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Commemorative Air Force: Dixie Wing

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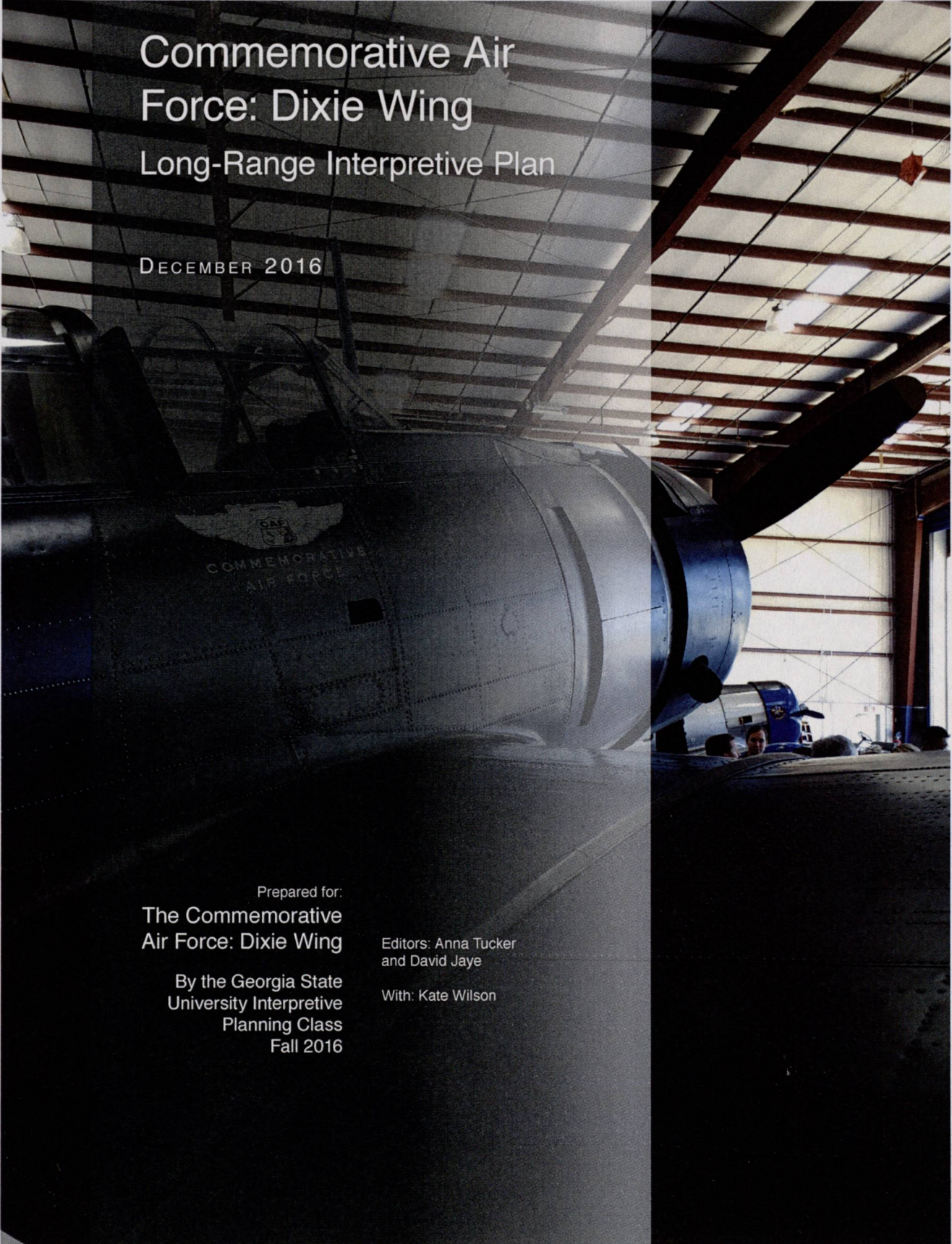
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Commemorative Air Force: Dixie Wing Long-Range Interpretive Plan

DECEMBER 2016

Prepared for:
**The Commemorative
Air Force: Dixie Wing**

By the Georgia State
University Interpretive
Planning Class
Fall 2016

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and David Jaye

With: Kate Wilson

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Introduction

Overview

The Commemorative Air Force

The Commemorative Air Force (CAF), initiated by a small group of aviation enthusiasts who purchased a P-51 Mustang in 1957, commemorates and educates local communities about defining moments in American military aviation history and is supported by more than 13,000 members hailing from all 50 states and over 25 foreign countries.

Founded in 1961 as a 501(c)3 all-volunteer, non-profit organization, the CAF is designated to “acquire, restore and preserve in flying condition a complete collection of combat aircraft which were flown by all military services of the United States and selected aircraft of other nations for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations of Americans.”

Today, the CAF is composed of more than 75 chartered units and a fleet of 171 aircraft representing more than 60 different types, including planes from several foreign countries and military conflicts since World War II. It has been ranked as the oldest and largest “Flying Museum” in the world, and is an advocate in supporting national public education programs.

The CAF Dixie Wing

The Dixie Wing, a 300+ member regional branch of the CAF, formed in 1987 in Peachtree City in metro Atlanta. The unit houses a collection of vintage WWII aircraft and associated aircrafts, and restores and currently flies six WWII and Korean War-era aircraft, including a P-51 Mustang, a FG-1D Corsair, and a rare Douglas SBD Dauntless--one of only three flying today. Along with air shows, ride days, and events and festivals, the Dixie Wing works with area schools, civic organizations, and youth groups to teach the inspiring history of World War II and honor “The Greatest Generation.”

The CAF Dixie Wing is committed to the restoration and preservation of the mighty planes of World War II. In pursuance of this goal, the CAF Dixie Wing perpetuates the spirit and heritage of American military aviation and educates various schools and communities through a combination of public education programs and living history experiences.

The Dixie Wing is uniquely situated and equipped to interpret the United States WWII experience through: a squadron of fully functional period aircraft; a strong support system of members and volunteers; and through thousands of memorabilia, ephemera, and artifacts located on site and at the Commemorative Air Force's home base in Texas.

CAF Goals

The Dixie Wing's objectives and goals are of utmost importance to the following Interpretive Plan. Through a series of conversations and surveys conducted by the IP team, the following objectives were established:

Stated Objectives

According to the Dixie Wing's website, the CAF objectives are:

- To acquire, restore and preserve in flying condition a complete collection of combat aircraft which were flown by all military services of the United States and selected aircraft of other nations for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations of Americans.
- To provide museum buildings for the permanent protection and display of these aircraft as a tribute to the thousands of men and women who built, serviced and flew them.
- To perpetuate in the memory and in the hearts of all Americans the spirit in which these great planes were flown in the defense of our nation.
- To establish an organization having the dedication, enthusiasm and esprit de corps necessary to operate, maintain and preserve these aircraft as symbols of our American military aviation heritage.

Hard Facts

Based on a membership survey conducted October-November 2016 which yielded 42 responses.

300+

Total Members

62.1

Mean Age of Members

<50%

Veterans and/or Retired

37

Age of Youngest Respondent

About the Interpretive Plan



The following Interpretive Plan (IP), coordinated by a Georgia State University Public History graduate consortium in cooperation with Dixie Wing administration and members, seeks the following goals for the Commemorative Air Force Dixie Wing.

Through extensive analysis and evaluation of the CAF's existing organizational structure, resources, processes, and environment, the following goals build upon the numerous opportunities the CAF possesses for a growth-oriented, sustainable model. While proximal and distal goals are incorporated into the structure, the present IP seeks to recommend the following within the parameter of a three- to five-year plan:

- **Evaluation.** Review and establish an evaluation model of the Dixie Wing's membership, resources, management, and opportunities to enable the administration to monitor, review, and implement policies and processes on an ongoing basis through the express input and investment of its constituents. Initial evalu-

ation in this IP is modeled as "Existing Conditions," with templates and suggestions for ongoing evaluation provided in the Appendix.

- **Clarification of Goals.** Through an overarching and comprehensive analysis of the administration and membership's goals, placed in conversation with the institution's resources and opportunities, this IP delineates a series of guiding themes that may be used to craft an expanded educational experience. These guidelines are provided in the "Interpretive Themes" section.
- **Sustainability.** Recommend policies and initiatives the CAF may implement as a sustainable model in the areas of environment, experience, and community. These policies emphasize membership input, resource management, and logistical, fiscal, and administrative structures to not only sustain, but expand, the CAF's audiences and programs.

Institutional History

Commemorative Air Force

In 1957, Lloyd Nolen, a former U.S. Army Air Corps instructor and veteran of World War II, and four of his friends, pooled their money to purchase a P-51 Mustang. Christened Red Nose, the aircraft cost \$12,500 (more than \$100,000 in 2016 currency), and marked the beginning of what would become the Commemorative Air Force.

In the following decade, CAF defined their mission, steadily expanded their operations, and purchased two Grumman F8F Bearcats in 1958. As they acquired more aircraft, Nolen and his colleagues learned that, despite their great historic significance, no one was making any effort to preserve aircraft from World War II. Fulfilling this duty became the then-named Confederate Air Force's primary objective. By 1961, they owned nine aircraft and received a non-profit charter from the state of Texas. In 1968, the CAF moved to a larger space at Rebel Field in Harlingen Texas. At that time, they incorporated medium and heavy bombers into their collection, including the B-25, B-17, and B-24.

In January 2002, the CAF officially changed its name to the Commemorative Air Force. Many in the membership believed that the name adequately reflected the mission of the organization, with its emphasis on preserving aircraft and the history of World War II. Today, the Commemorative Air Force boasts 79 unit locations and preserves 165 aircraft, of which 124 are deemed airworthy.

Dixie Wing

Jake Tryon, a colonel in the CAF, planted the seed for Dixie Wing in fall 1985 when Tryon moved to Atlanta from Ardmore, PA. Tryon attempted to locate a CAF branch in the area, but soon found there was none. He contacted John Hill, another CAF colonel who lived in Atlanta, and learned that previous efforts to establish a CAF branch in the area had been unsuccessful. Tryon asked Hill, "Why don't we try again?" Hill offered to get in touch with some

friends at Eastern Airline and help organize a meeting.

The foundational members of the Dixie Wing held their first meeting at the American Legion building in College Park, GA in December 1986. Twenty-five people attended, and the group elected John Hill as the first Wing Leader the following January. From the start, the members as team-effort model to build Dixie Wing. In his own account, Tryon emphasizes the collective nature of the endeavor:

"Let me get this straight. Let me get this straight. The work it took to get the Dixie Wing started was done by people like John Hill, Mike Conley, Vic Hews, PR Robinson and other CAF members. I was merely the instigator of the process."

"I am proud," he goes on to state, "I am proud to have been a part of this great unit in the CAF since its beginning."

Dixie Wing received a provisional charter from CAF in February 1987. Their first aircraft, a Fairchild PT-26 trainer, arrived September 21, 1987, and was stored in a hangar at South Fulton Airport. In April 1990, Dixie Wing acquired their second plane, a C-45 Expeditor, and a SBD Dauntless dive bomber the following year. By that time, the administration and members established the Dixie Wing as a very active presence in regional air shows and began to cultivate a growing membership base.

In March 1999, Dixie Wing moved to their current location at a hangar at Atlanta Regional Airport-Falcon Field in Peachtree City, GA. Since then, Dixie Wing has continued to thrive as an organization. The national CAF honored the Dixie Wing's successful membership base and expanding resources by assigning to their inaugural plane, Red Nose, to Dixie Wing in 2002. Other planes have been acquired since then, including an F4U Corsair, which arrived in 2012.

Presently, Dixie Wing is the 3rd largest CAF branch and boasts a collection of nine aircraft.

CAF Strategic Objectives

Status of Objectives

At the time of this Interpretive Plan, the Dixie Wing's status of the preceding CAF objectives is as follows:

1. The Dixie Wing continues to expand and preserve its diverse aviation collection and provides numerous opportunities for its community members to interact with and develop an appreciation for these aircraft and the pilots who flew them. However, there are several opportunities to address administrative and financial structures to create a sustainable growth model once the planes are no longer airworthy.
2. The Dixie Wing provides a museum framework with an onsite space and tour opportunities, as well as volunteer personnel including a curator and education manager. With the implementation of a collection policy, museum experience update, and educational guidelines, the present Interpretive Plan allows for the transition to a larger-scale museum model.



3. This objective is one of the strongest components of the Dixie Wing's current offerings. Through several hands-on experiences, the Dixie Wing provides numerous opportunities for its visitors to engage with American military aircraft. This IP seeks to expand this initiative through recommendations of standardized educational programs, museum best practices, and contextualized content.

4. This final objective is of special interest to the Dixie Wing's administration, and the IP seeks to evaluate present opportunities for this CAF unit to establish a growth-oriented model that addresses the numerous fiscal, logistical, and personnel components necessary to establish a dynamic museum and administrative model that meets contemporary challenges of deteriorating aircraft and an aging generation of veterans.

Recommendations Summary

The Recommendations Section of this Interpretive Plan allows for thoughtful consideration of each aspect of the running of the Dixie Wing.

This plan recommends:

- Incorporation and investment of members as volunteer resources to support educational and other interpretative programs. These expanded volunteer opportunities allow engagement of visitors of all ages and provide for the development of relationships within the Peachtree City and state-wide communities.
- Support of the transition of the Dixie Wing to a museum model through the establishment of interpretive themes, educational programs, and institutional branding representative of the resources available on site (both personnel and artifact).
- Creation of several policy and educational campaigns to create a sustainable, growth-oriented administrative and operational structure.

Desired Objectives

Through several conversations with CAF Dixie Wing administrator Jay Bess and members, the following goals were established:

1. Create a museum experience using established resources
2. Establish a realistic, sustainable educational program
3. Explore various audiences locally, regionally, and internationally to expand the Dixie Wing's general awareness
4. Evaluate potential risks and opportunities associated with space, finances, and membership interests

The Dixie Wing is currently in an early stage of development as a museum with diverse focus and programs. While there are opportunities for short-term and a long-term planning, the present IP focuses on the resources currently available to the Dixie Wing.

Foundations



The class attended a tour to begin this project, meeting and speaking with Dixie Wing members to gain insight on the organization.

Background

What is an Interpretive Plan?

The interpretive planning process identifies and defines important visitor experiences and recommends actions and policies to facilitate these experiences. Interpretive planning addresses a variety of aspects to develop the most effective approach to meet the needs of visitors, as well as objectives of the organization's management. The broader goal is to discern how to best utilize existing resources in order to best communicate a message to a targeted audience. An interpretive plan sets definable goals, develops key interpretive themes to shape existing historical content, inventories resources and existing conditions, and offers recommendations for future action. The result provides a framework for implementing content interpretation, education opportunities, and visitor experiences.

Methodology

Planning Committee

A team of graduate students from the Georgia State University Public History Program's Issues and Interpretations in Public History course produced this present Interpretive Plan in coordination with the Dixie Wing administration.

In keeping with best practices within the public history field today, the IP team developed the Interpretive Plan through engagement with key theoretical, methodological, and practical issues related to creating history by, for, and with a wider public audience, including questions of audience, shared space and authority in presenting history; the relationship between history and memory; the politics and ethics of public history; and the applications of history in diverse formats and media. Public history is a distinctive interdisciplinary field that unites theory and practice, values both traditional and non-traditional evidence, pursues a variety of presentation formats, reframes historical questions and narratives, and engages the public in collaborative inquiry and representation. Inherently collaborative, the present Interpretive Plan addresses and expands on an interdisciplinary, flexible approach to the Dixie Wing's numerous resources and opportunities.

The Georgia State University IP team, under the direction of Associate Professor of History Dr. Kathryn Wilson, includes: Jessamy Bleth, Charles Boyd, William Greer, Shakia Guest, David Jaye, Sarah Kirkley, Linlin Lu, Keven Lynch, Scott Morris, Kayla Morris, Sophia Queen, Lynn Robinson, Anna Tucker, Danny Woten, and Shaofan Zhang.

Methods

To evaluate and identify thematic and logistical direction, the IP team conducted the Interpretive Plan through the following methodologies:

1. Background research on the Dixie Wing and the Commemorative Air Force's objectives, history, resources, programs, and facilities as well as demographic studies of the organization's membership and local environment.
2. Met with Dixie Wing's management and volunteers to devise realistic goals for the organization and conducted several site visits, during which volunteers guided the IP team on a tour of Dixie Wing's facilities to help them assess existing resources, comprehend present historical content, and identify the organization's strengths and prospective opportunities.
3. Facilitated one-on-one interviews with key members of the Dixie Wing unit, including the administration, education manager, and curator.
4. Conducted a series of surveys to assess the demographics, interests, and insights of the Dixie Wing's active members.



Display cases in the current museum area of the Dixie Wing feature an assorted array of military paraphenilia.

Strengths and Opportunities

The CAF Dixie Wing's resources, administration, and interpretation highlight several institutional strengths as well as opportunities for growth. The Interpretive Plan took the following into consideration in its formulation of existing conditions and recommendations.

Strengths

- A dedicated and skilled administration and membership corps
- Numerous content-based resources, including airplanes, artifacts, and members with deep institutional and historical knowledge
- Third-largest "warbird collection" among all 75 CAF units
- Dedicated physical space and facilities
- Institutional support from the CAF

Opportunities

- Establish museum-grade exhibitions and educational programs
- Emphasize new historical subjects (including women and the home front)
- Expand membership numbers and involvement to address volunteer-only workbase
- Establish forums for membership communication and decision-making
- Seek expanded collaboration with external groups
- Increase regional visibility and institutional branding
- Identify additional funding sources
- Address geographical challenges in location

Interpretive Themes



The Commemorative Air Force Dixie Wing presents an exceptional opportunity to explore the voices, experiences, and social and international complexities of World War II. As the only flying museum located in the proximity of the city of Atlanta, the CAF Dixie Wing is a remarkable place to explore war memorial from the perspectives of individual experiences on the home-front and abroad, especially in connection with the stories of flight. There are several potential interpretive themes that explore these complexities and stories through the history of the World War II, including History Takes Flight, Experience of Total War, and Stewards of Memory, as explored below.

Throughout these themes, the personal, local voice is emphasized: it is not only the planes that create interest

and investment in World War II history, but also the lives, voices, and experiences of the pilots who flew them; the maintenance workers who maintained them; and the CAF members who preserve their memory that constitute the meaning and diversity of this extraordinary history.

The first theme for the CAF Dixie Wing to explore is the stories of flights by combining several historical narratives: the personal experiences of flights on the home-front and abroad, the influence of places on shaping people's memories of air fight and wartime mobilization, and the ways of wartime efforts dramatically influencing the development of aviation. The second thematic interpretation is the historical effects of the Second World War at the home-front from the perspectives of economics, eth-

nicity, gender, and social mobilization. It also displays the interactive relations between the home-front efforts and the abroad participation by exhibiting the impact of these dynamic, personal connections on World War II. These interpretations based on the individual and collective memories of war lead to the third thematic interpretation

Implementing Interpretive Themes

These interpretive themes may be applied to curatorial, educational, and programmatic initiatives, as noted in the IP's "Recommendations," as well as providing a flexible framework through which the Dixie Wing's numerous artifacts, narratives, and institutional identity may be interpreted. The interpretive themes, developed through

which focuses on responding to these significant issues: how people's memories shaped the historical narratives of World War II, in what ways that people's memories of war were displayed, and how memory is transmitted in the CAF Dixie Wing.

careful analysis of the Dixie Wing's resources as well as the narrative direction of the Commemorative Air Force, allow a clarification of goals and objectives when choosing accession policy, event programming, and partner collaboration.



History Takes Flight

Each plane tells a story of World War II. Through studying the people, places, and planes involved in World War II aviation, we may understand concepts of geography, memory, and experience.



Experience of Total War

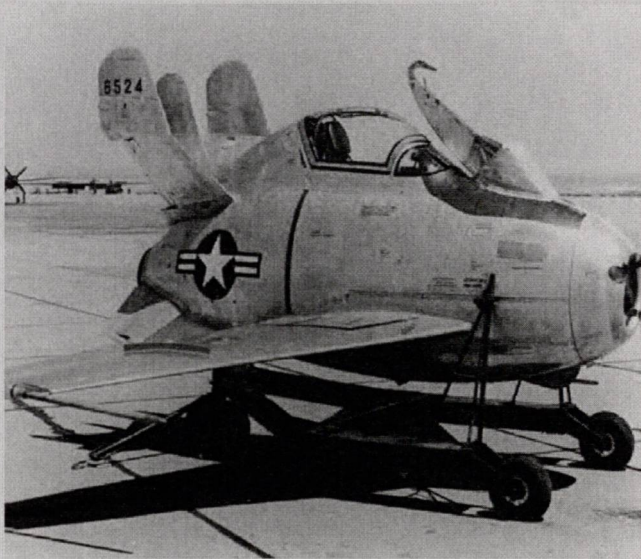
During World War II, the United States experienced total war at home and abroad.



Stewards of Memory

The CAF Dixie Wing is a steward of memory, and simultaneously derives benefit from and contributes to public memory surrounding World War II and the United States' military services.

Interpretive Theme I: History Takes Flight

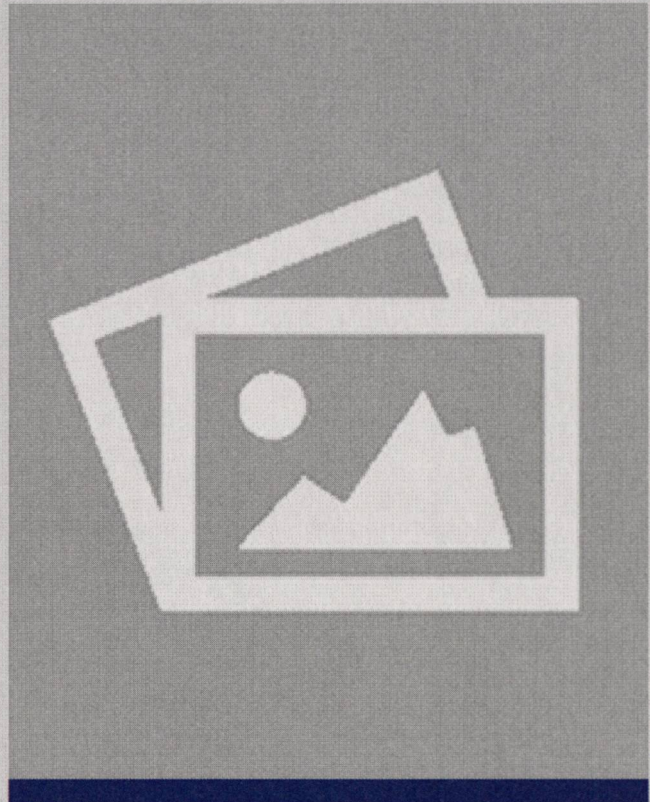


Flight represents multiple modes of thought, including movement and travel. Through an exploration of the vast and diverse impact of aviation – and the aviators who built, flew, and maintained the planes – we may experience the elevation of their personal experiences in the corresponding elevation of the planes' flight as exhibited at the CAF Dixie Wing.

Spaces and Places

Planes took people far beyond their homes, mobilizing thousands of men and women physically and ideologically. By tying the personal experiences of the pilots who flew the planes exhibited at CAF through oral histories, contextualized artifacts, and guided tours, visitors to CAF Dixie Wing learn what was happening on the home-front and abroad – and the planes that connected these various points. An emphasis on geography, flight paths, and the stages of World War II may be guiding principles alongside the personal items and physical planes rotated at CAF Dixie Wing.

This theme may also help expand the CAF's connections with local organizations that have connections to these stories, including the Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated (TAI).



Faces of Flight

Different voices had different roles in the war effort: from young bomber pilots to aircraft carriers and women who tested the planes, the planes represented multiple individual experiences. By expanding on the social and cultural histories framing the Dixie Wing's planes, visitors may explore larger themes of civil rights and the physical experience of flight. For example, the Dixie Wing's "Old Red Nose" P-51 Mustang, used by the Tuskegee Airmen who gave their planes the notable "red nose" and "red tail," may be used to discuss the roles and experience of African Americans during World War II, as well as the role of the plane in training runs by the United States Army Air Force.

Interpretive Theme II: Experience of Total War

Within the United States, economic and social forces shifted to support the war effort, creating a “total war” experience. This shift was evident in daily life, ranging from toys used by children, recipes and scrapbooks of the women left behind, and within printed media of the era. Through exploring the materials, industrialization, and experiences of this “total war,” Dixie Wing may explore the personal and extraordinarily broad impact of World War II on individuals of this era.

Material Culture of War

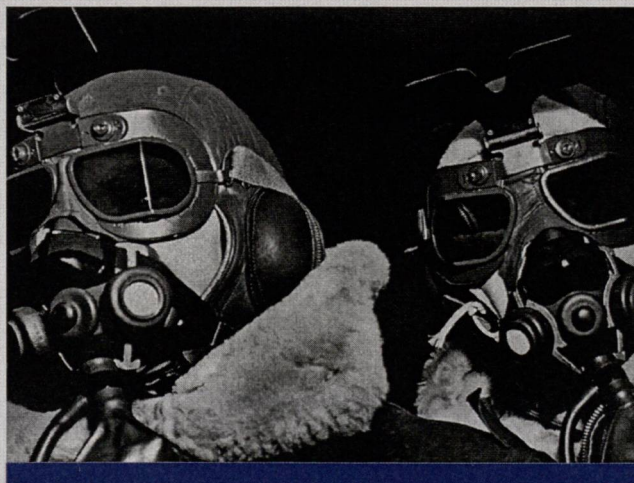
During the war, the government distributed ration books in to minimize the amount of food used by civilians. This rationing allowed food to be sent to soldiers overseas, as well as conserving the workforce that may have been used for agricultural labor. The rationing resulted in the spread of “victory gardens,” as well as the proliferation of new recipes which could be made using newly available materials. These home-front efforts, well documented and represented in the Dixie Wing’s current collection, may be explored through exhibition thematics and educational programming.

Propaganda circulated widely in American culture during this time period. Whether galvanizing support for the war effort or broadly influencing public opinion to rationing and bond initiatives, propaganda existed in privately published materials as well as government publications, comic books, movies, board games, and even toys. Exploration of propaganda provides opportunities to discuss communication networks, ethnic stereotyping, and art and culture across a variety of media.

Sinews of War

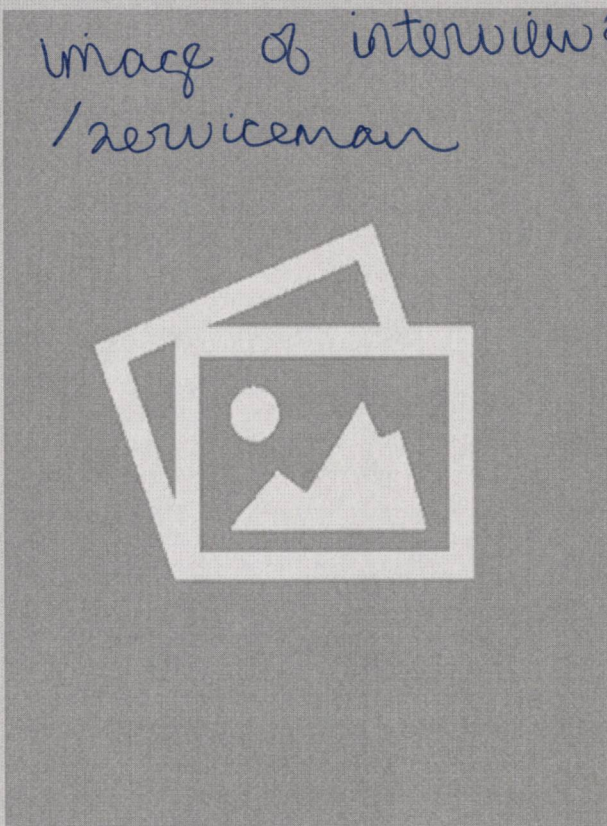
Industrial mobilization was key to Allied success in the World War II. For the first time, women flooded the workforce to take jobs left by those who served. Many minorities also served as industrial workers in order to support the cause. The effect of industrialization was not limited to the factories and their employees, however; the need for materials such as silk, metal, rubber, and even dye, changed American consumerism for the totality of American involvement in the war. Conservation of these materials was a useful marketing tool for companies, and was an easy way for civilians to support the troops.

This mass industrialization also provided the country with much needed economic stimulation, broadening the available jobs and giving civilians the opportunity to invest wholeheartedly in their government in the form of war bonds.



Voices of War

Total war had other observable effects in the wider world, including the United States Selective Training and Service Act of 1940. This act ensured that many young men went into training before the United States officially declared war. Outside of the draft, many civilians entered the war before this date, including the Flying Tigers, who trained in Burma prior to official US entry.



1. Many pilots in the military were very young when they began their service. Their stories of service, highlighted through oral histories and personal contextualization of the Dixie Wing's collection, could provide expanded perspective to young people who visit the CAF's museum.
2. Though military mobilization began before the US officially entered the war, it was still a long process and involved several international partners. The CAF currently holds many artifacts, including planes, which elucidate this narrative. Mobilization included the training of hundreds of thousands of young Americans on the homefront as well as overseas. Many young American pilots trained in the Royal Air Force of Great Britain, which at the time was considered the last vanguard against a Nazi Europe. This theme provides the space to discuss international relations within the context of the CAF's planes.
3. Marginalized groups encountered World War II within an ongoing, unequal system of access and rights. While African-Americans servicepersons, including the Tuskegee Airmen, are the best known group of people who negotiated civil rights during and after the war, other marginalized groups, including women, immigrants, Japanese Americans, and colonial subjects of the United States demonstrated their dedication to the US through military service. Through participation and support of traveling exhibitions provided by the CAF's national branch, the Dixie Wing may explore these diverse experiences of "total war."

Interpretive Theme III: Stewards of Memory



Lt Col Dick Cole, sole surviving member of the 1942 Doolittle Raid shares a photo opportunity with Col Dave Porter at 2016 Atlanta Warbird Weekend.

There are multiple ways in which World War II is remembered through the Commemorative Air Force. Through CAF, we can explore how memory is constructed and how memory has changed.

The Ways We Remember

Memory is constructed through many different ways over an extended period of time. The memory of World War II began with the creation of documents such as publications, letters, journals and scrapbooks. This creation continued through the direct recounting of stories to younger generations who may not have experienced the war in the same way, reinforcing familial ties. Because of the grand scope of the war, there are very few people in

the United States today, whether immigrants or natural born citizens, who do not have some personal connection to the conflict.

These personal narratives are usually aided by the preservation of artifacts from the era of World War II. Presently, memory of the war is being consciously constructed through interviews, oral histories, museum exhibits, fictional works such as movies, tv shows, and books, as well as formal scholarly works on the subject. Every new narrative creates a new perspective on the war itself; this includes exhibition and programs created by the CAF.

The Contemporary Heritage of World War II

For many people, the story of World War II is one of loss and heartache followed by victory and celebration. The CAF itself plays a role in local commemoration and memorialization of the legacy of World War II veterans by giving their stories a voice through the preservation of their planes, stories, and personal possessions.

The CAF itself is a steward of World War II history, and therefore a contributor to the public memory of World War II. The local branch of the CAF has the advantage of collecting and interpreting oral histories and artifacts that might otherwise not be shared, and put those on display to benefit the memory of the men, women, and children who contributed to the Allied victory in World War II. This interpretive theme also allows the opportunity to explore how we continue to construct memory and history, including through our contemporary interactions with historical objects and experiences. Through building ties to the past through memorial, we also build ties to each other as we learn, experience, and expand our understanding of veterans and personal sacrifice during World War II.

Existing Conditions

Experience

Hangar

This space of 10,000 square feet represents the space of greatest interaction – and opportunity for interpretation – at the CAF Dixie Wing. The hangar houses planes on a rotational basis, and visitors encounter the entire hangar and airfield upon entering the space. The hangar can accommodate up to 400 people with the door closed and a far greater number of people with the door open.

The hangar represents a multiuse space: casual visitors may take self-guided tours; educators may arrange for docent-led tours; mechanics work on plane maintenance; and the space is also reinterpreted for large community events including World War II Heritage Days. There is limited directional and interpretive signage in the hangar.

Dixie Wing Airpower Artifact Museum

This small space, located within the hangar, exhibits valuable historical documents, photos, uniforms and airpower artifacts that were donated by the local community to honor the efforts and dedication of WWII veterans. The dense exhibition style inhibits the placement of interpretive labels, however there are binders with themes including U.S. campaigns of WWII; medals, badges, and insignia; WWII V-Mail, ration books, and government-issued bonds; and WWII advertisements and propaganda. The artifacts are largely placed within glass shelves, with several uniformed mannequins along the passageway.



Exhibitions

In order to develop updated exhibitions in its hangar space using the interpretive themes as described previously, the CAF Dixie Wing can work with the on-site and national CAF curators, as well as a team of vested community members and institutional partners. The CAF Dixie Wing has many unique artifacts which provide unique opportunities.

Workshop. This space operates as a meeting area for CAF membership, a workshop for creation and maintenance of airplane parts, and as an infrequent education interpretive center. While there is limited room for signage and the area is not coded for safety and tour groups, if provided a backstage experience, visitors will likely encounter a highly interactive and engagement experience, including a rivet gun, World War II-era jeep, and active machinery. The workshop is located conveniently next to the hangar.

Meeting Room

This space, located adjacent to the hangar, accommodates up to 100 people and includes an overhead LCD projector with DVD player and full audio and video. Several model airplanes are suspended from the ceiling and artwork provided by members and visitors hangs on the walls, contributing to the branding of the CAF Dixie Wing as an aviation institution, however there is limited interpretive signage.

Miscellaneous Facilities

Parking: Copious amounts of free parking exists on-site, however the numerous unmarked buildings, limited signage, and gravel drives may inhibit an intuitive parking experience.

Entrance and Exit: The front entrance is easily accessible, and an entrance desk provides a collection of rack cards and small gift shop, although this reception area is modest and may be easily overlooked. A long hallway with American Legion and CAF memorabilia leads toward the meeting room and hangar.

Restrooms: Handicap-accessible restrooms are available onsite, and the décor of World War II era posters and advertisements supports a broad World War II branding.



For example, each plane within the hangar tells a story. Though this was expressed within the section on interpretive themes, it bears repeating. Exhibits centered on planes could focus on the story of a certain pilot, a specific battle, or of the men and wom-

en who created it. This amount of interpretations is not limited to planes, but applies to many artifacts within the CAF's collections. The local branch, as well as the national organization, contain an enormous amount of artifacts, each with their own small infinities of stories to tell.

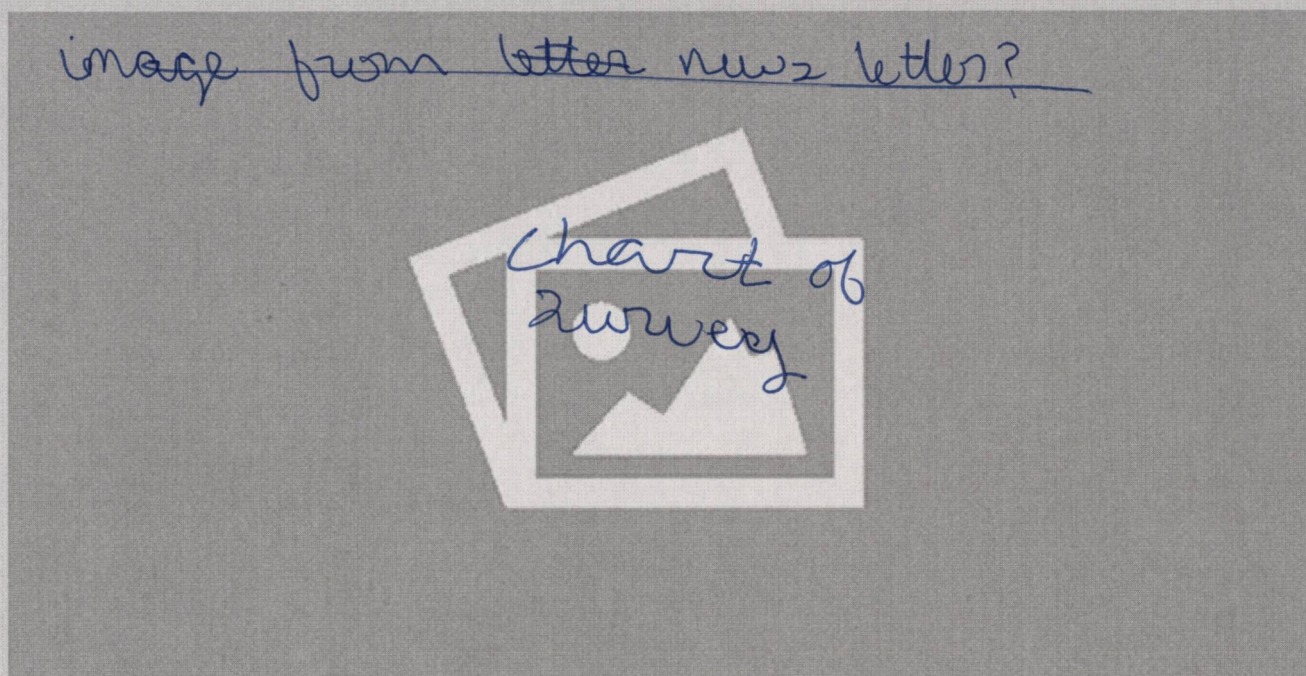




Community

Membership

The Commemorative Air Force members represent diverse demographics (location, ages, interests, involvement, and skills). At present, there is no known database apart from a list of names and basic contact information (name, address, email, etc.). The IP team surveyed current members to build this demographic information; assess members' skills, investment, and recommendations for CAF; and invest their voice in any modifications made as part of this Interpretive Plan.



The October-November 2016 survey received a total of forty-two responses.

Interpretation

Survey responders generally identified the mission of the CAF Dixie Wing as the preservation and commemoration of World War II, including its aviation history and living history. They offered a variety of recommendations for improvement including promoting active membership, looking for outside sponsorship, more involvement of members in making decisions, a cadet program, eliminating

"the flying club mentality," involving younger members, having more planes, airshows, and appearance fees, getting a better media profile, having a larger space, improved IT, mentoring for new members, changing the name to something less evocative of the Old South/Confederacy, and making it clearer to people that they are allowed to pay membership fees in monthly installments.

Strengths and Opportunities

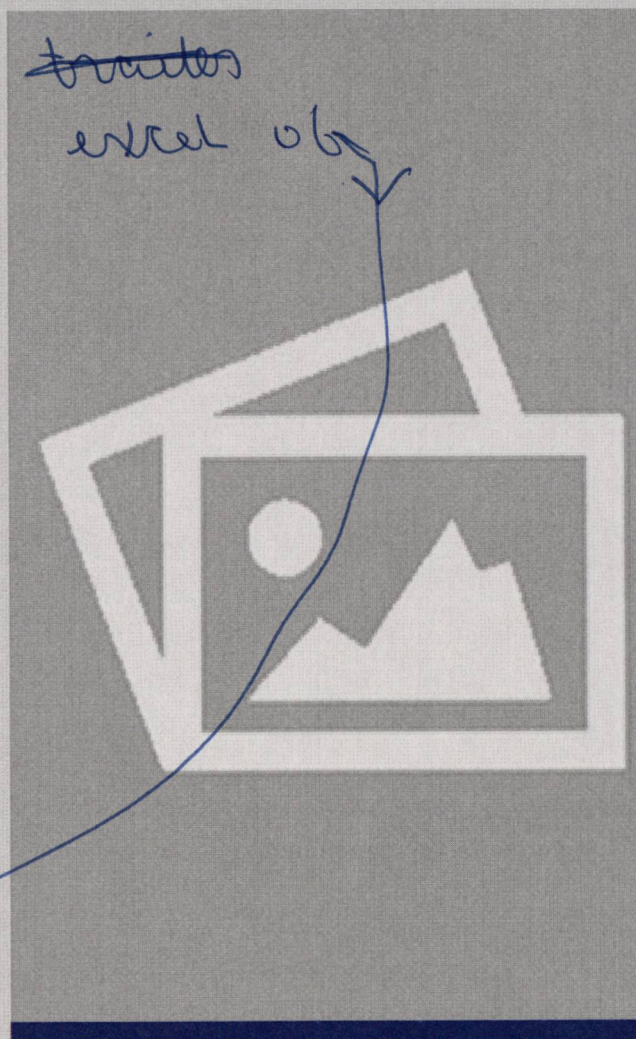
Respondents identified the Dixie Wing's strengths as the dedication of members, camaraderie, and outreach and its weaknesses as domineering members, a disproportionate share of the workload being delegated to a minority of people, the leadership's unresponsiveness to members, too few mechanics, the cliquish nature of the organization, too few planes, low member initiative, too little space, poor communication, "too many 'generals,'" and a poorly chosen location.

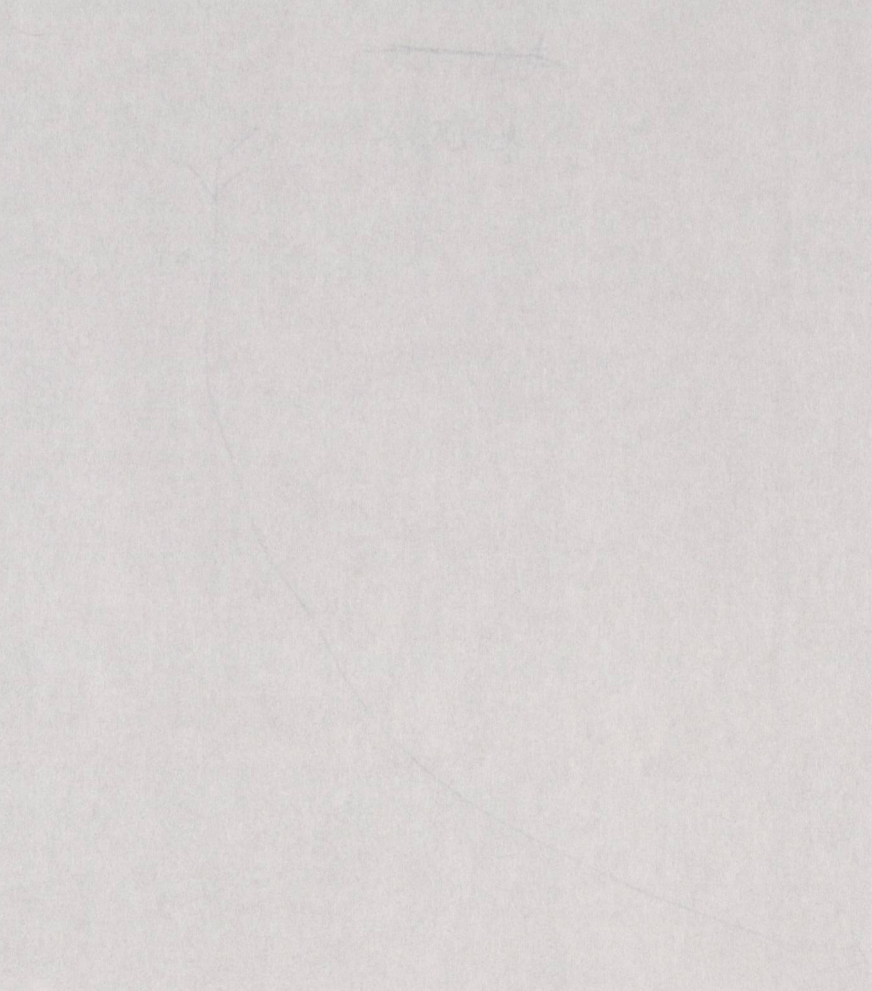
Regarding opportunities for the Dixie Wing, respondents listed tourism, school field trips, working together with other military aviation/history groups, exposure to Millennials, growing events such as WWII Heritage Days, expanding beyond its locality, and a greater focus on the role of women in WWII aviation history.

Opportunities that respondents identified included the CAF Dixie Wing being relatively unknown, government regulations regarding fuel, aging membership, maintenance expenses, a "good ole boy" mentality, government and airport requirements about space, a lack of fire safety, and a potentially offensive name. Members generally seemed overall satisfied but saw room for improvement.

Member Recommendations

When asked what aspect of the Dixie Wing they would most like to see developed (and given the option of checking all that applied), 42.5 percent of respondents listed membership numbers, 70 percent listed the museum, 55 percent listed tours, 30 percent listed membership gatherings, and 30 percent listed various other aspects. The median level of satisfaction was 9 out of 10, while the mean level was 8.22.

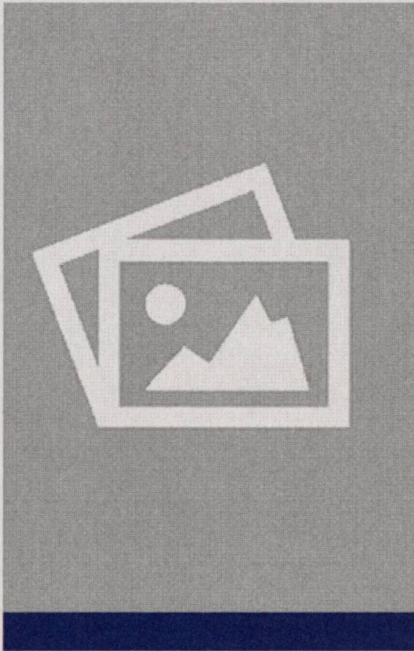




Community Demographics

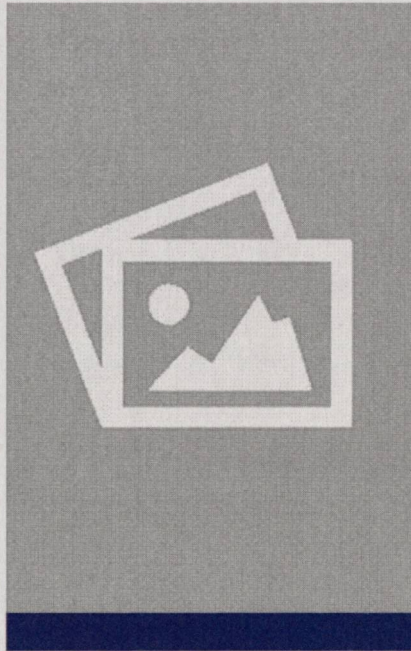
Peachtree City, is located a little over 30 miles outside of the city of Atlanta. Once home to Woodland Era Native Americans, Peachtree City was ceded in 1821 by Chief of the Lower Creek Native Americans William McIntosh; what would ultimately become Peachtree City became a part of Fayette County.

Established in 1959, Peachtree City is a part of Fayette County and bordered by Coweta and Tyrone County, and has population of 35,240.



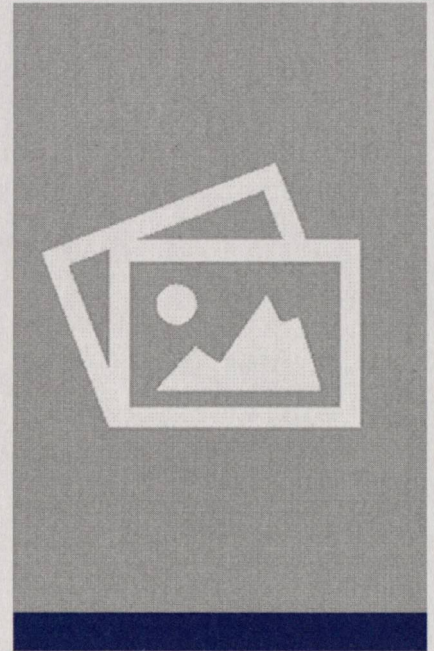
Ethnicity

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Gender

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Income

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Of the 17,757 women in Peachtree City over 14,500 are Caucasian women, 1,387 are of African-American decent, 1,255 Hispanic or Latino, 975 of Asian descent, 403 listed as two or more races and 369 listed as some other race.

