



*Man's Flight
Through Life Is
Sustained By The
Power Of His
Knowledge*

TO HONOR

ALEXANDER JEFFERSON

2ND LT. ARMY AIR CORPS

Stalag Luft III POW #7538, Alexander "Alex" Jefferson passed the Army Air Corps written exam but failed the physical exam, ½ pound too light to meet the 117-pound requirement. Told to go downstairs and drink lots of water and eat bananas, he was re-weighed registering at 117 pound even. In 1943, he left for training, counting himself as one who boldly flew under the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit, Michigan, and graduated to become one of what his Luftwaffe opponents called the "Blackbird Men." A Tuskegee Airman in the 332nd Fighter Group, Jefferson was shot down on his 19th mission on August 12, 1944, strafing and knocking down radar targets at Toulon Harbor in support of Operation Dragoon. Thrown out at eight hundred feet, his chute opened, and he landed in the middle of the 20 mm gun crew that shot him down. He was reported as KIA, but as a POW later marched 52 miles to Spremberg, Germany, in the winter of 1945, to board a 40&8 box car, arriving at Stalag VII-A in Moosburg, Germany, where he was liberated. Despite his love of country, Jefferson fought the "Double V Campaign" as his fellow Tuskegee Airmen had done, signifying their fight on two fronts--one, against the racism of the Axis powers and secondly against the segregation and discrimination of their own country. He is the author of Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free, The Memoirs of a Tuskegee Airman.

By: An Appreciative Stalag Luft III Community