



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Ida Van Smith Flight Clubs, Inc. Journal and Negro
Airmen International, Inc. Membership Cards

2017

National Air and Space Museum Archives
14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
NASMRefDesk@si.edu
<https://airandspace.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Ida Van Smith Flight Clubs, Inc. Journal and Negro Airmen International, Inc. Membership Cards
Date:	(bulk 1974-1978)
Identifier:	NASM.2017.0007
Extent:	0.05 Cubic feet ((1 folder))
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Samantha Stockley, Gift, 2016

Preferred Citation

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Restrictions

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Biographical / Historical

In 1967, Ida Van Smith founded a series of flight training clubs for minority children to encourage their involvement in aviation and aerospace sciences. Born in North Carolina, Smith graduated from Shaw University and earned a master's degree from Queens College. She became a teacher in the New York City Public Schools in the fields of history and special education. In 1967, at the age of 50, she finally fulfilled a personal dream to learn to fly. Once she had her private pilot's license and instructor rating, Smith founded the Ida Van Smith Flight Club on Long Island, New York. Training for the students was provided in an aircraft simulator funded by the FAA and an operational Cessna 172. Soon there were more than 20 clubs throughout the country, with members ages 13-19. As a result, thousands of children were exposed to aviation and many pursued careers in aviation. Smith also produced and hosted a cable television show on aviation and taught an introductory aviation course at York College of the City University of New York. Although she retired from teaching in 1977, Smith remains active in her namesake clubs. She is a member of the Tuskegee Airman's Black Wings, Negro Airman International, and the Ninety-Nines. She has published or been featured in many educational, aviation, and historical journals. Smith has received numerous awards for her contributions to aviation and youth education.

Biographical / Historical

The Negro Airmen International, Inc. (NAI) was founded in February, 1967 by aviator Edward Gibbs. NAI is the oldest African American civilian aviation organization in the country and encourages African Americans to enter the field of aviation by providing aviation learning opportunities and creating job opportunities.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of a 1974 edition of the Ida Van Smith Flight Clubs, Inc. Journal, signed by Smith, and two Negro Airmen International Inc. membership cards for Teddie N. Hayes, 1976 and 1978.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- African American air pilots

Types of Materials:

- Membership cards
- Publications

Names:

- Negro Airmen International, Inc.
- Van Smith, Ida