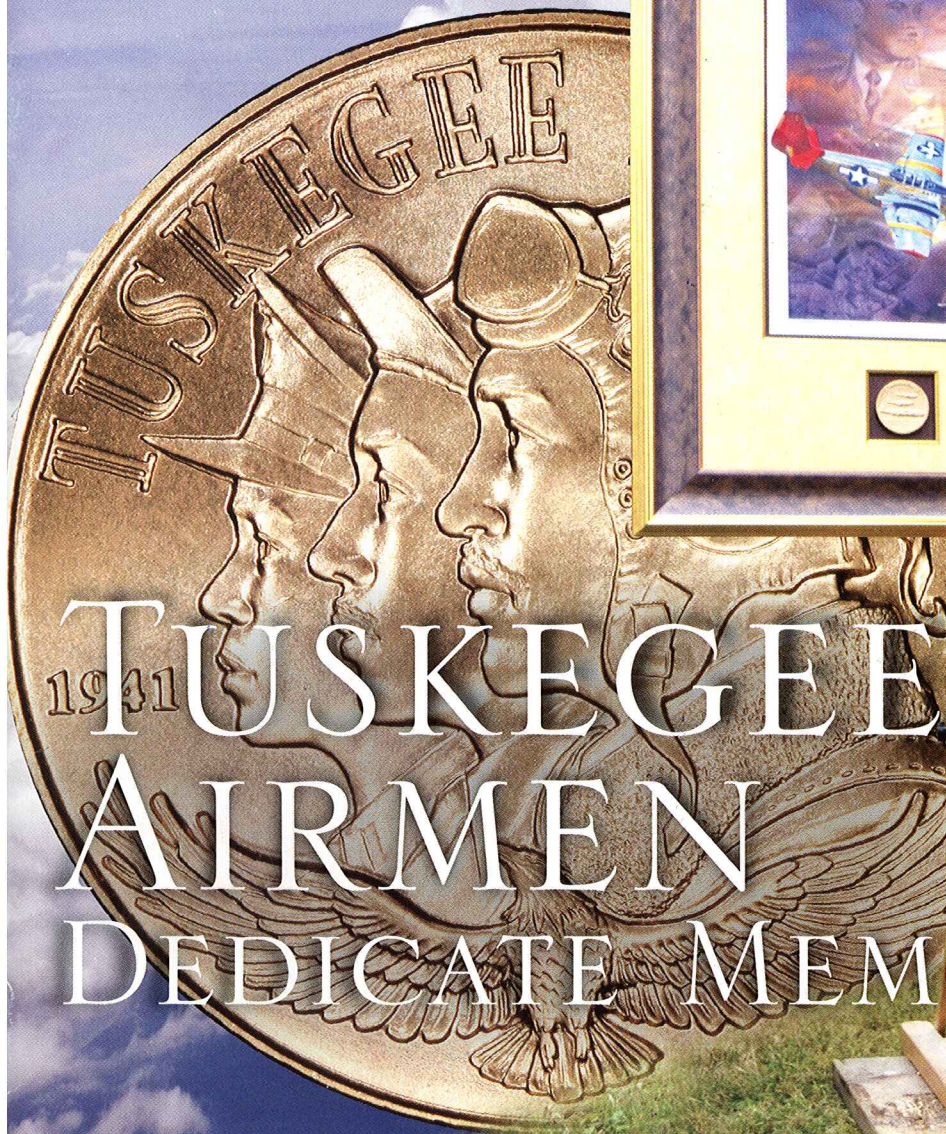


# iN Sewickley Area

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## TUSKEGEE AIRMEN DEDICATE MEMORIAL

UPMC Today Inside



*"It has been great witnessing today's groundbreaking. This is for all of the valiant men that overcame adversity with their tenacity and spirit."*

—Sewickley Mayor, Brian Jeffe

# GROUNDBREAKING FOR TUSKEGEE AIRMEN MEMORIAL AT SEWICKLEY CEMETERY

## Western Pennsylvania Tuskegee Airmen Honored For Their Courageous Service in World War II

By Kathy Rudolph

**G**roundbreaking for a powerful, mixed media monument to honor the more than 84 Tuskegee Airmen; bombardiers, pilots, navigators and support staff from the Western Pennsylvania Area who fought for our country in World War II took place at Sewickley Cemetery.

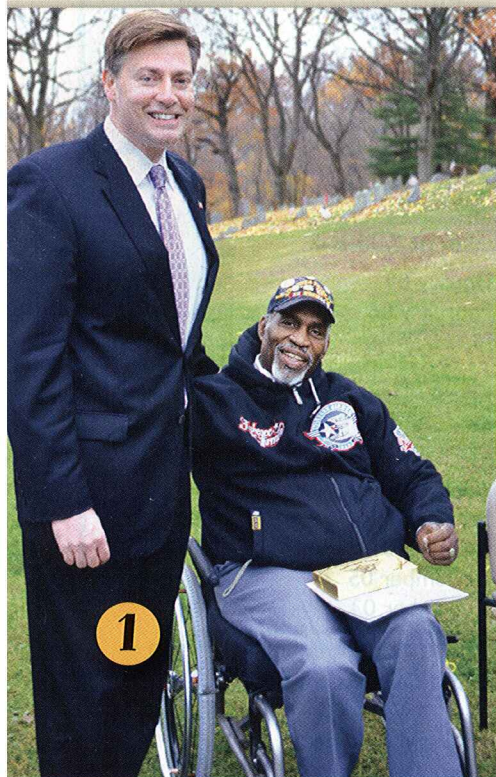
"Sewickley was chosen for the memorial because it is a midpoint in the memorial project's definition of the Western Pennsylvania region," said Regis Bobonis, Sr., Senior Project Manager of the Tuskegee Memorial Project of Greater Pittsburgh. "The Northern boundary is Erie and the Southern is London, WV which was the birthplace of Col. George Spanky Roberts, one of the Tuskegee combat pilots who graduated high school at the age of 15 with an IQ of genius. Seven Tuskegee Airmen came from Sewickley; five became pilots and four saw combat in North Africa and Italy."

Honored Veterans participating in the groundbreaking featured Tuskegee Airman, Lt. Harry

Lanauze, Honorary Tuskegee Airman, Retired Sr. Master Sergeant Timothy McCray and Buffalo Soldier, Lt. Col. George Charleton, Jr. Senator Jason Altmire, County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Sewickley Mayor, Brian Jeffe were also present to pay tribute.

"It's long overdue," said Lt. Harry Lanauze, a McKeesport physician. "The Tuskegee Airmen were one of the first to break the outstanding prejudices. We were a big, brotherly group of black personnel that stuck together."

The history of the Tuskegee Airmen goes back to 1940 when African Americans were not given the same rights and opportunities in the U.S. Armed Forces based on their race and were only able to perform labor and support positions. After an experiment by the U.S. Armed Forces that debunked this falsehood, the military chose Tuskegee Institute in Alabama to train African American pilots. Known as the "Tuskegee Airmen," they went on to fight in World War II and not only succeeded in helping to win the war but



1. Senator Jason Altmire, Stephen Price, President of Pittsburgh Black Vietnam Era Veterans 2. The Tuskegee Airman Memorial 3. Terry Bradford, Project Spokesperson, Lt. Col. George Charleton, Jr. 4. Regis Bobonis, Sr., Senior Project Manager of the Tuskegee Memorial Project of Greater Pittsburgh, Lt. Harry Lanauze, Tuskegee Airman 5. Sewickley Mayor Brian F. Jeffe







assisted in full integration of the U.S. Armed Forces.

“We are excited about the project,” said Mayor Jeffe, when asked about the memorial. “It has been great witnessing today’s groundbreaking. This is for all of the valiant men that overcame adversity with their tenacity and spirit. It is a historic marker that will last forever.”

The peaceful setting of Sewickley Cemetery and home to the memorial will include two granite 7 ft. by 3 ft. ebony granite towers that will display all of the Tuskegee Airmen’s names. It will also contain a 10 ft. by 8 ½ ft. white monument with the striking focal point of a 7 ft. by 5 ft. reproduction of an original painting depicting a P-51 warplane, piloted by a

*Continued on page 34*

To find out how you can help or to learn more about the Tuskegee Memorial, please visit their website at [www.tuskegeememorialpittsburgh.org](http://www.tuskegeememorialpittsburgh.org).



Retired Air Force Senior Master Sergeant Timothy McCray, Honary Tuskegee Airman







*“I wanted to capture the spirit, victories and defeats of The Tuskegee Airmen and the insurmountable challenges that they faced.”*  
 —Artist, Ray Simon

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Tuskegee Airman, shooting down an enemy aircraft on the Austrian border.

The original painting was unveiled by the artist, Ray Simon at the groundbreaking. “I wanted to capture the spirit, victories and defeats of The Tuskegee Airmen and the insurmountable challenges that they faced,” said Simon. “Something that will continue to tell a story long after we’re gone.”

The construction of the memorial will continue on March 7th, which is the anniversary of the graduation of the first five pilots in the Tuskegee program. \$178,000 is still needed of the \$250,000 budget before the work can begin.



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6. Ray Simon with his painting 7. Terry Bradford 8. Stephen Price and Lt. Col. George Charleton, Jr. 9. Lt. Harry Lanauze, Tuskegee Airman and Retired Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Timothy McCray



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