

BIOGRAPHY

A DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INC. PUBLIC RELATIONS, P.O. Box 830060
TUSKEGEE, AL 36083

ROSCOE J. DABNEY



Roscoe J. “Bub” Dabney was born on 28 December 1922 to Roscoe and Charlotte Dabney in Lakewood, New Jersey. He graduated from Lakewood High School, Lakewood, NJ, in 1941. He lettered in baseball and football all four years of high school but his true passion was music. He sang, played the drums and was affectionately known as the “Lakewood baritone.” Captain Dabney entered a number of amateur competitions in the tri-state area and even appeared on the Arthur Godfrey talent show. He made it to the finals however, he came in second place as he was beat out for first place by Anthony Dominick Benedetto, known professionally as the legendary crooner Tony Bennett.

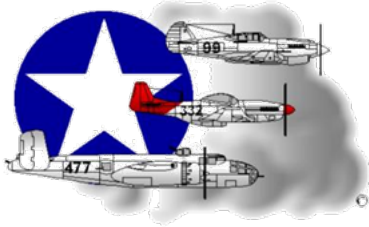
On 3 December 1942, Mr. Dabney enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps. The testing was rigorous and he tested three times, passing each time but was not called to report to Tuskegee. There was no explanation. Later, however, Mr. Dabney found out that the Army was using a quota system with Blacks entering the Army Air Corps. On 24 December 1943, he received word to board the train to Tuskegee, Alabama to begin aviation cadet training. The first time he was met with blatant discrimination was while traveling to training. Just outside Washington, D.C., he and fellow cadets were forced to move to segregated railroad cars before reaching their destination in Florida.

Captain Dabney was still training when the Allies landed at Normandy and a month after the United States forced Japan to surrender by dropping two atomic bombs on the country. In 1945, he graduated from Midland, Texas Army Airfield. He was assigned to the 477th Bombardment Group as a B-25 Bomber Pilot but remained stateside throughout the war. Captain Dabney left the military in 1946.

After the war, Captain Dabney flew Blimps as a Civilian Pilot for the United States Navy. He also returned to his first love, music, joining the Paul Gravelle Jazz Trio as a singer and drummer. On 16 Jul 1965, Captain Dabney married the love of his life, Brenda Herbert.

Captain Dabney completed his education at Rutgers University and took additional courses at Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey). In the late 1960’s, he worked at Camp Kilmer, on the Rutgers Campus, in the Vocational Center. He went on to begin a 23-year career as the Coordinator of Industrial Education with the Mercer County Vocational-Technical School.





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Family was an important element in the Dabney household. Captain Dabney was a basketball coach, softball umpire, and swim time keeper for his children. He especially loved family game night. He spent time golfing, fishing, travelling, gardening, and photography.

Captain Dabney's military education includes: Aviation Cadet Training Program.

Captain Dabney's civilian education includes: Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Captain Dabney's military awards include: Unknown.

Captain Dabney's civic awards and honors include: Hannibal Cox Chapter President; sang with the Corpus Christi Church choir in a pilgrimage to Italy's cathedrals ending at St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, 1997; Willingboro Township honored Willingboro Tuskegee Airmen with an etched marker in Mill Creek Park, Willingboro, NJ, 2008; and Burlington County Military Service Medal, 2014.

Captain Dabney passed away 8 September 2018, at Virtua Memorial Hospital, Mount Holly, NJ. He was 93 years old. His wife of 53 years, Brenda Herbert Dabney passed away 23 January 2020. She was 78 years old. Captain and Mrs. Dabney are survived by daughters, Lisa Dabney, and Denise Stevenson (Ken), and grandchildren Isaiah Youmans, Aleyah Youmans and Joshua Stevenson.

