



# 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).

February 2025

The CAF RISE ABOVE exists to ensure the contributions to history made by the Tuskegee Airmen and Women Airforce Service Pilots endure. That is never more important than when such men and women themselves pass into history.



On January 21, 2025 [Elizabeth 'Betty' White Dybbro](#) passed on. After a single passenger flight with a barnstormer in 1934, she began pursuing aviation - at a time when the very idea of women pilots seemed fantastical to most. When she heard of the possibilities - few and fleeting though they might be - of women flying for the military because of the urgency of World War II, she began taking flying lessons, reportedly from the same airstrip where she had first encountered that barnstormer, in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and pursued chances to serve until, in August 1944, she graduated the Women Airforce Service Pilots program, one of just over a thousand women to accomplish that, of more than 25,000 estimated applicants. She flew every manner of Army Air Force aircraft as a WASP (reportedly earning both admiration and chastisement for her daring

in low-flying training flights in AT-6s) until their disbandment in December of that year. Post-war, her passion was undiminished: she became a pioneer female flight instructor, first in Washington state and later in Alaska, where she raised six children, then remained active in the rich aviation heritage community in Seattle and among the WASP heritage community. Betty Dybbro was 102.



On February 2, 2025, [Lt. Colonel Harry Thaddeus Stewart](#) passed on. One of four Airmen to record in one day three aerial victories over enemy fighter aircraft attacking the bomber formation he defended as a member of the 332nd Fighter Group - for which he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross - Lt. Col. Stewart continued to accomplish after World War II: Stewart flew as one of the four Tuskegee Airmen assigned to the United States Air Force's inaugural aerial weapons competition - which they won, in outdated P-47Ns, a fact hidden for five decades (along with the inaugural trophy); Stewart completed his degree in mechanical engineering from NYU; and Stewart rose to Vice-President of ANR Pipeline, in Detroit. Stewart shared his extraordinary legacy in 'Soaring to Glory;' he and his wife Delphine are survived by their daughter Lori. Lt. Col. Harry Stewart was 100.

Our gratitude, and endless respect.

Chris Allen

Rise Above Road Exhibit Director

# 2025 RISE ABOVE TOUR SCHEDULE

[Check online for updates and more information!](#)

Feb 19-22	FL - Tallahassee Rise Above
Feb 25-28	KY - BAESystems (Private event)
Mar 12-15	AZ - Yuma Airshow
Apr 5-6	NV- Aviation Nation
Apr 11-13	OK - Altus Air Power Stampede
Apr 19-20	TX- Wings Over Texas
Apr 25-27	VA- Air Power Over Hampton Roads
Jun 10-11	VA - Aim High for Excellence
Jun 13-14	VA - TAKE IT TO THE STREETS
Jun 21-22	OH - Dayton Air Show
Jun 27-28	OK - Tinker Air Show
Jul 11-13	OH - Lorain County Discover Aviation Airplane & Car Show
Jul 21-27	WI - EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI
Aug 22-24	OH - Columbus Air Show
Aug 30-31	MO - Wings of Pride Air Show
Sep 13-14	TN - Smyrna Rotary Intl Wings of Freedom
Sep 27-28	CO - Wings of Pride Air Show

**Calling all students  
4th through 12th grade!**

**Deadline is February 28th**

Submit your essay for the CAF RISE ABOVE Squadron's essay contest saluting the Tuskegee Airmen or the Women Airforce Service Pilots!

[Click here for details!](#)



*Essay Contest*

# P-51C MUSTANG HISTORY

The P-51 Mustang aircraft manufactured by North American Aviation for use as a fighter in World War II made its debut in 1940, going into service in 1942 with the Royal Air Force, then in 1942 with the US Army Air Corps.

The CAF RISE ABOVE P-51C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen*, tail number N61429, saw service stateside as a trainer in 1945, then declared surplus after the war ended. It was displayed at Montana State College (now Montana State University) for 40 years before being donated for restoration. The CAF took possession of the aircraft in the late 1980s, and was initially restored to flying condition in 2001.

## Key historical events of the P-51C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen*

Manufactured:	North American Aviation in Dallas, Texas
Delivered:	US Army Air Corps, April 7, 1944
1st Assignment:	341st AAF Base Unit Pinellas, Florida; flown as trainer
Transferred:	378th AAF Base Unit in Venice, Florida, December 1944; flown as trainer
Transferred:	339th AAF Base Unit in Thomasville, Georgia, June 1945; flown as trainer

[Download and read](#) the full History of the CAF Red Tail Squadron and the P-51C Mustang.



**1945** on display at Montana State College  
*Photo courtesy Arlins Aircraft Service Inc. via Scott Thompson*



**2024** P-51C Mustang *Tuskegee Airmen* flown by Doug Rozendaal alongside a F-35 flown by Bart "Lefty" Smith  
*Photo credit Doug "Oedi" Glover*



## FEATURED TUSKEGEE AIRMEN PROFILE

*America's Tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen*



**Nathaniel Walter Goins, Jr.**  
**February 1918-1970 – March 30, 1970**  
**Class: 45-H-TE**  
**Graduation date: 11/20/1945**  
**Rank at time of graduation: 1st Lt.**  
**Service # 0582758**  
**From: St. Paul MN**

Nathaniel Goins applied for enlistment with the Army Air Corps at Fort Snelling, Minnesota in early 1942; his application being rejected because the Air Corps was segregated. Goins had passed all of the cognitive and physical requirements for enlistment, however. Goins sought the aid of close family friend and World War I hero, Major Samuel Ransom, to reverse the decision of Fort Snelling's recruiters, but to no avail.

He started his military career as an enlisted man in August of 1942, stationed in Fort Scott, Illinois. During his Fort Scott service, Goins learned that the Army's "experiment" with "colored flyers" was

proving successful. Goins applied for flight training at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama. He was sent to AFF Officers Candidate School at Miami Beach, Fl. Upon receiving his commission to Second Lieutenant, Goins was then assigned to staff duty at Tuskegee.

Goins was the Adjutant for Colonel Noel Parrish, commander of Tuskegee Army Air Field. 1st Lt. Goins coordinated a squadron of 500 enlisted men and 96 officers. He assumed command during the absence of the commanding officer, and performed all general duties incident to the administration of the organization.

He was allowed to enter the 40-week Two Engine AAF Flying School at Tuskegee. He graduated with Class 45-H in October of 1945. Goins was then assigned duties as a Flight Test Maintenance Officer with Squadron C at Tuskegee where he assisted in flight test operations in B-25's and AT-6 aircraft. He also flew the P-51 and B-29 aircraft prior to leaving active duty.

[Read his profile online!](#)

Learn more about the [CAF Red Tail Squadron](#), whose mission is sharing the inspiring legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, America's first black military pilots and their support personnel. Their strength, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity during WWII can serve to inspire others about how to succeed today.



*By Craig Huntly, Tuskegee Airmen Subject Matter Expert*

This event occurred at an U.S. airfield outside of the small Italian village of Montecorvino, approximately twenty miles south of Salerno, Italy on April 16, 1944.

T/Sgt. Henry J. Connell of Montana enlisted in the USAAC on January 29, 1942. A first-rate mechanic and line chief in the 367th Service Squadron, 96th Service Group which repaired aircraft for the 332nd Fighter Group and other allied aircraft at their airfield.

T/Sgt. Connell had been servicing Warhawks and Aircobras day in and day out since arriving overseas in February 1944. He was usually the first man out on the line at dawn to warm up the engines, and each evening, long after the last flight had landed, he could be found anxiously examining each minute detail of the fighters. He was considered to be one of the best crew chiefs by both mechanics and pilots. But T/Sgt. Connell wanted to fly.

Back in the states he had passed the flying cadet examination and was awaiting orders when his unit was alerted and shipped overseas where, he had since settled down to the job of keeping allied aircraft winging their way into the flak-torn skies.

T/Sgt. Connell's "escapade" took place after months of careful observation and notetaking. His buddies began to notice that he seemed to watch the pilots more carefully as they climbed into their ships and checked their instrument panels. They noticed too that he asked specific questions about the P-40's flight characteristics and he jotted down notes frequently in a tattered notebook.

On April 16, 1944, the air-hungry line chief came face to face with his big moment. The mechanics were patching up the shot-up tail assembly on a P-39. Near them on a direct line, a sleek Lend Lease P-40 purred in the morning sun. Sitting there in the cockpit for some unaccountable reason was T/Sgt. Connell decided to fly the thing, notwithstanding the fact had had never had a minute's instruction in flying the Warhawk. In fact, he had never had a minute's solo time in any type of aircraft not even a Piper Cub.

Suddenly, the engine burst into a throaty roar and, turning in the direction of the plane, mechanics were startled to see their line chief lean forward in the tiny cockpit, adjusting a sheet a paper to the instrument panel.

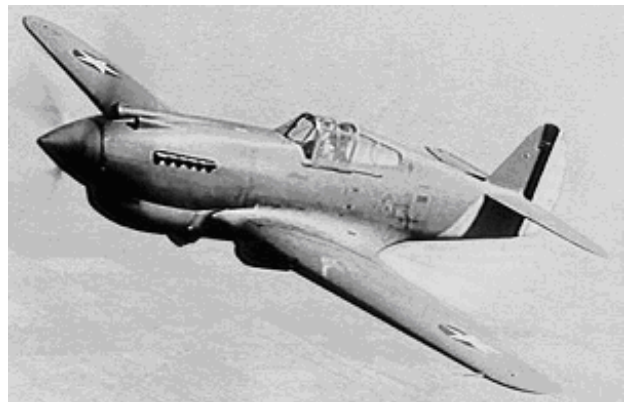
The ship taxied to the end of the strip and turned into the wind. A flight of four P-39 Aircobras flown by pilots of the 301st Fighter Squadron were preparing to take off. T/Sgt. Connell pulled the Warhawk into position behind the P-39's and

without asking their permission followed the P-39's down the runway on the takeoff. He was airborne much to the dismay of the tower which had not cleared him and for the next hour and fifteen minutes T/Sgt. Connell and the Warhawk flew around the area to his hearts content. He even managed a few maneuvers fighter pilots take months to learn.

The news spread, while mechanics, pilots, and one or two colonels on the field kept their eyes glued to the steep climbing fighter. The wing of the fighter dropped as it circled the field in a tight bank, and then diving, buzzed down the strip. The Warhawk climbed like a bullet and headed out to sea. After about an hour or so, he then decided to land. He picked out an airfield an airfield (Gaudo) some twenty miles southeast of Montecorvino, he killed his airspeed with a buzz job and peel up and made a technically perfect approach, reading his notes taped to the instrument panel he put his wheels and flaps down, slid the canopy back. But here capricious fate took a hand and a gust of wind blew his all-important notes out of the cockpit while simultaneously discovering he was undershooting the landing strip and would hit a ditch near the edge of the field.

This did not phase Sergeant Connell. He reached for the throttle to pull up and go around for another approach when he found that his engine had stalled out. That left the him with no alternative but to put the ship down ditch or no ditch. He cracked it up, naturally. But drawing heavily on his luck reservoir he got out of the ship before it went up in flames. He was all in one piece except for some minor cuts, bruises and a few missing teeth. Later while laid up in the 32nd Field Hospital tent, he told his admiring buddies he knew one thing; "I can fly a damned P-40!"

T/Sgt. Connell was court-martialed and busted to buck private. In addition, he spent six months in the Stockade all the while contending if they would give him another chance, he could show them he could safely land a P-40. After his release from confinement, he remained overseas with the 367th Service Squadron and in April 1945 he was transferred to the 950th Air Engineering Squadron, 524th Air Service Group where he remained until the end of hostilities.





*Honoring the Women Airforce Service Pilots*

## FEATURED WASP PROFILE



**Marie Mountain Clark**

**February 8, 1915 - October 2, 2008**

**Class: 44-W-1**

**Training Location: Avenger Field (Sweetwater, Tex.)**

**Assigned Bases: Las Vegas Army Air Field (Nev.)**

**Planes flown: PT-19, BT-13, AT-6, AT-10, B-17, B-26, P-39**

During the Second World War Marie completed U.S. Air Force pilot training with the Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASP). Following graduation in February 1944 she was assigned as a pilot with the U.S. Air Force, accumulating about 1000 hours in military aircraft, including the PT-19, BT-13, AT-11 and AT-6 training aircraft, the P-39 and P-63 fighter aircraft and as a copilot in the B-17 and B-26 bombers. Her military service was at the Las Vegas (Nevada) Air Force Base where her duties included giving instrument flying instruction to male pilots, flying mock fighter attacks on the B-17 "Flying Fortress" and serving as an engineering test pilot for P-39 and P-63 fighter aircraft. She is a

member of the Caterpillar Club, an organization of those military pilots who have made an emergency parachute jump from an aircraft. The WASP were the first women to serve as pilots for the U.S. Air Force and were the pioneers that led the way for women to fly today in all the military services. In 2005 Marie published her World War II memoirs in the autobiography: *Dear Mother and Daddy: World War II Letters Home from a WASP*.

In 2009 Marie was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal posthumously for her service in World War II. The Congressional Gold Medal is awarded by Congress and, along with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, is the highest and most distinguished honor a civilian may receive.

[Watch the video](#) of WASP Marie Mountain Clark remembering an unplanned parachute jump during training at Avenger Field.

[Read her profile online!](#)

Learn more about the [CAF RISE ABOVE: WASP](#), whose mission is sharing the story 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.

**“I thought instead of just riding in an airplane, I’d fly it.”  
Elizabeth I. White Dybbro, Class 44-W-6**



The WASP were officially formed on September 5, 1942 as the result of two separate efforts made by Nancy Love Harkness and Jacqueline Cochran, who began appealing the Army to include female pilots as early as 1939. Above, Nadine Bernice Ramsey from Wichita, Kansas stands with her P-38 Aircraft

*Photo courtesy of The WASP Archive, The TWU Libraries' Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX*



### **Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS)**

The purpose of the WAFS was to deliver planes from the factory to military bases.

**1942** Nancy Harkness Love, with the support of the U.S. Air Transport Command, organized 25 women pilots into the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron on Sept. 10, 1942. WAFS headquarters were located at New Castle Army Air Base, Delaware; later other ferrying squadron centers were established. Due to the strict qualifications for service in the WAFS, only 40 women wore the WAFS uniform (which they had to pay for) before it was merged into the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

### **Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD)**

Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Jacqueline Cochran - one of the most well-known aviators of that time - tried to interest the Army Air Corps in women pilots who would be trained to fly military aircraft within the United States. When that effort failed, she recruited a group of women pilots to serve in the British Air Transport Auxiliary.

Cochran established the Women's Flying Training Detachment, or WFTD, at Howard Hughes Airport in Houston, Texas on Nov. 16, 1942, with an initial class of 25 women who were required to have 200 hours flying time and a commercial license.

### **1943 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)**

The WAFS and WFTD merged into WASP on Aug. 5, 1943. Cochran served as director of WASP and its training division, while Love was director of the ferrying division. In the 16 months WASP existed, more than 25,000 women applied for training; only 1,879 candidates were accepted. Among them, 1,074 successfully completed the grueling program at Avenger Field - a better "wash-out" rate than 50 percent of male pilot cadets.

**1944** The WASPs were disbanded on Dec. 20, 1944. Arnold's letter of notification to WASPs stated, "When we needed you, you came through and have served most commendably under very difficult circumstances, but now the war situation has changed and the time has come when your volunteer services are no longer needed. The situation is that if you continue in service, you will be replacing instead of releasing our young men. I know the WASP wouldn't want that. I want you to know that I appreciate your war service and the AAF will miss you..."

### **1977 WASP receive veterans status**

More than three decades later, on Sept. 20, 1977, a select House subcommittee on veteran affairs heard testimony on H.R. 3277, a bill which recognized WASP service as active duty in the armed forces and entitled them to veterans' benefits. The bill was vehemently opposed by the American Legion on the grounds that it "would denigrate the term 'veteran' so that it will never again have the value that presently attaches to it." Controversy went back and forth, with the Veterans Administration opposing the bill and the Department of Defense supporting it.

On Oct. 19, 1977 a compromise was finally reached that if the Air Force would certify that the WASP had been de facto military personnel during the war, the WASP amendment would not be stripped.

**2010** Almost 70 years after the Women Airforce Service Pilots were disbanded with little fanfare, they finally received the Congressional Gold Medal at a ceremony in the Capitol March 10, 2010.

"The Women Airforce Service Pilots courageously answered their country's call in a time of need while blazing a trail for the brave women who have given and continue to give so much in service to this nation since," President Obama said. "Every American should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve."

**2016** Finally, in 2016, seventy-five years later, WASP can finally be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, thanks to bipartisan efforts.



# SHOP WITH WITH A PURPOSE!

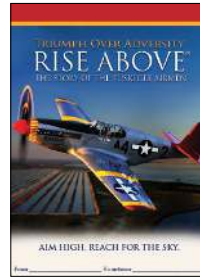
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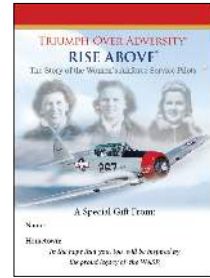
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## For \$99 you can join the exclusive ranks of the Top Flight Club!

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!

### Why 99? *(for each annual 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.





# Be A Hometown Hero

## Bring The RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit To Your Community!

The CAF RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit could be available to make a stop in your hometown. Imagine the draw an exhibit like this would be at your airshow, community event or festival!

Contact the CAF Rise Above Squadron at (802) 371-8838 or email [logistics@cafriseabove.org](mailto:logistics@cafriseabove.org) for more information.

## We Need Your Support!



The CAF RISE ABOVE is a part of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

The mission of CAF RISE ABOVE is to educate audiences across the country about the history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and the WASP - so their strength of character, courage, and ability to triumph over adversity may serve to inspire others to RISE ABOVE obstacles in their own lives and achieve their goals.

The operation of the P-51 C Mustang Tuskegee Airmen and the RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit are dependent on the generous support from people like you!

Here's how you can help:

[Make a one-time or recurring donation online.](#) Dedicate your gift in the following ways:

- Make a memorial gift to the Squadron to honor someone's memory. For donations of \$50 or greater the names will be listed on the online [Honorary Flight Log](#).
- [Join the Top Flight Club: Red Tail!](#)
- [Join the Top Flight Club: WASP!](#)

Purchase memorabilia, books and gifts from our [online store](#)

Join [The Heritage Club](#): The Heritage Club is made up of CAF supporters who have included CAF in their estate planning. Email [development@cafhq.org](mailto:development@cafhq.org) for more information.

Check out [FreeWill](#), a **free** estate planning tool which is provided as a benefit for our CAF members and supporters. Gifts from your estate may be designated as unrestricted or restricted to a specific aircraft, unit, or the CAF's endowment.

***Do you need to make a charitable gift from your IRA before the end of the tax year?***

Check out [Smart Giving from Your IRA](#) on the CAF website or contact your IRA administrator **TODAY** to arrange a QCD before the end of the year.

Please mail correspondence or donations to our home office at:

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**[RISE ABOVE: Red Tail](#)**

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

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

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