

DEDICATION CEREMONY

CHIEF ELMER WILLIAM “BILL” ROSS FIRE STATION 2



August 2, 2025

Bldg. **4017**

5144 Vincent Street
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH

CEREMONY

WELCOME REMARKS

NATIONAL ANTHEM

INVOCATION

REMARKS BY
Colonel Dustin Richards

REMARKS BY
Congressman Mike Turner

DEDICATION

REMARKS BY
Mr. Stephen Ross

CLOSING REMARKS



Chief Elmer William "Bill" Ross Fire Station 2

Elmer William Ross was born June 28, 1929 in Dayton, Ohio. He began serving our country when the atomic age and Cold War had just begun. On November 6, 1945, 17-year old Ross, who did not complete high school, joined a segregated Army. In 1946, while serving in Guam, he became a firefighter. Upon his return from overseas, he completed his enlistment with the 332nd Tuskegee Group at Louderback Air Base as a truck driver and was honorably discharged on October 21, 1948 at MacDill AFB. During his service he earned the Good Conduct Medal, World War II Victory Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon, and the Japanese Occupation Medal.

Mr. Ross came back to Dayton and became a hod carrier. In late 1950, he married Glenna M. Hill (on her birthday). They knew each other as kids in Hog Bottom. They were faithful members of the Corinthian Baptist Church; he sang in the choir, and he would later join the Concerned Christian Men's Choir. Elmer was also drummer in the Richard Bright Jazz Quartet.

Elmer took a civil service test in June/July 1959. He passed the exam but there was an ineligibility issue with his application—and his military experience was added to his application leading to new rating making him eligible for the position.

Mr. Ross became a civilian, GS-4 Firefighter Ross on October 19, 1959.

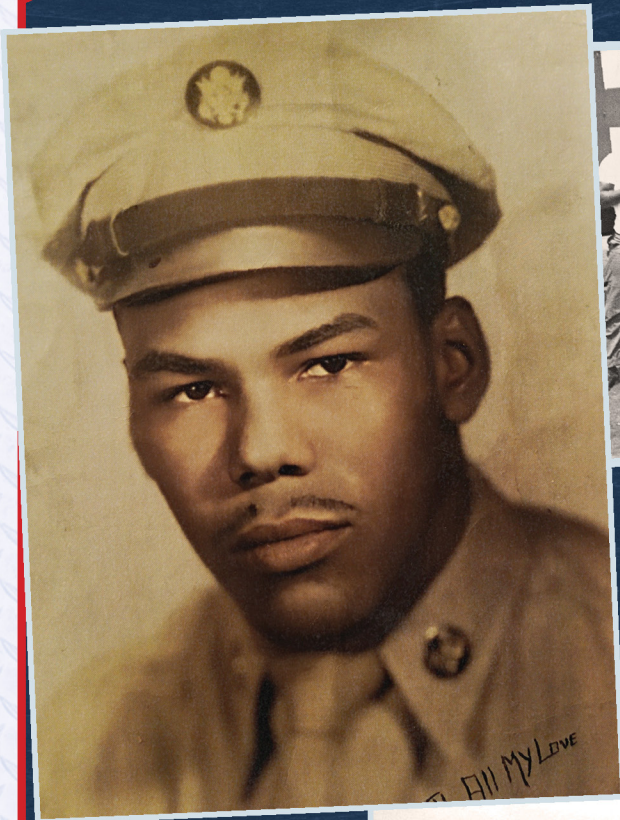
For our department, 1959 marked another significant event, as mentioned in Fire Chief Neil Magnan's History of Firefighting at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Elmer Ross became the first African-American man employed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Fire Department as a civilian firefighter.

For the next several years Firefighter Ross took on the responsibilities of the job, learning the new generation of crash vehicles like the P-2 that were added to the fleet in the 1960s. Our installation saw the expansion of the West Ramp for the 4043rd Strategic Wing's (Strategic Air Command) fleet of B-52 bombers which began what became a 15-year mission at Wright-Patterson AFB. This build-up included a new fire station out of Building 4012. Though the B-52s and SAC have long ago left the West Ramp, our protection has remained as evidenced by this new Fire Station #2 (Bldg. 4017).

Throughout the 1970s he earned accolades for his work, ideas, and volunteerism. In 1976, he became a GS-8 Supervisory Firefighter.

Elmer Ross retired at the end of 1982 as an Assistant Chief of Operations with 23 years of civilian service and 3 years of military service. In his many retirement years, Chief Ross continued to serve his community as a volunteer, was a member of the National Epicureans, Inc. with his wife, and was an active-member of the Ohio Memorial Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman.

Chief Elmer Ross passed away on September 27, 2020 at the age of 91. We honor Chief Ross for his contributions to the Army, the early Air Force, and Wright-Patt Fire Department by dedicating our new Fire Station #2, Bldg. 4017 in his name. Future generations will be inspired to serve their country and become firefighters because of what they will learn about Chief Ross' life and contributions to our nation.



Chief Elmer William "Bill" Ross

