss."

During the RISE ABOVE Squadron's week-long visit, several schools and groups were able to come see the "Rise Above" film, along with our Mustang and the other museum sights. With consideration of health safety, there were many veterans who were able to tour the facility and a constant stream of visitors received their own private tour from one of the museum's well-versed guides. The museum hosted its first ever children's aviation program known as "Super Soarin' Saturday." It is free and includes aviation-themed activities mixed in with history for children ages 6-11. Having the RISE ABOVE Squadron present provided the perfect opportunity to display the CAF's beautiful Mustang and educate the kids with our entertaining, mobile theatre.

The CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron volunteers in attendance included Terry and Jeannette Hollis, myself, the pilot Paul Stojkov, as well as members and volunteers from the Greater Cincinnati Chapter Tuskegee Airmen (I'll admit I had no idea this group even existed!).

Although this year has been a struggle for everyone, being able to volunteer again and spend time with history and aviation buffs was a good reminder of how important our mission is. There are so many great lessons to teach with our exhibit and still so many individuals that need to be educated on the impact aviation has had in history and how the Tuskegee Airmen contributed to that history.



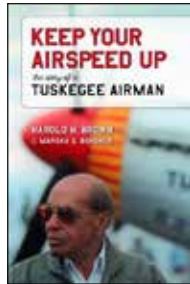


Find great treasures AND honor the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP!

[Visit our online store.](#) *Shipping is included for state-side orders!*



[Apparel](#)



[Books, DVDs, Resources](#)



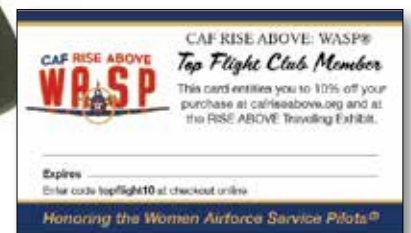
[Gifts](#)



[Sale items](#)

*For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!*

There's no better way to support our mission to educate, inspire, and honor through flight and living history experiences than by joining a Top Flight Club! Memberships also make great holiday gifts, so you might leave think link as a hint for the family...



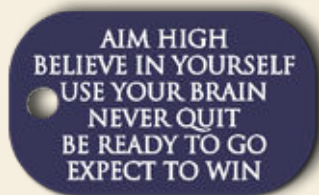
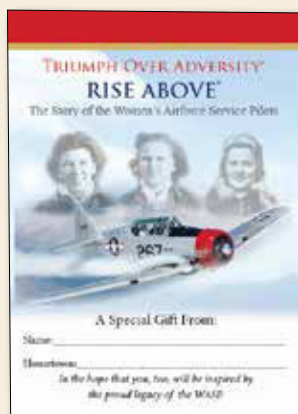
## Why 99? *(for each membership)*

### [Join RISE ABOVE: RED TAIL](#)

The 99th was originally formed as the U.S. Army Air Forces' first African American fighter squadron, then known as the 99th Pursuit Squadron. The personnel received their initial flight training at Tuskegee, Alabama earning them the nickname Tuskegee Airmen.

### [Join RISE ABOVE: WASP](#)

The Ninety-Nines was founded November 2, 1929, at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream, Long Island, New York. All 117 women pilots at the time were invited to assemble in mutual support of the advancement of women in aviation. In 1942 members of the Ninety-Nines were asked to join the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) class of 43-W-1 in Houston, Texas.

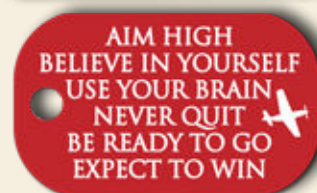
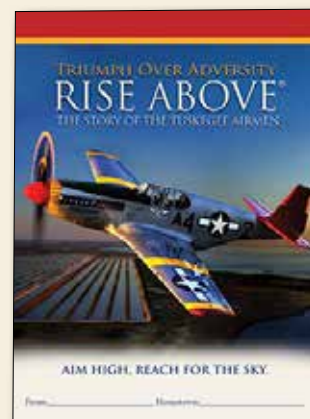


Our Inspiration Packs are perfect for the parent, teacher, youth leader or community group looking for a tangible reminder of the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen or the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)!

**Cost is \$95 each pack, includes s/h**

The [Inspiration Pack: WASP](#) pack includes:

**50 each** CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles and the “Triumph Over Adversity – RISE ABOVE: The Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots” booklets.



The [Inspiration Pack: Red Tail](#) pack includes:

**50 each** CAF Red Tail Squadron dog tags featuring the Six Guiding Principles and the “Triumph Over Adversity – RISE ABOVE: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen” booklets.



**Back-to-School Campaign**

The [RISE ABOVE Back-to-School Campaign](#) provides free electronic resources to support and inspire educators and students to Triumph Over Adversity and work together to persevere through their challenges. School kick-off resources and “flight plans” will be available for PreK, primary, elementary, middle, and high schools. Inspiring short videos about WWII Tuskegee Airmen and Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) are also included to help educators and students “rise above” crisis challenges. Teachers can use these resources to provide help to students setting personal achievement goals for the year.

## \*\*\* Penda Learning \*\*\*

We are pleased to announce that we have secured another great resource to support your back to school efforts in this challenging time. Penda Science’s game-based, standards-aligned, online intervention platform helps students in grades 3 through 10 develop mastery and excel in science. We are excited to offer complimentary access to the Penda Science platform for one semester, with a significant discount on the purchase of the product once the trial period ends.

Contact Penda Learning at (888) 919-0404 and mention code CAF for complimentary access. Since the content will need to be fully aligned and customized for your school district, and your specific students need to be loaded into the system, there is a nominal set-up fee.

## Check the free RISE ABOVE Resource Kits!

Our [free, downloadable RISE ABOVE Resource Kits](#) provides users access to posters featuring the Six Guiding Principles, PowerPoint’s, classroom activities and a wealth of material about the Tuskegee Airmen or the WASP.

**Want to go a step further?** [Check out all the affordable supporting educational materials available!](#)



On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:

3 November 1943: Twenty-nine pilots graduated from advanced pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Twenty of the graduates (SE-43-J) were single engine pilots, and nine (TE-43-J) were twin engine pilots. TE-43-J was the first class of twin-engine aircraft pilots to graduate from advanced flight training at Tuskegee. They would eventually be assigned to fly medium B-25 bombers with the 477th Bombardment Group (which would be activated at Selfridge Field, Michigan after the 332nd Fighter Group departed). (Craig Huntly and lists of graduates from advanced flight training at Tuskegee Army Air Field)

After the twin-engine pilots graduated from advanced flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field, they went to Mather Field, California, for B-25 transition training. Many of those eliminated from twin engine flight training at Tuskegee were sent to Hondo, Texas, to be trained as navigators, or to Keesler Field, Mississippi, to be trained as bombardiers. (History of The Corps of Aviation Cadets, Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, AFHRA call number K289.28-1, 1 Aug 1941-1 Mar 1944).



### CLASS SE-43-E

Front row: Left to Right: Laurence D. Wilkins, Maurice V. Esters, Oliver O. Miller, Luther H. Smith, Langdon E. Johnson, James A. Walker, John H. Suggs, Clemenceau M. Givings

Back row: Left to Right: Joseph P. Gomer, Felix J. Kirkpatrick, Craig H. Williams, George E. Gray, Dempsey W. Morgan, Spurgeon N. Ellington, Albert H. Manning, Dudley M. Watson, Milton R. Brooks, Harry A. Sheppard, Charles M. Bussey, John F. Briggs

**Charles Dryden**

**Class 42-D-SE 4/29/1942 2nd Lt. 0789119 Bronx, NY**

**September 16, 1920 - June 24, 2008**



*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*



*"Chuck Dryden is a sincere, honest, friendly person who has fought the good fight throughout his long life and now, through the medium of his autobiography, desires to share its important details with all Americans but particularly with Americans of goodwill, who need all the information they can muster to arm them for the antiracism fight that will continue for the remainder of our lives and those of our descendants."*

*~ General Benjamin O. Davis*

We are proud to offer an ongoing deeper look into the personal and professional lives of Tuskegee Airmen. Their drive and determination, in the air during the war and in their education and careers as they forged ahead stateside, is not only impressive, it's inspirational. These American heroes are the kind of role models we should all aspire to, and today we take a moment to learn about Charles W. Dryden, a man with a passion for flying that led him to fly for the Army Air Corps.

Dryden was born on September 16, 1920, in New York City to Jamaican parents who were educators. He graduated from Peter Stuyvesant High School and earned a BA in political science from Hofstra University and an MA in public law and government from Columbia University. In 1996, he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by Hofstra University.

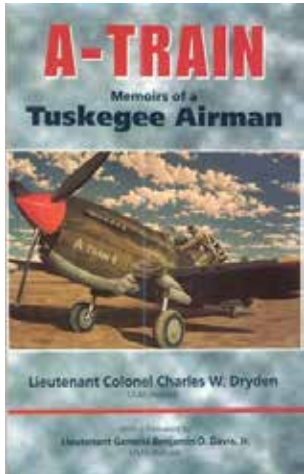
In August 1941, Dryden was selected for aviation cadet training at the Tuskegee Army Flying School in Alabama. He was commissioned on April 29, 1942 as a second lieutenant in a class of only three graduates, which was the second class of black pilots to graduate in the history of the U.S. Army Air Corps. Upon completing his training, Dryden was named a member of the famed 99th Pursuit Squadron, and later the 332 Fighter Group, which served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy during World War II. On June 9, 1943, Lt. "A-Train" (his P-40 nickname) led a flight of six pilots engaging enemy fighter aircraft in aerial combat over Pantelleria, Sicily. It was the first time in aviation history that black American pilots of the U.S. Army Air Corps engaged aircraft in combat. When he retired from service, he had achieved the rank of Lt. Col.



*Charles W. "A-Train" Dryden pictured here in a P-40 Warhawk with Benjamin O. Davis on the wing before a mission in this 1943 AP photo*



Following the war, Dryden served as a professor of air science at Howard University and retired in 1962 as a command pilot with 4,000 hours flying time. Dryden was a member of the board of directors of the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame, and was also a member of the Atlanta Metro Lions Club, Quality Living Services (a senior citizens organization) and the Atlanta Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (ACTAI), which he helped found in 1978 and served as president, vice president and national convention committee chairman. He has been inducted into the Honorable Orders of the Daedalians, the Kentucky Colonels and the Palmetto Gentlemen of South Carolina. In 1998, Colonel Dryden was inducted into the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame. He was designated an Outstanding Georgia Citizen by the Secretary of State in 1997.



His autobiography, "[A-Train: Memoirs of a Tuskegee Airman](#)," was published by the University of Alabama Press in 1997. The book is a remarkable account of Dryden's youth, war experience and feelings about the deep impact of racism on our country.

"A-Train is a moving memoir of a black military officer and illustrates the period of racial integration in both military and civilian life. Colonel Dryden's book commands our attention because it is a balanced account by an insightful man who enlisted in a segregated army and retired from an integrated air force. Dryden is eloquent in his presentation of the experiences he has shared and the changes he has witnessed. This story of an authentic American hero will touch each and every reader."

Dryden passed away in 2008. He leaves behind not only a legacy of determination, but proof that following your dreams can change the course of history. Like other Tuskegee Airmen, Dryden's passion and skill for flight was stronger than the racism thrust upon him at every juncture. Because these fine American's had the strong desire and will to become aviators and serve their country, they changed the course of race relations. History shows we have all benefited from their ability to triumph over adversity.

To Charles Dryden, a fine aviator and citizen, we salute you for your service!

Listen to Oral History Segments on "[The History Makers](#)"

#### Sources:

- [Wikipedia](#)
- [New Georgia Encyclopedia](#)
- [SUN Port Charlotte](#)



*The Class of 42-D, Clarence C. Jamison,  
Charles Dryden, and Sidney P. Brooks,  
all 2nd Lieutenants*

## AND THEN THERE WERE WOMEN!

### Tuskegee Airman Nurse Irma Cameron Dryden

1920 – September 17, 2020

As the Tuskegee Airmen fought for their place in the skies during World War II, they were supported by a dedicated and often forgotten cadre of women.

They were nurses, mechanics, supply pilots and secretaries. They nursed injured bodies and souls, packaged and repackaged parachutes, cleared land for runways and base buildings, delivered supplies and did the other work that helped keep the base running.

It isn't clear exactly how many women were included among the estimated 15,000 people that worked as part of the program. But Ruth Jackson, a research librarian at the University of California–Riverside, said her research confirms at least 41 women were nurses. The university houses a large archive of material related to the Tuskegee Airmen, and Jackson has been collecting oral histories from many of the female personnel.

"They believed very strongly, just the way the men did, that it was ridiculous for the barriers to exist, and for the military to have believed that African-Americans were not intelligent enough or brave enough to fly," Jackson said. "They were very much devoted to the cause and the success of the experience. They felt very special to be a part of it, as a matter of fact."

Some of the women working with the program married the airmen, and continued their supportive role as wives. Irma "Pete" Dryden served in such a dual role – first working as a nurse at the Tuskegee air base's hospital.

Irma was an only child. She was born May 28, 1920 in New York City. Her dad was a Jamaican dental technician and her mother was a teacher. Irma, whose nickname "Pete" is derived from her childhood habit of wiggling her nose like Peter Rabbit.



She volunteered to serve as a nurse on base just after finishing her training at Harlem Hospital in 1942. She was 23 when she boarded a train in April 1943 to travel to the air base being built outside Tuskegee, Alabama. A New York City native, she had never experienced the Jim Crow racism of the south, but she and two fellow black nurses got their introduction after having to change to a segregated train in Washington, D.C.

The train didn't have a separate dining car for African-Americans, so Dryden and two fellow nurses, Alice M. Dunkley and Mary Rickards, were given strict rules about when and where they could eat their meals. They were to be in the dining car only, and as they ate, a curtain was pulled around them so that the white passengers wouldn't have to acknowledge the "coloreds" in their midst.

"I had never been exposed to anything so humiliating," Dryden said. "But something came out of this humiliation – I knew I can overcome anything and I can help whoever I'm with. Like these young men, I knew I could give them strength, and I did."





To Dryden, that meant lending a sympathetic ear as well as bandaging a wound.

“We were to run the hospital and be there for these young men,” said Dryden. “They were all young and they needed some counseling – somebody to talk to – to help them get over the bad times when they had not done well in an examination or something, someone who was there for moral support. And it was the women who they returned to the most.”

The airmen being trained as part of what was then called “the Tuskegee experiment” were under tremendous pressure. In addition to the stresses of military service during wartime, they worked knowing that their success or failure would be used as justification for or against African-Americans’ participation in the armed forces. Their training was grueling on base, and at least as trying was the racism and discrimination they faced in the communities surrounding some of the bases.

Irma eventually married an airman she met her first day on base. Charles “A-Train” Dryden was an instructor and pilot, commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1942. At the time, he was part of the second-ever class of black pilots to complete the U.S. Army Air Corps training program. They were married 32 years, then divorced. Charles Dryden remarried and passed away in 2008.

“Pete” considers her service as a Documented Original Tuskegee Airman among her proudest accomplishments. “We knew we had a purpose,” Dryden said. “We had to make this thing work, with a passion that other units didn’t have to exhibit.”

#### Sources:

- [Tuskegee Army Nurses](#)
- [In America Blog](#)
- [Atlanta TAI](#)



*Irma and Charles Dryden*



Visit [Tuskegee Airmen Profiles](#) and take a closer look at the lives and accomplishments of some of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. New profiles are added regularly and will grow as the staff and volunteers of the CAF Red Tail Squadron continue their tireless efforts to research and share the remarkable stories of these important American figures.

We invite you to share stories and photos with us to feature! Contact LaVone [info@cafriseabove.org](mailto:info@cafriseabove.org), by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:

CAF RISE ABOVE  
971 Hallstrom Drive  
Red Wing, MN 55066

## CAF Red Tail Squadron Virtual Museum Artifact Spotlight

The [CAF Red Tail Squadron Virtual Museum](#) is a community collaborative effort, made up of photos and information of artifacts pertaining to the Tuskegee Airmen submitted from all around the country. Anyone with an item of significance to the Tuskegee Airmen, or has visited the location of a memorial in tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen, can share their knowledge by [submitting your own virtual artifacts](#).



### [Signed door from Tuskegee Airmen training aircraft](#)

**Submitted by:** Jean Lahaie

**Location:** Washington, DC

#### **About:**

This photo was captured on a trip to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. The PT-13D Stearman Kaydet on display had been used by the Tuskegee Airmen as a training aircraft at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. The lower door had been signed by Tuskegee Airmen, and is now in display at the museum alongside the aircraft.



## ARCHIVE PHOTOS - TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

UNLESS NOTED ALL PHOTOS ARE COURTESY OF THE AIR FORCE HISTORICAL RESEARCH AGENCY, MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA



**CLASS SE-43-F**—Front Row: Left to Right: Willie S. Hunter, Wayne V. Liggins, Hezekiah Lacy, Theodore A. Wilson, Charles E. McGee, Oscar A. Kenney, Richard H. Harris, Weldon K. Groves, Row 2: Left to Right: Frank D. Walker, Joe A. Lewis, Wilbert H. Johnson, William F. Williams, Leonard F. Turner, William G. Wilkerson, Row 3 Left to Right: John S. Sloan, Walter J. Palmer, Theopolis D. Moore, Wiley W. Selden, Robert R. Alexander, Herbert S. Harris, Milton R. Henry, Alexander M. Bright.



Communications trainees posing for what may be a class photograph, possibly at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois.

*Photo courtesy Illinois Heartland Library System*

# WASP PROFILE: Mildred Inks Davidson Dalrymple

Class 44-W-4

February 14, 1920 - November 14, 2012



*"I was the absolutely minimum of everything that you could be to get into the WASP. I thought I could, and I applied myself and I made it. I think anybody who really wants to do something very bad, if they work at it, and they focus, and they concentrate, they can do it."*

Millie Dalrymple was born on February 14, 1920, to Roy Banford Inks and Myrtle Louise Moss. At birth Mildred Banford Inks weighed only a few ounces over three pounds and was placed in an improvised incubator - a shoe box with a lamp. Her prospects for survival were slim. She not only survived, but went on to become a strong life force, impacting many people and achieving many goals, often as a pioneer. That she survived, and ultimately thrived, may in part be due to her parents' stock.

Her father was Roy B. Inks, a business man in Texas who helped establish the Highland Lakes, one of which is named after him. Her mother, Myrtle Moss Inks, gave her some of the Moss family stock, pioneers of Texas with roots to the Battle of San Jacinto and a family ranch west of Llano. She grew up in Llano, Texas, where she enjoyed a good life learning, among other things, how to play tennis with an unorthodox serve and many improvised self-taught shots. However, the Great Depression, the early death of her father, and World War II changed things dramatically.

Before America entered WWII, Millie had already graduated from the Texas State College for Women, where she majored in journalism. In June 1942, she married Bill Davidson, a B-17 pilot. After her husband was shot down and killed over the North Sea while on a mission in Europe, Millie took flying lessons at Doc Haile's airport in Austin and soloed after only 11 days, successfully applied to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) training program and on Nov. 5, 1943.

Millie reported to Avenger Field near Sweetwater, Texas, for seven months of intensive flight training in Class 44-4 as one of the 1,830 applicants who were accepted into the program and one of the only 1,074 talented women to complete the program — to become one of the first women in our history to fly military aircraft.



Millie was appointed Flight Lieutenant, Flight #1 where she was the one who shouted cadence while she and her fellow class members marched to their ground school classes and to the flight line.

Millie was part of a group of extraordinary, patriotic women who wanted to do even more for their country than what those hundreds of thousands of dedicated American women symbolized by "Rosie the Riveter" — were already doing here at home while their husbands, brothers, and sons were fighting the war "over there."

*Left to Right: Eloise Huffines Bailey, Mildred Inks Davidson Dalrymple, Elizabeth McKethan Magid, Clara Jo March Stember.  
In the background is a B-24.*



These WASP would fly transport, weather, target towing, ferrying, maintenance checkout and other missions; they would fly trainers, fighters and bombers to and from factories and air bases; they would make sure that those marvelous aircraft built by the "Rosies" were ready for combat service overseas.

Millie graduated on May 23, 1944, a day and a ceremony she will never forget. For, in addition to receiving her silver WASP wings, Millie also accepted the Air Medal for her husband who had given his life for his country only a short time before.

After graduation, Millie was assigned to Maxwell Field, Ala., where she was fortunate to fly under an officer who believed in the capabilities of these young women. There, she flew an amazing number and variety of military aircraft, including B-17s, C-45s, BT-13s, AT-6s and the venerable B-24 "Liberator" bomber, an aircraft Millie says, she "usually flew for four or five hours after repairs to make sure they were ready for combat service."

Nancy Parrish, a former Public Broadcasting Service producer/director, whose mother was also a WASP, said once: "These women went through the same flight training as the men... They flew dilapidated planes; they flew every kind of aircraft, and they flew every kind of mission except combat." A few exceptionally qualified women were allowed to test rocket- and jet-propelled aircraft.

The WASP program would last only 18 months, but during that period Millie and her fellow patriots would be stationed at 120 Army Air bases across the country; would fly sixty million miles in every kind of mission; would receive hardly any recognition and see 38 WASP and WASP trainees pay the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

In December 1944, the WASP program was suddenly and unceremoniously terminated. WASP did not receive any military benefits and little or no recognition for their wartime service.

Inexplicably, the WASP records were classified and remained sealed for 33 years. Even historians had no access to the records containing the WASP significant contributions to the war effort, thus denying Americans the opportunity — the duty — to honor these heroic women.

Again, Nancy Parrish: "When the WASP disbanded, these women had to pay their way back home. Thirty-eight of them were killed, but because they had no benefits, the women had to take up collections to get their bodies back home to their families."

The army would not even allow the U.S. flag to be put on fallen coffins of the WASP corps.

Millie, however, said she harbored no ill will or bitterness towards the government and considered herself to be "one of the luckiest women in the United States to have had the opportunity."

After the war Millie married Edwin Dalrymple, a friend from Llano who had been a Spitfire fighter pilot in the war. During their first 20 years of marriage they raised three children while Edwin was an FBI agent, first in Washington DC and later in Houston. They moved to Austin in 1967 and were married for 60 years before his death in 2006.

Millie worked part time as a substitute teacher while the kids were growing up in Houston. In Austin, she worked full-time to help earn money and channel her energy. In those jobs, she again showed her pioneering spirit, including setting up and managing the first word processing center in Austin. She also took up tennis again, winning dozens of tournaments and eventually achieving a national ranking as a senior doubles player.

Later in life, she became a sought-after speaker, describing her adventures as a WASP.

In 1977, after a two-year WASP "Battle of Congress," President Jimmy Carter signed legislation granting the WASP corps full military status for their service. Subsequently, in 1984, each WASP was awarded the World War II Victory Medal and many of them also received the American Theater Ribbon/American Campaign Medal for their service during the war.

Finally, in 2009, Congress was pressured into granting the WASP the Congressional Gold Medal — legislation that President Obama signed on July 1, 2009.

In March 2010, Millie, along with approximately 200 surviving of the WASP corps, traveled to the U.S. Capitol to accept the Congressional Gold Medal, a well-deserved and long overdue honor for their distinguished and trailblazing service during World War II.

#### **Sources:**

[Final Flight](#)  
[HUFF POST](#)  
[US Department of Veteran Affairs](#)  
[Fold3.com](#)

*Millie receiving the  
Congressional Gold Medal*





Visit [WASP PROFILES](#) and take a closer look at the lives and accomplishments of the Women Airforce Service Pilots in order to inspire others, especially girls and young women, to RISE ABOVE expectations and find a greater appreciation of their potential.

New profiles are added regularly and will grow as the staff and volunteers of the RISE ABOVE: WASP continue their tireless efforts to research and share the remarkable stories of these important American figures.

We invite you to share stories and photos with us to feature! Contact LaVone [info@cafriseabove.org](mailto:info@cafriseabove.org), by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:

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## DID YOU KNOW?

On August 5, 1943, the WFTD and WAFS merged to create the WASP organization.

The WASP arrangement with the US Army Air Forces ended on December 20, 1944. During its period of operation, each member's service had freed a male pilot for military combat or other duties. They flew over 60 million miles; delivered 12,652 aircraft of 78 different types transporting every type of military aircraft; towed targets for live anti-aircraft gun practice; simulated strafing missions and transported cargo.

Thirty-eight WASP members lost their lives and one disappeared while on a ferry mission, her fate still unknown.





## ARCHIVE PHOTOS - WASP

NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM IN THE PORTAL TO TEXAS HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS LIBRARIES.



Left to Right: Marrie Shanon" and "Property of Madge Minton 43-W-4



A group of several WASP in flight suits and goggles posed near the rear of a bus

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