



# Smithsonian

*National Air and Space Museum*

## Reading Air Show Collection

2017

National Air and Space Museum Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Reading Air Show Collection
<b>Date:</b>	(bulk 1946-1981)
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.2017.0031
<b>Creator:</b>	Reading Aviation Service
<b>Extent:</b>	7 Cubic feet ((7 boxes))
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

John Cianci, Gift, 2017

### Preferred Citation

Reading Air Show Collection, Accession 2017-0031, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

### Conditions Governing Use

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## Biographical / Historical

During its over 40 years of operation, the Reading Air Show became one of the best known and attended air shows nationwide. Air shows at the Reading Airport started in 1939 and were run by the airport authority before the US Army took over and enlarged the show during World War II. After the war, Reading community flying clubs and Reading Aviation Services (RAS) started a modest show. The RAS, a fixed base operation providing aircraft service and supplies, was instrumental in the Reading Air Show (which they called the National Maintenance and Operations Meeting ) as an event to package their product and to thank their customers. Eventually the Air Show evolved into the following format: public air shows to open and close the show with commercially attended trade exhibits midweek. In 1966 the first military team performed. At its peak in the mid 1970s the four-day public attendance topped 100,000, with more than 200 companies and several hundred exhibits and 650 airplanes parked on the ramp. The roster of exhibitions included Rockwell International; Grumman American Aviation; Boeing Vertol; AVCO Lycoming; Bell Helicopter Textron; Aerospatiale Helicopter; Pratt & Whitney; Beechcraft; Piper; and Cessna. Eventually crowd control and logistics overwhelmed the modest airport and the staff of Reading Air Services who planned the event; the last year for the Air Show was 1980.

## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of seven cubic feet of programs; scrapbooks; black and white photographs; and financial ledgers documenting the Reading Air Show, 1946-1980. The scrapbooks including newspaper clippings; exhibitor registrations, rules and regulations agreements and passes; tickets; newsletters; press releases; and black and white photographs of both the exhibitors and the air shows.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Air shows
- Reading Air Show

Types of Materials:

- Photographs
- Programs
- Scrapbooks