The past year has been an extremely busy one for the Library & Archives (L&A). The L&A now houses the nation’s largest private nonprofit collection of its type, and we are known throughout the world for our continuing efforts to make this collection accessible for education and research, both on-site and digitally. Ultimately, we strive to make progress in preserving and adding to our collection, and in providing greater online access for researchers, scholars, educators and students.

We are especially thankful for our 30 dedicated volunteers because, without their help, many of our tasks would be impossible to complete on time. Last year L&A volunteers contributed 7,721 hours, a 10 percent increase from the year before. They helped digitize and catalog over 20,000 images and 2,000 films; processed, organized and cared for our collection; assisted with book sales and other fundraising activities, as well as writing articles for the Museum’s website, newsletters and other publications.

More than 3,000 films have now been digitized and uploaded to YouTube (along with links from the AeroCat record), and nearly 250,000 photographs have been digitized, most now available on Flickr.com. These online resources can now all be accessed through our Museum website. Last year we received over 35 million views of our digital images and over 800,000 views of our films. We have had a remarkable 170 million views of our images on Flickr over the past six years since we first placed them online.
RESEARCH REQUESTS

During the year, we answered over 11,500 telephone, mail and email information requests and had 65 onsite visitors. Although
the number of onsite visitors was less than the year before, our global audience has increased dramatically because of our visibility
and the easy access to our records through the Internet. Our staff also supported production of various domestic and foreign
produced aviation and space related films and documentaries, including topics such as the Flying Tigers, the Spirit of St. Louis,
PSA, the Sea Dart, and the SST, with showings on PBS, the Smithsonian Channel, the Travel Channel, the Discovery Channel
and the A&E Network.

Information requests were received from around the world, including Canada, Puerto Rico, France, Germany, Scotland, England,
Russian Federation, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Many well-known organizations requested assistance, including the San
Diego International Airport, SPAWAR San Diego, Boeing, General Dynamics, Peterson Automotive Museum, Virginia Historical
Society, City of Downey, Holland Princess America, Yankee Air Museum, Museum of Flight, National Museum of Scotland,
Aerospace Medical Association and the Morven Museum and Garden.

We also assisted over 60 authors in their preparation of books, newspaper and magazine articles as well as assisting internet
magazines, multi-media displays and exhibits, promotional catalogs, marketing advertisements and commercial websites. Diverse
topics included WWI and WWII, 94th Aero Squadron, AVG, PSA, 345th Bomb Group, Charles Lindbergh, UAV, Ryan Aeronautical
Company, the Spandau machine gun, Lincoln Beachey, Amelia Earhart, Louise Thaden, Ruth Elder, Messerschmitt, Howard
Hughes, Glenn Martin, 1919 transatlantic flight and flying cars.

Drawings, photographs, and basic information about various aircraft are often requested. This past year requests for information
included the XB-42 and 43, Douglas DC-3B, Douglas B-10, Grumman F4F-3, North American P-51 Mustang, Lockheed F-104
Starfighter, PT-22, B-24, B-25, Ryan SC-W, Ryan ST, and Ryan M-1 and M-2, Stits Playboy, Lark B, Loening Sea Plane, Nieuport
83, Convair Model 200, Convair 880 and 990, Sea Dart, Spirit of St. Louis, Vultee Vanguard and Atlas Missile.
EXPLORING OUR COLLECTIONS

We have continued to improve our various collection databases and our online offerings for the general public. Much of this work has been accomplished through a series of federal and foundation grants. In the past several years, the Institute of Museum and Library Studies (IMLS) has contributed over $250,000 in grants for our Great Explorations project, first Phase I and now Phase II.

In August 2012 the Museum received an IMLS Museums of America grant for Great Explorations Phase I, a two-year project to develop requirements and standards for catalog record formats and metadata for archival materials, connect the Museum’s library system to a digital asset management system (DAMS) to reduce duplicate data entry, connect other collection databases to this system, and continue to add information to these systems to aid searching for both the Museum staff and general public.

Metadata standards selected during this project ensure there is a uniform way of cataloging digital assets for the future. Also, the ability to use the DAMS as the center for metadata and digital files is incredibly valuable and avoids duplication. Now, metadata and files only need to be loaded once; and by simply clicking on an icon, those assets can be uploaded to Flickr.com or YouTube. In addition, the ability to automatically ingest public tags from Flickr.com into the DAMS ensures that the incredibly valuable information gained from crowdsourcing is quickly and permanently stored in one location.

In October 2016, we received a second IMLS Museums of America grant for Phase II of our Great Explorations project. This three-year project will focus on improving and streamlining the Museum’s collection management system through use of proper and consistent cataloging and metadata, detailed descriptions and location tracking. During the grant period, over 30,000 currently held curatorial objects, as well as incoming objects, will be cataloged into the Museum’s PastPerfect system. In addition, a digital record of the object will also be created, stored in the DAMS, and linked to appropriate databases.

Images of the objects and their metadata will be offered online to the public through the Museum’s existing social media sites. The online resources will allow a broad audience of scholars, students, aviation enthusiasts and other museums to access artifacts without having to visit San Diego. This second phase of our Great Explorations online initiative will allow the public to tag images and add more information, which will also be stored in the artifacts’ metadata.

UNDERSERVED AUDIENCES

We are always exploring new ways to broaden our reach to diverse populations within and outside our communities. Through our digitization efforts, the use of social media sites, book publications, website improvements, and exploring new technologies we have been able to reach a much larger global audience, as well as better serve our own community.

In January 2016 the Museum launched a new program, under the leadership of the L&A, to broaden access to underserved segments of the population. Through the use of a virtual presence device - a rolling teleconference-screen robot known as the BEAM - individuals and school groups are able to visit the Museum virtually while interacting with guides, educators or even other visitors.

Many potential visitors never get the chance to physically visit the Museum in person. Because of distance, expense, work schedules, special needs, or perhaps illness, a true “virtual presence” is the only option to provide interactive access to the Museum and our collections. Now, virtual visitors are able to engage with Museum exhibits in real-time with a fully interactive tool that moves, sees, and speaks on command through the wheeled motorized robot with a video screen that displays the user’s face.
The robot is controlled by the user (our virtual visitor) from a remote location on any PC or laptop. On their computer screen, the user “sees” the BEAM’s surroundings through its wide-angle camera, and can control its movement with their keyboard. Hearing and speaking is possible through a filtering microphone and a powerful built-in speaker. Because the BEAM robot is fully interactive by seeing, hearing, moving, and talking - users are virtually autonomous and able to interact with an in-house guide or Docent as they explore the galleries and see the artifacts as clearly as if they were there. Comments and questions from the offsite visitor invite immediate response or discussion either with the guide or other museum visitors, creating interactivity essential for any great museum visit.

The success of the BEAM tour program prompted us to look at other ways to better accommodate visitors with special needs. We revised our Interpretive Plan to include specific considerations for visitors impaired by loss of sight, hearing, learning capabilities, and mobility. Targeted audiences include the elderly, young children, and non-English speakers. As part of the evaluation, docent Ron Carrico and archivist Katrina Pescador experienced first-hand a wheelchair tour through the Museum’s exhibit areas in order to examine the exhibit panels, displays, and signage for their visibility in a seated position.

Suggestions for improvement were noted for input into the revised interpretive plan, which now includes exhibit design and programming that are more inclusive to these groups. Every effort is made to provide full access to interpretive media and programs to ensure people with special needs as well as people who do not speak or understand English have access to the same information necessary for a safe and meaningful visit. To accommodate specific special requirements for visitors, the Museum provides wheelchairs, bilingual tour guides, and seeing and hearing impaired assistance. We welcome comments and suggestions addressing how we can continue to improve our programs for visitors with disabilities and/or special needs.

**ATLAS NEGATIVE COLLECTION UPDATE**

In April 2015 the Museum received a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) for a two-year project to digitize and catalog the Museum’s Atlas Missile Negative Collection. This collection documents all aspects of the Atlas missiles produced in San Diego by General Dynamics Convair Division, later the Astronautics and Space Systems Divisions, from design and development, to testing, to launching. To date, over 22,000 images have been digitized from this collection and placed online through our Flickr site. Upon completion of the two-year project, we will have digitized 50,000 and cataloged 100,000 images.
ADDITIONS TO THE COLLECTION

The Library & Archives collection has grown significantly in the past year. We now hold the largest private nonprofit aerospace archives in the nation. The addition of two especially noteworthy donations has increased our collections by 25 percent.

Arkansas Aviation Historical Society

In November 2015 the Museum received the Arkansas Aviation Historical Society collection previously located in Little Rock. The newly acquired collection was the outgrowth of over fifty years of intensive collecting by Jay Miller, noted aviation author and photographer, and former curator at the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas. It is one of the nation’s largest private compilations of aviation material, recently appraised for $4.5 million.

The collection was originally sold by Mr. Miller to the Arkansas Aviation Historical Society in 1992, which then housed the collection at the Central Arkansas Library System, Aerospace Education Center in Little Rock. At their closing in 2011, it was taken over by Central Flying Service, Inc. in Little Rock, which had sponsored its purchase in 1992. Truman Arnold Companies of Texarkana, Texas acquired the collection from Central Flying Service in January 2015, donating it to the San Diego Air & Space Museum.

In addition to six thousand history books related to flight, there are fifty thousand journals, including complete sets of many important aviation periodicals, as well as hundreds of operation manuals for out-of-production aircraft. There are also rare autographs, pamphlets, aeronautical charts, aviation art, technical reports, as well as 650 lineal feet of unprocessed manuscripts, scrapbooks, and one million photographs, altogether an extraordinary archive for scholarly research.

Vought Aircraft

In March 2016 the Museum acquired the Vought Aircraft archive collection from the Vought Aircraft Heritage Foundation in Arlington, Texas. The collection is the largest component of the surviving archive of the Vought Aircraft companies. For 70 years, Vought was one of three prime contractors providing fighter aircraft to both the U.S. Navy and other naval forces around the world. Vought’s more famous aircraft designs include the F4U Corsair, the F7U Cutlass, the F8U Crusader and the A-7 Corsair II. Vought was also a major subcontractor for other prime contractors. The Vought collection acquired by the Museum consists of hundreds of thousands of photographic images, as well as a broad spectrum of technical reference material, currently housed in 500 storage containers on 30 pallets.
In the Library’s Quarter Moon Room (named for its crescent shape) there is a small treasure trove of rare books and special collections. It also houses donations held for processing. One, in particular, had been there for quite a while as we waited for the return of the signed Deed of Gift. The collection was very “cool.” It was made up of about 500 World War I photos, with about 150 glued to the black paper pages of an unbound photo album. The black pages were hand-labeled in German, written with white ink in an “Old English” style text.

The donor was contacted by phone, email, and postal letter but never responded. The collection could not be properly processed without the signed Deed of Gift. So, in the meantime, clues from the collection itself were used to piece together a back story but only added to the confusion. The donation form listed the donor as living in Spring Valley; a notation on the form said it was donated by Lou Larson of Bella Vista, Arkansas, and another notation said, “Many photos were from the Charles Donald Collection.” Who was Charles Donald?

Three years later, we had a breakthrough. The donor responded to an email and was sincerely apologetic for the delay. We received our signed Deed of Gift and the story behind the collection:

Louis Floyd Larson was born in Lakeland, Minnesota on March 7, 1919; his wife, Gladys Evelyn, was born November 19, 1922. The couple lived in Arlington Heights, Illinois from about 1951 to 1982 where they were friends and neighbors with Ralph and Eileen Young. Ralph served during WWII in Germany when he came into possession of two photo albums; one of Zeppelins and another of WWI photographs. The majority of the photos are stamped on the back with “Charles Donald” of Union City, New Jersey. Apparently, Mr. Donald was a collector and seller of WWI aviation photographs and negatives, military medals, and Richtofen memorabilia. An advertisement in the October and November 1945 issues of Flying magazine states, “War Air photos 1914-18. Clear glossy photographs, Spads, Camels, Nieuports, Fokkers, Albatross on the ground and in the air. Rare Richtofen photographs, Aces, and Crashes. 3 cent stamp brings price lists.” Maybe Ralph purchased the photos from Charles. Ralph and Eileen eventually moved to Fort Worth, Texas, and about 1975, Lou and Gladys drove from Illinois to Texas to visit Eileen after Ralph had passed away. The photographs had been in Ralph’s possession for thirty years and Eileen was ready to toss them out when Lou asked if he could keep them. Lou enjoyed them for another thirty-seven years before they were donated by his daughter to the museum in 2012. Lou, a retired IBM engineer, and Gladys now reside in Arkansas.

The donor also added that her father, Lou Larson, had been an engineer for IBM for forty years and had worked on the first computers – those gigantic behemoths measuring 50-feet long, 12-feet wide, and 7-feet high. He is described as a very kind, gentle man – sharp and brilliant, yet humble.

We are thankful that he took such good care of these photographs and are delighted to share such an interesting slice of history. You can see this fantastic collection on our Flickr photostream at https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/albums/72157632002251228.
A FAMILY MYSTERY

RON GOING

Note: A recent research request sought our help in solving a World War II aviation related family mystery. Ron Going, the researcher, prepared an article describing the mystery, and its solution, which he shared with us, thanking us for our help.

Our family lost a husband and father in one of the very first offensive actions after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that was the beginning of WWII in the Pacific. Joe Chitwood was an enlisted navy pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown when it launched an attack on the Marshall/Gilbert Islands on February 1st, 1942. Joe was listed as Missing in Action after the mission and later changed to Killed in Action. Very little information was ever known or forwarded to his surviving family. It has been 75 years since his death and my deceased mother and older sister never knew what happened that first day of February 1942. So this year I began an effort to investigate and discover, for my surviving half-sister, what really happened to her father on that early morning sortie. This was not a subject that our mother ever discussed with us and therefore our knowledge of events surrounding Joe’s death had always been a family mystery. Most of his life was known, but not the final chapter. We are forever grateful to the San Diego Air and Space Museum, specifically to Debbie Seracini, for providing the information that allowed us to complete Joe’s life story.

Armed with slightly over two years of personal correspondence between Joe and our mother, information gathered from the Ancestry website, and the history of the USS Yorktown, I was able to assemble a chronology of pertinent events leading up to Joe’s last mission. Ancestry provided basic information like his birth in November 1911, up through his joining the US Navy and being selected as an Aviation Cadet at Pensacola, Fla. In his personal artifacts, I have a record of him being designated a Naval Aviator in the Spring of 1938 and assigned to Torpedo Squadron Five based aboard the USS Yorktown. The newly commissioned Yorktown was based out of Norfolk, VA. at the time he joined his squadron that summer. Through Joe’s letters, we can follow his early navy career and his meeting our mother in 1939 in Long Beach, CA when the Yorktown was transferred from the Atlantic fleet to the Pacific fleet. We have a record of their marriage in March 1940 and documentation showing that in their short time as a married couple, they spent only 30 some days together before he was killed. We know that my sister was born in March 1941, one year after they were married. We even have the one and only anniversary card that Joe sent to our mother. The mystery has always been what happened to Joe on his very first mission in the Pacific. The official information seemed to elude me. After combat missions, reports are required in the Navy to document the details. They show objectives, personnel involved, mission outcome, and many other specifics.

The internet has many of these “After Action Reports” available for the Yorktown but none of them that covered the February 1, 1942, battle in the Marshall/Gilbert Islands. I personally spoke with many museums across the country, including the SDASM, hoping to find information on the Yorktown and the missing report. The only response that I received was from Debbie Seracini of the SDASM. She had taken it upon herself to check further and, in the museum basement, found the exact report that we were looking for. This After Action Report was THE key to solving the remaining questions for the family. Without her effort, we would still be searching for answers.

We now know the exact location of the mission, the launch time and weather in the area, the target island, and the distance to and from the target. The pre-dawn launch was in terrible weather and made formation join up and flying most difficult. We know
that two of Joe's squadron aircraft were lost on this mission and unfortunately, he was among the missing. Low fuel was a major issue because of the distance to the target and the winds. Many strike aircraft landed with emergency low fuel or ditched in the ocean on the return to the Yorktown. Even though we don't have an eye witness account of his death, we are at least aware of the mission that he was assigned to perform and the conditions that lead to his loss.

These are all details that our family has never known in the 75 years since Joe's death. My mother died without ever knowing exactly what happened to her husband and my sister has lived her life with only rumors or misinformation about her father's death. With no body to bury, through junior high school, my sister continued to hope that her father was alive on a deserted island and would return home someday. We are forever indebted to Ms. Seracini and the SDASM for providing the missing information that we were seeking. Just knowing the truth about what really happened is a way of putting closure to this old family mystery.

**BOB HOOVER’S FINAL FLIGHT**

Aviation legend Bob Hoover, described by Jimmy Doolittle as the “greatest stick-and-rudder man who ever lived,” passed away on October 25, 2016, in Los Angeles at 94. Hoover was inducted into the Museum’s International Air & Space Hall of Fame in 2007. It should also be noted that the Museum was a major contributor to *Flying the Feathered Edge: The Bob Hoover Project*, a film produced by Kim Furst in 2014, celebrating Hoover’s life.

Born in Nashville on January 22, 1922, Robert A. “Bob” Hoover loved aviation, soloing on his 16th birthday. After the outbreak of World War II, he reported for pilot training with the Army Air Corps. Deployed to Casablanca, his first assignment was as a test pilot at a repair depot, flying virtually every combat airplane in the Allied arsenal.

Hoover flew combat in Spitfires with the 52nd Fighter group. Shot down off the coast of Southern France, he spent 16 months as a prisoner of war. In April 1945, he planned and initiated a daring escape from the prison camp, commandeering a FW-190 fighter, taking off behind enemy lines, and flying to safety in Holland.

After World War II, Hoover was assigned to the Flight Evaluation Group at Wright Field in Ohio flying and evaluating captured German and Japanese combat aircraft, also transitioning to the new jet fighters. Later, as Chuck Yeager’s backup pilot, Hoover flew the chase safety plane during Yeager’s historic Mach 1 flight at Muroc AFB.

Hoover joined North American Aviation, testing the FJ-2, the F-8 Crusader, and the F-100 Super Sabre. Though no longer in the Air Force, he flew combat missions with Air Force squadrons in Korea, demonstrating capabilities of the F-86 Sabre to pilots in actual combat. He was also the first man to fly the Navy’s XFJ-2 Fury and the Navy’s T-28 trainer.

During his lifetime, Hoover flew more than 300 types of aircraft and performed at more than 2,500 civilian and military air shows. He was considered one of the founding fathers of modern aerobatic.

*Bob Hoover is pictured with long-time L&A volunteer Dave Barnett at a North American F-100 Super Sabre reunion in Ohio in 2015. Dave and Bob both flew the F-100.*
In this issue, the L&A would like to pay tribute to one of our most dedicated volunteers, Daniel Schlachet.

On July 1, 2013, Special Collections archivist Stephania Villar brought in a young volunteer to help her with her work. Daniel was entering his senior year at UCSD in the history department and was also a close friend of her brother and family. He was looking for archival experience as he continued his studies at school, and Stephania could see a perfect match.

He was quiet, studious, reliable, and willing to tackle any job. Daniel started out operating our camera station and spent hours in the dark, digitizing hundreds of photographs. Daniel is also highly skilled in computer technology and was valuable to the Library & Archives with his knowledge of archival programs. It wasn’t long before Daniel became a strong team member and was processing special collections.

Daniel graduated from UCSD on June 15, 2014, and Stephania’s last day was three months later, on September 30th. She taught him well and Daniel stayed on, coming in a couple of days each week. That October, the L&A was under a grant deadline to update and process 189 special collections. We all went into high gear as we updated finding guides, rehoused collections, and continued to process new ones, all with the goal of having continuity with the collections. Daniel was extremely valuable at that time as he alone processed more than 25 collections between October 2014 and January 2015.

Collection processing is a challenging experience as each one is unique. Some come to the library already in some sort of order, while most do not, and it is our job as archivists to organize the collection and create a finding guide for researchers. The challenge is putting together the history. Some donations may arrive in one box, while others could be in 10, 20, or more.

For three years, Daniel was there to help with many of those collections. But he will always be especially remembered for processing and housing hundreds and hundreds of Convairity, Consolidated News, Boeing, Lockheed, and General Dynamics newsletters.

It was a bittersweet day when he told us in early 2016 that he would be leaving at the end of summer to attend UCLA for a Master of Library and Information Science degree. We are very proud of our friend and colleague – we miss him greatly, especially his sense of humor, and happy to see him moving up in the archival world! Congratulations, Thumper Dan!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Your gifts to the San Diego Air & Space Museum make it possible for many dedicated people to pursue important work and help the Museum remain California’s premier institution for aviation history and technology. Some of the world’s most talented, caring, passionate, and involved individuals work and volunteer at the Museum.

You will find our staff and volunteers:

- Caring for some of the world’s most important collections
- Creating memorable visitor experiences
- Teaching school groups and other local organizations
- Assisting researchers in the Library & Archives
- Producing informative publications about the collections.

If you are interested in joining our important team, please contact us at 619-234-8291 x123 or kpescador@sdasm.org.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE L&A

More than fifty percent of L&A funding is from private donors. Your tax-deductible contribution of $100, $250, $500 or $1,000 or more, or of any amount, will help accomplish our 2017 goals, which include our cage renovation project. To date, we have raised $120,000, but need another $20,000 before we can initiate this critical project. Please feel free to contact me at 619-234-8291 x123.

Thank you in advance for your continuing support.
STAY CONNECTED

Are you following us on Facebook? We are posting regularly with news, photos of the week, and special articles. Facebook is just one way the Library & Archives is sharing its collection with the community.

By becoming a fan and following our blog, you can stay up to date with the latest news, volunteer information, publications, and photos of the Library & Archives. Join us and stay connected at facebook.com/SDASMLA.

Recommend us to all your family and friends, and help spread the word about our mission to “Collect... Preserve... and Make Available” Aerospace History.

flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/
youtube.com/user/sdasmarchives

OPEN FOR RESEARCH

The SDASM Library & Archives collection is accessible for research. Staff and/or volunteers are available for assistance. Appointments should be made in advance by calling 619-234-8291 x125, or by emailing dseracini@sdasm.org, prior to your visit. Information can often be pulled prior to your visit if we are aware of your research request. Contact the L&A staff for research rules and regulations.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesday to Friday
(10:00 am - 4:00 pm)

(Closed on Mondays, weekends, federal holidays, and for some special Museum functions)