



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky Reference Files

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2024

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky Reference Files
Date:	1889-1982
Identifier:	NASM.2022.0052
Extent:	2.5 Cubic feet (COLLECTION IS CURRENTLY UNPROCESSED)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of approximately 2.5 cubic feet of material gathered by former National Air and Space Museum (NASM) curator Von Hardesty and former NASM Museum Specialist Carl Bobrow as a set of reference files on the life and achievements of Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky. The collection contains many types of materials including correspondence, photography, writings by Sikorsky, news clippings, copies of official documents, motion picture film, and audio recordings.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Pan American Airways (PAA) Sikorsky S-42, World's Altitude Record with Load, April 26, 1934.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

NASM Generated, transfer, 2022, NASM.2022.0052

Processing Information

Arranged and described by Jessamyn Lloyd, 2022; encoded and revised by Melissa A. N. Keiser, 2024.

Preferred Citation

Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky Reference Files, NASM.2022.0052, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky (1889--1972) was born in Kiev and graduated from the Naval War College in St. Petersburg. While in Russia, he experimented with rotary-wing craft and designed the first multi-engined fixed-wing aircraft, the S-21 Grand and Il'ya Muromets. He immigrated to the United States in 1919 and a few years later formed the Sikorsky Aero Engineering Company (later a subsidiary of United Aircraft and, eventually, United Technologies Corporation). The Sikorsky S-29-A and S-38 arrived to acclaim and use in air transport. In 1939, the Sikorsky VS-300, the world's first successful helicopter, was flown for the first time and by 1943, Sikorsky's company was producing the Sikorsky R-4, the world's first production helicopter. After many more years of achievement and a multitude of honors for his highly significant contributions to aviation, Igor Sikorsky died at the age of 83.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of approximately 2.5 cubic feet of material gathered by former National Air and Space Museum (NASM) curator Von Hardesty and former NASM Museum Specialist Carl Bobrow as a set of reference files on the life and achievements of Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky. Much of the material seems to have been sent to Hardesty by Igor Sikorsky, Jr. The collection contains many types of materials including correspondence, photographic material, writings by Sikorsky, news clippings, copies of official documents such as Sikorsky's baptismal certificate, motion picture film, and audio recordings. The collection also contains an oral history interview (on two cassette tapes) with Dimitry D. "Jimmy" Viner, and three copies of *Igor Sikorsky at the 20th Annual Wright Brothers Memorial Dinner* (recorded December 14, 1967, reissued 1982). Two of the copies are on vinyl LP disc and the third copy is a cassette tape. Additional audio formats include metal and shellac on metal transcription discs.

Arrangement

The bulk of this collection is unprocessed and remains in the order in which it was received when the material was transferred to the Archives. The last series, Miscellaneous 35mm Film Cut Strips and Frames, has been rehoused, scanned, and described in this finding aid and the photographic materials placed in cold storage.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Aeronautics

Names:

Sikorsky, Igor Ivan, 1889-1972

Container Listing

Box 1	Unprocessed Materials (Box 1 of 5)
Box 2	Unprocessed Materials (Box 2 of 5)
Box 3	Unprocessed Materials (Box 3 of 5)
Box 4	Unprocessed Materials (Box 4 of 5)
Box 5	Unprocessed Materials (Box 5 of 5)

Miscellaneous 35mm Film Cut Strips and Frames, circa 1931-1938

Box 6

Box 6, Folder 1

[35mm Black and White Negative Roll Film, circa April-May 1934](#)

Notes: 35mm black and white Agfa negative roll film cut into 6 strips of 3-6 frames each, 32 frames total; severely curled, badly faded and browned overall.

Frames 10-15: pallets of sandbags, group of men inside a hangar. Frames 16-21: Right side of nose of Pan American Airways (PAA) Sikorsky S-42 inside a hangar, with five stacks of sandbags and sign, "SIKORSKY S-42 RECORD LOAD CARRIED, 16608 #, 4-26-34-1-1"; same set up with sign, "SIKORSKY S-42, WORLD'S ALTITUDE RECORD WITH LOAD, 16608 PDS TO OVER 16000 ft, APRIL 26 – 1934" with 3 or 4 men posed standing, including Igor Sikorsky at far right end. Frames 22-27: Views of Sikorsky flying boat components under construction inside a hangar (factory floor views); Sikorsky S-42 fuselage under construction; Sikorsky S-42 in low-level flight, taking off from water. Frames 28-33: Sikorsky S-42 in low-level flight, landing on water. Frames 34-38: Three unidentified men in factory hangar office; right side of nose of Pan American Airways (PAA) Sikorsky S-42 inside a hangar, with five stacks of sandbags and sign, "21,800 ft., SIKORSKY S-42 WORLD'S ALTITUDE RECORD with 5000 Kilo., May 17 – 1934." Frames 39-41: Men pose beside right side of nose of Pan American Airways (PAA) Sikorsky S-42 inside a hangar, with five stacks of sandbags and sign, "21,800 ft., SIKORSKY S-42 WORLD'S ALTITUDE RECORD with 5000 Kilo., May 17 – 1934."

Box 6, Folder 2

[35mm Glass-Mounted Color Slides, circa 1931-1934](#)

Notes: 4 frames, removed from deteriorating glass and cardboard mounts, only cut 35mm Kodachrome color transparency film frames retained. Three views of wingtip floats of a flying boat (probably at Sikorsky S-42) taken from inside the aircraft during flight; probably circa 1934. One distant view from shore of Sikorsky S-40 in flight over water, large crowd of civilians watching from foreground; circa early 1930s.

Box 6, Folder 3

[35mm Color Transparencies, Sikorsky Trip to Europe, 1938](#)

Notes: Two groups of miscellaneous frames of 35mm Kodachrome color transparency roll film cut into strips of 1 to 6 frames each; faded overall, with some frames over- or under-exposed.

Envelope: "DAD 35 m.m. Europe 1938 ?" Tourist photos taken in several different places, possibly including Lourdes (France), Rome (Italy), Switzerland, and other locations; may include some photos from the Mount Athos (Greece) area. Envelope: "Mt. ATHOS ? Circa 1938." Photos presumably taken in the Mount Athos monastery area

including orthodox priests and/or brethren, interiors and exteriors, Igoe Sikorsky and party in a boat and on shore.

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