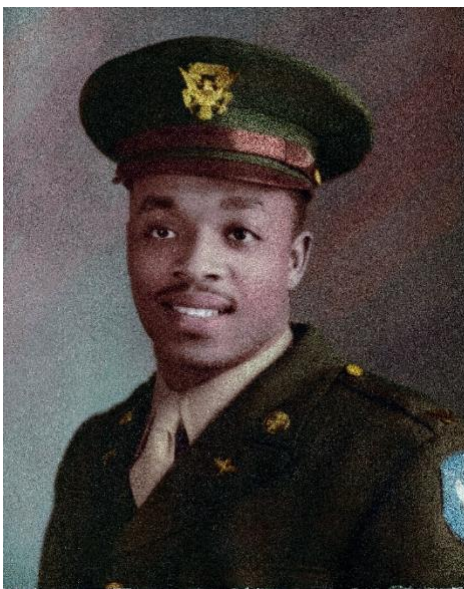


BIOGRAPHY

A DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

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

EDWARD JAMES TALBERT, Jr. (1922 ~ 2019)



2ND Lt Edward J. Talbert, Jr. in 1948

Edward J. Talbert, Jr. was born in Philadelphia, PA on December 30, 1922 to Edward James Talbert, Sr. and Sadie Bell Skinker Talbert. The family moved to Washington, DC in 1923, where his younger sister and brother were born. He graduated from Armstrong Technical High School in 1940, after which he enrolled at Howard University and began ROTC training. While in college, he worked part-time at the War Department from 1941-1943. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943. He trained at Fort Hood (TX) and Keesler Field (MS). During WWII, he was a Cargo Checker with the 433rd Port Company in Cardiff, Wales. He attended Army Information Education Staff School in Swinden, England and Biarritz American University in Biarritz, France. He also guarded German prisoners of war in Karlsruhe, Germany. Ed was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army in 1946.

Later that same year, he returned to Howard University as a History major and enrolled in the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (AROTC), later known as the Air Force ROTC (Det. 130).



Col. Davis welcomes the first (6) Howard University AROTC graduate Officers to Lockbourne

Graduating in 1948 at the rank of 2nd Lieutenant, he was assigned along with five other Howard University classmates to the 332nd Fighter Wing at Lockbourne AAB in Columbus, Ohio, commanded by Col. B.O. Davis, Jr. He served as Base Supply Officer and was the last officer on the base, turning the keys of the formerly segregated (and now deactivated) Lockbourne Air Force Base to the Air National Guard on July 1, 1950. Ed was honorably discharged from the U.S. Air Force on July 15, 1950.

He returned to Washington, DC to rejoin his new bride Jane Martin Talbert and attended Miner Teachers College, graduating in 1953 with a B.S. degree in Elementary Education. During this time, he was employed part-time by the District of Columbia Public Library System. He and Jane moved to Suitland, MD in 1957, and daughter Patricia was born in 1959. He enjoyed library work so much that he decided to devote his career to this pursuit.

During his tenure in the DC Public Library System, Ed was responsible for managing the opening of several new libraries in the Washington, DC area. He also earned his Master of Library Science degree at Catholic University in 1962. In 1968, he was hired by the Prince George's County (MD) Memorial Library System. While there, he continued to manage branches and supervise the openings of new libraries. He oversaw the renovations of several existing libraries and became Area Branch Librarian at the Hyattsville Library in Maryland. He had the distinction of being the first African American Area Branch Librarian in both the District of Columbia and Prince George's County Library systems.

Ed also served in the USAF Reserve from 1962-1982, retiring at the rank of Major. He retired from his library career in 1984 and enjoyed traveling extensively and spending time at the campsite he and Jane purchased on Chincoteague Bay, Virginia in 1974. He also volunteered with the "Friends of the Library" at the Spauldings Branch Library in District Heights, MD, serving as its long-time President.

His only grandchild Courtney was born to daughter Patricia and her husband Christopher Smith in 1990. Ed was happily devoted to Courtney, traveling an hour each way to serve as her daily caregiver until she began nursery school. He spent his final years participating in many events sponsored by the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. He often recounted his busy days as a Base Supply Officer under Col. Davis.: "My job was really to solve any and all problems before he ever learned of them". Ed was presented his Tuskegee Airmen Congressional Gold Medal Replica by Maryland U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen in a special ceremony in 2013. Ed died on December 9, 2019, having celebrated his 70th wedding anniversary in April of that year. He credited his long, happy life to his loving family and being blessed by the Lord. He was a 50-year member of Allen Chapel AME Church in Washington, DC.

MILITARY LOCATIONS / ASSIGNMENTS

Ft, Hood, TX
Keesler Field, MS
Cardiff, Wales (*433rd Port Company*)
Swinden, ENGLAND
Biarritz, FRANCE
Lockbourne Army Air Base, Columbus, Ohio
(*332nd Fighter Wing*)
Bolling AFB (U.S. Air Force Reserve)

CAMPAIGNS / WARS

WW II

CIVILIAN AWARDS / HONORS

Congressional Gold Medal (awarded collectively)



Edward J. Talbert, Jr. at age 91