

# Southern Museum of Flight -Tuskegee Airmen Exhibit

If you've been to the Southern Museum of Flight lately and walked into the South Wing, you may have noticed quite a few exciting changes. These changes represent the beginnings of a number of new exhibits developed by the board and staff scheduled for completion over the next several years. The first exhibit completed consists of a diorama display of Tuskegee, Alabama's Moton Field and Tuskegee Army Air Field. This exhibit honors Alabama's famed "Tuskegee Airmen." The 332nd Fighter Group of World War II consisted of Tuskegee pilots trained at Moton Field and Tuskegee Army Air Field in Tuskegee, Alabama.

The exhibit features a number of aircraft representative of the World War II era trainers flown by the Tuskegee Airmen, including a North American AT-6 "Texan," a Vultee BT-13B "Valiant" and a Fairchild PT-19 "Cornell." A montage of larger-than-life photos surrounds the aircraft forming a chronological timeline as a backdrop to the display. A theater lighting system accentuates the aircraft, and visitors find themselves greeted by audio recordings of aircraft flying, engines firing and airmen calling cadence. Professionally designed museum figures, as well as the incorporation of state-of-the-art technology, bring the diorama to life. This not only includes audio and professional lighting technology, but a video display, as well. A large LCD flat-panel monitor keeps visitors engaged in the story represented by this wonderful exhibition. At the touch of a button, visitors continue to watch the story of the Tuskegee Airmen unfold.

A focal point of the exhibit consists of a display case featuring the personal items and belongings of Charles Alfred Anderson, including his trademark sport coat among others. "Chief" Anderson is often regarded as "The Father of Black Aviation." He was selected by Tuskegee Institute to serve as the chief flight instructor. This assignment included the development of a pilot training program. The Southern Museum of Flight is proud and honored to exclusively display these artifacts as part of an aviation exhibit in honor of the Tuskegee Airmen.

With displays complimented by visual and audio technology, this tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen at the Southern Museum of Flight offers something for everyone. The interactive approach in the development of new displays such as this allows visitors to be part of the exhibit. Moreover, the diorama dedicated to the Tuskegee Airmen at the Southern Museum of Flight provides for more than an exhibit. It is a spotlight shining down on a significant period of American history, and this tribute highlights such an extraordinary group of men who continue to provide inspiration for anyone who dares to dream.

