

War Era Story Project 2012

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Current home town: Columbus, Ohio

Age: 92

I am very proud to have been the wife of one of the Tuskegee Airman, now known as the Tuskegee Red Tails. Captain William W. Green, II served during WWII as a member of the first all-black 332nd fighter squadron in America. He was born in 1920 in Greensboro, N. C. to Captain William W. and Mrs. Green. In 1941, when he was attending North Carolina A&T, he joined the civilian pilot training program at the Tuskegee Institute. At the time, whites doubted that blacks were fit for military services at all, much less as a fighter pilot. He later earned his wings with Tuskegee Airmen of the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps. He graduated as a second lieutenant on July 27, 1943 in Staunton, Virginia, from the Tuskegee Flying School in a class of 43 graduates.

My husband served in Europe and Japan. He served 123 wartime missions in Europe, shot down three German aircraft, earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, an Air Medal with six oak leaf cluster, E.T.O. ribbons with three battle stars, and the Purple Heart, and he was awarded the Order of the Partisan Star, Third Class by Yugoslavia. He is the only man in U.S. Air Force to have received such honors. I hope that people take the time to see the movie "Red Tails" because much of American History is told and we can learn what a struggle and hardship these men had to endure.

On the other hand, we wives had a tremendous job on the home front. For instance, taking care of the children, paying bills and budgeting was very hard. I became quite a household engineer myself. Being a soldier's wife is not an easy job for anyone. Much was required of me; however, I made it through it all by the grace of God. Church, faith, community, neighbors, family and support groups like the Officers Wives Club were invaluable to me.



Officers' Wives Club Support Group, 1948

My prayer would be for communities to support the wives and children in the states while their husbands are serving our country. There should be a way for non-military people to connect with military people to be a support system. Child care, food, monetary support for emergency situations, invitations for holiday meals, listening ears, positive and constructive advice and prayers are a few suggestions on how non-military people could be of assistance.

After the war, we located to Lockbourne Air Base, in Ohio, when it opened up, and we lived there for a while. We bought a home in Columbus, Ohio. Two years later, my husband was sent to Japan and our two boys (William and Reginald) and I joined him there until the Korean War had started. By this time, my husband's health began to fail and he could not fly any more. William was discharged on July 19, 1950.

After we returned home from Japan, my husband was offered a job as an agent and manager of Atlanta Life Insurance Company. We lived in Columbus, Ohio for 65 years and it is still home for our two sons and me today. William died in 1978. The Williams' monument is located in Gypsy Hill Park, Staunton, Virginia. We were richly blessed and we served a grateful community and country.



Christmas 1957