



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).



One of the wonderful experiences of my job is interacting with others who share our passion inspiring others to RISE ABOVE. Below is an email exchange I recently had with a gentleman whose story was so wonderful I asked if I could share it with you all and he graciously said yes.

LaVone Kay
CAF RISE ABOVE Marketing Director

Ms LaVone,

You asked if I would tell the story of why I bought Red Tail caps, jackets, and pins to give away. I am happy to do so, for I am proud of each of the guys to whom I am giving these symbols - symbols of Triumphs over Adversity. I believe their stories explain why. And I hope their stories prove useful and as inspiring to others as they are to me.

I bought several Red Tail caps and pins and five Red Tail bomber jackets - basically to give away. Three of the jackets are for "sons", one is for my neighbor, and one I will proudly wear myself.

The "sons" of whom I speak are not biological sons (although I actually am old enough to be their father). They call me "Pops" and send me Father's Day cards each year. On the Saturday before Father's Day this past year, the three came to my house, and when I answered the door, they burst in, marched through the house to my back porch, set up my grill, and presented me with a Bar-B-Q ribs dinner - to which they invited my neighbor to join us as well!

MARVIN is the son whom I have known the longest. I met him in 2003. He was then 47 years old and had been using drugs for 32 of his 47 years! He came to rehab to get clean so he could go back out and deal and make more money. But he got turned around in the process. Not only has he succeeded in finally finding a job that offers him fulfillment, but he has become a role model both to his peers and to several teenagers. In 2016 his record was deemed so outstanding that the governor issued a full pardon, and now, with a prison record no longer, he has his eye on ministering to prison inmates. Talk about "believing in yourself" and "expecting to win"!

MELVIN is a bit younger, born in 1962. He entered our rehab program at the age of 44 having lived on the streets for the preceding fifteen years. He got clean but soon relapsed. A few months later he reappeared and announced: "Now I am ready!" He got clean again, and later, when he decided to attempt marriage again, he asked me and my wife (whom he had begun calling "Moms") to provide marriage counseling so he could (as he phrased it) "do it right this time." He asked



Photo courtesy Vic Whitcroft

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me to be his best man. The next year he took me out to dinner on Father's Day, and has done so ever since. Obviously we have a special relationship, and the other sons tease him for being the "favorite" son. One son even claimed that, since he was older than Melvin, Melvin had "stolen his birthright." Melvin never made it through the tenth grade, having quit school at age 16, but he has won the confidence, not only of the street people who knew him back when, but of his church who selected him as head elder. Despite his limited formal education, you should hear him read Scripture and pray! Talk about "aiming high" and "being ready to go"!

CLARENCE, born in 1951, is the oldest of my many sons and the most recent to have conquered his addictions. He met his wife as they worked together in a feeding program for the homeless, and when they married, they invited my wife and me to the wedding. Clarence had attended college years ago, but never finished. However, he did manage to amass student loans that grew exponentially in interest. He has now undertaken systematically to pay off these massive debts (including interest) despite his age! Talk about "using your brain" and "never quitting"!

All three of these sons live exemplary Christian lives. All three volunteer in the youth programs at church. All three are trained to respond when disaster strikes and have served when hurricanes and floods have struck, both locally and in other states. And all three made me proud by participating in my wife's memorial service last year. Melvin read four of my wife's favorite Scripture passages, while Clarence and Marvin each sang solos. I have not yet gifted these three sons of mine with their caps and pins and jackets. I plan to do so as a Christmas surprise!

The fourth of the jackets is for my neighbor LONZIE, a career military man. Since retiring, he has been raising grandsons - some for the long haul and some on a short term basis while their parents serve on active military duty. I had begun paying the two older grandsons (then of high school age) to mow my lawn. However, after my wife became ill, I came home from the hospital one night to find them mowing my lawn, but refusing to accept any pay, claiming it was "community service." Think of it! A couple of today's teenagers who refuse money in favor of being community servants! That indicates how Lonzie and his wife are raising their grandkids. When I gave Lonzie his Red Tail cap, his eyes teared up. And later when I gave him the Red Tail bomber jacket, he gave me a bear hug and fought back the tears again.

The fifth jacket is for me. I served in the Navy onboard two aircraft carriers in the final months of the Korean War and in the months following. I came to admire the story and achievements of the Red Tail Squadron. The other recipients - my three "sons" and my neighbor - are African-American, while I am an old white guy, born in 1932. But I wear my Red Tail cap and jacket as proudly as if I, too, were African-American. For I, too, aim high, believe in myself, use my brain, and never quit (in fact, Melvin once stood up in church, and while telling how thankful he was for me, he called me a pit bull because "when he gets a hold of you, he don't let you go!") And I, too, am still ready to go (despite being an old man). Plus, I expect to keep on winning! and winning! and winning!

~David Appleby

On November 13th David presented the jackets so we could share photos with you! This is his reply email and photos:

I gave my three "sons" their Christmas presents last night. They were blown away, as I expected. Plus, they were impressed with the right things - specifically, the credo of the Red Tail Squadron, "Aim High – Believe In Yourself – Use Your Brain – Never Quit – Be Ready to Go – Expect To Win."

One said, "This is inspirational talk! It makes you want to be winners like them." Another said, "Rise above! That's been our goal all along." One of them called me after he got home and said he was thinking of going to bed with his jacket on. Another one's wife irritated me by calling to tell me she was jealous and wanted a jacket, too.



My three "sons" and I, left to right: Clarence Smith, Melvin Tucker, David Appleby, and Marvin Richardson



David Appleby and his neighbor, Lonzie Felder

[Order your very own 332nd package!](#)

Incredible savings for a limited time!!!

In honor of the 332nd Fighter Group the lucky recipient will enjoy a roomy high-quality lined brown leather jacket with full-color embroidered back and a Tuskegee Airmen Squadron patch ball cap with 13 insignia patches related to the Tuskegee Airmen, and the Rise Above lapel pin!

RISE ABOVE inspires through the legacy of the Tuskegee Airman and WASP



We are PROUD to announce that our RISE ABOVE program has been selected as the winner of the 18th Annual Combs-Gates Award given for aviation history research and preservation efforts! National Aviation Hall of Fame Chairman Michael Quiello said, "The CAF indisputably sets the standard for aviation education around the world."

Our leader, Doug Rozendall added, "CAF RISE ABOVE is committed to telling the inspirational story of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP. We are on a mission to educate people of all ages about these important American trailblazers so their strength of character and ability to triumph over adversity may serve as a means to inspire others to rise above obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals."

Thank you to all of you supporters who make this possible!
[You can read the full press release here.](#)

OUR MISSION IN ACTION

Students who have visited the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit share their letters of thanks to the Tuskegee Airmen.

Dear Brigadier General Charles McGee and Tuskegee Air
Men,

Thank you for all

Thank you for all your time and effort for showing and teaching
us the air planes and famous people that achieved their dreams.

I really liked the airplanes and their design, I'm a very art
loving person. When watching the movie I thought that
the message was that any person, any race, can
achieve their dreams. Thank you very much and have a good
day.

Sincerely, Sam.



WE NEED YOU!

Make a [one-time or recurring donation](#) to help us ensure that the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP is passed on to future generations, so that their strength of character, courage and ability to triumph over adversity may serve as a means to inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals!

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

**CAF RISE ABOVE
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



This story must be told to all youth - that through hard work and persistence, you can achieve any goal you dream of and your only limitation is your God-given talents.

This is the message that the P-51C Mustang Tuskegee Airmen and the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit will tell as it travels around the country to various air shows and special events.

Yes, I fully support the CAF RISE ABOVE, not only by words, but through generous contributions.

Sincerely,
Dr. Harold Brown
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret)
99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group





Logistics Coordinator
Kristi Younkin

As we are approaching the end of a very interesting year, I have been reflecting on all of the ways that we have risen above the challenges and made the most of what 2020 had to offer. From adapting how we operate at events to align with COVID-19 restrictions and recommendations, to more online content and livestreaming WWII Veteran interviews, to having the opportunity to make some improvements and upgrades on the Traveling Exhibit and within the educational content. It may not have been what we planned, but I still view our 2020 season as a success, and we couldn't have done it without you! Normally right now we are gearing up for the annual International Council of Airshows Convention in Las Vegas, but like so many other things this year, it has been moved to a virtual convention. You can [visit our virtual booth](#) and have a conversation with myself or Doug Rozendaal!



I have been working with countless event organizers to plan and finalize details on events from Florida to Oregon, Maine to California, and everywhere in between! Our 2021 season promises to be our busiest one yet! If you are interested in having us attend an event near you, please contact me at logistics@cafriseabove.org or 479-228-4520. I would also recommend reaching out to your local air show organizers to let them know that you are looking forward to attending, and want to see us at their event! Thank you for your continued support, and I wish you and your families a healthy and happy holiday season!

GREETINGS FROM THE AMBASSADOR TEAM!



Volunteer Coordinator
Melanie Burden

Since it's inception in 2018, the Ambassador of the Year award recognizes those who have gone above and beyond. This annual award is presented to a selected volunteer who has demonstrated a strong commitment and drive to support our mission. Despite COVID-19 and the challenges it has brought forth, this year's award goes to an individual who has not only continued to help out on the front lines, but also behind the scenes. Kevan "Will" Leveille has recognized opportunities and various platforms to showcase the CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron, to help inspire others by sharing the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen as he was, many years ago. Will has taken the initiative to help bridge our outreach program with Auburn University so they can promote an interest in aviation amongst elementary and high school students. Additionally, he stepped up to represent our squadron at a Tuskegee Airmen reunion held at Moton Field in Tuskegee, AL. Currently, Will is organizing and facilitating a video tour of Moton Field and the National Historic Site. Will's passion and commitment is invaluable and that is why we are proud to award him as our 2020 Ambassador of the Year.

As the recipient of this award, Will has been awarded a flight in our P-51C Mustang Tuskegee Airmen. Congratulations Will!

To all of our volunteers who have taken the time to help the squadron in any capacity, Thank You! We truly appreciate every one of you, and the success of the squadron is a result of our fantastic team!

If you would like to be part of the CAF RISE ABOVE family, we encourage you to check us out at cafriseabove.org and volunteer today!

Kevan "Will" Leveille



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Jacqueline Covington

I would like to salute the CAF RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit for finally visiting the Greater Cincinnati-OH area (smile). When Jeanette and Terry Hollis notified me that although they had retired as the 'official' Drive Team Members for the Traveling Exhibit, they would be hosting an event at the Tri-State Warbird Museum (TSWM) in Clermont County; Batavia-OH in October.

Due to our interest in COVID-19 ratings in the area and travel restrictions faced by RTS Ambassadors, we had high concern for out-of-state Ambassadors being able to support this event. As an ex-Ambassador for six-years, I didn't hesitate to commit to help and I offered to solicit other local volunteer friends to stand by in case needed. I would not let the Hollis' present this history alone.



When the Traveling Exhibit arrived at the TSWM on Tuesday, October 6, I drove out to greet the Hollis' and to see the new wrap on the Exhibit. I spent my entire day helping Jeanette, Terry and Paul Stojkov (pilot) to clean and prepare the Exhibit for TSWM activities to be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday involving workshops and children projects. On Saturday, some members of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (GCCTAI) supported and/or visited the TSWM and Traveling Exhibit. GCCTAI President, Darryl Shirley spoke during their Lecture Series on the "Tuskegee Airmen Experience."



However, the GCCTAI Member that I would like to highlight is our Historian, Diane Hamm. Diane and I met in 2012 while I was volunteering with the Traveling Exhibit at the Dayton-OH Air Show. She was in a wheelchair at the time. She thought that I was very kind to her and in 2014, she joined me as a member of GCCTAI. In 2017, she displayed her true interest in history and especially in the Tuskegee Airmen by supporting DOTA Leslie Edwards, Jr. (deceased) and myself in seeking funding for the Lear/Heilbrun Memorial Bench installed at their 1928 elementary school.

Note: Memorial Bench can be viewed in [CAF Red Tail Virtual Museum](#).



A year later, I was chaperoning DOTA Edwards while he toured Washington-DC area and spoke at the Thomas Jefferson Library of Congress. Diane graciously stepped in and made the contacts necessary to seek donations for personalized 'red bricks' that now surround the Memorial Bench.



When the health of our GCCTAI Historian, started to fail, Diane stepped in and volunteered for the position with me as her back-up. Most importantly in 2020, she committed to join me on Saturday, October 10, to sanitize the Traveling Exhibit's outside rails and theater seats between each showing. In addition, we interfaced with visitors and shared our knowledge of our famed Tuskegee Airmen. I returned on Sunday, 11 October until the event closed.



Here, I stand with Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) member and my 'best' volunteer friend from KY at the TSWM in 2016.



Brigadier General Charles E. McGee

This December 7, 2020, retired United States Air Force Brigadier General [Charles E. McGee](#) will celebrate his 101st birthday!



A legacy like no other.

Red Tailed Angels: The Story and Legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, a the 3-part docuseries highlighting the legend of the trailblazing aviators.

[Be sure to subscribe to Air Force TV on YouTube watch!](#)

The premier of episode 1 aired on Nov. 11th.

P.S. does the Mustang look familiar?



Lucasfilm Ltd featuring the documentary Double Victory: The Tuskegee Airmen at War accompanied by an all-new educational curriculum guide created by educator Vivett Dukes. The guide is a learning tool developed for English Language Arts classrooms, grades 6-12, and includes a wide range of options for the virtual or physical classroom.

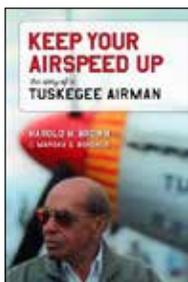
Check out our [ADDITIONAL RESOURCES!](#) The CAF Red Tail Squadron is proud to offer educational outreach resources to help educate and inspire people of all ages with the remarkable lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen. Interested in learning from other credible resources? Check out the links to other organizations featuring interesting educational offerings, recommended by your friends at the CAF Red Tail Squadron. All resources are free, unless otherwise noted.

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](#)

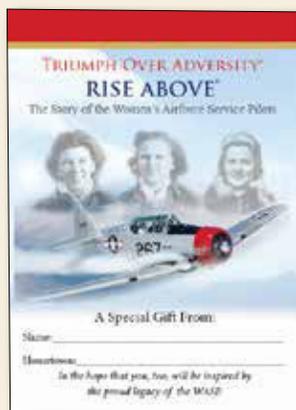
The 99th was originally formed as the U.S. Army Air Forces' first African American fighter squadron, then known as the 99th Pursuit Squadron. The personnel received their initial flight training at Tuskegee, Alabama earning them the nickname Tuskegee Airmen.

[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.

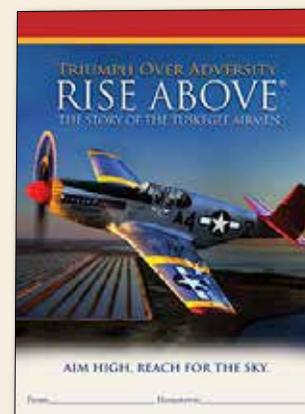
Our Inspiration Packs are perfect for the parent, teacher, youth leader or community group looking for a tangible reminder of the lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen or the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)!

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



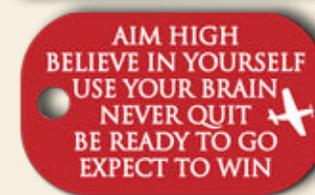
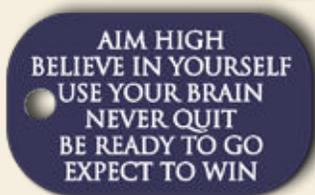
The [Inspiration Pack: WASP](#) pack includes:

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.



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 and challenges. Teachers can use these resources to provide help to students setting personal achievement goals for the year.

Be sure to watch the [Back-to-School Campaign graphic novel](#) that features video interviews with Tuskegee Airman Dr. Harold Brown talking to students about applying the Six Guiding Principles to their lives!



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!](#)

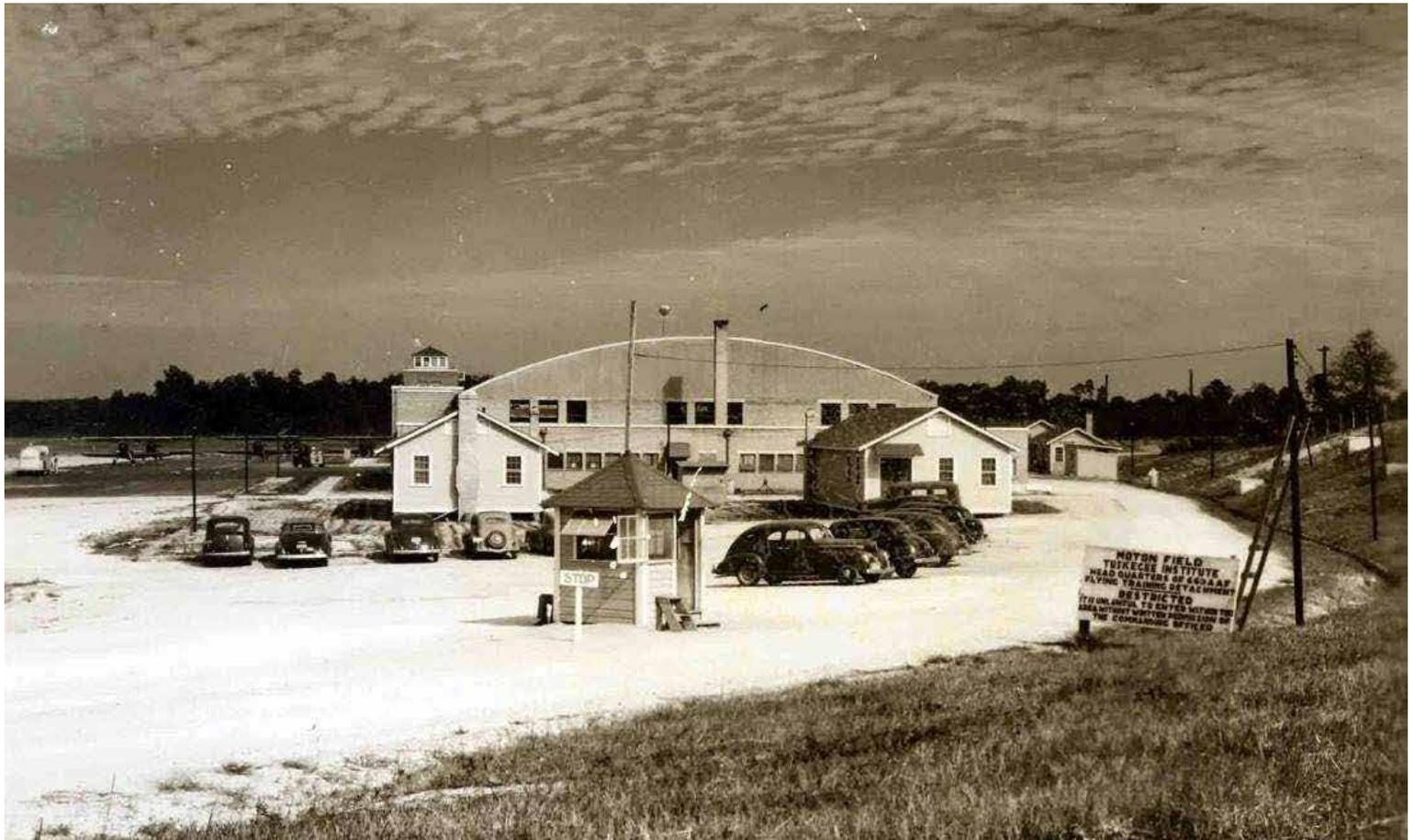
On this date, the following Tuskegee Airmen events occurred:



1 December 1941: Lieutenant (pictured as a Major) William T. Smith assumed command of the 66th Army Air Forces Flight Training Detachment, which was the training designation for the Tuskegee Airmen while they were in primary flight training at Moton Field. Major Smith, who was a West Point graduate and former instructor at Randolph Field, came to Tuskegee after having served a year as Assistant Supervisor at the Army Primary School at Albany, Georgia.

Under Major Smith's supervision the flight program at Tuskegee expanded from a comparatively small one to its present size which was comparable to most other Army Primary Flying Schools. Under Major Smith the Tuskegee Airmen learned how to fly PT-17's and PT-19's before transitioning over to Tuskegee Army Air Field for basic and advanced flight training.

1 December 1945: The 2164th AAF Base Unit (Contract Pilot School Primary), which operated the primary flight training school at Tuskegee Institute's Moton Field, was discontinued. The basic and advanced flight training at Tuskegee Army Air Field, about six miles to the northwest of Moton Field, continued until the end of June 1946.



Tuskegee Institute's Moton Field

Captain Lawrence E. Dickson
Class 43-C-SE 3/25/1943 2nd Lt. 0798945 Bronx NY
1920 – Dec. 23, 1944
Unit: 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group



2nd Lieutenant Lawrence E. Dickson of Bronx, N.Y., graduated from flight training on March 25, 1943, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama in class 43C. In December, he deployed to Italy with the 100th Fighter Squadron.

On Dec. 23, 1944, Captain Dickson was part of a reconnaissance mission to Praha, Czechoslovakia, when engine trouble forced him to bail from his P-51D Mustang, nicknamed 'Peggin'.

"Capt. Dickson called to me over the radio and told me that he was about to bail out," 2nd Lt. Robert L. Martin wrote in a military report. "His canopy was jettisoned and the plane rolled over on its back. I did not see Capt. Dickson leave the plane and I was unable to observe a parachute because of the snow on the ground. Judging from the way in which the plane struck the ground, I do not believe the pilot (Dickson) was in the plane at the time of the crash."

Dickson's name is included on the Tablets of the Missing at the Florence American Cemetery and Memorial in Italy. According to a government database, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, an Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters and a Purple Heart for his military service.

In 1949, the Army recommended that his remains be declared "nonrecoverable."

In 2017, the Pentagon, armed with new data on the crash location, began investigating the case anew.

In 2018 the Defense Department announced that it had accounted for Dickson. His ring, charred remains and other small personal items were found during a dig at the crash site near Hohen-thurn. The dig was conducted by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, the University of New Orleans, and the University of Austria at Innsbruck, with help from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

Michael Mee, the identifications chief for the Army's Past Conflict Repatriations Branch, pre-sented Capt. Dickson's daughter, Marla L. Andrews, with the ring and a formal report on how her father was accounted for.

On March 22, 2019, seventy-five years after his fighter plane crashed in Austria, Capt. Lawrence E. Dickson was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery as four Air Force jets roared overhead and his daughter and grandchildren looked on.

As of April 17, 2019 there are 26 Tuskegee Airmen still missing from the war.

Sources:

Dr. Daniel Haulman, Retired, Organizational Histories Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB, AL
Katherine Rasdorf, WWII POW/MIA Researcher, MIA Recovery Network

[St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#)

[Washington Post](#)

[Santa Fe New Mexican](#)



“She [Eleanor Roosevelt] told me, ‘I always heard Negroes couldn’t fly and I wondered if you’d mind taking me up’... When we came back, she said, ‘Well, you can fly all right.’ I’m positive that when she went home, she said, ‘Franklin, I flew with those boys down there, and you’re going to have to do something about it.’”
~ Tuskegee Airman C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson



April 19th, 1941

Shown in photo is Lewis Jackson, who was the Director of Training at Tuskegee, First lady Eleanor Roosevelt, and C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson, who is piloting the Piper.

Photo courtesy Office of Air Force History, Maxwell Air Force Base

Mustang photo courtesy Max Haynes

AND THEN THERE WERE WOMEN!

Tuskegee Airman Nurse Second Lieutenant Alice P. Binford

Second Lieutenant Alice P. Binford was a dispensary nurse on the base. According to the station hospital roster, she had been promoted to first lieutenant and was one of the five remaining nurses on the base before its closing. According to the Dozier nurse newsletter from LAAB of March 15, 1947, she had reported from TAAF to LAAB in July 1946 or thereafter.

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!



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



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

CAF RISE ABOVE
971 Hallstrom Drive
Red Wing, MN 55066

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](#).

[Replicas of Tuskegee Airmen WWII planes](#)



Submitted by: Paul Love
Location: Kalamazoo, MI

About:

Upon hearing as an adult about who the Tuskegee Airmen were, Paul Love was angry that the heroes were left out of the history books taught to him as a child.

Determined to spread the word about the forgotten black World War II airmen, Love became a self-taught expert and contributes his model Tuskegee Airmen planes to exhibits in Chicago and Detroit to give an accurate visual of the red-tailed aircrafts.

In some ways, Love has carried on that tradition on a miniature scale as he is sometimes forced to hand-paint the patches and patterns onto the plane because most Tuskegee graphics are not sold as decals.

He began making his planes in 2012 when one of his early models was displayed in Grand Rapids. Since then, he's had seven planes displayed at the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum in Detroit, where he is a docent.



Capt B.O. Davis Jr "By Request"



Harry Stewarts "Little Coquette"



Roscoe Brown "Miss Kentucky State"

Build your own model of the [P-51C "Tuskegee Airmen"](#) for only \$25!

This realistic diecast plastic model has a 9 1/2" wingspan, measures 8" in length and features fine details including full-color markings and retractable landing gear. Model is easily built up in about 5 minutes and includes everything that's needed for assembly.



ARCHIVE PHOTOS - TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

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



*Cadets during mess at Tuskegee Army Air Field, June 1942.
From the Air University/HO, Maxwell AFB, AL photo collection.*



As part of his comprehensive flying training course an aviation cadet practices instrument flying in a Link Trainer at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, June 1942.

From the Air University/HO, Maxwell AFB, AL photo collection.

WASP PROFILE: Nancy Batson Crews
WAFS, Class "The Originals"
February 1, 1920 - January 14, 2001



"The Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron was started in 1942 with the appointment of Nancy Love as director of 28 highly qualified civilian women pilots stationed at New Castle Army Air Base. "The Originals", as they called themselves, began by ferrying light aircraft and primary trainers then moved to larger aircraft including pursuit planes like the P-51. In August 1943, the WAFS and the Women's Flying Training Detachment were merged into one program named the Women Airforce Service Pilots

Nancy Batson was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama. While attending the University of Alabama she received a private pilots certificate in the Civilian Pilot Training Program in 1940 and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1941. Her parents bought her a Pope J-4 Cub Coupe and she used it to get her commercial certificate and instructor's rating. Ms. Crews was hired by Pan American Airways as a control tower trainee and by Embry-Riddle in Miami as an instructor in J-3 Cubs on pontoons.

In October 1942, she traveled to New Castle Army Air Base near Wilmington, Delaware to join the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS). She had accumulated more than 500 hours of flight time and had two additional flight ratings: multi-engine and 200 horsepower. After passing her acceptance flight, she was checked out in some primary trainer and liaison aircraft.

Her first ferrying job came on November 5th, 1942 when she and five other WAFS pilots flew Fairchild PT-19s from the factory in Hagarstown, Maryland to an Army training base near Chattanooga, Tennessee. A year later, Nancy Batson along with 9 other WAFS made history when they became the first women assigned to the Air Transport Command's Pursuit School in Palm Springs, California. After less than 3 weeks of ground school, Nancy Batson soloed a Republic P-47 "Thunderbolt" - one of the first women to fly the plane. Since the P-47 was a single seat aircraft, her first flight was also her first solo flight. On 1 January 1944, she graduated a fully qualified pursuit plane ferry pilot.

After nearly a year of ferrying high-performance aircraft, she demonstrated her superb piloting skill while delivering a P-38 "Lightning" from the Lockheed factory in Burbank, California to Newark, New Jersey. She took off from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on the trips' last leg and noted a problem with one of the engines and decided to return to Pittsburgh to have it checked out. However, when she tried to lower the landing gear, the nose gear stuck in a semi-retracted position. She followed emergency procedures to try to get the nose gear to lock in place - pumping the manual emergency hydraulic pump in the cockpit and flying "zooms" to use g-forces to lock the gear in place, but nothing worked. Finally, she was able to get the gear down by flying a "zoom" while firing a compressed gas cartridge to be used as a last resort to force the gear down. She then made a relatively routine landing and saved the \$115,000 aircraft.

On December 19th, 1944 -- one day before the WASPs were deactivated -- Nancy Batson flew her last pursuit plane when she ferried a new P-47 from the Republic factory in Farmingdale (Long Island), New York to the overseas embarkation point in Newark, New Jersey. Nancy Batson accumulated about 900 hours of flight time ferrying more than 25 types of military aircraft including L-4, PT-19, AT-6, C-60, P-38, P-39, P-40, P-47, P-51, and A-20s. During this time, she received an Army Air Corps instrument rating.

In 1946 she married Lt. Colonel Paul Crews and had three children. In California she was a part-time instructor at Rose Aviation, flew in three Powder Puff Derbies and bought a Piper Super Cub to tow gliders and aerial banners. Ms. Crews bought a Schweizer 1-34 and 2-33, receiving a glider commercial certificate, instructor rating and Silver badge. She has also owned a Taylorcraft and Mooney Mite which was donated to the Southern Museum of Flight in Alabama. She was mayor of California City and in 1989 was inducted in the Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame.

Sources:

[Wikipedia](#)

[Alabama Women's Hall of Fame](#)

[The Flying Career of Nancy Batson Crews](#)

WASP QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"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 ever weapon possible. WOMEN PILOTS, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used."

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, September 1, 1942



About the Artist

"Kerm", Kermit Dyer retired from engineering management and decided to take up watercolor painting and guitar to keep busy, but guitar wasn't as loved as the watercolor painting. Kermit's passion is painting military aircraft, especially aircraft from the WWII era. "I think I am drawn to art that honors our veterans because my experience with WWII was through the eyes of a small boy," said Kermit Dyer. Later he says he took part in 'blackouts' and watched 'America Goes to War' newsreels. He explains that throughout his watercolor painting career, he has met incredible people and understood the lives and stories of many young men and women that served. He honors them in his paintings.



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

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DID YOU KNOW?

In October of 1943, 15 WASP from Camp Davis were transferred to Camp Stewart to take a special “top secret” course in radio controlled drone flight. The program drones included the Culver PQ-8 and PQ-14 pictured here. A radio-controlled target drone for training anti-aircraft artillery gunners, the drones were used throughout WWII and beyond.



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WASP posed with Flight Gear



Aerial photograph of the air force radar station

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Kristi Younkin
Senior Logistics Coordinator
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Doug Rozendaal
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Kim Pardon
Public Relations/Media
PR@cafriseabove.org

For general inquiries, contact:

LaVone Kay
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