



POSTAL NEWS

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PA Contact: Ray Daiutolo

856.933.6019

raymond.v.daiutolo@usps.gov

National Contact: Mark Saunders

mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

202.268.6524

usps.com/news



Father of Black Aviation Immortalized on Stamp

C. Alfred 'Chief' Anderson: the Tuskegee Airmen's Airman

A high-resolution image of the stamp is available for media use only by emailing mark.r.saunders@usps.gov.

BRYN MAWR, PA — Referred to as the Father of Black Aviation, Chief Flight Instructor of the prestigious Tuskegee Airmen C. Alfred "Chief" Anderson, was immortalized on a stamp today. The dedication ceremony took place in his hometown just northwest of Philadelphia.

Anderson also has been referred to as the Charles Lindbergh of Black Aviation for his record-breaking flights that inspired other African-Americans to become pilots.

As the 15th stamp in the Postal Service's Distinguished American Series, the 70-cent First-Class stamp, available in sets of 20, is good for First-Class Mail weighing up to 2 ounces. Customers may purchase the stamps at usps.com/stamps, at 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), at Post Offices nationwide or at ebay.com/stamps.

"The Postal Service is proud to honor Charles Alfred "Chief" Anderson, a Black aviation pioneer who inspired, motivated and educated thousands of young people in aviation careers, including the famed Tuskegee Airmen of World War II," said U.S. Postal Service Judicial Officer William Campbell in dedicating the stamp whose [father](#) was a decorated Tuskegee Airman who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

"Their accomplishments ranked them as one of the elite fighter groups during the war and their heroism will forever be an important part of our country's history and heritage.

“It all began with the instruction they received from Chief Anderson, an extraordinary teacher who motivated and inspired them to reach their full potential as military aviators. The Airmen’s professionalism and extraordinary effectiveness in combat was, in large part, the catalyst for President Harry Truman’s issuance in 1948 of Executive Order 9981, which desegregated America’s armed forces.”

Joining Campbell in dedicating the stamp was Tuskegee Flight Instructor “Coach” Roscoe Draper who was mentored by Anderson and together taught the Airmen. Other Tuskegee Airmen attending included Val Archer of Stockbridge, GA; Roscoe Brown of Riverdale, NY; Leo Gray of Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Anderson Jefferson of Detroit; Hiram Little of Atlanta; and Theodore Lumpkin, Jr., of Los Angeles. Anderson’s son Charles Alfred Anderson, Jr., of Greensboro, NC; and granddaughter Christina Anderson Augusta, GA, also participated.

“What makes the stamp so meaningful is that it brings my father’s legacy to life,” said Anderson’s youngest son Charles Alfred Anderson, Jr. “It is truly an honor to have him portrayed as the face of the Tuskegee Airmen.”

Illustrator [Sterling Hundley](#) of Richmond, VA, used a combination of acrylic paint, watercolor, and oil to create the stamp art. His portrait of Anderson is based on a photograph from a 1942 yearbook of the Tuskegee Institute’s flight training school in Tuskegee, AL. Hundley added headgear used by pilots in World War II. Art director Phil Jordan of Falls Church, VA, designed the stamp.

The Father of Black Aviation

C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson (1907-1996), traced his fascination with airplanes to his early childhood when he lived with his grandmother in the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton, VA. She was troubled by his habit of running off in search of planes.

After returning to his parents’ home in Bryn Mawr, PA, Anderson pursued his dream of becoming a pilot. Since no flight schools would accept him as a student because of his race, he needed a plane of his own to learn how to fly. Incredibly, he was able to raise \$2,500 from supportive members of his community and bought a used plane. As Anderson later recalled, he learned to fly by reading books, getting some help from a few friendly white pilots, and, in his own words, “fooling around with” the plane. By 1929, he taught himself well enough, against all odds, to obtain a private pilot’s license.

To help him qualify for an air transport, or commercial license, Anderson eventually found an instructor, Ernest Buehl — a recent immigrant from Germany and owner of a flying school near Philadelphia — who was able to refine his techniques and even persuade a federal examiner to let Anderson take the commercial pilot’s test. When Anderson secured the license in 1932, he was the only African-American in the nation qualified to serve as a flight instructor or to fly commercially.

The Charles Lindbergh of Black Aviation

Anderson was soon breaking flight records and inspiring other blacks to become pilots. In 1933, he and Albert E. Forsythe, an African-American physician and Tuskegee Institute alumnus, teamed up to become the first black pilots to complete a round-trip transcontinental flight. With that flight and their goodwill tour to the Caribbean in 1934, they sought to prove to the world the abilities and skills of black aviators. It was this flight that led to Anderson’s being dubbed “The Charles Lindbergh of Black Aviation.”

As part of the publicity campaign for their goodwill flight, Anderson and Forsythe flew to Tuskegee, AL, for a ceremony at Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University), where their plane was christened *The Booker T. Washington*, after the famous black leader who was the first head of the renowned educational institution. Tuskegee provided support for the tour, initiating

the school's public role as a promoter of black aviation.

The Tuskegee Airmen

World War II gave Anderson the opening he needed to make a career in aviation. In 1939, as war erupted in Europe, Congress created the Civilian Pilot Training Program at the urging of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The program provided funding to train tens of thousands of young people who could be transitioned to military service in the event of war. A provision in the legislation permitted civilian flight training for blacks, a significant step toward the long-range goal of opening up the elite, all-white Army Air Corps to qualified black applicants.

Tuskegee Institute won a government contract to establish a Civilian Pilot Training Program and named Anderson chief flight instructor soon after hiring him in 1940. To those who learned their piloting skills in the program, he was affectionately known as "Chief."

Tuskegee's subsequent role in training the nation's first African-American military pilots began in January of 1941, the year leading up to the country's entry into World War II. The War Department announced plans to create a "Negro pursuit squadron" that would be trained at Tuskegee. In March, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, a champion of equal opportunity, came to the rented airfield Tuskegee was using for flight instruction and was introduced to Anderson. He later recalled her saying that everybody told her blacks couldn't fly. "I'm going up with you," she told him, "to find out for sure." After Anderson gave her an aerial tour of the campus and surrounding area, she announced, "Well, you can fly all right." A widely publicized photograph of the smiling pair in the cockpit of a Piper Cub sent a powerful message about the First Lady's support of black aviators.

Soon after her flight, Roosevelt participated in the decision of the Rosenwald Fund — of which she served as a trustee — to finance the construction of Tuskegee Institute's own airfield, Moton Field, for a primary flying school. Under a contract with the War Department, the flying school would conduct the first phase of pilot training for black aviation cadets. Construction also began in the summer of 1941 on the Tuskegee Army Air Field, the military airfield where graduates of the primary flying school moved on to complete basic and advanced military flight training.

The War Department's plans for a black pursuit squadron took shape when ground crews of the 99th Pursuit Squadron (later renamed the 99th Fighter Squadron) began their training in March 1941. The first class of black pilots graduated in March 1942, and soon thereafter the nation's first all-black military aviation unit became fully manned. In 1943, the 99th of the U.S. Army Air Forces began combat operations in North Africa. Members— along with members of several other all-black flying units whose pilots began their training under Anderson at Moton Field — are now commonly known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

During the war, the Tuskegee Airmen escorted heavy bombers on hundreds of missions in the European theater. They flew thousands of sorties, destroyed more than a hundred German aircraft, and received scores of Distinguished Flying Crosses. Their professionalism and effectiveness in combat was a significant reason that in 1949 the newly independent U.S. Air Force became the nation's first armed service to desegregate.

For the rest of his life after the war, Anderson pursued his passion for flying and for teaching others to fly. In 1967, he helped organize [Negro Airmen International](#) to encourage interest in aviation among African-American youth. In 1996, the "father of black aviation," as Anderson is often called, died at his home in Tuskegee at age 89.

His granddaughter Christina established the C. Alfred "Chief" Anderson Legacy foundation, [chiefanderson.com](#). The foundation's mission is to share and expose Anderson's legacy through speaking events, a traveling museum and through scholarships presented to deserving youth pursuing education and/or careers in aviation.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at local Post Offices, at usps.com/stamps or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

C. Alfred "Chief" Anderson Stamp
16 N. Bryn Mawr Ave.
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, there is a 5-cent charge per postmark. All orders must be postmarked by May 13, 2014.

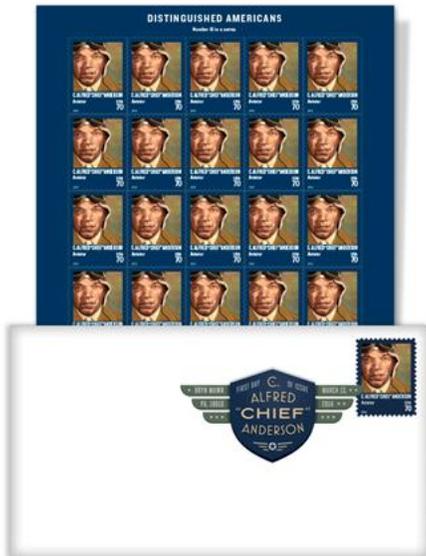
Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service
Catalog Request
PO Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are seven philatelic products available for this stamp issue:
117106, Press Sheet w/Die Cuts, \$112.00 (print quantity of 1,000).
117108, Press Sheet w/o Die Cuts, \$112.00 (print quantity of 1,000).



117110, Keepsake (Pane of 20, 1 DCP), \$15.95.



117116, First-Day Cover, \$1.14.



117121, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.85.

117131, Stamp Deck Card, \$0.95.

117132, Stamp Deck Card w/ Digital Color Postmark, \$2.20.

Customers may view the C. Alfred “Chief” Anderson stamp, as well as many of this year’s other stamps, on Facebook at [facebook.com/USPSStamps](https://www.facebook.com/USPSStamps), on Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website uspsstamps.com, the Postal Service’s online site for information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

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