



Smithsonian Institution Archives

George V. Barton Reminiscences, 1982-1983

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
Contact us at osiaref@si.edu

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Historical Note.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Descriptive Entry.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	George V. Barton Reminiscences
Identifier:	Record Unit 9556
Date:	1982-1983
Extent:	3 audiotapes (Reference copies). 4 digital .mp3 files (Reference copies).
Creator::	Barton, George V.
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9556, George V. Barton Reminiscences

Use Restriction

Restricted. Contact SIHistory@si.edu to request permission.

Historical Note

George V. Barton (1928-), marine electronics specialist and amateur astronomer, joined the staff of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO) in 1957 to work on the Satellite Tracking Program (STP). Over the course of the next year, he set up Baker-Nunn cameras at satellite tracking stations in Las Cruces, New Mexico; Olifantsfontein, South Africa; San Fernando, Spain; Naini Tal, India; and Villa Dolores, Argentina. Barton left the STP in 1958 to work on the Cateye Project from 1958 to 1963 and career at the Naval Research Laboratory from 1964 to 1974. He then returned to the field of marine electronics.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also reminiscences and interviews recorded by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

George V. Barton recorded his reminiscences of his career at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in 1982 and 1983 and donated them to the Smithsonian Institution Archives Oral History Collection.

Descriptive Entry

These reminiscences by Barton cover his hiring, orientation to the Satellite Tracking Program, the launching of Sputnik, installation of Baker-Nunn cameras, and his technical innovations such as the Barton Scope and reels for winding film.

The Barton Reminiscences consist of 3.5 hours of audio recordings and 83 pages of transcript.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Astronomy
- Astrophysics
- Interviews
- Observatories
- Oral history
- Scientific apparatus and instruments
- Sputnik satellites

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Transcripts

Names:

- Baker-Nunn camera
- Barton Scope
- Barton, George V.
- Naval Research Laboratory (U.S.)
- Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. Cat-Eye Program
- Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. Satellite Tracking Program

Geographic Names:

- Las Cruces (N.M.)
- Naini Tal (India)
- Olifantsfontein (South Africa)
- San Fernando (Spain)
- Villa Dolores (Córdoba, Argentina)

Container Listing

Reminiscences

- Reminiscences **Session 1: August 7, 1982**
- Reminiscences Includes Barton's reminiscences of his early work on the Satellite Tracking Program, c. 1957-1958.
- Reminiscences Transcript, pp. 1-43, of audiotape recording, 2.25 hours.
- Reminiscences Audio Recordings of Reminiscences; Total recording time: 2.25 hours
Note: • Original Masters: 2 audiocassette tapes
 • Preservation Masters: 2 7" and 3 7" low torque reel-to-reel tapes; 5 digital .wav files
 • Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes, 5 digital .mp3 files
- Reminiscences **Session 2: November 19, 1983**
- Reminiscences Includes Barton's reminiscences of his work setting up Satellite Tracking Program cameras abroad and the Cateye Project, c. 1958-1963.
- Reminiscences Transcript, pp. 44-83, of audiotape recording, 1.25 hours.
- Reminiscences Audio Recordings of Reminiscences: Total recording time: 1.25 hours
Note: • Original Masters: 1 audiocassette tape
 • Preservation Masters: 2 7" and 2 7" low torque reel-to-reel tapes; 4 digital .wav files
 • Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes, 4 digital .mp3 files