

The Southern Museum of Flight.

The Southern Museum of Flight is located just two blocks east of the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport at 4343 73rd Street North, Birmingham, AL 35203. The Southern Museum of Flight is dedicated to investigating, preserving and promoting the rich stores of Southern Aviation and to providing exciting interactive educational programming for people of all ages. Through collaborative partnerships with the community, the Southern Museum of Flight provides a continuum of exhibitions, displays, and educational services with sincere devotion to cultural and historical literacy.



Founded in 1966, the Southern Museum of Flight is one of the largest aviation museums in the Southeast. The museum's collection includes over 100 aircraft, as well as engines, models, artifacts, photographs and paintings. In addition, the Southern Museum of Flight is home to the Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame with over 70 biographical plaques presenting Alabama Aviation History through collective biography.

National Reconnaissance Office

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For information about the National Reconnaissance Office visit:

<http://www.NRO.gov>

Information about the D-21 Drone may be found on:

<http://www.nro.gov/history/index.html>

and

<http://www.nro.gov/foia/declass/collections.html>

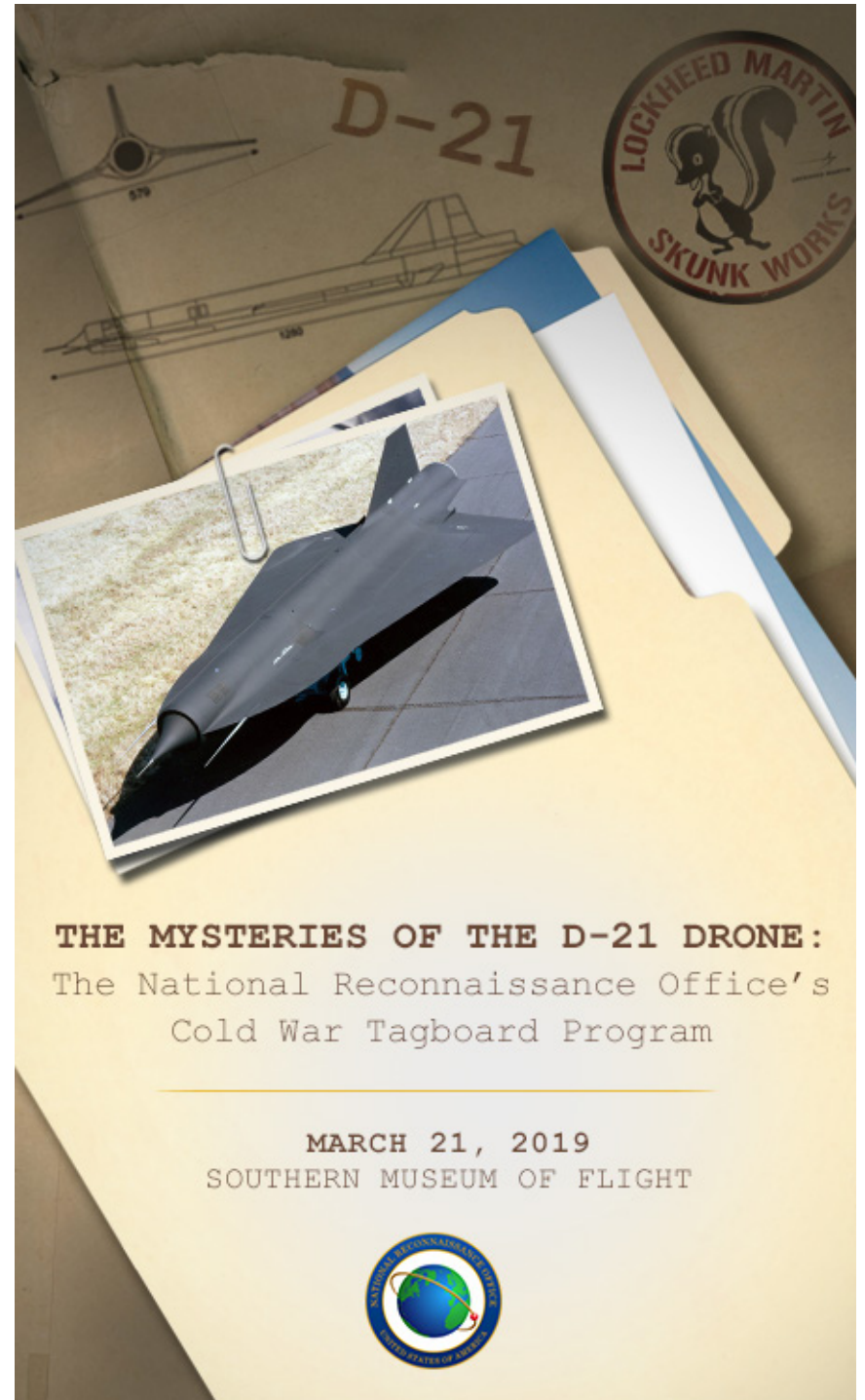
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The Center for the Study of National Reconnaissance (CSNR) is an independent National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) research body reporting to the Director, Business Plans and Operations. The CSNR's primary mission is to advance and shape the Intelligence Community's understanding of the discipline, practice, and history of national reconnaissance. Through evidence-based social scientific and historical research the center makes available information that can provide NRO leadership with the analytic framework and historical context to make effective policy and programmatic decisions. The CSNR accomplishes its mission by chronicling the past, analyzing the present, identifying lessons for the future, and recognizing models of excellence that are timeless.

Contact Information: To contact the CSNR, please phone us at 703-227-9368 or e-mail us at csnr@nro.mil



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF
NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE



THE MYSTERIES OF THE D-21 DRONE: The National Reconnaissance Office's Cold War Tagboard Program

MARCH 21, 2019
SOUTHERN MUSEUM OF FLIGHT



D-21 DRONE

In the 1960s the National Reconnaissance Office's (NRO's) "Program D"—a joint Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and U.S. Air Force (USAF) program office—was developing and experimenting with unpowered reconnaissance aircraft. The D-21 program was an activity from that period that foreshadowed what was to become a proliferation of unpowered aircraft in the 21st century. The D-21 was a high performance, advanced, unpowered reconnaissance system, testing the limits of technology of the time. It initially was carried and launched from a modified A-12 CIA high-performance reconnaissance aircraft and then later from a modified USAF B-52. The D-21 could fly at 90,000 feet and reach a speed of over Mach 3.3 with a range of over 3,000 miles. The NRO terminated the program in July 1971. The D-21 has an amazing story set in the early days of the Cold War when it tested the limits of the technology of its time as it experimented with a way to collect reconnaissance imagery over denied territory.

AGENDA

Introduction:

Dr. Robert A. McDonald

(What is this story of creativity and risk?)

Historical Context:

Dr. James D. Outzen

(How does the D-21 fit into the story of the Cold War?)

Recollections and Lessons:

Mr. Patrick Widlake

(What do we recall, and what did we learn?)

NRO's D-21B Artifact:

Ms. Trisha Aquintey

(What is the story behind #538 and 539?)

New D-21 Secrets Revealed:

Ms. Cynthia Allman

(What has the NRO just declassified?)

A Home for NRO's D-21B Artifact:

Ms. Gloria King

(Why Birmingham?)

Conclusion:

Dr. Robert A. McDonald

(What is the legacy of the D-21?)

PRESENTERS

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