Mitchell Higginbotham papers

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Mitchell Higginbotham papers
Date (inclusive): 1944-2012, undated
Date (bulk): 1991-2002
Collection Number: MS 234
Creator: Higginbotham, Mitchell
Extent: 8.52 linear feet (8 boxes, 2 flat file folders)
Repository: Rivera Library. Special Collections Department.
Riverside, CA 92517-5900

Abstract: This collection includes newspaper clippings, programs, photographs, brochures, and documents from former Tuskegee Airman Mitchell Higginbotham. Most of these items are related to the military history of the Tuskegee Airmen, events of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., and African American history. This collection also contains some items pertaining to aviation history and Higginbotham’s personal life.

Languages: The collection is in English.

Access
This collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation
[identification of item]. Mitchell Higginbotham papers, MS 234. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside.

Acquisition Information
The Mitchell Higginbotham papers were acquired as a gift in 2006. Additional items were donated and added to the collection in 2007 and 2012.

Processing History

Biographical Note
Mitchell Higginbotham was born on March 2, 1921 in Amherst, Virginia. He began active duty in the United States military during the summer of 1942 and graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field on February 1, 1945 as a member of class TE-44-K. Upon graduation he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant and was an original member of the famed 477th Bomber Group. He remained on active duty in the military until 1946 and was a reserve from 1946 to 1962. After his military service ended, Higginbotham served as a registrar at the Pittsburg Airport for the Los Angeles Airport Advisory Committee, and was also a probation officer with the Los Angeles County Probation Department for nearly three decades. In 1996, Mitchell Higginbotham was honored as the “Man of the Year” by the Los Angeles Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

1921: Mitchell Higginbotham was born on March 2nd in Amherst, Virginia.
1942: Higginbotham began active duty with the United States military during the summer.
1945: Higginbotham graduated as a member of class TE-44-K at Tuskegee Army Air Field on February 1st.
1946: Higginbotham ended active duty and became a reserve in the United States military.
1962: Higginbotham ended his role as a reserve in the United States military.
1996: Higginbotham was named "Man of the Year" by the Los Angeles Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

Collection Scope and Contents
The Mitchell Higginbotham papers are contained within the Tuskegee Airmen Archive. This archive consists of materials related to those individuals who served at Tuskegee Army Air Field, and its predecessors, as well as materials pertaining to Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., a non-profit organization.

The Mitchell Higginbotham papers consists of newspaper clippings, programs, photographs, brochures, and documents. These items primarily relate to the military history of the United States, Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., and Higginbotham’s personal endeavors. This collection includes plaques recognizing Higginbotham’s United States military service and
personal accomplishments, materials documenting aviation history, and personal correspondence regarding Higginbotham.

**Collection Arrangement**
This collection is arranged into six series:


**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

**Subjects**
African American fighter pilots.
Higginbotham, Mitchell, 1921-
Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.
United States. Army Air Forces. Fighter Group, 332nd History.
World War II.

**Genres and Forms of Materials**
Brochures.
Clippings.
Documents.
Photographs.
Programs.

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**Series Scope and Contents**
This series contains photographs, programs, and newspaper clippings regarding African American History.

**Box 4, Folder 3**
"Black History Month Celebration: A Salute to Black Veterans" by unknown author. undated.

**Box 8, Folder 2**
Multiple newspaper clippings on African American history. 1982-2004, undated.

**Box 4, Folder 5**
"The American Negro" by Dr. Lulamae Clemons, et. al.. 1967.

**Box 3, Folder 5**

**Box 3, Folder 1**
Program from the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce and Civic Association’s Veteran's Day Ceremony honoring the Buffalo Soldiers and Tuskegee Airmen. 1994.

**Box 2**
Clear plastic plaque with the inscription "The Wild Blue Yonder, Black Chamber of Orange County 12th Annual Awards Banquet". undated.

**Box 3, Folder 10**

**Box 4, Folder 1**

**Box 3, Folder 11**

**Box 3, Folder 5**

**Box 5**
"Their Story: The History of Blacks, African Americans in Sewickley and Edgeworth" by Bettie Cole; signed by author. 2000.

**Box 3, Folder 4**
Photograph of a music band with the date "Thursday, February 15, 2001". 2001.

**Box 3, Folder 10**
Box 3, Folder 10  Flier for the "4th Annual Celebrity Toast and Roast". 2002.
Box 3, Folder 2  Newspaper clippings titled "This Week in Black History". undated.
Box 3, Folder 10  Photographs taken at the 4th Annual Celebrity Toast and Roast honoring Nichelle Nichols (quantity, 6). 2002.
Box 3, Folder 1  Brochure from the Statesman of Jazz, Inc.. undated.
Box 3, Folder 5  Funeral program for Chauncey Edward Spencer, Sr. titled "The Gathering". 2002.
Box 3, Folder 2  Article titled "Looking Back" by Paul Stilwell from the United States Naval Institute (photocopy). undated.
Box 3, Folder 2  Program titled "San Diego Aerospace Museum Presents The International Aerospace Hall of Fame, Investiture '96". 1996.
Box 8, Folder 4  Multiple newspaper clippings on aviation history. 1985-1986, undated.
Box 3, Folder 2  Article titled "The Co-Pilots" discussing Patricia M. Schnegg and Cliff Robertson. undated.
Box 3, Folder 2  United States Air Force News Release "Learn About Pioneering Aviators Over the Internet" by Tech Sergeant Bud Mckay, McChord AFB (photocopy). undated.
Box 3, Folder 4  Aerial Photograph of a Grumman X-29 in flight. undated.
Box 3, Folder 4  Photograph of the NASA Crew of Space Shuttle Mission STS-33. undated.
Box 3, Folder 4  Folder titled United States Air Force Northrop B-2 Team containing a photograph of Mitchell Higginbotham and unknown man and a stealth bomber pin. undated.
Box 3, Folder 4  Photograph of a two engine aircraft. undated.
Box 3, Folder 5  Program for the "2001 Odyssey Mentoring Our Youth in Aviation" Military Luncheon. 2001.
Box 3, Folder 5  Program for the Sixth Annual History of Aviation Banquet. 1991.
Box 3, Folder 11  Folder from Orange Coast College containing a photocopy of "Orange Coast College's Connection to Military Aviation", a photocopy of aviation pilot training, and an e-mail of an aviation industry career expo. undated.
Box 3, Folder 12  Souvenir program for the Oakland Air Show '91. 1991.
Box 3, Folder 9  Publication by NASA titled "Celebrating a Century of Flight". 2002.
Box 3, Folder 4  Photograph of an airplane's cockpit. undated.
Box 3, Folder 12  Article titled "Inspiring Black Youths to Reach for Stars". undated.
Box 4, Folder 5  Article titled "Discovery mission's two Black astronauts" from The Washington Afro America, vol. 115, no.18. 2006.
Other 8, Folder 1  Article titled "Tales of the Red Tails: Inside the Tuskegee Legend, The men, the machines, the missions" by Barrett Tillman from Flight Journal. February 2012.

Series Scope and Contents
This series primarily contains newspaper clippings on the military history of the Tuskegee Airmen. Photographs, programs, and other documents are included as well.

Box 3, Folder 9

Map-Case AA5, Folder 2

Print titled "Destroyer Attacks". undated.

Collage of newspaper clippings related to the Tuskegee Airmen. undated.

Box 3, Folder 2
"Dana Point Man Tells of Service with Tuskegee Airmen", Get up and Go!, June 1999. 1999.

Map-Case AA5, Folder 2
Newspaper clipping (laminated) titled "Flight through History" from the Orange County Register. 2001.

Box 4, Folder 1

Map-Case AA5, Folder 2
Newspaper clipping (laminated) titled “Tuskegee Airman Recalls Racism that Hobbled Dreams” from WAVE Newspapers. 1998.

Map-Case AA5, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2
"World War II’s Black Eagles" by Brock Garland from Players. undated.

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2
Article titled "Monument is Dedicated to Black World War II Airmen" by Joe Nazel. undated.

Box 3, Folder 2
Article titled "Tuskegee Airman Pilot Brings History to Life" by Jessica Peralta from the Sun Post News (photocopy). undated.

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 6

Box 3, Folder 11

Box 3, Folder 3
Brochure for the poster titled "Beyond Mission 100". undated.

Box 4, Folder 4
Certificate presented to the Tuskegee Airmen from the City of Lancaster. 1991.

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 4, Folder 2

Box 5

Box 3, Folder 3
Flier for the Red Tail Project titled "American Legends, National Treasures" (3 copies). undated.

Box 3, Folder 5
Funeral program for Claybourne "Buddy" Lockett. 1987.

Box 3, Folder 5

Map-Case AA5, Folder 2
Poster of the Tuskegee Airmen movie by HBO. undated.

Box 3, Folder 13
Information sheet about African Americans in World War II (2 copies). undated.

| Box 3, Folder 13 | Information sheet about Asian Americans. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | Information sheet for the Minority Outreach program (2 copies). undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Information sheet on General Daniel "Chappie" James. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Information sheet regarding the Tuskegee Airmen Oral History Project conducted by the National Park Service. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Letterhead with a line drawing of World War II titled "World War II 50th Anniversary". undated. |
| Box 8, Folder 5 | Multiple newspaper clippings on military history. 1977-2006. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | Newsletter of the Tuskegee Air Force titled "King Promoted to General". undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Newspaper clipping of Hubert L. Jones' obituary. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Photograph of Mitch Higginbotham standing in front of the "Mitch the Witch II" airplane. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Photograph of several Tuskegee Airmen standing in front of an airplane titled "The Lonely Eagles". (photocopy). undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Photograph of the Dedication of the Tuskegee Monument at Arlington National Cemetery. 1996. |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | Photograph of Tuskegee Airmen at a street parade in California (Internet printout). 2003. |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Photograph with Oliver Goodall, Mitch Higginbotham, and Roger C. "Bill" Terry in front of a B-25. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | Photographic print titled "Memories of World War II" (image distorted). undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | Photographic prints of the Tuskegee Memorial Mural at Palm Springs Air Museum (quantity, 2). undated. |
| Map-Case AA5, Folder 2 | Photograph collage of Tuskegee Airmen. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | Program for the Los Angeles Air Force Base Black History Month Dinner. 1996. |
| Box 8, Folder 6 | Photographs and newspaper clippings dealing with the Tuskegee Airmen. 1985-1989, undated. |
| Map-Case AA5, Folder 2 | Posterboard advertising Tuskegee Airmen Tribute backed with a poster of Dana Point. 2002. |

Box 1

| Statue of a Tuskegee Airmen soldier with the following inscription "2LT. Mitchell Higginbotham, Tuskegee Airman Class 44K, 617TH SQ, 477TH Bombardment Group City of Inglewood, Feb. 27, 1996". undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Typescript titled "History of the 332nd Fighter Group", undated. |
| Box 1 | Wall clock, "Tuskegee Airmen Lt. Roger C. 'Bill' Terry and Mitchell Higginbotham, Original Members of the 477th Bomber Group and True Friends". undated. |
| Box 2 | Wooden plaque from the Palm Springs Air Museum with the inscription "Commendation to the Tuskegee Airmen for their courage and heroic actions in WWII, The Tuskegee Airmen helped win more than the war". undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | Yearbook of Tuskegee Army Air Field 44-D-E-F (reprint). 1944. |


| Series Scope and Contents |
| This series contains materials, including plaques and a typescript, that highlight the military service of the Tuskegee Airmen. |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Photographic print of several images depicting soldiers from the Tuskegee Army Field; printed in Fotone by the Ulman Company, Inc.. undated. |
Box 6
Wooden plaque presented to Second Lieutenant Mitchell Higginbotham from the City of Inglewood signed by Mayor Edward Vincent. 1996.

Box 6
Wooden plaque presented to Mitchell Higginbotham from the City of Inglewood signed by Mayor Roosevelt F. Dorn. 1998.

Series Scope and Contents
This series primarily contains correspondence and photographs regarding Mitchell Higginbotham's personal life. Also includes several recognition awards that Higginbotham received.

Box 4, Folder 3
"I Views, City of Inglewood, California", April 1992; Report from City Hall including an article on the Tuskegee Airmen's visit to Inglewood. California. 1992.

Box 3, Folder 9

Box 3, Folder 2
Advertisements for the Fountains at Sea Bluffs retirement community; two of the advertisements include Mitchell Higginbotham. undated.

Box 3, Folder 7
Assorted e-mails, Internet printouts, and fliers pertaining to the personal life of Mitchell Higginbotham. undated.

Box 7
Blue attache with a U.S. Marine Corps sticker attached. undated.

Box 3, Folder 6
Card from Marquire Avery of the Lincoln School titled "to Mitch the Tuskegee Airman". undated.

Box 3, Folder 6
Card to Mitchell Higginbotham from Genesis Chavez of the Lincoln School. undated.

Box 4, Folder 4

Box 8, Folder 7
Certificate presented to Mitchell Higginbotham from the City of Inglewood titled "Commendation for Meritorious Service". undated.

Box 8, Folder 1
Multiple newspaper clippings collected by Mitchell Higginbotham. undated.

Box 3, Folder 6
Correspondence to and from Mitchell Higginbotham. 1983-2012.

Box 3, Folder 11
Envelope addressed to Mitchell Higginbotham containing a note with passport information. 1957.

Box 6

Box 2
Glass award presented to Mitchell Higginbotham from The Black Chamber of Commerce of Orange County. 2003.

Box 3, Folder 8
Correspondence from Mitchell Higginbotham to Ralph Smith dated 2-8-05. 2005.

Box 3, Folder 1

Box 3, Folder 13
Notebook titled "Ambassador of Goodwill Mitch Higginbotham" prepared by sixth grade students at Frank D. Parent School including a birthday card signed by students. 1997.

Box 3, Folder 4
Photograph of an unknown woman. undated.

Box 3, Folder 4
Photograph of Mitchell Higginbotham posing with three young girls displaying their "Vision" awards. undated.

Box 3, Folder 4
Photographic prints of Mitchell Higginbotham with Muhammad Ali. undated.

Box 3, Folder 4
Plastic sleeve with a stamp of Billy Mitchell and one of Roy Wilkins affixed. undated.

Box 2

Clippings 8,
Folder 1

Series Scope and Contents
This series primarily consists of materials related to Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (TAI) conventions. Newspaper clippings and other documents regarding TAI are also included.

Box 4, Folder 3

Box 8, Folder 3
Multiple newspaper clippings dealing with Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.. 1977-2004, undated.
Box 7  Black bag sponsored by Tuskegee Airmen, Inc and the Organization of Black Airline Pilots, Inc. titled “Aviation Legacy Forging Tomorrow’s Opportunities”. undated.


Box 4, Folder 1  Annual Report for the Tuskegee Airmen Scholarship Fund. 1985.

Box 4, Folder 6  Mitchell Higginbotham’s personal copy of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. Member Handbook. undated.


Box 3, Folder 13  The Tuskegee Airmen, vol.9, no.4. 1998.


Box 3, Folder 11  Attendee list for Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., Los Angeles Chapter’s General Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr. Memorial Dinner. 1978.


Box 7  Black tote bag from the 27th Tuskegee Airmen National Convention. 1998.


Box 7  Blue attache from the Sam Bruce Chapter. undated.

Box 3, Folder 1  Brochure for the Alfonza W. Davis Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated. undated.


Box 3, Folder 1  Brochure titled “Tuskegee Airmen 332nd Fighter Group Spitfire 50 Year Commemorative Edition”. undated.


Box 3, Folder 13  Calendar from the Atlanta Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. titled "Lonely Eagles". 1985.


Box 3, Folder 3  Flier titled “Come and Meet the Tuskegee Airmen” distributed by Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.. 1995.

Box 3, Folder 8  Obituary of Grant Reynolds from the Omega Chapter. undated.


Box 4, Folder 1  Pamphlet from Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. 34th Annual National Convention titled “Two Boys From the Bronx”. undated.

Box 3, Folder 12  Program for the Tuskegee Airmen Inland Empire Chapter, Inc. Honorary Awards Banquet held at UC Riverside. 2002.

Box 3, Folder 5  Program for Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. 31st Annual National Convention Military Affairs Luncheon. 2002.


Box 4, Folder 1  Program for Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. 34th Annual National Convention Awards Banquet. 2005.

Box 5  VHS tape titled “Tuskegee Airmen, Inc./Organization of Black Airline Pilots, Inc Awards; Keynote address by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Colin L. Powell”. 1991.

| Box 3, Folder 1 | Program from HBO Pictures announcing "The Tuskegee Airmen" movie premiere at the 24th Annual Convention of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. 1995. |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Typescript, unidentified and incomplete. undated. |
| Box 3, Folder 11 | Membership roster for Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., Los Angeles Chapter. 1978. |
| Box 2 | Man of the Year Award presented to Mitchell Higginbotham from the Tuskegee Airmen Inc., Los Angeles Chapter. 1996. |