

Freeman Army Air Field History

Freeman Army Air Field was built in just nine months, from May 1942 through February 1943. The land was acquired from 27 area farms, providing room for 413 buildings and four runways, each 5580 feet long and 150 feet wide.

Freeman Field was an advanced training base for cadets who had already completed primary flight training but needed to learn to fly multi-engine aircraft. They would go on to fly bombers and cargo planes, not fighters. At the peak there were about 5000 military personnel stationed here, and approximately 4200 multi-engine pilots trained at Freeman Field. The principal training aircraft was the AT-10 "Wichita" built by Beech Aircraft. There were approximately 250 of the wood and canvas planes at Freeman Field, but none exist today.

The Tuskegee Airmen were briefly stationed here in 1945. Racial strife resulted in their removal; but also led to the integration of the United States Army. There were also WACS (Woman's Auxiliary Corps Service) and WASPs (Women's Air Service Pilots) at Freeman Field. The WASPs did test flying and ferry (transfer) flights so the men could concentrate on flight training and combat.

The Freeman Army Air Field era ended in 1947 when the entire base was closed and deeded over to the City of Seymour for one dollar. It is now an industrial park and civilian airport.

Visiting the Museum

Admission and Parking: Free.

Hours: Open Saturday mornings 9:00 to noon, except for holiday weekends; other times by appointment. Call the Airport Manager's Office, 812-522-2031, to make an appointment or arrange a free tour. Groups welcome.

Directions: From I-65, go west on Hwy. 50 into the middle of town, turn left on Walnut St. at the hospital, go about 1 mi., then turn right into Freeman Field and follow the signs to the museum.

Donations

The Freeman Army Air Field Museum is a federally recognized 501.c.3 charity. We rely on donations to fund our operation and grow the collection. Items or cash donated to the museum are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donation acknowledgement letters are provided. Please call 812-522-2031 if you have something to donate.



Acknowledgements

The museum could not exist without the continuing support of the Seymour Municipal Airport Authority. We greatly appreciate the assistance of the airport manager and staff.

Seymour, Indiana



Freeman Army Air Field Museum

Located about halfway between Indianapolis, IN, and Louisville, KY. Take Exit 50-B off I-65.

1035 A Ave.
Seymour, IN 47274
812-522-2031

www.freemanfield.org

Freeman Army Air Field Museum

Founded in 1996, the museum tells the story of the Field and its ties to this small Midwestern community through artifacts ranging from vintage uniforms and letters to a 1000 lb. dummy bomb and recovered aircraft parts.



The museum also displays an extensive collection of photographs of the life and activities of the men and women who lived and worked here. There are special displays devoted to the Tuskegee Airmen and to the women who served at Freeman Field as WACS and WASPs. There are also depictions of Seymour's downtown and parks, as they appeared in the WW-II era.

Uniforms and personal items have been loaned or donated by local residents and the cadets who trained here. Detailed scale models depict the types of aircraft



that frequented Freeman Field in the 1940's. Many captured German and Japanese items enhance the collection and allow visitors to visualize the bustle of the war-era training facility.



After World War II the Field served as a Foreign Aircraft Evaluation Center where captured Axis aircraft were reassembled and evaluated. Most of these aircraft were dispersed to other museums around the country, but a few are believed to have been buried in landfill areas on the base. Three separate search and digging efforts have yielded engine, propeller and airplane parts, some of which are on display in the museum. One vivid piece of history is the tail section of a German Focke-Wulf 190, still displaying a faded Swastika.



While at the museum, see the original 1942 Ford/American LaFrance fire truck that was at Freeman Field. It was made functional again in 2008 and now appears in local parades and historic events.



Pilots training at the Field spent many hours in flight simulators known as Link Trainers. Our Link shows how this vital training was conducted.

