



Hampton

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New Installation ‘NASA: Hampton Takes Flight’ Opens at Hampton History Museum Saturday March 17

Hampton, VA - The story of Hampton’s leading role in aeronautics and space exploration is presented in the exhibit “NASA: Hampton Takes Flight” opening to the public at the Hampton History Museum on Saturday, March 17.

In this update to the museum’s Hampton History Galleries, visitors can experience 100 years of NASA history from its early days as NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics) to the Space Race. The exhibit celebrates the NACA and NASA’s singular history and immeasurable contribution to the Hampton community. This installation features artifacts and images recently acquired from NASA Langley Research Center. This will be the first step in refreshing the museum’s 20th Century Galleries, and accompanies “When the Computer Wore a Skirt: NASA’s Human Computers,” that opened in January 2017.

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The exhibit is being organized by Hampton History Museum curator Allen Hoilman who states, "The age of flight was barely a decade old when Hampton became its epicenter. From perfecting the aerodynamics of biplanes to putting men on the Moon, Hampton's Langley has always been there. NASA changed Hampton economically and culturally. But, Hamptonians like mathematician and aerospace engineer Mary Jackson and Mission Control creator Chris Kraft, changed NASA too."

Artifacts:

Along with NASA images, the exhibition features a number of artifacts including one of the 12-foot long wind tunnel fan blades from The 16-foot Transonic Tunnel, which could produce wind speeds of about 700 miles per hour; wind tunnel test models, including the space shuttle, that were used in research into supersonic flight at Langley; Henry J.R. Reid's "command button," used before cell phones, pagers or hand-held radios, to summon Director Reid at a moment's notice by loudspeaker anywhere on the sprawling campus; and a Friden Mechanical Calculator like those used by "human computers," such as Katherine Johnson and Mary Jackson, to perform their complex calculations.

July 9, 2017 marked the 100th anniversary of the 1917 groundbreaking for construction of the NACA Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory (now NASA Langley Research Center) at the Army's then new Langley Field. Construction of Langley Field actually began in 1917, but the chaos of mobilizing for war in Europe delayed completion of the NACA's facilities for three years. By the end of 1918, the first of the NACA buildings on Langley Field was complete and in operation. In 1920, Langley's first operational wind tunnel laboratory came online. By 1931, NACA Langley was generally acknowledged to be the world's premier aeronautical research establishment. That year, Langley's Full-Scale Tunnel began operations, joining the ingenious Variable-Density Tunnel and Propeller Research Tunnel and completing a set of research facilities that outperformed any other single collection of facilities in the world. Thanks to the reliable data resulting from intelligent use of Langley's unique complex of experimental equipment, American

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aircraft began to dominate the world's airways. In 1958, the NACA was succeeded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Hampton again became the center of the aerospace research universe, with projects Mercury, Gemini and Apollo based at Langley.

The Hampton History Museum is located at 120 Old Hampton Lane in Downtown Hampton. There is plenty of free parking in the garage across from the museum. Open Mon-Sat, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun 1-5 p.m. Closed major holidays. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, active military, active NASA, AAA, children 4-12, free to children under 4. For more information, call 757-727-1102, visit www.HamptonHistoryMuseum.org, or like the Hampton History Museum on Facebook and follow it on Twitter and Instagram.

Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton, with the 344,000 sq. ft. Hampton Roads Convention Center and the award-winning Hampton Coliseum, is located in the center of Coastal Virginia and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement, the site of the first arrival of Africans in English North America, and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, harbor tours and cruises, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.

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