MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD ARCHIVIST

It has been a year since our last newsletter - much has been going on in the Library & Archives in the interim. Not only are we assisting a larger number of researchers needing information, but we have also increased our work in support of grant-funded projects, made possible through our fundraising efforts. These successes would not have been possible without the talented staff and volunteers in our Library, and through the support of our patrons and donors.

Much progress has been made over the past several years to raise awareness of and increase access to our archival collections. We have accomplished this through our many publications, adding collections into our online catalog system (AeroCat), digitizing our vast photo and film collections, and using various social media sites such as Flickr and YouTube to reach a larger audience. Our Flickr site alone has received views from around the world totaling 53 million since launched.

As we continue to move forward, we are also focusing on improving the library's storage spaces. Our collection has dramatically increased in size and scope over the years, far outgrowing available storage space. We have developed a two phase plan which will optimize space usage through the use of compact shelving and customized storage equipment. In August 2013, the Library's annual appeal rose over $15,800 for this effort. In addition, we are actively seeking government and foundation funding to complete the first phase of this project.

We are also working on several new online exhibitions. For the upcoming park centennial celebration we are introducing an exhibition on the history of Balboa Park and our Museum, due for release in April 2014. We will also be developing a Women of Flight online exhibit during the year, due for release in 2015.

Finally, it is especially important to note, in the past year, we received two significant grants to increase access to our collections, one from IMLS and one from the Mellon Foundation. We also received a very significant donation from United Launch Alliance (ULA) and Lockheed, the Heritage Atlas Centaur Film Collection, along with $50,000 for its care. It has been a good year!

HIDDEN COLLECTIONS

Over 233,000 on-site and over 220,000 virtual guests visited the Museum last year to learn about air and space history and technology, but few really knew of the depth and breadth of the Museum’s archives. Last year, thanks to a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (funded by the Mellon Foundation), we were able to embark on a two-year project to better bring our “hidden collections” into the public eye. This required cataloging the Museum’s important aerospace archival and special collections and making them available online in a variety of formats and locations.

Our archival documents, including over 180 of what we call special collections, cover a wide range of materials. These are one-of-a-kind primary sources that can shed light and provide important information to the historical record. Our special collections include the corporate records of several San Diego-based aerospace companies, including Ryan Aeronautical, Rohr Aircraft Corporation, and Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, as well as the personal papers of a number of aerospace pioneers and famous aviators, such as T. Claude Ryan, Jacqueline Cochran, Helen Richey, Charles Lindbergh, George Hallett, and many others. It is for this reason that we have made it a priority to make these materials available to the public.

After a great deal of planning and testing to smooth out the process, over 80 of our special collections have now been rehoused, have condition reports prepared for future conservation use, and have finding guides

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that the general public will be able to locate and use. Two of these collections are the substantial Rohr and Convair-General Dynamics Collections. While the latter is still being processed, an in-progress finding guide has been provided on the “Collections” page of our website.

We have already received requests and have been able to share previously lesser known special collections with researchers - such as the George B. Arnold Special Collection. These collections have proven valuable, as evidenced through the popularity they have enjoyed on social media, and the number of requests and researchers they have drawn into the Library.

George Arnold served as Vice President and General Manager of Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company in China, among other companies. His collection includes numerous photographs from the 1934-1939 period. Of particular interest are images from 1937, when Arnold was in Shien Chaio, China, building an aircraft factory. His collection of photographs, as well as many other previously hidden treasures, are now able to enjoy the spotlight.

The Library & Archives is always looking for volunteers to be a part of this project, without whom this enormous task would be nearly impossible to complete. As of January, over 1,400 volunteer hours have been spent rehousing, organizing, and developing finding guides for these collections. In addition, we have begun to use social media to spread the word and share rarely seen images and materials from our collections. Be a part of the conversations on Flickr, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter!

COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT: Horace Clyde Balsley

“Many strange thoughts have been coming in my head all day … How strange it was for me to be there. I, who a little more than a year ago never even dreamed of France. I was in a lecture room full of officers and soldiers participating in this war and I was one of them.” From the diary of Horace Clyde Balsley, October 30, 1915.

This year, on July 28, one hundred years will have passed since the start of the Great War. More than nine million combatants were killed, a casualty rate various historians have attributed to technology that had advanced beyond the tactics of the era. This war saw the first early use of fixed-wing, military aircraft – initially for reconnaissance and ground attack, but eventually heralding the aerial battles that would define World War II.

The Museum’s Library & Archives has a number of collections related to World War I, including the logbook of the Lafayette Escadrille, as well as various personal collections of those who served in this war, whose writings, photos, and memorabilia bring humanity and life to this conflict. The papers of Horace Clyde Balsley are one such collection.

Capt. Horace Clyde Balsley (July 27, 1893 – July 23, 1942) was a member of the Lafayette Escadrille – a French fighter squadron mostly comprised of American volunteers who sought to aid France in the war and encourage Americans at home to abandon neutrality. In 1915, he left San Antonio, Texas, and chose to go to France and participate in the European conflict. He was the first American whose plane was shot down during World War I, in effect, the first American pilot to be shot down in aerial combat.

A significant item in the Balsley collection is a reprint of his war-time diary, which describes his trials and difficulties of getting to Europe and trying to find work, and finding ways to help the war effort, while not having a penny to his name. He was finally able
to work steadily as a part of the American Ambulance Hospital and then, in early 1916, he was accepted into the Air Guard of Paris and trained on the Nieuport 23. He became the ninth American pilot in the Lafayette Escadrille.

An entry from December 2, 1915, reads:

*Yesterday I had a letter from [home] enclosing a newspaper clipping telling that I had joined the aviation corps etc. It also said I had dislocated my knee. If so, that is the first I heard of it.*

Heralded as a “daring aviator,” who had the Lone Star of Texas painted on his plane, Balsley was unfortunately shot down and injured in the hip by an explosive bullet. For some time, it did not seem he would survive, but, thanks to the talents and tenaciousness of medical personnel, he did. As the first American shot down during the war, Balsley gained considerable fame.

Upon his return to the United States, Balsley served as a flight instructor at Gerstner Field, near Lake Charles, Louisiana and later as a recruiter, while he continued to generate publicity making speeches during war bond drives throughout his later military service. Several letters in the collection detail Balsley’s efforts to claim benefits from the Veteran’s Administration.

Among the various news clippings following his life is one announcing Balsley’s marriage to silent screen actress Miriam MacDonald and references to her sister, actress and producer Katherine MacDonald.

After the war and his retirement from the military and aviation, Balsley was General Manager of the Merle Norman cosmetics firm in Los Angeles. He passed away in 1942.

Both Balsley and his collection are survivors. Parts of his collection were lost or badly damaged during the Museum’s 1978 fire, but conservation copies and many original pieces survived, and are available to researchers. It is one of many stories in our collection that bring the First World War down to a human scale and new life in the year of its centennial anniversary.
HERITAGE ATLAS CENTAUR FILM COLLECTION

The San Diego Air & Space Museum recently received an historic Atlas space launch vehicle film collection from Lockheed Martin and United Launch Alliance (ULA), totaling approximately 3,000 reels of 16-millimeter film, along with a $50,000 grant to preserve and catalog this collection. The film collection includes interviews and lectures by early rocket pioneers, such as Kraft Ehrlicke, known as the “Father of the Atlas;” James Dempsey, who headed development of the original Atlas Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) program; and Dr. Charles Draper, known as the “Father of Inertial Navigation.” Films of both presidential and early astronaut visits to Atlas facilities are included, as are films documenting many of America’s most historic space missions. The collection includes data, photographs, and film of virtually every launch over more than 50 years of the Atlas program. Every aspect of the program is captured, including images of the vehicle, the design, development, test facilities, operational sites, and the men and women who made this era of spaceflight possible.

San Diego is the birthplace of the Atlas, truly one of America’s air and space “giants.” The Atlas was designed, developed and manufactured in San Diego, initially by Convair, and, later, the Space Systems Division of General Dynamics Corporation, also known at one time as the Astronautics Division. Atlas provided an effective Cold War deterrent in its initial role as America’s first ICBM, and later served as a reliable and more powerful space launch vehicle for sending America’s first astronauts into Earth orbit.

Atlas launched the first satellite to project a human voice from space in 1958, broadcasting a message to Earth from President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Atlas also launched the Surveyor moon missions, which provided the foundation for Apollo human exploration voyages, the Mariner missions to Mars and outer planets, critical national security missions, weather and climate monitoring satellites, and vital communications and navigation satellites such as today’s Global Positioning Satellite system.

Today’s Lockheed Martin Corporation heritage companies include the General Dynamics Space Systems Division originally headquartered in San Diego, where over 500 Atlas ICBM and space launch vehicles were designed and built. In 1994, the Space Systems Division was acquired by Martin Marietta, and the following year Martin Marietta joined Lockheed to form Lockheed Martin. Following this merger Lockheed Martin donated a significant archive of historic photos and films to the Museum. The records gained at that time constituted an unprecedented historic treasure, consisting of 165,000 Atlas images, as well as 77,750 Convair aircraft images and 3,500 corporate images. The film collection most recently acquired significantly complements the earlier Atlas collection donation.
ASSISTING RESEARCHERS

It’s truly amazing how many research requests the Library & Archives receives from around the world - Europe, South America, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan - and many of them are from repeat customers! The majority of our requests are typically for photographs for use in publications, while many other requests are for technical drawings needed to rebuild planes and engines, such as the Ryan PT-22 or the Stits Playboy. Another frequently received request is for film footage that will be used in exhibits, television shows, and documentaries.

There are about 4,000 films now cataloged in the Library & Archives, with about 1,000 of those now available for viewing on YouTube. Our collections also include over two million photographs, with about 170,000 of those now available for viewing on Flickr. Both of these internet sites have been invaluable to researchers worldwide, and we provide an easy and streamlined response service in fulfilling their requests.

Typically, a request is received through the SDASM website and forwarded to us, or sometimes called in over the phone. Researchers usually ask if we have photographs of such-n-such, and to help them with their search, an email is sent with a link to whatever subject they are interested in on our Flickr site. We also include a request form that can be filled out online and is usually promptly returned. With the information provided, an invoice is prepared and returned by email with instructions on how to make payment by phone or online through PayPal. Once payment is received, the images are sent through a large-file transfer website - our favorite being WeTransfer.com. In many cases, these transactions take place within one day, making many happy customers, especially those working under a deadline!

Doing business by phone and email, with assistance from the Internet, has made the fulfillment of research requests an easy task for everyone. Aviation researchers from around the world have found the Library & Archives to be their favorite one-stop shopping place.

DIGITIZING THE COLLECTION

Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, in particular Marsha Gray and Steven Clark, digitization of the Heritage Atlas Centaur Film Collection is well underway. To date, over 200 films and videos have been digitized and placed online via the Library &

In 2013, we received 122 request forms for films, photographs, and drawings, which generated over $10,000 in revenue, just from photo reproduction and usage requests.
NEW ONLINE EXHIBITION


The exhibit explores the history of Balboa Park, from 1868 to the present. With images from our archives, *Evolution and Rebirth* documents the Panama-California Exposition, to the Navy usage of the Park to train sailors for World War I, to the 1935-1936 California Pacific International Exposition that kept Balboa Park from shutting down, and when the Ford Building was constructed, giving us a glance at the Park today as it prepares for its Centennial in 2015. Most importantly, however, this exhibit demonstrates the deep ties the Park has to its San Diego home and how individuals, organizations, and the community shaped the Park and San Diego Air & Space Museum to be the institutions they are today. Balboa Park is San Diego’s cultural park and *Evolution and Rebirth* will tell its story.
IMPROVING OUR SPACES

The Museum's collections are the core of its mission and activities. As the Library & Archives’ special collections have grown dramatically in recent years, these important materials have been stored in a 1,400 square foot Caged-In area in the lower level of our building. This Caged-In area was intended only for temporary collection processing, but with a recent loss of open storage space, and the dramatic, three-fold increase in the size of these special collections, this area has become permanent storage for archival materials. This imposes a significant problem for retrieval, collection care, as well as overall security, and significantly reduces access for research purposes.

Virtually all of the collections currently stored in this area must be processed, rehoused, cataloged and more properly stored. The area is currently surrounded by a chain link fence with a locked gate. The Museum’s restoration and fabrication workshops surround the outside perimeter of the fence. To protect the collection, walls must be constructed to allow temperature, humidity, ventilation and security control. Additional compact shelving must be installed, freeing up much needed space, and also providing space for re-housing these collections in acid-free archival boxes. Additional stand-alone shelving for oversized materials is also needed, and museum-standard lighting must be installed.

To date, we have completed a significant amount of work in preparation for this important project. Three of the six walls required have been constructed, an electrical system has been provided for, and the environmental control system has been put in place, which can be activated once the walls are completed. Full completion of the special collections permanent storage facility envisioned, including the additional construction necessary, will require funding in the amount of $139,043. Thus far we have raised $10,880 from individual donations and we are also actively seeking government and foundation grants for this project.
UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Behind every exhibit there must be factual documentation, making the Museum’s Library & Archives essential for its educational effectiveness. The L&A supports the Museum’s education, exhibit, and aircraft restoration programs by providing historical background, photographs, films, and documents; in addition to its continuing support of authors, historians, and researchers from around the world.

Beginning April 25th and running through December this year, the Museum will showcase a new exhibit entitled, San Diego Aerospace Industry: Serving the Military for 100 Years. Ours is one of ten such exhibits being staged at various institutions throughout San Diego County in a collaborative effort with the San Diego History Center to be called collectively, Presidio to Pacific Powerhouse: How the Military Shaped San Diego. The various exhibits will tell the story of how the military has impacted every aspect of San Diego’s social, economic and political growth and development.

Our exhibit will focus on the story of the region’s aerospace manufacturing history as it has related to the U.S. military demand. Perhaps greater than any other in the nation, the San Diego area boasts a heritage rich in the military manufacturing culture, encompassing over 100 years of technological advancement. From the birth of Naval Aviation on North Coronado Island in 1911 the San Diego aerospace industry has grown and flourished.

Consolidated Aircraft Corporation (later Convair), manufacturer of the famed B-24 Liberator and PBY Catalina from the WW II era, the Air Force F-102 and F-106 interceptors, and the Atlas ICBM and space launch vehicle, relocated here from New York in 1935. Ryan Aeronautical Company, manufacturer of thousands of World War II training aircraft and later a long series of military un-manned vehicles, sprouted from Ryan Airlines in the 1920’s. Numerous ancillary organizations as well contributed to this history which will be captured through the San Diego Air & Space Museum exhibits at its Balboa Park and Gillespie Field locations.

In addition to the Presidio to Powerhouse exhibition, the Museum will be enhancing two of its galleries featuring never-before-seen items from its permanent collections. Both the Women of Flight and World War I galleries will be updated over the next several months.
Women of Flight Gallery Update, April 2014

Located in the Golden Age of Flight gallery, the Museum will be creating an exhibit honoring the significant achievements of women in the world of aeronautics. We will recognize and tell the story of organizations such as the WASP and the 99’s, of individuals of note such as Jackie Cochran and Louise Thaden, of aerobatic entertainers, industrial giants, and aviation pioneers, all contributors in their own way to the glorious history of aviation.

World War I Gallery Update: 100 year Anniversary, August 2014

This year marks the 100 year anniversary of the start of the Great War. The multifaceted conflict that would consume most all of Europe, eventually drawing in the United States, was monumentally expensive both in terms of dollars spent and more importantly of lives expended. More than nine million combatants were killed, a casualty rate various historians have attributed to technology that had advanced beyond the tactics of the era. Yet this war saw the first use of fixed-wing, designated military aircraft – initially for reconnaissance and ground attack, expanding to air to air combat, heralding as it did, the aerial battles that would define World War II.

In commemoration of the 100 year anniversary, the Museum will be upgrading its one of a kind WWI gallery to include: rare archival materials (Lafayette Escadrille logbook), video documentation of the aircraft and other valuable artifacts in the gallery, and featuring two original and significant period French aircraft, the Nieuport 28 and the SPAD VII and the Apollo missions in particular. Highlights of the collection include personalized, autographed letters from John Glenn and Neil Armstrong, among others.
SAN DIEGO AVIATION HERITAGE:
FOOTPRINTS FROM THE PAST

Known for years as the “Air Capital of the West,” San Diego’s early aviation history includes many aviation “firsts,” as well as a number of equally important historically important aviation events or locations. The locations and history of these early events will be celebrated in a proposed Museum publication. Through a series of profiles describing San Diego County’s early aviation sites, we will provide historical information for the reader, and for those wishing to explore the area. San Diego’s aviation past will come to life through a carefully researched and detailed catalog of events and places that have made San Diego’s aviation history unique. Period images will be included for each event or location, as will be contemporary photographs, providing today’s view. A special section will highlight San Diego’s many “abandoned airfields.”

WHAT’S NEW IN AEROCAT

Descriptions of the Museum’s collection of more than 300 rare and unique photo albums and scrapbooks have now been uploaded into our online catalog, AeroCat. The photographs, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia in these volumes document individuals, aircraft, locations, and events important to the history of aviation over the last century. In addition, significant items from more than 50 of these volumes have been digitized and can be viewed in Flickr.com via a link in AeroCat. For additional information, contact the Library & Archives at 619.234.8291 x125.
TRIBUTE TO:
Dennis Stewart

Tuesday and Thursday mornings will never be the same around the Library & Archives as we have lost one of our most friendly, valuable, and knowledgeable volunteers...Dennis Stewart. Dennis sadly passed away on January 16, 2014. His memorial service were held at Fort Rosecrans on Wednesday, February 13th.

Dennis had volunteered at the Museum since 1997; first as a docent and then in the Library & Archives. His skills have been invaluable in the preservation of the Museum’s Film collection. This collection contains films, negatives, and other digital media that spans the whole history of aviation. He helped process, number, and catalog the collection. Dennis was often seen watching films on the Library’s film projector with pencil and paper in hand taking notes to add to the catalog. His knowledge of the film collection was expansive and he was always available to assist researchers and volunteers with questions relating to the collection.

Dennis was born and raised in the Los Angeles suburb of Bell, California. After two years of studies at Compton Junior College, he enlisted in the USAF as an aviation cadet. Trained in a T-6 Texans and B-25 Mitchells in flight school, Lt. Stewart was assigned to Military Air Transport Command as a C-124 Globemaster pilot. He flew cargo all over the pacific. After completing his service in the Air Force, Dennis completed college earning a BA in History from San Francisco State University. In 1960, he took a job with the Federal Aviation Agency as an Air Traffic Controller in Los Angeles. In 1962, Dennis transferred to the Anchorage office and in 1964 went into personnel management. Dennis switched from the FAA to the Department of the Navy in 1967, and retired from Federal Service in San Diego. Dennis was a licensed commercial pilot and had over 2,000 flight hours in his log book. At the age of 60, Dennis flew around the world with Robert Weiss in an A36 Beechcraft Bonanza. His story is told in the book, Bonanza Around the World, published by Wind Canyon Publishing, Inc. in 1998.
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.

Twitter.com/@SDASM_archives
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 (x 125), 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 Library & archives 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)