

ALEXANDER JEFFERSON
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.)

Birth Date: 15 November 1921
Birth Place: Detroit, Michigan



In January 1944, First Lieutenant Alexander Jefferson graduated from pilot training course at Tuskegee Army Air Field followed by three months of combat training at Selfridge Field, Michigan. He served as a P-51 fighter pilot with the Red Tail, 332nd Fighter Group, 301 Fighter Squadron in Ramitelli, Italy.

While providing protection from enemy aircraft, Jefferson flew 18 long-range escort missions for B-17 and B-24 bombers. On August 12, 1944, three days prior to the invasion of Southern France, Jefferson was shot down by ground fire while strafing radar stations on the coast. He was captured by German troops and interned for nine months as a prisoner of war. He spent five months in Stalag Luft III, 80 miles east of Berlin on the Oder River.

When the Russians started their offensive on January 29, 1945, the American, British and French prisoners were transferred to Stalag VII-A in Moosburg, approximately 20 miles north of Dachau. Liberated by American forces on April 29, 1945, he visited Dachau to witness the results of the atrocities committed by the Nazis. Lt. Col. Jefferson was discharged from active duty in 1947 and retired from the reserves in 1969 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Following the war, he became an elementary school science teacher in the city of Detroit where he retired as an assistant principal in 1979. Lt. Col. Jefferson is an active member of various church, educational and alumni organizations. He is one of the founders of the Detroit Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen and is a member of the Tuskegee Airmen speakers bureau.

As a life member of the Silver Falcon Association Jefferson serves on a voluntary basis as an admissions counselor for the United States Air force Academy and the Air Force ROTC. He is a life member of the American E-Prisoner of War and Perpetual Member of the Military Order of the World Wars. On October 14, 1995, Lt. Col. Jefferson was enshrined into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame.

Jefferson is a graduate of Chadsey High School in Detroit. He received a B.S. degree at Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia. He has done graduate work in chemistry at Howard University, Washington, D.C. , and received a Master of Education, Wayne State University in 1954.