



# BIOGRAPHY

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## A DOCUMENTED ORIGINAL TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

Tuskegee Airmen Inc. Public Relations, P.O. Box 830060 Tuskegee, AL 36083

## **Major James J. Johns**

1917 – 1989



James J. Johns was born in Springfield, Tennessee, on October 12, 1917. He was raised in Alliance Ohio and attended Central State University (HBCU) in Xenia, Ohio, where he met and married his college sweetheart Lillian Saxon. While at CSU, he applied for (Officer Candidate School) and was denied three times with no explanation. Eleanor Roosevelt, the First Lady, was an advocate for minorities, so he traveled to Washington D.C. to plead his case there. After meeting with her, she promised that she would make some inquiries. When he returned to CSU, he had been accepted and entered OCS on April 8, 1942.

LT Johns was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant on April 16, 1943, and held the position of Adjutant to the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron in the 332-Fighter Group stationed at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama. In 1946, the 99th Fighter Squadron moved from Tuskegee to Lockbourne Air Base, Columbus, Ohio, where he continued serving as Adjutant of the 99th Fighter Squadron. He achieved the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant on July 26, 1944. On December 13, 1946, his wife Lillian gave birth to their first child, Sandra Elain Johns. He was promoted to Captain on September 12, 1947.

Captain Johns continued serving as Adjutant of the 99th Fighter Squadron until September 1949. In May of 1950, he was stationed at Clark Air Force Base where he served as a Finance Officer. On December 7, 1951, his wife Lillian gave birth to twins, Janet Marie, and James Johns II. He achieved the rank of Major on June 19, 1952. Later that month, Major Johns returned to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio and served in the Finance Division of HQ 2750<sup>th</sup> Air Base Wing. On August 1, 1956, he was stationed at the 51<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing at Naha Air Base, Okinawa and served for 3 years as its Wing Disbursing Officer. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1959, he returned to the United States and was stationed at the Air Force's Finance and Accounting Center in Denver, Colorado where he retired on March 31, 1963.

After retiring from the Air Force, Mr. James J. Johns, Jr. started a business called 3-J Enterprises in Denver's historic Five Points neighborhood. He passed away on June 7, 1989.

