

Freeman Field History

Freeman Field was an advanced training base for cadets who had already completed primary flight training. Here they learned to fly multi-engine aircraft and flight solely by reference to instruments. The base was built in just nine months, May 1942 through January 1943. The land was acquired from 27 area farms, providing space for 413 buildings and four runways. After 9 weeks training at Freeman the cadets went to another base and learned to fly bombers and cargo planes, which they then flew in the war. There were about 5000 military personnel stationed here, and approximately 4200 multi-engine pilots were trained. The principal training aircraft was the twin-engine AT-10 "Wichita" built by Beech Aircraft. There were approximately 250 of the wood and canvas planes at Freeman Field, but only one example survives today, at the National Museum of the Air Force.



The Tuskegee Airmen were briefly stationed here in 1945. Racial strife resulted in their removal; but also led to the integration of the US Army. Women's army groups, including WACs, WASPs and WAFS were also at Freeman Field. The WASP and WAFS pilots did test flying and ferry (transfer) flights so the men could concentrate on flight training and combat.

Flight training at Freeman ceased in early 1945 and the base was repurposed as the Foreign Aircraft Evaluation Center. There were 160 captured enemy aircraft here for flight testing and engineering evaluation. Those airplanes eventually went to museums all around the country.

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

Visiting the Museum



Admission & Parking: Free.

Hours: Open Saturdays 10:00 to 1:00, except Christmas and New Years; other times by request. Call 812-271-1821, for details & tours.

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., turn right into Freeman Field and follow Air Museum signs.

Donations

The Freeman Army Airfield Museum is a federally recognized 501.c.3 charity. Items or money donated to the museum are tax deductible. Donation receipts provided. Please call 812-271-1821 if you have something to donate. Our mailing address is PO Box 714, Seymour, IN 47274.

Acknowledgements

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German SA dagger

Seymour, Indiana



Link Trainer (flight simulator) at Freeman Army Airfield Museum

Freeman Army Airfield Museum

Located half way between Indianapolis, IN, & Louisville, KY. Take Exit 50-B off I-65.

1035 A Ave, Seymour, IN 47274
812-271-1821



For more information please visit our website by scanning the QR code at left, or use the address below.

www.freemanarmyairfieldmuseum.org

What's in our museum?

Founded in 1995, the museum tells the story of the airfield and its ties to this small Midwestern community through artifacts ranging from vintage uniforms and letters to a 1000 lb. dummy bomb and recovered enemy aircraft parts. We have an older Link Trainer that has been converted into an interactive children's display



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 1940s.



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 the Foreign Aircraft Evaluation Center. Captured Axis aircraft were shipped here for flight testing and engineering evaluation. When the base closed in 1947 these aircraft were dispersed to other museums around the country. Excess parts were buried here on the airfield and many have been unearthed, 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



Another interesting item is a portion of the engine from a German Bf-109 fighter plane. We add pieces to it as more are discovered.



While at the museum, see the original 1942 Ford/American LaFrance fire truck that was at Freeman Field. Functional since 2008, the truck regularly appears in local parades. Kids love to climb in it and operate the siren.



Pilots training at Freeman Field spent many hours in flight simulators known as Link Trainers. Our Link (see cover photo) shows how this vital training was conducted.

Our museum concentrates on the air war, and especially bomber and transport pilots and their training. However, we do have some firearms that have been donated over the years, which we proudly display.



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, WASPs and WAFS. There are also photos of Seymour's downtown and parks, as they appeared during WW-II.

Please come and see us.