



Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

Clifford W. Henderson Collection

2017

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Clifford W. Henderson Collection
Identifier:	NASM.2017.0008
Date:	undated
Extent:	0.47 Cubic feet ((3 boxes))
Creator:	Henderson, Clifford W., 1895-1939
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Kim Dell, Gift, 2016

Preferred Citation

Clifford W. Henderson Collection, Acc. 2017-0008, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

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Biographical / Historical

Clifford W. Henderson (1895-1984) was an aviation promoter and showman who managed the annual National Air Races from 1928 until 1939, bringing attention to the expanding field of sport aviation. Born in Iowa, Henderson graduated from the University of Southern California in 1917 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He served in the 35th Ambulance Unit, France, during World War I, before transferring to the 101st Aero Squadron where he learned to fly. After the war, Henderson returned to California and was chairman of ground arrangements for the departure and return of the Army's Around the World Flight in 1924 from Clover Field in Santa Monica. In 1928 he became Director of Aviation of Los Angeles and served as the first manager of the Los Angeles airport system. Also in 1928 Henderson became director of the National Air Races and was responsible for interesting industry leaders in competition trophies, including the Thompson, Bendix, and Grieve Trophies. He retired from managing the National Air Races

in 1939. Henderson served in the Army Air Corps during World War II, rising to the rank of colonel. He played an instrumental role in planning the Burma Hump air route, and also served as military governor of Dakar in North Africa. After the war, Henderson was suffering from illness and injuries sustained in Africa, and so went to recuperate in California where he founded Palm Desert, California. He remained active in the Palm Desert community until his death in 1984.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of approximately 0.5 cubic feet of material relating to Clifford W. Henderson including photographs, event programs, published materials, news clippings, audio tape, and motion picture film. The photographs consist of black and white prints, mostly 8 x 10 inches in size, and a photo album of smaller black and white prints with a leather cover which measures approximately 9 x 7 inches. Besides Henderson, other notable people in the photographs include James R. Wedell; Benjamin Odell Howard; Roy Minor; Henry Harley "Hap" Arnold; Charles Edwin Thompson; Mary Pickford; Ernst Udet; Frank Hawks; Gordon Israel; H. W. "Spud" Manning; Florence Lowe "Pancho" Barnes; Ken Maynard; John McDonald Miller; Hoot Gibson; Amelia Mary Earhart; Steve J. Wittman; Lee Gelbach; James "Jimmy" Haizlip; Mary "Mae" Haizlip; Iris Louise McPhetridge Thaden; James Harold "Jimmy" Doolittle; Roscoe Turner; Tito Falconi; and Ruth Rowland Nichols. Aircraft shown in the photographs include the Howard (Benjamin O.) DGA-4 "Mike"; Curtiss B-2 Condor; Vought O2U-1 Corsair; Northrop (Avion) Experimental No.1 (1929 Flying Wing); Keith Rider R-2 "Bumble Bee"; Israel (Gordon) "Redhead" Racer; Wedell-Williams Model 22 (NR 60Y) (Race #s: 22, 54); Keith Rider R-1 "San Francisco I"; Udet U 12 Flamingo; Pitcairn PCA-2 Autogiro; Brown (Alden) Racing (Special Monoplane Racer); Wittman (Steve) (#2) "Chief Oshkosh"; Wedell-Williams Model 44 II (NR 536V) (Race #: 92); Chester (Art) Jeep; Lockheed Model 5B Vega, Earhart Aircraft, NR7952; Wedell-Williams Model 44 (44 III) (NR 61Y) (Race #s: 2, 25, 57, 121); Brown (Lawrence) Miles-Atwood Special; Vultee V1; Stearman (1927) Model 6-A Cloudboy; Wedell-Williams Model 44 I (NR 278V) (Race #s: 44, 91); Northrop Gamma 2A "Sky Chief"; Lockheed Model 5 Vega Special (Nichols Aircraft); a Douglas Dolphin custom-built for the Vanderbilt family (A/C No. NC14208); Stearman (1927) Model 4-C Junior Speedmail; Curtiss F8C-5 (O2C-1) Helldiver; and a Caproni Ca.113. The audio tape consists of a 1/4 inch reel made in 1960 at an event celebrating the anniversary of the 1910 Dominguez Air Meet. There are 16 reels of 8mm film in the collection, all of which contain footage relating to World War II aviation. The collection also contains a reel of microfilm of an unidentified book on ballooning and early aviation, and a hard-backed promotional book for the Ford 4-AT Tri-Motor.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Air pilots
- Airplane racing
- Airplanes
- Lockheed Model 5 Vega
- Vought O2U-1 Corsair
- Wedell-Williams Model 44 (44 III)

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Motion pictures (visual works)

Newspaper clippings
Photograph albums
Photographs
Programs

Names:

Arnold, Henry Harley, 1886-1950
Barnes, Florence Lowe "Pancho"
Doolittle, James Harold, 1896-1993
Earhart, Amelia, 1897-1937
Hawks, Frank
Nichols, Ruth.
Pickford, Mary
Thaden, Iris Louise McPhetridge
Turner, Roscoe, 1895-1970
Udet, Ernst, General