

Preservation/Restoration of Moton Field

Phase II



Tuskegee Airmen
National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

Historic Structure Report
Vehicle Maintenance Shed

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Executive Summary

Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) was the only institution during World War II that provided primary military flight training for African-American pilot cadets in the United States Army Air Corps. Tuskegee Institute constructed Moton Field in Tuskegee, Macon County, Alabama, from 1941 to 1945 and used it as the principal facility of their contract primary flying school. The airfield was named for the second president of Tuskegee Institute, Robert Russa Moton. Most Tuskegee Airmen received their first military flight training at Moton Field.

The Tuskegee Airmen were the first African-American soldiers to complete their pilot training successfully and enter the Army Air Corps. Military leaders were at first hesitant to use the Tuskegee Airmen in combat. Eventually the airmen saw considerable action in Europe and North Africa. Their accomplishments in the air proved conclusively that African Americans could fly and maintain sophisticated combat aircraft and ultimately paved the way for full integration of the United States military.

The Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service (NPS) prepared the *Moton Field/Tuskegee Airmen Special Resource Study* in October 1998 to evaluate the potential of adding Moton Field to the National Park System and to define the significance of the site with regard, specifically, to its association with the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II and, in general, to its role in the history of military aviation. The airfield complex at Moton Field was designated as the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site in November 1998 and was subsequently programmatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

This Historic Structure Report (HSR) has been prepared as part of Phase II of the Moton Field Preservation/Restoration project. Phase II includes the production of a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) and fifteen Historic Structure Reports for nine extant structures and six non-existing structures. The CLR addresses the Moton Field site as a whole and contains the complete historic context for the site; each HSR contains an abbreviated historic context that focuses on building history. Following is a list of the fifteen structures for which HSRs have been prepared.¹

EXTANT STRUCTURES

Hangar Number One
Skyway Club
Control Tower
Bath and Locker House
Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building
Dope Storage Shed
Oil Storage Shed
Fire Protection Shed
Entrance Gate

NON-EXISTING STRUCTURES

Hangar Number Two
Cadet Class and Waiting Room
Army Supply Building
Physical Plant Warehouse
Vehicle Maintenance Shed
Guard Booth

A *Moton Field Structure Nomenclature* table clarifying the name of each structure for purposes of the CLR and HSRs follows the Executive Summary.

To prepare the Historic Structure Reports and the Cultural Landscape Report, research was done at a number of repositories and on site. Research included on-site field inspections; interviews of persons associated with the site before, during, and after the construction of Moton Field; and review of primary and secondary sources related to the social and physical history of Moton Field, including NPS files compiled during the preparation of the *Special Resource Study* and selected transcripts from the ongoing NPS Tuskegee Airmen Oral History Project. A list of repositories visited and the primary materials that were reviewed at each is located in the bibliography of the Cultural Landscape Report.

Major research findings resulting from the research phase of the project included the location of a number of primary sources yielding information about the construction and operation of Moton Field. This primary information included original architectural drawings and site plans for the airfield and its expansions throughout the war years; historic photographs of the airfield complex and the flight training activities that took place there; written histories chronicling the airfield's construction and day-to-day operations; information on the building contractor and landscape architect involved in the complex's design and construction; and the history of the site before and after its war-era use for primary flight training.

¹ The Phase II scope of work originally included a seventh non-existing structure, the Shed/Pump House, for which an HSR was to be prepared. After the research phase, however, no specific information had been found on the location or design of a shed/pump house on the Moton Field site. Because of this, the building was dropped from the list of non-existing structures.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The period of significance for the interpretation of Moton Field has been established as 1941 to 1945, the period during which Moton Field was constructed and the Tuskegee Airmen were trained by the contract primary flying school. 1945 will be the date of restoration for the field's extant buildings and site features; the date of reconstruction for Hangar Number Two, the only non-existing building at the field that will be re-created; and the date of interpretation for the remaining non-existing buildings and site features. 1945 is the date by which all the buildings and site features at the airfield that were associated with the flying school had been constructed.

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed (non-existing) served as an auxiliary storage facility for vehicles other than planes. Based on historical research, an investigation of the building's relationship to the site as a whole, and the building's significance to the site's interpretation, the Ultimate Treatment and Use Recommendation for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is **Creation of a building footprint**. The Vehicle Maintenance Shed was important as a part of the day-to-day operation of the airfield and footprinting the building will be an important component in the interpretation of the airfield to the public.

MOTON FIELD STRUCTURE NOMENCLATURE

EXTANT STRUCTURES

***Use Structure Name in Bold Italics*

<u>Original Name¹</u>	<u>Common/Later Name</u>	<u>NPS Name</u>
<i>Hangar Number One</i>		
Civilian Recreation Bldg.	<i>Skyway Club</i>	All Ranks Club
<i>Control Tower</i>		
<i>Bath and Locker House</i> Mechanics' Bath & Locker Bldg.		Administration/Locker Bldg.
Warehouse, Maintenance Bldg., Vehicle Storage		<i>Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Bldg.</i>
Dope Storage		<i>Dope Storage Shed</i>
Oil House		<i>Oil Storage Shed</i>
Fire Protection		<i>Fire Protection Shed</i>
<i>Entrance Gate</i>		Entrance Gate

NON-EXISTING STRUCTURES

<u>Original Name</u>	<u>Common/Later Name</u>	<u>NPS Name</u>
<i>Hangar Number Two</i>		
<i>Cadet Class & Waiting Room</i> (Cadet Waiting House)	Flight Command Office	Flight Command Office
Supply Building	Army Supply Building	<i>Army Supply Building</i>
<i>Physical Plant Warehouse</i>		Physical Plant Storage
Vehicle & Maintenance Shed		<i>Vehicle Maintenance Shed</i>
Guard House		<i>Guard Booth</i>

¹ Based on architectural drawings, written histories, or other original documentation.

Administrative Data

Locational Data

Building Name: Vehicle Maintenance Shed (non-existing)

Building Location: Moton Field, Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, Tuskegee, Macon County, Alabama.

Real Property Information

Acquisition Date: November 1998

Total Improvement/Modification Costs to Date: \$810,855 (total construction cost to date for stabilization at Moton Field)

Size Information

Total Floor Area: unknown

First Floor Area: unknown

Basement Area: n/a

Roof Area: unknown

Perimeter Length: unknown

Number of Stories: One (1)

Number of Rooms: 1 (based on historic photographs)

Number of Bathrooms: 0 (based on historic photographs)

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Building Code Information

N/A

Proposed Treatment

Proposed Treatment for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed: Creation of a building footprint

Related Studies

Moton Field/Tuskegee Airmen Special Resource Study, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia, 1998.

Cultural Resource Data

The site of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is a component in the Moton Field complex which was programmatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic site unit of the National Park Service on November 6, 1998 with the approval by President Bill Clinton of Public Law 105-355 which established the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site.

The period of significance for Moton Field has been established as 1941 – 1945, the period during which Moton Field was constructed and served as the principal facility of the primary flying school for the training of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Moton Field is nationally significant for its association with the historic contexts of African-American History and Military/Aviation History. In both African-American and Military/Aviation history, the airfield complex is significant for its role as the only primary flight training facility for African-American pilot cadets in the Army Air Corps during the World War II era. The accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen in military air combat in both European and North African theaters of operation helped pave the way for the full integration of the United States military and future civil rights advancements.

Recommendations for Documentation, Cataloging, and Storage of HSR Materials

A copy of research materials specifically documenting the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is located within the body or in *Appendix A* of this HSR. A copy of research materials documenting Moton Field as a whole may be found with the Cultural Landscape Report. Pre-stabilization photographs and other photographs taken during and after stabilization work of the Moton Field structures and site will remain with the project architectural firm until the completion of final construction drawings and specifications required for the preservation/restoration work.

Part I – Developmental History

Historical
Background & Context

Chronology of
Development & Use

Physical Description

Historical Background & Context

Formally approved as Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site on November 6, 1998, Moton Field is of national importance for its association with the training of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. Moton Field, constructed between June 1941 and March 1945, was the only primary military flight training facility for African-American pilot candidates in the United States Army Air Corps during the war. The field, named in honor of Robert Russa Moton, the second president of Tuskegee Institute (now known as Tuskegee University), symbolizes the entrance of African-American pilots into the Army Air Corps under a policy of segregation that was mandated by the military and institutionalized in the South. The buildings that remain at Moton Field have changed little over the years and the historic setting of the 1940s is still discernible.

Context

Opportunities for African-American participation in the United States military were always limited and controversial. Quotas, exclusion, and discrimination based on race reinforced the prevailing attitude in both the military and the general public that African Americans did not possess the intelligence or ability to be successful in the military. This perception carried into the 1940s when military officials still believed that African Americans could not become successful pilots in the Army Air Corps. The Air Corps decided to train a small number of African-American pilot candidates under segregated conditions and in January 1941, chose Tuskegee Institute as a civilian contractor to operate a primary flying school at a location in Tuskegee, Alabama, that would become known as Moton Field. This was the only primary

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military flight training facility for African-American pilot candidates in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. The facility symbolizes the entrance of African-American pilots into the Air Corps, although on a segregated basis.

War-Era Construction at Moton Field

Building construction at Moton Field can be divided into three major phases of construction. These construction phases are modern descriptive terms and are not historic nomenclature. The justification for the three phases is based on actual dates of construction as well as the source of funding for each. The primary flying field was not officially known as Moton Field until its dedication in April 1943.

Phase One, beginning in June of 1941 and lasting through December of that same year, consisted of the initial establishment of the airfield (grading and clearing) as well as the construction of Hangar Number One and the Fire Protection Shed. Tuskegee Institute contributed \$20,000, but the major funding source was a \$130,000 loan from the Julius Rosenwald Fund.

Phase Two began in the summer of 1942 and lasted almost a year. Tuskegee Institute's Board of Trustees initially authorized \$15,000 for construction of the Cadet Class and Waiting Room and the Army Supply Building.² Hangar Number Two and the Control Tower, the Bath and Locker House, several small sheds for oil and dope storage, and an addition to Hangar Number One were completed with a \$150,000 loan from the institute's general funds.³

Phase Three began in early spring of 1944 and extended through the summer of the following year. It is believed that Tuskegee Institute funded this third phase of construction as well, but documentation has not been located to support or disprove this. During this phase the Vehicle Maintenance Shed and the Physical Plant Warehouse were constructed and the enlargement of the asphalt parking mat and paving of roadways in the building area were completed. The ground was graded south of Hangar Number One for a civilian recreation building, later known as the Skyway Club, that was not started until 1945.

Phase One Construction (June-December 1941)

Following the final contract negotiations with the Julius Rosenwald Fund, the United States Army, and Samuel Mizel (S.M.) Eich, the owner of the farm land on which the primary flying field would be built, construction of the airfield got underway in the early summer of 1941. "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama" states that the contract was signed on June 6, 1941 and construction of the airfield started about the same time.⁴ Archie A. Alexander, a prominent African-

² Julius Rosenwald Fund (JRF) Box 359, Folder 5. General Correspondence.

³ JRF Box 359, Folder 5. General Correspondence.

⁴ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section I," p.1.

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American contractor from Iowa, was recruited to supervise the initial phase of airfield construction.

By the end of 1941 the first phase of construction was complete. Hangar Number One was constructed for \$44,134, which was included in the total cost of \$148,506.98. The final construction costs were as follows:

Payment in full of contract	\$112,900.00
Extra work by contractors	1,389.50
Purchase of land	33,500.00
Cutting trees	500.00
Allowances for crop damages	<u>217.48</u>
	\$148,506.98 ⁵

Phase Two Construction (June 1942-May 1943)

The Tuskegee training program expanded per orders of the Army, and the facilities originally constructed for a smaller number of cadets soon became inadequate. By the end of May 1942 plans were underway to construct one new supply building and one cadet waiting house. Hangar space formerly used for supply was converted to a link trainer room and empty office space was nonexistent at the field.⁶ The Tuskegee Institute Board of Trustees authorized special expenditures of \$15,000 to finance these improvements, which were completed by late July 1942.

That fall, when it became necessary to expand the facilities at the field again because of another increased quota of students per class, financing once again was an issue. A request to the Julius Rosenwald Fund for an additional loan was rejected. In addition, they offered no leniency for loan repayment should Tuskegee be able to secure a loan from another source. Ultimately, \$150,000 was secured through a loan from the general funds of Tuskegee Institute to complete the second phase of construction.

In addition to the expansion work completed by July 1942, the following construction was completed during Phase Two. Hangar Number Two was built with lean-to space for a Cadet Ready Room, five link trainers, and space for parachute maintenance, issue, storage, and drying. The Control Tower, a pump house containing chlorination units, the Dope Storage Shed, the Oil Storage Shed, and Bath and Locker House were also part of this phase.⁷ Women began to apprentice as mechanics, due to the manpower shortage during the War that necessitated separate facilities for men and women. Although initial construction had failed to anticipate women workers at the primary flying field, toilet and locker facilities were incorporated into the plans of the Bath and Locker House to remedy the need for women's facilities.⁸

⁵ JRF Box 359, Folder 5. General Correspondence.

⁶ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section II," p. 4.

⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁸ George L. Washington, *The History of Military and Civilian Pilot Training of Negroes at Tuskegee, Alabama, 1939-1945* (Washington, D.C.: George L. Washington, 1972), pp. 306-307; 310-311.

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A School Facilities and Civilian Personnel Report dated October 27, 1942 details the status of the construction project with Hangar Number Two including the Control Tower at 7% complete; the Bath and Locker House at 25%; and the Oil Storage Shed at 90% complete. Progress to date on the main field was 20% complete.⁹

During construction it became difficult to obtain some building materials due to the shortage caused by the war. Even with a high priority rating obtained from the Air Force, locating materials often lengthened construction time. This was especially true with regard to the 100-foot span trusses and metal truss ties for Hangar Number Two. Ultimately, David A. Williston, the Landscape Architect at Tuskegee Institute who was responsible for the landscape design at the primary flying field, scoured the campus for suitable trees for cutting and milling the trusses. Construction on the hangar came to a virtual stopping point for two months until truss ties could be located.¹⁰

On November 10, 1942, 35% progress was reported on the main field. Construction on the Oil Storage Shed was complete and Hangar Number Two had reached 35% completion while the Bath and Locker House was 60% complete.¹¹ By November 25, the Hangar progressed to 60% completion and the Bath and Locker House to 75% complete.¹²

In December construction began on the Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building and a Vehicle Maintenance Shed. The shed, which was located at the east extremity of the building complex, housed trucks and ambulances overnight as well as miscellaneous lumber used for maintenance. The warehouse was a concrete block building located east of where the Physical Plant Warehouse was soon completed.¹³ The December 10, 1942 report boosted the Hangar to 70% completion, the Bath and Locker House to 80%, and the Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building was 20% complete. Although the main field had been in use over a year, it was only 45% completed as of this report.¹⁴

Despite being only 95% complete in March 1943, offices in Hangar Number Two were occupied in order to relieve office congestion in Hangar Number One. May 1943 marked the completion of the second building phase at the airfield. The Bath and Locker House, Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building, improvements to the landing field and Hangar Number Two were finished. At this time the Intelligence Office was moved from Hangar Number One to Hangar Number Two, which allowed space for the Intelligence Library. As the Cadet Ready Room was also moved to the second hangar, it allowed trainees free access to the reading materials. The Intelligence Office was a military office that provided secure as well as general information about war activities. The office included an Intelligence Library

⁹ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section II," Appendix III.

¹⁰ Washington, pp. 301-303.

¹¹ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section II," Appendix IV.

¹² Ibid, Appendix V.

¹³ Washington, p. 312.

¹⁴ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section II," Appendix VI.

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with reading materials such as magazines, newspapers and intelligence summaries, and a War Room with additional reading materials, models of aircraft, ships, and tanks, and maps of various theaters of operations, all of which were kept updated as the war progressed. Aviation cadets were encouraged to spend a few minutes each day in the Library and War Room to keep themselves informed. The Parachute and Link Trainer Departments also moved into larger spaces in Hangar Number Two. This left more space in Hangar Number One for Engineering and Operations.¹⁵

The airfield was named Moton Field in honor of Tuskegee Institute's second president Robert Russa Moton. In preparation for the official dedication ceremony on April 4, 1943, a brick entrance gate was constructed along the main road to the west of the building complex. The south wall contained a niche that featured a bust of Robert Moton.¹⁶

In July of 1943, Tuskegee Institute made its final payment on the loan to the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Tuskegee Institute president Dr. Frederick D. Patterson summed up this special partnership with the following words:

I think it is safe to say that were it not for the wisdom and generosity of the Rosenwald Fund, in its willingness to make an exception to its stated policy, this favorable accomplishment probably would not be a matter of record today. I am sure also that the action of the Rosenwald Fund encouraged our own trustees to take the larger portion of our free funds to make possible the expansion and promotion of this development. We now have a total investment of approximately \$350,000, and aviation has been developed to the point where I am sure it will be a permanent feature of the work of Tuskegee Institute. When we consider the importance of aviation as a vocation today and what it will in all probability mean in the post-war world, we can see that a contribution of lasting importance has been made.¹⁷

Phase Three Construction (Spring 1944-Summer 1945)

During the first half of 1944, Moton Field experienced yet another program expansion. In March a new Physical Plant Warehouse was completed, which provided additional office and storage space used by the primary flying school contractor, Tuskegee Institute, to better oversee activities at the airfield.¹⁸

A year later construction finally got underway on the civilian recreation building, later known as the Skyway Club. This building was to serve as a recreational facility for employees who worked at Moton Field. Built as a cooperative project, Tuskegee Institute supplied the materials while the employees were expected to contribute most of the labor. "Solo," a

¹⁵ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section III," pp. 1-2; "History of the 2164th AAF Base Unit (CPS.P)(Formerly 66th AAFSTD), Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section IV," p. 39; *Solo*, 10 March 1945, p. 9.

¹⁶ Washington, p. 310.

¹⁷ JRF Box 359, Folder 5. General Correspondence.

¹⁸ "The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section IV," p. 1.

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locally distributed newsletter at Moton Field, suggested that an appropriate motto for the new building project was, “[t]he harder we work, the sooner we get to play.”¹⁹

The final installment of the History of the 2164th AAF Base Unit, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama covered September through November 1945. This period marked the final phase of primary flying training of African-American personnel at Moton Field. By the end of November all trainees had either graduated, been discharged, or transferred to Tuskegee Army Air Field.²⁰

Post War (1946-1998)

The close of the Army Air Corps contract flying school in November 1945 brought a change in the activity at Moton Field. Charles Alfred “Chief” Anderson, who was a flight instructor at the field for the Army Air Corps, continued to offer private flying lessons from Moton Field. Even though primary flight training operations had ceased at the airfield, the Skyway Club continued to operate as a night club open to the general public during this time. According to Bill Childs, who worked as a mechanic at Moton Field, a private business, Tuskegee Aviation Corporation, formed soon after the end of primary flight training. This corporation used the Moton Field facilities to repair and maintain planes and convert military planes for civilian use. In addition, the corporation operated a G. I. flight school through the G. I. College Bill, and Tuskegee Institute offered a degree in Aircraft Mechanics using the corporation and Moton Field for training. The corporation operated for approximately two years after the war ended.²¹ According to Mr. Childs, the City of Tuskegee attempted to levy Tuskegee Aviation Corporation for a total of four million dollars in taxes, the amount for which the Moton Field property was insured. Rather than pay the taxes, the corporation decided to shut down. The government’s first attempt to tax Tuskegee Institute for the property failed because the school was tax exempt and refused to pay the taxes.²²

After the corporation dissolved, Macon County used the hangars for storage of surplus food and as a distribution center for welfare recipients.²³ During this time, several of the support buildings were turned into housing for employees of Tuskegee Institute. The bare minimum was spent on upkeep of these “cottages” as they were known, and residents did general repairs on the buildings themselves. Bill Childs remembers the Skyway Club serving as a dormitory for male students shortly after the war. The G. I. Bill increased student enrollment, and, while campus dorms were being renovated, the Skyway Club’s original open space was subdivided into smaller sleeping quarters. The building may have been in use as a dormitory until the early-1950s.²⁴

¹⁹ *Solo*, 10 March 1945, p. 9.

²⁰ “The History of the 66th AAF Flying Training Detachment, Moton Field, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Section XII,” p. 2.

²¹ Telephone Interview with Bill Childs by Debbie Curtis Toole, December 2001.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

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All activity, with the exception of housing Tuskegee Institute employees in the cottages, ceased by the mid-1950s, and Tuskegee Institute put little money into the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and grounds at Moton Field. According to Ed Pryce, landscape architect and superintendent of grounds and maintenance from 1955-1969, the only official upkeep at the field was occasional mowing and maintaining the water and sewer lines. No official use was given to the hangars or sheds during this time. With this lack of maintenance, the buildings and landscape deteriorated.

In the 1960s, the Tuskegee Institute School of Veterinary Medicine began to use the airfield for animal research. The area to the east of the field's building complex contained numerous cattle pens. The school renovated Hangar Number Two into a large animal operating and research lab in the early 1970s, which involved subdividing the large hangar space into operating rooms while the original office and classroom areas were converted into laboratories.²⁵ A fire destroyed the hangar in 1989, and the remaining walls were leveled to the ground. Based on a 1964 floor plan of the Skyway Club, this building may also have been used by the Veterinary School. In the mid-1970s, the school renovated the Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building into a Swine Research Center.

In 1972, a tract consisting of 325 acres of the original Moton Field was deeded to the City of Tuskegee for development of a municipal airport. Bids for the contract were opened in April of 1972, and construction began a year later by the Dubose Construction Corporation in March of 1973. The Municipal Airport was constructed to the north of the building complex. The new paved runways occupy the southern portion of cleared land where the original grass runways were located.

Creation of Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site

President Bill Clinton approved Public Law 105-355 on November 6, 1998, which established the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. The site was created to commemorate and interpret the heroic actions of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II and was established as a unit of the National Park System. With this approval, Moton Field was also programmatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Establishment of the site included the acquisition by the National Park Service from Tuskegee University of approximately forty-four acres known as Moton Field.²⁶ This forty-four acre tract includes the nine extant historic structures as well as the former sites of the six non-existing structures. In addition, the tract includes an overlook area that might eventually be the site of a proposed interpretative center. NPS land does not include the grass runways, a portion of the historic taxiway, or a portion of the historic – tarmac.

Because of its creation as a contract school, Moton Field facilities have not faced the adaptation or conversion typically experienced by other World War II pilot training facilities. Although deterioration has occurred to the historic fabric, the surviving buildings have not

²⁵ Interview with Booker Conley by The Jaeger Company, September 26, 2001.

²⁶ Public Law 105-335. 112 Stat. 3254-3258.

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undergone significant alterations. When considered in the larger historic setting, the buildings and surviving landscape features express the field's historic function as a flight training facility. Moton Field retains a high level of integrity for interpretation of the training and activities of the Tuskegee Airmen.

For a complete historical overview and developmental history of Moton Field see the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Moton Field, Tuskegee, Alabama.

Chronology of Development & Use

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed (non-existing) at Moton Field was constructed in 1943 or 1944. G. L. Washington, head of Tuskegee Institute's Division of Aeronautics and General Manager of Moton Field, discussed the construction of the "maintenance and vehicle storage shed...at the east extremity of the building complex" in his history of civilian pilot training at Tuskegee.²⁷ According to Mr. Washington, the building was used for the storage of trucks and ambulances at night and provided storage space for lumber used for maintenance purposes.

The only two historic photographs of the shed found to date are the circa 1944 and circa 1945 historic aerial photographs.²⁸ (See *Figures 1 and 2*.) In the circa 1944 photo, the shed is more clearly visible. It was a rectangular shed structure with gabled roof and open on all four sides. In the circa 1945 photo, the same gabled-roof shed can be seen. An additional shed appears to have been added at the building's rear by this time. Another shed or low-roofed building had also been constructed between the Vehicle Maintenance Shed and the Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building. It is not known what these two additional sheds were used for, but due to their proximity to the vehicle maintenance and storage buildings, they

²⁷ G. L. Washington, *The History of Military and Civilian Pilot Training of Negroes at Tuskegee Alabama 1939-45*, PPD-AP, p. 16 (p. 313).

²⁸ c.1944 Aerial Photograph, Historic Photograph Collection, Howard University. c.1945 Aerial Photograph, Historic Photograph Collection, NPS Curatorial Storage Facility, Tuskegee Institute NHS.

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may have been used for related purposes. It is not known when the Vehicle Maintenance Shed was demolished.

1. Hanger No. 1
2. Bathhouse
3. Hanger No. 2
4. Plant Engineer's Bldg.
5. Warehouse

6. Vehicle & Maintenance Shed
7. Control Tower



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of Moton Field circa Fall 1944. Vehicle Maintenance Shed is number six. Historic Photograph Collection, Howard University.



Figure 2: Aerial photograph circa 1945 showing Vehicle Maintenance Shed at east end of complex. Additional sheds had been constructed by this time. Historic Photograph Collection, National Park Service Curatorial Storage Facility, Tuskegee Institute NHS.

Physical Description

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed (non-existing) was a gabled-roof structure open on all four sides. The shed's structural frame appears in the circa 1944 aerial photograph to have been constructed of wood posts and beams but this is not known for sure. The roof appears to have been covered with asphalt shingles. The dimensions of the shed are unknown.

Part II - Treatment & Use

Ultimate Treatment & Use
Requirements for Treatment
Alternatives for Treatment

Ultimate Treatment & Use

Four potential treatments derived from the standard historic preservation treatments defined in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* have been considered for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed. These four treatments are (1) Creation of a building footprint, (2) Preservation, (3) Creation of a ghost structure, (4) Reconstruction. The Ultimate Treatment and Use Recommendation for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is **Creation of a building footprint**. This recommendation is evaluated based on the Criteria for Determining Treatment. The evaluation is followed by a summary of the steps needed to realize the treatment and a summary recommendation based on the practical feasibility of the treatment, the treatment's impact on historic materials, and its effect on the historic character of Moton Field as a whole.

The Period of Significance for interpreting the history of Moton Field is 1941-1945, the period during which the buildings and landscape at Moton Field were constructed and the Tuskegee Airmen were being trained in the primary flying school. 1945 is the date identified during the period of significance by which time the entire complex at Moton Field associated with the training of the Tuskegee Airmen and the operation of the flying school had been constructed. This is the target date for the interpretation of non-existing buildings and structures.

ULTIMATE TREATMENT AND USE RECOMMENDATION

The Ultimate Treatment and Use Recommendation for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is **Creation of a footprint of the shed's outline by constructing a color tinted concrete slab on the ground.**

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed was an auxiliary structure built to store service vehicles that were used in the day-to-day operations at the airfield. A building footprint of the correct proportions along with interpretative signage at the site will provide visitors with adequate information about this non-existing building.

Criteria for Determining Treatment

Following are the criteria that have been used for determining the recommendation for the ultimate treatment of the non-existing historic structures at Moton Field. An explanation of how the Vehicle Maintenance Shed meets each criterion for the treatment of creation of a building footprint is provided.

- **Significance and Value to the Site's Interpretation**

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed was built during Phase Two of the war-era construction. Its importance to the overall interpretation of the airfield is secondary to extant buildings. Interpretation of this shed will aid in the interpretation of the overall operations of the airfield.

- **Existing Condition and Material Evidence**

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed is no longer extant. Archeological investigation in April and May 2002 was not accomplished due to inaccessibility of the area. The area where the shed was originally located is currently being used by the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine for animal quarantine and cannot be accessed. Hazardous materials must be removed from the site before archeological work can be done.

- **Archival Documentation**

Limited historic documentation of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed exists in the form of historic photographs and written histories.

Creation of a Footprint of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed

Creating a footprint of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed will convey to visitors the dimensions of the structure as it stood in 1945. This will also interpret the location of the shed in relationship to the rest of the complex.

- Hazardous materials must first be removed from the area where the shed was located before any archeological or construction work can be done.

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- Archeological investigation should then be done to determine what remains of the original shed.
- If the original concrete slab is uncovered during the investigation, the recommended treatment would change to preservation of the existing slab (see Alternative for Treatment: Preservation).
- If the original slab no longer exists, construct a new concrete slab footprint of the correct dimensions using a tinted concrete that clearly indicates the newness of the footprint and does not lead visitors to believe that the footprint is historic.

Interpretation and Use Recommendations

- Interpretative displays should provide information about the shed's function during the war era.
- Text and illustrations can explain how the shed was used historically and how it fit into the overall Moton Field complex.

Summary Recommendation

Numerous non-extant buildings need to be interpreted at Moton Field. Because the Vehicle Maintenance Shed held a minor role in actual pilot training, its interpretation is secondary to other buildings more closely associated with the Tuskegee Airmen. Lack of documentation about construction of the shed would make reconstruction conjectural. With adequate interpretative signage, a footprint of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed would convey this former building to the public. For these reasons, creation of a building footprint is the Recommended Ultimate Treatment.

Requirements for Treatment

Legal mandates and policy directives restrict treatment of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed. The NPS's Cultural Resources Management Guideline (DO-28) requires planning for the protection of cultural resources "whether or not they relate to the specific authorizing legislation or interpretive programs of the parks in which they lie."

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates that federal agencies, including the NPS, take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment.

To help guide compliance with the statutes and regulations noted above, the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* have been issued along with guidelines for applying those standards.

Alternatives for Treatment

Three alternatives for treatment have been considered for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed and are presented here. They are (1) **Preservation**, (2) **Creation of a ghost structure** and (3) **Reconstruction**. These alternatives are evaluated based on the Criteria for Determining Treatment. This evaluation is followed by a summary of the steps needed to realize the treatment and a summary recommendation based on the practical feasibility of the alternative, the alternative treatment's impact on historic materials, and its effect on the historic character of Moton Field as a whole.

The **Period of Significance** for interpreting the history of Moton Field is 1941-1945, the period during which the buildings and landscape at Moton Field were constructed and the Tuskegee Airmen were being trained in the primary flying school. 1945 is the date identified during the period of significance by which time the entire complex at Moton Field associated with the training of the Tuskegee Airmen and the operation of the flying school had been constructed. This is the target date for the interpretation of non-extant buildings and structures.

ALTERNATIVE FOR TREATMENT: PRESERVATION

An alternative for treatment of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is **Preservation** of the original concrete slab foundation that may survive based on archeological investigation and existing materials. This treatment is only recommended in the event that the original slab does indeed exist.

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Preservation of the concrete slab in conjunction with interpretative signage at the site will explain to visitors the function of this secondary structure.

Criteria for Determining Treatment

Following are the criteria that have been used in determining the alternatives for treatment of the non-existing historic structures at Moton Field. An explanation of how the Vehicle Maintenance Shed meets each criterion for the treatment of preservation is provided.

• Significance and Value to the Site's Interpretation

The significance of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed to the overall interpretation of the airfield is secondary to extant buildings. Interpretation of this shed would help to illustrate the day-to-day operations of the airfield.

• Existing Condition and Material Evidence

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed is no longer extant. Archeological investigation in April and May 2002 was not accomplished due to inaccessibility of the area. The area where the shed was originally located is currently being used by the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine for animal quarantine and cannot be accessed. Hazardous materials must be removed from the site before archeological work can be done.

• Archival Documentation

Limited historic documentation of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed building exists in the form of historic photographs and written histories.

Preservation of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed

Preservation of an existing concrete slab of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed would seek to protect any existing historic fabric and then to repair it to prevent further deterioration. Stabilization/preservation work should be clearly differentiated from the existing historic fabric.

- Remove vegetation from in and around the concrete slab.
- Check the slab for areas where the foundation may have settled, shifted, or cracked; repair the concrete to prevent further deterioration.

Interpretation and Use Recommendations

- The concrete slab should be accessible to the public.
- Interpretative displays should provide information about the building's function and appearance.
- Text and illustrations can explain how the shed was used historically and how the building fit into the overall Moton Field complex.

Summary Recommendation

Because access to the shed location is currently restricted, physical investigation of this area has not taken place. Because of a lack of documentation and uncertainty about whether any original foundation material exists, preservation is not the Recommended Ultimate Treatment. If, however, original material is discovered, preservation should be reconsidered as a potential ultimate treatment.

ALTERNATIVE FOR TREATMENT: GHOST STRUCTURE

Another alternative for treatment of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is the **Creation of a ghost structure** for the building. A ghost structure would convey the three dimensional proportions of the building in a skeletal form at the original building site. This structure would accurately represent the size and location, but not the full presence of the shed.

Criteria for Determining Treatment

Following are the criteria that have been used in determining the alternatives for treatment of the non-existing historic structures at Moton Field. An explanation of how the Vehicle Maintenance Shed meets each criterion for the treatment of creation of a ghost structure is provided.

- **Significance and Value to the Site's Interpretation**

The significance of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed to the overall interpretation of the airfield is secondary to extant buildings. Interpretation of this shed would help to illustrate the day-to-day operations of the airfield.

- **Existing Condition and Material Evidence**

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed is no longer extant. Archeological investigation in April and May 2002 was not accomplished due to inaccessibility of the area. The area where the shed was originally located is currently being used by the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine for animal quarantine and cannot be accessed. Hazardous materials must be removed from the site before archeological work can be done.

- **Archival Documentation**

Limited historic documentation of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed building exists in the form of historic photographs and written histories. No architectural drawings have been found to date. While the footprint dimensions could be determined from archeological investigation, the height of the shed, roof pitch, and materials would have to be determined from historic photographs.

Creation of a Ghost Structure of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed

Creation of a ghost structure of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed would involve archeological field work to document building location and footprint dimensions as well as constructing a skeletal frame that accurately outlines the original dimensions of the building. Following are steps that would be required to accomplish this alternative treatment.

- Archeological excavation should be performed to determine the exact location of the building as well as footprint dimensions.
- Documentation of the three-dimensional proportions of the building, such as the height and roof slope, would have to be taken from historic photographs.
- Construct a metal skeletal frame outlining the structure and roof of the original building.

Interpretation and Use Recommendations

- The ghost structure should be accessible for the public to enter and explore so that visitors can get a sense of the size of the building.
- Interpretative displays at various locations in and around the ghost structure should provide information about the building's function and appearance.
- Text and illustrations can explain how the shed was used historically and how the building fit into the overall Moton Field complex.

Summary Recommendation

Numerous non-existing buildings need to be interpreted at Moton Field. Creating ghost structures for all non-existing buildings could potentially detract from the surviving historic fabric at Moton Field. Because of the location of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed at the far eastern end of the building, using a ghost structure would create a more visible site than a low-profile footprint would provide. However, the vertical dimensions are known only from historic photographs. For these reasons, creating a ghost structure is not the Recommended Ultimate Treatment.

ALTERNATIVE FOR TREATMENT: RECONSTRUCTION

Another alternative for treatment of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed is **Reconstruction** of the shed. Existing photographic documentation in addition to archeological investigation would have to be used to determine original dimensions and construction materials of the shed. The reconstructed shed should be clearly identified as a reconstruction rather than a historic building.

Criteria for Determining Treatment

Following are the criteria that have been used in determining the alternatives for treatment of the non-existing historic structures at Moton Field. An explanation of how the Vehicle Maintenance Shed meets each criterion for the treatment of reconstruction is provided.

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• Significance and Value to the Site's Interpretation

The significance of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed to the overall interpretation of the airfield is secondary to extant buildings. Interpretation of this shed would help to illustrate the day-to-day operations of the airfield.

• Existing Condition and Material Evidence

The Vehicle Maintenance Shed is no longer extant. Archeological investigation in April and May 2002 was not accomplished due to inaccessibility of the area. The area where the shed was originally located is currently being used by the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine for animal quarantine and cannot be accessed. Hazardous materials must be removed from the site before archeological work can be done.

• Archival Documentation

Limited historic documentation of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed building exists in the form of historic photographs and written histories. No architectural drawings have been found to date. While the footprint dimensions could be determined from archeological investigation, the height of the shed, roof pitch, and materials would have to be determined from historic photographs.

Reconstruction of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed

Reconstruction of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed would seek to re-establish a building of the correct size, shape, and materials at the site of the original building based on historic documentation and archeological evidence. The building should be clearly identified as new construction rather than a surviving historic building.

Reconstruction of the building would involve rebuilding the structural frame and roof based on historic photographs and existing physical evidence. Following are items that would be required to accomplish this alternative treatment.

- Archeological excavation should be performed to determine the exact location of the building as well as footprint dimensions.
- If the original slab does not exist, reconstruct a concrete slab based on archeological evidence of its size and location.
- Reconstruct the structural frame and gabled roof based on historic photographs and existing physical evidence.

Interpretation and Use Recommendations

- The structure should be accessible to the public.
- Interpretative displays at various locations around the structure should provide information about its function and appearance.

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- Text and illustrations can explain how the shed was used historically and how the building fit into the overall Moton Field complex.

Summary Recommendation

Reconstruction of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed could be only partially accomplished using existing documentation. Only the building's two-dimensional size and location can be found in existing physical evidence. The three-dimensional proportions as well as the configuration of the structural frame and construction materials would have to be taken from historic photographs and would be conjectural. In addition, given the fact that nine war-era structures survive at Moton Field and the relatively minor role in the training of the Tuskegee Airmen that the Vehicle Maintenance Shed played, reconstruction of this building is not "essential to public understanding of the cultural associations of (the) park."²⁹ Because other methods of interpretation will adequately explain the function of the Vehicle Maintenance Shed to the public and not enough information is known about materials and construction methods to accurately reconstruct the shed, reconstruction is not the Recommended Ultimate Treatment.

²⁹ DO-28, p. 132.

Appendices

A p p e n d i x A

**Appendix A is located in a separate notebook that contains the supplemental archival documents, photographs, and architectural drawings for all Historic Structure Reports and the Cultural Landscape Report.

- Archival Documents
- Photographs
- Architectural Drawings

A p p e n d i x B

- Bibliography

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