Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

Roy Healy Papers

2017

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Roy Healy Papers
Date:	(bulk 1930s-1960s)
Identifier:	NASM.2017.0034
Creator:	Healy, Roy
Extent:	8 Cubic feet ((8 boxes))
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Adele and Lyn Healy, Gift, 2017

Preferred Citation

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Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

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Biographical / Historical

Roy Healy (1915-1968) was a prominent American rocket pioneer whose career spanned more than 40 years. Healy began conducting amateur rocketry experiments in 1927 at the age of 12, and studied aeronautical engineering at the Casey Jones Technical School from 1934-1938. He worked for Brewster Aviation Company and American Airlines before being hired by the Air Material Command at Wright Field to work on rocket technology. From 1943 to 1946, he served as a project engineer for the design, testing, and development of air-to-air and air-to-surface rocket projectiles and launchers at the Armament Laboratory at Wright Field. This work led him to be sent, in 1944, to the China-Burma-India Theatre for four months to install rocket launchers in aircraft and to train crews on how to use them. Healy was involved with the Tiny Tim air-to-surface rocket, as well as a six-round automatic revolver type rocket launcher for 4.5-inch rockets designed by Bell Telephone Laboratories for use on the B-17 and other aircraft. During this period, Healy also served as the rocket and launching equipment design and development head at the Dover Rocket Development Center at Dover, Delaware. He also designed and flight tested wing rocket pods for the first U.S. Air Force jet fighters and was the Chief Technical Engineer, Preliminary Designs, at the Naval Aeronautical Rocket Test Station in New Jersey. From 1946 to 1953, Healy was employed at the M. K. Kellogg Co. of Jersey City, N.J., in their Special Projects Division, first on Navy liquid propellant boosters, from 1946 to 1949, and

then as their Chief Design Engineer at Kellogg's test facilities at Lake Denmark, N.J. Healy's later work with Kellogg was on rocket sled boosters, rocket test equipment, and lastly on the preliminary design of rocket engines, boosters, and JATO units. In May 1953 Healy joined North American Aviation, working on their 75,000-lb thrust liquid propellant rocket engine for the Redstone missile. Also in 1953, Healy served as a temporary consultant to SNCASO of Paris, France, and helped arrange the installation of a rocket engine for their Trident interceptor aircraft. In 1955, North American formed its Rocketdyne Division, and Healy was transferred to this organization, advancing to the position of Senior Research Engineer. From 1955 to 1958, he was the Project Engineer for the Thor (S3E rocket engine), and from 1958-1960, he was the Program Manager for the Jupiter missile rocket engine (S-3D). In 1958, Healy was also named the Program Manager of a space mission cluster project for the Army Ballistic Missile Agency, although he retained his positions at Rocketdyne. In 1961 Healy transferred to North American Rockwell's Space Division to become the Assistant Program Manager of the Saturn S-II engine. In June of 1966, Healy went on medical leave and he died of a heart attack in 1968. Healy was very involved with the American Rocket Society (ARS), joining in 1935. He became the President of the ARS both in 1942 and 1947, and was named a Fellow in 1955. Healy served as the editor of the ARS Journal during the 1940s, and authored numerous technical and popular articles on rockets. He also co-chaired the AIAA's Los Angeles Section Historical Committee for 1966-1967. In 1970, a 23.6 mile diameter crater on the far side of the Moon was named in Healy's honor (situated at 32.8° N, 110.5° W).

Scope and Contents

This collection of papers consists of approximately 8 cubic feet of material chronicling Roy Healy's lifelong interest in rocketry and his career as a rocket engineer. The collection includes correspondence; technical manuals; technical drawings; book manuscripts; articles; reports; slides; photographic prints; publications; scrapbooks; and pamphlets.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Astronautics
- Jupiter Missile
- Redstone Missile (Major, URSA, SSM-G-14, SSM-A-14, PGM-11, Hermes C-1)
- Rocket engines
- Rocketry
- Rockets (Aeronautics)
- Saturn 5 Launch Vehicle
- Thor Missile

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence
- Manuals
- Manuscripts
- Photographs
- Publications
- Scrapbooks