



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).



On March 12th we were faced with a difficult decision. Our schedule called for us to be in Phoenix on Monday March 16th. At that time the impact of COVID 19 was not fully understood. Thankfully, we made the tough call to cancel our West Coast tour. It seems so obvious today with all of our appearances currently canceled through late July. This is a terrible thing for our program, but as we have done before, our mission is to “RISE ABOVE” adversity and persevere, and we will!

Like the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASPs, both groups that overcame obstacles to achieve their goals to fly for a Country that did not want their service, we chose to regroup and figure out a way to [carry our message to young people](#) in spite of being unable to tour with our exhibit and airplane.

Shutting down the schools has created a need for online educational content and we have it! Our website traffic has been up significantly and teachers as well as parents have been downloading our educational resources for online teaching and home-schooling.

Unrelated to the crisis, but certainly timely, **we have launched our new website, cafriseabove.org**. Created to better project our larger mission – continuing to tell our existing stories, but also projecting our vision of telling even more stories about sacrifices made during a time when Americans were called to RISE ABOVE their own challenges for the greater good, just as we are doing right now!

This crisis will pass and when it does, we will be back on tour carrying our “RISE ABOVE” message out to schools museums, and airshows all across the country. But this set back will have created greater awareness of our online content and that will benefit our program long term.

While we need to maintain physical distance to flatten the exposure curve, we also need to come together in these difficult times to support one another, and especially support our health care professionals and first responders who are on the front-lines fighting this disease. Working together we will “RISE ABOVE” and overcome this adversity and move forward stronger and better than ever.

RISE ABOVE!

Doug Rozendaal
CAF RISE ABOVE Leader



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RISE ABOVE tour schedule at a glance

In response to government directives related to COVID-19, many events and air shows are being cancelled as a necessary part of mitigating public health risk. We are unsure how late into the year events will continue to be cancelled, but we have also seen several tentative events as late as this fall postpone to 2021 given the economic impact of the virus on their sponsorships. We continuously update the schedule on our website as we are notified of event cancellations and postponements, so please check that between newsletters. For those of you home with your children, be sure to [download our free resources](#) for educators to access fun lessons on the Tuskegee Airmen and WASP! Stay safe and healthy, we hope to see you at an event this fall!

PLEASE CHECK OUR SCHEDULE ONLINE FOR UPDATES!

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
March 17-22	Arizona CAF Museum <i>[Postponed to 2021]</i>	Mesa, AZ
March 24-26	Riverside Convention Center <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Riverside, CA
March 28-29	March Air Field Air & Space Expo <i>(Postponed, new date TBD)</i>	March AFB, CA
April 18-19	Joint Base Charleston Air Expo <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Charleston, SC
April 25-26	Wings Over Columbus <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Columbus AFB, GA
May 9-10	Dyess AFB Air & Space Expo <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Dyess AFB, TX
May 30-31	Scott AFB Air Show <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Scott AFB, IL
June 6-7	Selfridge ANG Air Show <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Selfridge, MI
June 13-14	Wings over Whiteman <i>[Cancelled]</i>	Whiteman AFB, MO
July 20-26	EAA AirVenture RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit, P-51C Mustang	Oshkosh, WI
August 1-2	Owls Head Air Show RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Owls Head, ME
September 5-6	Kansas City Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	New Century, KS
September 12	Airport Day RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Crawfordsville, IN
September 19	Dynamic Aviation Air Show RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Bridgewater, VA
September 25	Arsenal of Democracy Fly-Over [Postponed from May 8] P-51C Mustang	Washington D.C.
October 7-11	Tri-State Warbird Museum RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Batavia, OH
October 24-25	Thunder Over the Rock RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Little Rock AFB, AR
October 28-November 1	BFTS Flight Museum RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit	Terrell, TX
November 7-8	Stuart Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	Stuart, FL
November 14-15	Joint Base San Antonio Airshow RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit and P-51C Mustang	San Antonio, TX

DATE CHANGE!

Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame

Honoring Original Tuskegee Airman Dr. Harold Brown and Dr. Marsha Bordner

The event will be held in the same location, at the MSP Intercontinental Hotel on November 7, 2020.

All associated banquet events, such as the Plaque Unveiling, will also be postponed.

Register to attend at mnaviationhalloffame.org.



Brown and his wife, Dr. Marsha Bordner, will also be recognized as Writers of the Year for their book, "[Keep Your Airspeed Up: The Story of a Tuskegee Airman](#)," a detailed account of Brown's experience as one of the country's first black military aviators.

DID YOU KNOW?

On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:

7 April 1943: Pictured below is Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., standing on the wing as he talks to Lt. Charles W. Dryden (A-Train), before Dryden goes on a training mission in a P-40 fighter aircraft at Tuskegee Army Air Field. A true leader is always there to give an encouraging word to his men.

7 April 1945: On today we remember the life of 2nd Lt. Ferrier H. White who passed away on this date in 1945 while serving overseas in Italy.

7 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions. One escorted six groups of 5th Bombardment Wing B-17s raiding the Vipiteno, Camp Di Trens, and Bressanone railroad bridges in northern Italy. One of the group P-51 fighter pilots was initially reported missing, but he later returned. On the second mission that day, 332d Fighter Group P-51s escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 262 and 263) 2 Lt. Ferrier H. White of the 100th Fighter Squadron died while serving overseas.

7 April 1945: Back at Freeman Field, Indiana, Colonel Robert Selway, commander of both the 477th Bombardment Group and the field, ordered Officers' Club 2, which had been reserved for white officers, closed, except for the mess hall.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

[GivingTuesday May 5th](#)

IT'S ABOUT FEELING
GOOD ABOUT THE
DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE.

#GivingTuesdayNow



GREETINGS FROM THE AMBASSADOR TEAM!



*Volunteer Coordinator
Melanie Burden*

We are navigating through uncharted territory right now as the impact of COVID-19 is being felt across the world. With public health being top priority, it has led to the cancellation of many community events around the country, and the CAF RISE ABOVE tour has temporarily come to a pause.

Similar to SARS and the H1N1, this too shall eventually pass, and we shall RISE ABOVE again!

We will continue to update everyone as the situation evolves. Please follow us on our [website](#) for the most up to date information.

If you or someone you know, would like to become a CAF RISE ABOVE Ambassador and help out at an event, or if you want to make use of this opportunity during this time of social distancing and help out from the comfort of your own home, we encourage you to [complete the volunteer application online!](#)

We would love to have join the TEAM!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Bob Sheppard



Growing up in NYC during the 60's, Bob Sheppard knew that his father had been in WWII, but details were sparse. It wasn't until years later when James A. Sheppard, like many veterans, began to share memories with his family that the significance of his service became clear. Stories unfolded from time spent stateside and in Italy with the 301st Fighter Squadron, one of the four

squadrons that made up the 332nd Fighter Group. Today, this group is far better known as the Tuskegee Airmen. By then, he had imparted his lifelong interest in aviation in his three sons. Bringing them on weekends to the hangar where he worked for the Federal Aviation Administration, they got the chance to ride aboard the agency's fleet of DC-3's as they were moved around the airport. Later, while working as a Flight Standards Inspector in Maine, family trips around the Northeast often included a detour to visit classic aircraft being lovingly restored - and if they were lucky, an opportunity to fly aboard a rare warbird.

Working as a broadcast journalist after college, Bob encouraged his dad to share some of his stories of training in segregated Alabama. By the 1980's there was growing interest in the Tuskegee Airmen. James had taken photos with his own camera during the war, and meticulously organized documentation from his time overseas as well. The family commissioned a 30-minute documentary, supplementing the presentations made in more than 15 states, and a half dozen foreign countries to fellow pilots, military groups and the general public. After the passing of his mother, Bob accompanied his dad on trips where men who served in the 332nd FG were invited into middle and high schools, encouraging young people to consider STEM careers.

In 2011, the Red Tail Squadron flew the P-51 to Maine, to surprise his dad with an unforgettable ride along the coast for his birthday. Bob began volunteering with the group's traveling exhibit at airshows in several states as a way to give back, helping to share the story of the courageous men and women who helped break down the barriers for African Americans. Last summer, he got to check another

item off the bucket list, attending AirVenture 2019 in Oshkosh and spending the week with old family friends, Tuskegee Airmen George Hardy, James Harvey, Charles McGee, and Harry Stewart. Sadly, James Sheppard passed away in August 2018 from complications of Alzheimer's, but not before instilling the ethics and humility of the airmen in his grandchildren, Josh and Danielle, who are employed in the technology field in MI & CA. The family continues to speak to student, aviation, community and military groups about the Tuskegee Airmen.

For the last five years, Bob has managed business development efforts for a New Hampshire firm that manufactures a series of small drones for the commercial and industrial markets. He brings two decades of sales and marketing expertise, as well as a deep interest in aviation. The company serves a range of corporations and government agencies deploying Unmanned Aerial Systems for unique surveying, environmental monitoring, infrastructure inspection, and aerial photography missions.

The fondest memory of traveling with his dad and his colleagues was a scene at Houston Intercontinental Airport a decade ago. The group was waiting in the terminal for a late arrival, and the Tuskegee Airmen were dressed in their distinctive jackets and caps. They were being treated like rock stars; civilian and military flight crews, regardless of gender or race, dropped their bags to come shake their hands. Photos were taken, autographs given. People of color and female pilots explained they would not be doing the job they loved, if not for the Tuskegee Airmen.



Bob with Original Tuskegee Airmen George Hardy and Charles McGee at AirVenture in 2019



Reinvention

By Michael J Martin

Photo courtesy Ken Mist

Imagine a sculptor sitting down in front of a block of granite. The cold, hard stone tells us nothing of the warm, soft, elusive artform that will emerge from it. However, in the eye of the sculptor, each tap on the chisel slowly reveals what is within the hunk of stone. It takes time, hard work, and perseverance to painstakingly form the stone. Sometimes, a whole lifetime to construct the form. Eventually, the stone sheds its exterior disguise and shows the world what was always there, hidden within it, the work of art that is buried deep inside.

We are the sculptors of our own lives. We chisel away at ourselves to show who we are from the raw materials that we are given as we adventure forward in time.

The Tuskegee Airmen returned home from the war and had to reinvent themselves, to reshape the stone from which they were already carved.

For those who were in the conflict, the personas that they held in their mind's eye were of dashing pilots, or skilled ground crew, or lifesaving nurses, or any of the hundreds of jobs designed by the specific needs of wartime. However, once the war ended, there was no further need for many of these roles and responsibilities. Some, such as the mechanics or nurses might be able to build upon these capabilities earned during the war. But, for others, such as the Tuskegee Airmen, there was no path forward. For example, the US major airlines of the day, like TWA and Pan Am, would not even consider hiring a black fighter pilot at the end of the war, regardless of their rank, record of accomplishment, and high levels of aviation proficiency. It took another two decades after WWII before we would see black pilots fly commercial airliners. Something that we take for granted today was unimaginable in the mid 1940s. The prejudice continued.

So, what options were available post-war for these pilots? They needed to start life all over again and tap the hammer against the chisel to carve out a second likeness of themselves. Most of us never face such a daunting process to start life over again. We simply and continually build upon what we created in the past. Sure, we may shift the course slightly, and modify our career goals, but a wholesale reinvention is a discouraging task to undertake.

One of the tools available to these pilots for this transformation was the GI-Bill.

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, often called the GI Bill, was a law that offered a variety of benefits to the veterans coming home from World War II. While the original WWII GI Bill expired in 1956, there were many iterations for these WWII veterans and for veterans of more recent conflicts.

The GI Bill provided veterans with financial benefits as a result of their service to the country.

Benefits included low-cost mortgages, low-interest loans to start a business or farm, one year of unemployment compensation, and dedicated payments of tuition and living expenses to attend high school, college, or vocational school. These benefits were available to all veterans who had been on active duty during the war years for at least 90 days and had not been dishonorably discharged.

By 1956, 7.8 million veterans had used the GI Bill education benefits, some 2.2 million to attend colleges or universities and an additional 5.6 million for some kind of training program. Historians and economists judge the GI Bill a major political and economic success – especially in contrast to the treatments of World War I

veterans – and a major contribution to U.S. stock of human capital that encouraged long-term economic growth. However, the GI Bill received criticism for directing some funds to for-profit educational institutions and for failing to benefit all African Americans. Banks and mortgage agencies refused loans to blacks, making the GI Bill even less effective for blacks. Once they returned from the war, blacks faced discrimination and poverty, which represented a barrier to harnessing the benefits of the GI Bill, because labor and income were immediately needed at home.

However, here are two fine examples of how Tuskegee Airmen reinvented themselves making the GI Bill work for them, even against such overwhelming odds.



Lt. Col. Harold H. Brown (RTD)

Harold began developing his work ethic at age 12 when he took his first job delivering newspapers. He graduated from high school at 17 years old. He successfully completed his flight training and graduated on May 23, 1944, receiving his wings and commission as a 2nd Lieutenant, at 19 years of age. He stayed in the military for over 20 years, including service years during WWII. He reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

After his service, the road to become an academic was challenging. During his service, he moved around to different bases working on a variety of different assignments. After the War, there was a RIF or 'Reduction in Force' program. Colonel Benjamín O. Davis, Jr. sat on a Review Board and Harold was called in to face the Board's questions related to what he wanted to do after the war. He requested and was granted the opportunity to seek advanced electronic training and was able to remain in the service. Harold's diverse educational path included substantial training inside the military and abundant formal education outside the military. While stationed in Texas, the Dean of the Graduate School at Texas Southern University guided Harold and helped shape his educational pursuits.

While in the military, he took classes during the daytime, so he traded shifts with other officers in order to go to school during the day and worked grueling 12-hour nighttime shifts on the base. This stressful pace went on for over one year. However, it was much quieter on the night shift, so he could pass the time in between work tasks by studying.

Harold used the GI Bill to its full extent and leveraged every dollar available to graduate with a baccalaureate degree and two graduate degrees, including a PhD.

After many years of effort, Harold graduated from Ohio University with a Bachelor of Science degree in June 1965, just days after retiring from the Army on May 31, 1965, having logged more than 6,500 hours in the sky. After fulfilling the impossible promise he made to himself to earn his college degree, it is not surprising that he went on to earn his doctoral degree and to embark on a second career – in higher education.

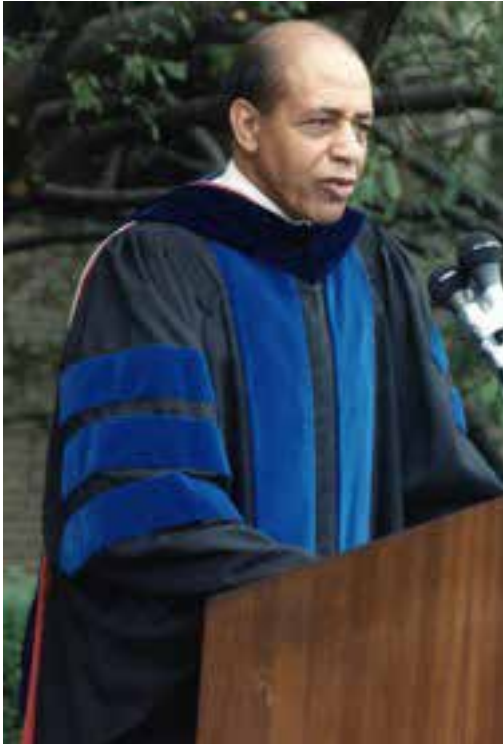
He was hired to teach in the math department at the Columbus Technical Institute, which was just starting out in the basement of Central High School and today is known as Columbus State Community College. In his first quarter with the institution, he was approached with a new opportunity in the college's electronics department.

"The director of the school came up to me, and he knew my background because he had offered me the job." He said 'Harold, you ran an electronics department over in Japan. Can you take over the department and make it run?'" Harold recalled. I said, "Sure I can."

His Bachelor of Science degree was focused in Maths and Physics. He went on to earn a Masters of Arts degree in Education and in ultimately in 1973, he graduated with a PhD in Education. He attended both Ohio State University in Columbus and Ohio University in Athens to earn these degrees.

Dr. Brown initially taught students in a variety of subjects all related to math, engineering, and physics. He led as an administrator of the electrical, technical, and engineering programs culminating with his retirement from Columbus State Community College as Vice President of Academic Affairs.

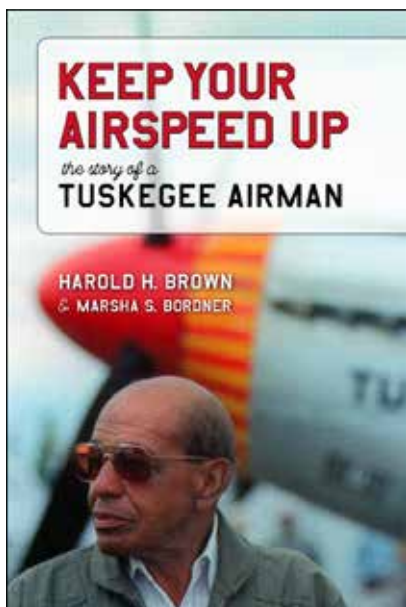
Post of the war, he transformed himself from a military aviator to become an academic leader. He is credited with helping the following generations achieve their own dreams of higher education.



Columbus Tech Commencement



Growth of Columbus Tech



[KEEP YOUR AIRSPEED UP](#)

The Story of a Tuskegee Airman
By Harold H. Brown and Marsha S. Bordner
The University of Alabama Press



Lt. Col. Harry T. Stewart, Jr. (RTD)

Harry Stewart was born in Newport News, Virginia, but moved with his family to Queens, New York, at the age of two. He grew up near LaGuardia Airport and was able to watch commercial airplanes depart to far off exotic places from his childhood neighborhood. Harry's love of aviation developed from these early days of watching these airliners.

On his 18th birthday, and heavily influenced by his friends, Harry left high school unfinished and volunteered for the Army Air Corps, where he says he managed to hide from military doctors a heart murmur and the fact that he had polio as a child.

After he completed his pilot training in Tuskegee, Alabama, on June 25, 1944, Harry was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Forces. He was then sent to Italy as part of the 332nd fighter group, known as "The Red Tails."

In 1950, he was honorably discharged from service as a part of the Reduction in Service program that saw 25,000 removed from the service. This RIF action came as a shock to Harry after seven years of committed service as he envisioned remaining in the military and continuing to fly for his entire career.

He struggled mightily once outside the military. He was thrust back into a life that he was ill-equipped to deal with, so he naturally retained a tight grip on his aviation passion. He wanted to get back to aviation as soon as possible.

He used his GI Bill credits to privately earn additional advanced aviation training in helicopters and float planes. After the war, it was imagined that helicopters would be commonly used to move people around. However, this vision failed to catch on as hoped. Harry instructed and took manual labor jobs to survive.

His transformation to his second life had many hurdles to overcome. His skin color blocked him from flying commercially even though he was absolutely equal or more qualified compared to many white applicants after the war.

Harry realized that manual labor was not the future that he saw for himself and his new family. He understood more than ever the mistake he made leaving high school unfinished. He knew now that it was education that would empower him towards a new life. When he applied to many better jobs, he saw that it was his lack of education that held him back from being selected.

After a great deal of self-reflection and some heavy-handed comments from a rather blunt Veterans Administration interviewer when Harry was seeking guidance for work career advancement, he decided to return to school and get the requisite education. So, while he continued to work at intense, manual labor jobs, he attended post-secondary education after work. However, without the requisite foundations in the maths, the university programs were crushing. He struggled and failed. Fearlessly, he switched to a less demanding associate degree. An Associate of Arts (AA) degree is an academic program taken at the undergraduate level. It aims to give students the basic technical and academic knowledge and transferable skills they need to go on to employment or further study in their chosen field. Students can apply the two-year AA degree to upgrade towards a four-year baccalaureate degree program.

This decision proved to be the right call. Harry excelled in this AA program at a community college in Brooklyn and earned the missing educational foundations to allow him to advance later. Once the AA degree

was earned, Harry refocused on a university degree and enrolled at New York University. The AA degree also permitted him to leave the backbreaking manual labor work behind and he joined the City of New York engineering department. In this role he worked with professional engineers and discovered the value of this type of work. He flourished at engineering as he continued his NYU studies aimed at a baccalaureate degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was helped along by his City colleagues.

With the support of a loving wife, he worked for the City, attended classes at night, and studied late into the wee hours, with very little sleep. His life revolved around school and engineering.



Harry Stewart NYU graduation



NYU graduation diploma



NYU Distinguished Alumni Award 2006

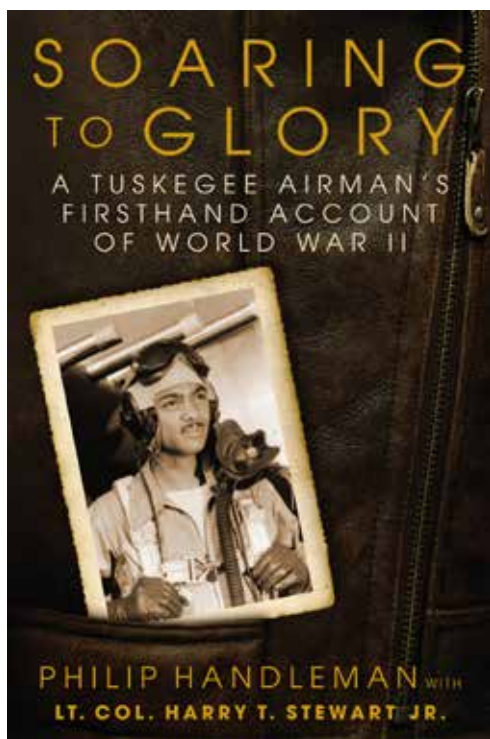
Once he earned his baccalaureate degree, he received many offers for engineering jobs. He was a highly valued candidate and companies were chasing him. His life had turned around after so many years of challenges. It was at this point; he made the final career pivot and left the dream of aviation behind and fully embraced the life of an engineer.

He joined General Foods and gained more experience in mechanical engineering. His work involved the design and implementation of systems for the flow of food products through automation lines.

Later, he worked for a consulting engineering firm in the chemical business undertaking a variety of work as a project engineer where he led teams. He was relocated to various projects and even got to Brandon, Manitoba in Canada for a year overseeing a chemical plant project constructed to process nitrogen, ammonia, and urea.

He managed complex projects overseeing scheduling, production, inspection, and expediting all on the critical path. He was doing senior engineer work. Head-hunters approached him with new opportunities to spread his engineering wings even further with elevated roles to lead businesses. Now in California with his family's homesick desire to return back east to be closer to loved ones, he moved to Michigan. He went on to have a successful civilian career, retiring as Vice President of the ANR Pipeline Company in Detroit, Michigan, operators of one of the largest interstate natural gas pipeline systems in the United States.

Eventually he retired from the world of engineering only to rediscover flying again with the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum in Detroit that had acquired several Schweizer motor-gliders from the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Harry's passion for aviation was reignited and he returned to flying, even earning his commercial glider pilots license at the age of 81. As a volunteer pilot he took young people flying. He was active in this general aviation role from the age of 82 to the age of 90, when he formally ended his flying days. Many of the young people that he flew as passengers went on to become commercial pilots for airlines like Delta and American. One day, when boarding a flight, Harry looked into the cockpit to see two female pilots commanding his airplane. He was delighted and emotionally moved to see how far things had progressed. For both Harold Brown and Harry alike, education allowed them to reinvent themselves post of the war. They both transformed from skilled fighter pilots to become essential and productive members of society, to earn a living, and to be critical part of their families, and to ultimately reshape their form to a higher level of art. While the path to transform a life is tough and rife with setbacks and roadblocks, it was the values and lessons earned as Tuskegee Airmen that helped them to endure and achieve greatness in their second lives.



SOARING TO GLORY

A Tuskegee Airman's First Hand Account of World War II
Author Phillip Handleman with Lt. Col. Harry T. Stewart Jr.
Regnery History Publishing

We are currently out of stock but you can purchase the book on [Amazon](#).

Check out our new web site!

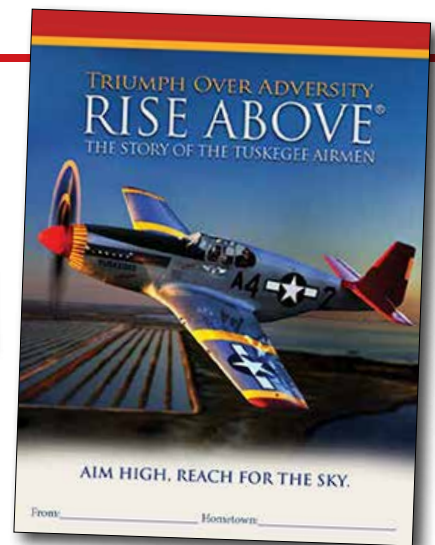
The [CAF RISE ABOVE website](#) has a wealth of information about the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP and offers resources for educators, youth leaders, parents and students.

Check both 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.



Check out the [Inspiration Pack](#) to receive **50 dog tags** and **50 *Triumph Over Adversity – RISE ABOVE: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen* booklets** for only \$95!



WHAT TEACHERS AND PARENTS HAVE TO SAY:

QUESTION

How did the materials from CAF RISE ABOVE or visiting the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit benefit both you as a teacher and your students?

ANSWER

Thank you so much. Our students loved the video and the discussion before and after the film. They really loved the Six Guiding Principles dog tags that they received and shared with us how much they loved them. We had done the Flight plan lesson ahead of time, so the students were familiar with the Six Guiding Principles and how the WASPs and Tuskegee Airmen had to overcome lots of negative mindsets and obstacles to become pilots.

~Marie Cooper



8th graders National History Day project on the Tuskegee Airmen
Lancaster Middle School, WI



We really enjoyed going and seeing the Rise Above Exhibit. This is our second year going. Several of the students that went last year went again and really liked it. The students always like it when can ask questions and have answers immediately. I had 4 of my students that came back to the school and shared an [8-minute presentation](#) with the entire school about the Tuskegee Airmen.

Thank you for allowing us to visit and we are looking forward to going again next year.

~Kelly Dykes
AVID and College and Careers



Aug. 13, 1921 - June 11, 2009

“O for a man who is a man, and, as my neighbor says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through!” When Henry David Thoreau shared these words in his 1849 essay *Civil Disobedience*, he was lamenting the fact that while many people complain about injustice, fewer people are actually willing to risk everything and do something about it. One such man was Roger C. “Bill” Terry who not only served his nation as an officer during World War II, but also a person of conscience who stood up against segregation.

Terry was born August 13, 1921 in Los Angeles. His father Joseph Roger Terry was originally from Texas and was a clerk for the United States Postal Service. Terry’s mother Edith Ross was originally from Mississippi and she was a teacher. Sibling Jack was older, and Dickenson and Joseph were younger. The family lived in the home they owned at 11627 Bandera Avenue in the Compton neighborhood.

After graduating high school, Terry enrolled at the University of California, Los Angeles campus. His roommate was future-baseball great and American hero Jackie Robinson. He graduated at the age 19, harboring dreams of being a pilot and serving his nation.

On November 24, 1943, Terry enlisted in the military at Fort MacArthur in San Pedro, California. He would be accepted into the Tuskegee Airmen training program, graduating with class 44-K-TE on February 1, 1945, earning his wings and commission as a 2nd Lt. Terry was assigned to the historic [477th Bombardment Group](#), the first bombardment group whose pilots and mechanics were African Americans.

On March 1, 1945, the 477th was moved from Godman Field at Fort Knox, Kentucky to Freeman Field, Seymour, Indiana in anticipation of overseas operations set to begin during the summer. While the structural limitations at Godman Field had made for difficult bomber training for the 477th, the sociological limitations at Freeman Field would prove challenging.



Roger C. “Bill” Terry (center) at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, December 1944

Despite the military ordering the desegregation of recreational facilities about two years before the 477th arrived at Freeman Field, Terry and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen and support staff found segregation nonetheless. According to *Black History Untold Stories*, the 477th was told during their initial briefing that: "This is not the time for blacks to fight for equal rights or personal advantages. They should prove themselves in combat first. There will be no race problem here, for I will not tolerate any mixing of the races. Anyone who protests will be classed as an agitator, sought out, and dealt with accordingly. This is my base and, as long as I am in command, there will be no social mixing of the white and colored officers." This resulted in recreational facilities, including the officer's club, PX or postal exchange, and theater, being segregated.

According to newspaper accounts of the time, Freeman Field was able to segregate despite the military ban because the reason for the separation given was, "The army operates recreational facilities on stations with the point of view of obtaining the highest degree of moral and efficiency among all members of the command." Leaning on the idea that there is long tradition of separating students and instructors during recreational time and that similar policies existed at other facilities, Freeman Field commanders argued that it was "unwise" to blend students and teachers while off-duty. The practical result of this however at Freeman Field was that the division between instructors and trainees was really the difference between white and black officers and staff. Ironically, at some of these same bases and fields, enemy prisoners of war could use American military recreational facilities that were denied to African American officers of the United States. As a symbol of the unfair nature of the policy, some members of the 477th called the officers' club designated for "students" only "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

On April 1, 1945, a letter carrying the order to maintain separate recreational facilities was distributed at Freeman Field. 2nd Lt. Terry and other officers thought the order unfair and illegal considering the military's ban on segregating such facilities. On April 5, 1945, the group from the 477th went to the officer's club with goal of entering and being served as was their right. That action would be known as the "[Freeman Field Mutiny](#)" and in many ways, served as the beginning of the modern Civil Rights era in the United States.

Some officers there that day think that perhaps a mole got word to base commanders Major General Frank O'Driscoll Hunter and Colonel Robert R. Selway Jr. that a protest would occur. As the officers arrived at the officer's club, they were met by the provost marshal and other guards. Upon trying to enter the club, 2nd Lt. Terry "jostled" 1st Lt. Joseph D. Rogers – in essence, by brushing against him to pass through the doorway. A total of 61 African American officers were arrested and confined to quarters until disposition occurred for the offense. Soon after, officers were directly ordered to sign a document certifying that they read, understood, and would abide the regulations about the segregated recreational facilities. 101 African American officers refused, many because they felt that signing the document was the same as agreeing to the unfair and discriminatory policy. These officers were then arrested.

In part because of media coverage and pressure from groups like the *NAACP*, most of the officers were released with letters of reprimand added to their files by General Hunter. Decades later in newspaper accounts, these officers would discuss how those letters affected their ability to properly advance in the military and how they harmed them.

Three of the officers involved in the protests, 2nd Lts. Terry, Mardsen A. Thompson, and Shirley R. Clinton, were kept under solitary confinement and eventually tried under a general court martial with charges brought by Col. Selway during the first week of July 1945 at Goodman Field. The original presiding officer of the court martial was [Benjamin O. Davis](#), but because of a procedural protest raised, he was replaced by Captain George L. Knox. Terry, Thompson, and Clinton's defense was lead by future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. The trio was acquitted, except for a single charge against 2nd Lt. Terry who was found guilty of "jostling" a superior officer. The brushing against 1st Lt. Rogers was defined by the court as an act of violence. Nearly two years after his original enlistment date, Terry lost the command of his B-25 bomber and was discharged from the military during November 1945.

The effects of the court martial were severe, both militarily and as a civilian. Terry would never fly a combat mission overseas or achieve his dream of being a military pilot. His conviction required him to identify himself as a felon on job applications or school records. Despite graduating Southwestern Law School in 1949, his conviction affected his ability to earn his law license.

Terry did not let the challenge go unmet, however. He found ways to contribute to society. On June 24, 1949, he married Anna Mae Williston, and the couple had two sons. He had a career as a Los Angeles County district attorney investigator and Probation investigator. In 1972, Terry helped found the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., a group dedicated to preserving the history and contributions of the Tuskegee Airmen and support staff.

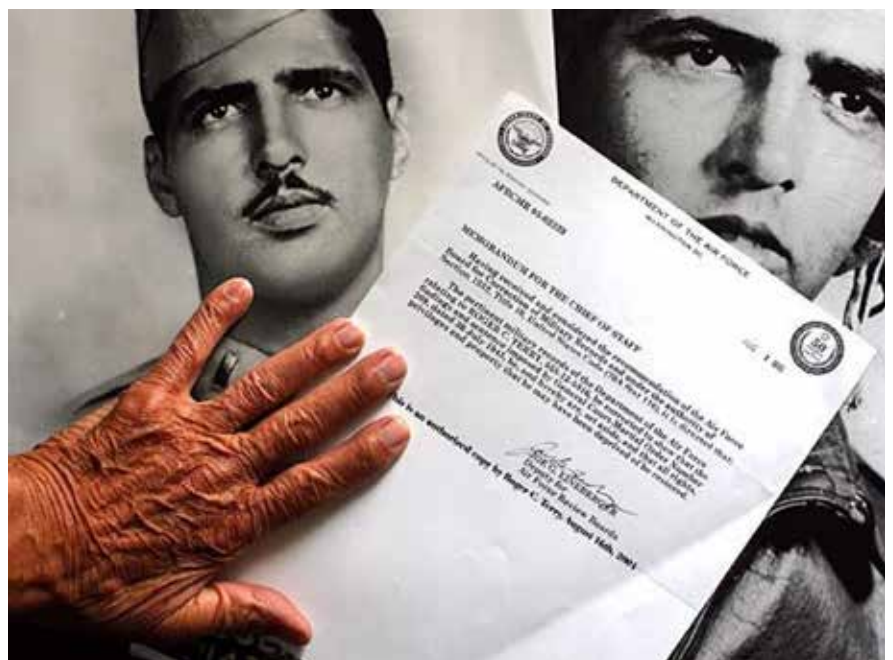
August 2, 1995, would see the long-standing injustices that occurred at Freeman Field corrected. The Air Force removed the letters of reprimand from the files of those affected upon request and review, and Terry's rank was restored, fine returned, and record expunged. While the pardon could never erase the 87 days spent in solitary confinement or the 50 years of damage that followed, 2nd Lt. Terry said, "For the first time in 50 years, I could vote, I could hold office, I was restored Second Lieutenant, and it only goes to show that we're a nation of laws. If you wait long enough, you will be vindicated. The only thing is that they wasted so much money and so much time doing it. But we did show them that we could fly."

As more and more people learned of the stand against prejudice that 2nd Lt. Terry and his fellow officers took back in 1945, honors finally began to be earned. On August 16, 1997, for example, those involved in the "Freeman Field Mutiny," including Terry, returned for the first time to the same location where the protests took place. There, they were honored by Seymour Mayor John Burkhart. In 2007, Terry was among those who were awarded the group Congressional Gold Medal by President George W. Bush for their service to the nation and to the cause of equality. 2nd Lt. Terry was even invited on a tour of the Lucasfilm vaults and got to see and hold many props from famous George Lucas films like Star Wars and Indiana Jones. Although his health at the time prevented him from attending, 2nd Lt. Terry was among the Tuskegee Airmen invited to the inauguration of President Barack Obama. About six months later, on June 11, 2009, Roger Terry passed away.

"We were young (and) we were right," Roger Terry told the Los Angeles Times in 1995. By his act of conscience and by his service, 2nd Lt. Terry helped begin much more than he could have imagined on that April 1945 evening. He helped begin the process that made more real the American ideal that all people are equal.

Written and submitted by Nick Tenuto

- [Online Profile with source listings](#)
 - [Virtual Museum listings](#)
- [Roger "Bill" Terry Square](#) and the [Freeman Field Mutiny](#)



Tuskegee Airman Roger Terry's paperwork clearing his name after he was court-martialed



Mencie Trotter, Class of 1940 and future instructor at the school, Louise Lomax, Class of 1942, and **Della Bassette, Class of 1941**, were three of the Tuskegee Army Nurses graduates of the St. Philip School of Nursing in Richmond, Virginia. The segregated school for black nurses operated from 1920 to 1962. It was part of the Medical College of Virginia which later became part of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond.

Della was also one of the 17 nurses pictured in the [1942 "Wings Over America" yearbook](#). As all nurses in the ANC, she too arrived as a second lieutenant at the base and served as a surgical nurse. By March 15, 1946, she had been promoted to first lieutenant and was transferred.

First Lieutenant Elizabeth Dozier wrote in a nursing article newsletter for LAAB in 1947 that Bassette was one of five nurses who reported to Lockbourne on May 3, 1946. She also wrote that Bassette married CPT John Branche, AC, and left the military. (1942 yearbook, LAAB nursing newsletter, March 15, 1947, station hospital roster)



Bottom row from left: Louise Lomax, Della Raney, Kathryn Bough, Dietitian, Elsie Wallace 2nd row from left: Mencie Trotter, Beatrice Hill, Octavia Bridgewater, Frances McCloud Third row from left: Ruth Carter, Ruth Speight, Elizabeth Dozier, Alice Binford Fourth from left: Della Bassett, Mary Rickards, Alice Dunkley, Ruth Faulkner, Naomi Bell

Thank you to Pia Winters Jordan, Project Director of the Tuskegee Airmen Nurses Project, for sharing with us the incredible legacy of nurses who served alongside the Airmen. We are honored to feature their history and stories.

Be sure to visit [Tuskegee Airmen Nurses Project](#) for more information!



Pia Jordan, Project Director
(Photo by Chris Levister)



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 volunteer 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, by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Hope is the driving force of change. Born of the vision of a better day, it compelled the young men and women who became the Tuskegee Airmen to leave behind their known worlds and to navigate hostile territory. It was the hope that they could be instruments of change that would usher in that new day. And by that virtue of their success that hope swells again in generations to come.

Excerpt from the book, ["Tuskegee Airman: Biography of Charles McGee"](#), page 203



Photo courtesy David Hawley

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ARCHIVE PHOTOS - TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

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



Pilot from 332nd Fighter Group Signing Form *One Book*, Indicating any Discrepancies of Aircraft, Prior to Take-off, Ramitelli, Italy.

Photo by Toni Frissell, March 1945



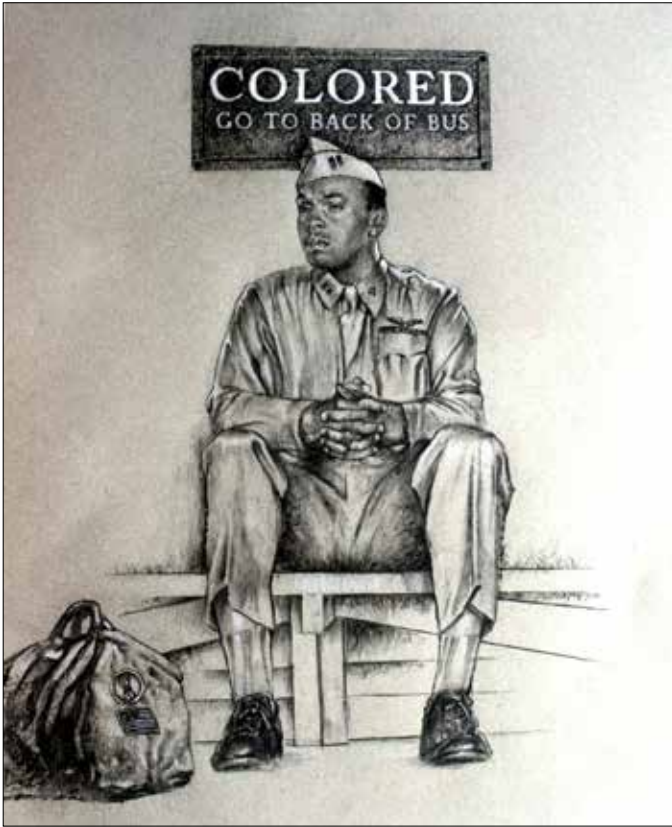
Paul W. Scott

Below: 1st Sgt Allen, T/Sgt Johnson and Pvt Arnold take time out for a little recreation at the Company bar.



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 to the Virtual Museum](#).



[Good To Be Home](#)

Artwork by Chris Hopkins

"If you were a Tuskegee Airmen traveling in the South no matter what your rank, no matter what your military title you were a second class citizen. It didn't matter what your paid ticket said you had to ride coach or at the back of the bus. No matter how you decried Jim Crow you had to accept it or be jailed for daring to be the man you thought your uniform had made you. No matter how hard you fought Nazism in Europe, Bigotry was the winner back home. Thankfully a brighter day was coming in America and we as a country are blessed to know the Tuskegee Airmen were there to see it.

God Bless America."

-Guy E. Franklin



Painting "[Butterflies](#)" by Chris Hopkins honoring the Tuskegee Airmen, "The nervous anticipation of a well-trained and highly motivated pilot of the 332nd fighter group standing on the wing of his P-51 Mustang prior to takeoff," Courtesy of: The Pentagon, Permanent Collection.

Oil on Canvas

49" x 41"



“But what I loved was that the planes I flew never asked if you were a man or a woman; they flew just as well for me as anyone else.”

November 15, 1919 - March 6, 2016

Born Elizabeth Bridget (“Betty”) Wall in Faribault, Strohfus was a tomboy always looking for adventure. After graduating from high school in 1937, she worked at the register of deeds office in the county courthouse, but found it to be stifling work. In school, the course selection was limited for women. “I couldn’t take any classes except home economics or classes for working in an office – like shorthand, typing and that sort of thing.” Strohfus was not interested in those things.

One day, she overheard someone discussing flying. She became intrigued, and when offered a chance to learn to fly, she jumped at it. She spent her afternoons after work at the Faribault airport and learned from pilots in the local flying club. She got so good that she was asked to replace a male pilot when he left for military service. She needed to take out a loan to cover the \$100 it cost her to join but then saw an ad for the WASPs and quickly logged the required 35 hours in the air.

She applied along with about 25,000 other women. Of that number, only 1,047 made the cut — including Strohfus, who trained to fly every aircraft and simulate enemy fights in mock air combat with U.S. bombers. Elizabeth Wald Strohfus trained to fly every aircraft. “The planes ... never asked if you were a man or a woman.”

During 1943 and 1944, Strohfus was sent to a U.S. Army air gunnery school in Las Vegas to help train men for in-flight combat. Her job was to dive an AT-6 Avenger fighter-trainer onto formations of B-17 bombers to give the gunners target practice, using special cameras in place of guns.

She towed cloth sleeves behind her plane so the bombers’ gunners could practice with live ammunition. A couple of fellow WASPs died that way, among the 38 WASPs who died during the war in crashes and other accidents. Strohfus also trained men to fly by instrument. A few of them didn’t think a woman could handle a plane.

“It was just something you had to put up with,” she told the Star Tribune in 1991. “But what I loved was that the planes I flew never asked if you were a man or a woman; they flew just as well for me as anyone else.”

The WASPs were disbanded in December 1944. Her application to become a pilot at Northwest Airlines was rejected. Instead, she became an aircraft controller in Wyoming. She then moved back to Faribault, where she married and had children.

Strohfus began speaking about her experience as a member of WASP and a female aviator beginning in the 1980s. In 1991, she became one of the first women to pilot a F-16 when she was 71-years old. Strohfus later flew as a passenger for a 4.5 Gs acrobatic plane ride when she was 95 years old.

Strohfus died from complications from a fall at the Milestone Senior Living Center in Faribault, Minnesota, on March 6, 2016, at the age of 96.

On June 24, 2017, the field at the Faribault Municipal Airport was renamed the “Liz Wall Strohfus Field” in her honor.

Sources:

[Wikipedia](#)

[War History Online](#)

[MNOPEdia](#)

[HONOR 365](#)



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 volunteer 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, by calling (888) 928-0188, or by mail at:

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“This is not a time when women should be patient. We are in a war and we need to fight it with all our ability and every weapon possible. Women pilots, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used.” First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, September, 1, 1942



WASP Betty Wall Strohfus, a Women Airforce Service Pilot from Minnesota, sings the “Star-Spangled Banner” during the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony at the Capitol March 10, 2010. More than 200 WASPs attended the event, many of them wearing their World War II-era uniforms. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. J.G. Buzanowski)

DID YOU KNOW?

Beginning in 2002, the cremated remains of WASP were allowed internment at Arlington National Cemetery, but the burial ground remained off limits. Unfortunately, in March of 2015, the Secretary of the Army John McHugh ruled that WASP would no longer be granted any access to internments at Arlington, citing their civilian volunteer status during WWII, even though they were granted veteran status in 1977.

President Obama signed the bill into law May 20, 2016 that now allows WASP to be able to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery. The bill Obama signed reverses McHugh's decision.

Erin Miller of Maryland brought the bill to the House after her grandmother Elaine Harmon was denied entry. "It's not the funnest thing to have to ask Congress to pass a law to bury your grandmother," she said. But after starting a petition on change.org and asking friends, neighbors and total strangers for their signatures, Miller's bill picked up traction.

WASPs are thought by many to be the unsung heroines of World War Two. "They set the standard for their male counterparts," said Iowa Senator Joni Ernst. "They taught them how to fly they allowed those male colleagues to go off to war."

But because of their non-combat roles, they were unable to be interred at Arlington. Harmon left her family a letter saying her last wish was to be at Arlington. The new law allows WASPs and a slew of other groups to be interred at Arlington's above ground plots. Many of the remaining WASPs still alive have opted out of Arlington.



WASP Elaine Harmon



Be sure to visit the [RISE ABOVE: WASP](#) area of the website!
We invite you take a deeper dive to learn more about the remarkable WASPs, and be inspired to tap into the ability within yourself to overcome barriers and find success.

Download the free [CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP Resource Kit](#)
For use by teachers, youth leaders and parents.

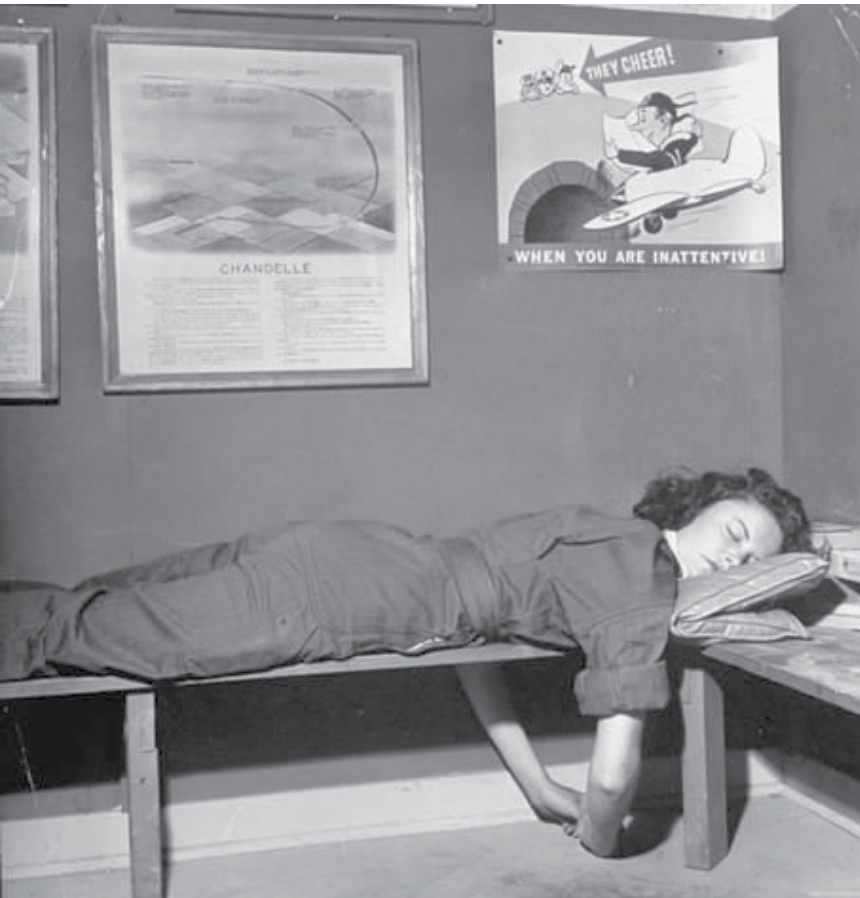
Upon submission of this form, you will receive an email with a link to access the materials.

ARCHIVE PHOTOS - WASP

COURTESY OF THE TWU LIBRARIES' WOMAN'S COLLECTION, TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY, DENTON, TEXAS

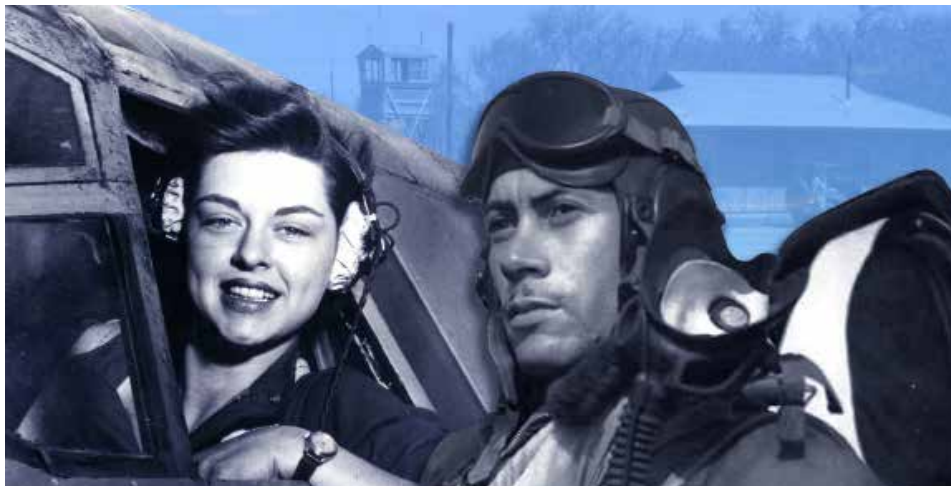


Entrance gate all WASP would enter upon arrival at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas



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* denotes a new [Top Flight Club](#) member of the CAF Red Tail Squadron

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