



Lindbergh exhibit makes history museum the place to be

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Over the course of history, few people have been as significant as Charles Lindbergh. This fact is clearly evident after visiting the new exhibit about Lindbergh at the North Carolina Museum of History. Lindbergh, which opened last Saturday, details Lindbergh's life from birth, to his famous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, to his death.

There was surprisingly little information about the famous kidnapping and murder of his toddler son Charles, Jr.

On May 20, 1927, Charles Lindbergh set off from New York in an attempt to become the first person to travel by plane across the Atlantic. After thirty-three and a half hours of worrisome, death defying, trying hours, he landed in Paris, France having broken the world record for distance in an airplane. With over 400 artifacts, the exhibit is amazingly detailed. In truth, it is the



Charles Lindbergh aviation poster.
photo courtesy of www.charleslindbergh.com

artifacts that set this exhibit apart from many of the other big name exhibits that recently have been present in the area.

From the beginning, a timeline detailing not only Lindbergh and his life, but also world events helps place the importance and cultural relevance of his flight in context. There are many small artifacts, such as a toy cast-iron cannon that Lindbergh had as a child, which make the

exhibit personal.

There is also a replica of the cockpit of the Spirit of St. Louis, the plane Lindbergh flew. In it you will find that Lindbergh flew across the ocean in a wicker chair. Add to that the fact that he chose not to have a radio, did not run the lights on his control panel, and did not install any windows (he said the flow of air helped keep him awake). Visitors realize how difficult a day and a half it was.

The importance the world placed on this one man is mind blowing. Speaking on his flight over Ireland on his way to France, Lindbergh said, "People came running out I skim low over their houses-blue-jeaned peasants, white aproned wives, children

scrambling between them, all bareheaded and looking as though they'd jumped up from the supper table to search for the noise about their roofs." This quote is taken directly from the logbook he kept during his journey, which is on display at the exhibit. There are newspaper articles from all over the world regarding his flight, and for a day and a half the world held its breath to see if Charles Lindbergh would survive the trek.

The most interesting pieces on display are those that Lindbergh actually had with him on the flight. Artifacts include his actual flight suit, his logbook, his spark plugs and his pilot's identification card. There is also a glass full of oil from the plane.

Unfortunately, the actual Spirit of St. Louis hangs in the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

The most beneficial part of the exhibit is the movies that show the event occurring. There is footage of his take off and landing. The films allow you to see just how important this event was to people all over the world. Lindbergh was greeted by thousands of people at Le Bourget airport in France. This, however, was rather insignificant when compared to the reception he received back in America.

He had crowds of over 75,000 people meet him in Washington, D.C., New York City, and over 100,000 in his home of St. Louis. The footage is jaw dropping. In St. Louis, the parade lasted for eight miles!

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Lindbergh with Spirit of St. Louis in 1927.
photo courtesy of charleslindbergh.com

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