



Colonel George S. "Spanky" Roberts USAF (Ret.)

1918-1984

BIOGRAPHY

Born in London, West Virginia, September 24, 1918.

Elementary and high school in Fairmont, W.Va.,
graduating in 1934 at age 15.

Graduated from W. Va. State College at age 18 with a BS Degree in Mechanic Arts
in 1938. Began CPT* training in 1939 at W. Va. State.

Entered military service as first Negro Aviation Cadet in July, 1941.

Graduated in first class of five Cadets, March 7, 1942.

Commissioned 2nd Lt., pilot and married Edith McMillan
on March 7, 1942 at Tuskegee Air Field, Alabama.

Duty as Flight Instructor in Advanced Flight Training School.

Appointed Commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, June 1, 1942.

Entered combat in North Africa in May, 1943.

Became Deputy Commander of the 332nd Fighter Group,
later Commander.

Ended World War II with more than 100 missions against the enemy
in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Returned to US in 1945.

**CPT-Civilian Pilot Training*

Following the war, became the senior Air Corps ROTC instructor at Tuskegee
Institute, Alabama. Later became the Dean of the School of Military Science. The
George S. Roberts Squadron, Arnold Air Society, was named in his honor in 1950.

In 1950, reported to Langley Air Force Base as the first Black to command a
racially mixed unit in the Air Force.

Was assigned to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas as a student in the U.S. Army Command
and General Staff College, graduating in 1952 with a Masters' Degree.

Promoted to Colonel, June, 1952.

Qualified in jets after Ft. Leavenworth and reported to Korea in 1953
as full Colonel, commanding the 51st Air Base Group.

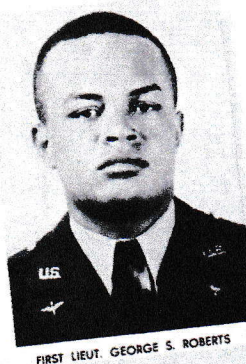
Reported to Chanute AFB, Illinois in January, 1954,
Commander of the Maintenance and Supply Group and simultaneously serving
as Base Director of Materiel.

In 1960, reported to the 313th Air Division on Okinawa
Director of Materiel. This assignment, in addition to the responsibility for all
maintenance, supply, transportation and logistics functions for all Air Force units,
also included the livelihood of 800,000 Okinawans as a side issue.

In 1963, reported to the Air Force Logistics Command at Griffis AFB,
Rome, New York. Responsible for all ground radar in the USAF.
This included BMEWS (Ballistic Missile Early Warning System),
the DEW line, the continental U.S. flight radar and the radar
controlling the Berlin Air Corridors.

In 1965, assigned to McClellan AFB, Sacramento, California to assume
responsibility for the Freedom Fighter (F-104) for the entire Free World. Just
prior to retirement, served as Deputy for Logistics for most of the fighters in Viet
Nam, USAF Space Missiles and overall logistics
for the Pacific Ocean area hours.

Colonel George S. "Spanky" Roberts USAF (Ret.) -continued



*George and Edith Roberts on the campus of
West Virginia State (now University) in 1939.*

Retired in 1968 from McClellan AFB. Decorations include the
Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Force Commendation Medal with four
Oak Leaf clusters and two Presidential Unit Citations.
Was a Command Pilot with more than 6000 hours.

Following retirement became affiliated with Wells Fargo Bank
in Sacramento, California. Served as Credit Officer, Training Officer for
the Valley Division and retired as a Personal Banking Officer in 1982.
After retirement from the bank, Col. (Ret.) Roberts served on numerous
boards and committees in the community of Sacramento, California.
He was an Elder in St. Stephens Presbyterian Church, served on various
committees within the Sacramento Presbytery and worked closely with
the Meals A La Car, a community organization providing hot meals to the
elderly and homebound and the "Hipsters," a support group for those
who have hip replacements. He was a co-founder.

Col. (Ret) Roberts died on March 8, 1984 of a heart attack in
Sacramento, CA. He is survived by his wife Edith, one son, three
daughters, two granddaughters, four grandsons and three great-
granddaughters, all in the Sacramento area.

In 1984, the Sacramento Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. was
renamed the GEORGE S. "SPANKY" ROBERTS Chapter in his memory.

In 1985, McClellan AFB honored him by renaming one of the
Base streets ROBERTS AVENUE.

In 1986, Chanute AFB, Illinois also honored Col. (Ret) Roberts by
dedicating a new dormitory in his name. ROBERTS HALL has the capacity
to house a thousand students.

Col. (Ret.) Roberts was a Mason and a Life Member of
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity (1935).

In July, 1999 a memorial bridge was dedicated and named the
GEO. S. "SPANKY" ROBERTS MEMORIAL BRIDGE in Fairmont, W.Va.

On December 17, 2004, the First Flight Society inducted the
Tuskegee Airmen into their Hall of Fame by unveiling a portrait of
Col. (Ret.) Roberts and Gen. B.O. Davis, Jr.

January 1, 2010 – ROSE BOWL PARADE - One of eight picture panels
featured on the West Covina Rose Bowl Float entitled,
"Tuskegee Airmen – A Cut Above."



Commander George S. "Spanky" Roberts