

Home for D-21
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(As prepared)

We at the Center for Study of National Reconnaissance regularly receive queries from museums across the country about our national reconnaissance artifacts. There appears to be high interest in putting these on display, not only at air and space museums, but also at other museums that have an interest in science, history, and intelligence, and this is true both in the US and internationally. We actually have an artifact on display at the Science Museum in London.

So, a natural question is why is this unique and fascinating D-21 artifact finding its display home here in Birmingham, Alabama? I am particularly interested in this question. Alabama is my home state. I never dreamed that I would work for a company that one day would display an artifact in Alabama where I can share the story with my family.

There probably are three reasons why we selected this museum for the D-21 display: first, the role of Alabama in the history of aerospace; second, second, the relationship of the D021 to other displays already in the museum, and third, the CSNR goal to make NRO artifacts available to the public.

First, Alabama has played and continues to play a major role in aerospace.

- In Huntsville, there is Redstone Arsenal, which was headed by Wernher von Braun, the legendary pioneer of rocket technology and space science;
- NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center also is located in Huntsville, and it has played a major role in NASA's mission, including the Apollo moon program and space shuttle;
- In 1903 the Wright brothers established the first civilian flying school in Montgomery.
- A little over 100 miles to the east of Birmingham is where Tuskegee Army Airfield was located, a historic site where the Tuskegee airmen trained for their pioneering contributions during World War II,
- Fort Rucker has the Army Aviation Center and the US Army Aviation Museum
- Auburn University is the home to the nation's oldest continually operated flight school
- Overall, the aerospace industry is one of the largest industrial sectors in Alabama. Some reports suggest that Aerospace accounts for approximately 73,000 direct jobs and a payroll of \$3.66 billion.

Second, The Southern Museum already has a significant exhibit of intelligence-related artwork obtained from the Central Intelligence Agency—some of the artwork is directly related to this D-21 on display. And it has an A-12 in its collection. It's only appropriate to add the D-21.

Third, one of our goals is to make NRO artifacts available to the public in as many venues as possible. The NRO artifacts already have a significant presence in the Midwest at the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, OH; and in the Mideast at Washington, DC's Smithsonian Air & space Museum. The Southern Museum of Flight is one of the largest aviation museums in the Southeast.

So with the importance of aerospace in the heritage of Alabama, the presence of related displays in the museum, and our desire to expand the presence of NRO artifacts at museums outside of

Washington DC and Dayton; isn't this gallery an ideal location to display NRO's D-21? We are pleased to have our D-21 here at the Southern Museum of Flight.