

Fairchild Aircraft Fire Brigade in Burlington

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Found this for sale on eBay. Fire brigade badge from the [Fairchild Aircraft Company](#), back when they had a plant in Burlington during World War II. As the excellent [Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields web site](#) tells, the story begins with Huffman Field in Burlington, built in 1931 and dedicated in 1933. After the war started, the federal government took over the old Burlington Rayon Plant on North Church Street.



The factory was located directly across from Huffman Airport, and was the perfect location for Fairchild Aircraft Company to begin production of the AT-21 Gunner, a twin-engine training plane. As a result, the airport was upgraded with new hangars and a concrete runway. (The airfield was used as a testing ground.) The first AT-21 was completed in 1943, but production lasted only one year. In 1944, use of the AT-21 ended.

Firestone replaced Fairchild as occupants of the plant. They started making guns. The surrounding area prospered, including barracks-like buildings built to house workers. After the war, Western Electric moved into the structure, which was still owned by the government. Over the next two decades, they manufactured Nike Ajax and Hercules surface-to-air missile system components at the plant.



Scott Murdock photo

The airport operated as a civilian airfield until between 1966 and 1972. Most of the original airport is gone, though a few sections of runway pavement remain. The plant building was still standing in 2006, when the above photo was taken. Don't know the current occupants, if any.

AT&T had the building when western electric closed. they moved out by 1993 though. IT may be vacant now.

Charlie - 01/24/11 - 00:18

The Hospice league of Alamance has used parts of the complex for its yearly "garage sale" for the last 2-3 years. Local Police and Sheriff depts also have used it for training. From what I understand it still has 24 hour security for a mostly unoccupied complex.

T Loy - 01/24/11 - 09:47

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