

Palmer of Tuskegee Airmen dead at age 87

by UPI

INDIANAPOLIS -- Walter Palmer, one of the Tuskegee Airmen from World War II, has died in Indianapolis at the age of 87, his daughter says.

Janice Carter said her father, who flew a P-51 Mustang dubbed "the Duchess" in honor of his wife during World War II, was proud to serve in the famed military group of black fighter pilots, The Indianapolis Star said Monday.

"He was very proud of his service to his country," Carter said of Palmer, who died Saturday of stomach cancer.

While serving in the Tuskegee 99th Fighter Group, Palmer flew 158 missions in "the Duchess" above Germany and Italy.

During their World War II service, the Tuskegee Airmen were credited with downing more than 100 enemy airplanes while never losing a bomber they escorted.

Carter said despite the group's successes during the war, its members were never fully embraced by U.S. society due to their race.

"They weren't allowed to march in any of the military parades," said Carter, who survives Palmer along with four children, 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. "It was just a different time back then with so much segregation."

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