



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Walter R. Roderick Oral
History Interviews, 1986-1987

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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

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| Repository: | Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu |
| Title: | Walter R. Roderick Oral History Interviews |
| Identifier: | Record Unit 9590 |
| Date: | 1986-1987 |
| Extent: | 2 audiotapes (Reference copies). |
| Creator:: | Roderick, Walter R., interviewee |
| Language: | English |

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9590, Walter R. Roderick Oral History Interviews

Use Restriction

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

Historical Note

Walter R. Roderick (1935-), aircraft restoration specialist, served in the United States Air Force from 1952 to 1956. During these years, he gained experience in aircraft maintenance and repair. After three years with Capital Airlines, he joined the staff of the National Air and Space Museum (NASM) in 1959. His duties as an aircraft restoration specialist at NASM's Paul E. Garber Facility were to preserve, restore, and exhibit historic aircraft. Highlights of his career include the opening of the new NASM building in 1976 and the Silver Hill Museum in 1977. He retired as Chief of Production Operations at NASM in 1986.

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 interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Smith was interviewed for the Smithsonian Institution Archives Oral History Collection because of her service as a librarian and administrator with Smithsonian Institution Libraries.

Descriptive Entry

Roderick was interviewed by Susan E. Ewing, a University of Maryland student and Technical Information Specialist for the NASM Archives, in 1986 and 1987. The interviews cover his youth; education; career in the U.S. Air Force, Capital Airlines, and NASM; restoration of such famous aircraft as the *Winnie Mae*, *Vin Fiz*, and Douglas *World Cruiser*; opening of NASM and Paul E. Garber Facility; and reminiscences of colleagues, including Edward B. Chalkley, Paul E. Garber, and Walter Male. The collection consists of 3.0 hours of audiotape recording and 78 pages of transcript.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Interviews
- Oral history

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Transcripts

Names:

- Capital Airlines
- Chalkley, Edward B.
- Douglas World Cruiser (Airplane)
- Ewing, Susan E., interviewer
- Garber, Paul Edward, 1899-1992
- Male, Walter
- National Air and Space Museum (U.S.). Paul E. Garber Preservation, Restoration, and Storage Facility.
- National Air and Space Museum (U.S.). Silver Hill Facility
- Roderick, Walter R.
- United States. Air Force
- Vin Fiz (Airplane)
- Winnie Mae (Airplane)

Container Listing

Interviews

| | |
|------------|--|
| Interviews | Interview 1: November 28, 1986 |
| Interviews | Interview covers his youth; education; career in the U.S. Air Force, Capital Airlines, and NASM; restoration of aircraft; and reminiscences of colleagues, including Edward B. Chalkley, Paul E. Garber, and Walter Male. |
| Interviews | Transcript, pp. 1-59, of audiotape recording, 1.5 hours. |
| Interviews | Audio Recordings of Interviews: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original Masters: 1 audiotape cassette• Preservation Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel audiotapes• Reference Copies: 1 cassette audiotape |
| Interviews | Interview 2: June 2, 1987 |
| Interviews | Interview covers inquiries concerning injury of Walter Male, restoration of such famous aircraft as the <i>Winnie Mae</i> , <i>Vin Fiz</i> , and Douglas <i>World Cruiser</i> ; opening of NASM and Paul E. Garber Facility; aircraft restoration techniques; and the annual "Open House" for the public at the Garber Facility. |
| Interviews | Transcript, pp. 60-79, of audiotape recording, 1.5 hours. |
| Interviews | Audio Recordings of Interviews: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original Masters: 1 audiotape cassette• Preservation Masters: 1 5" reel-to-reel audiotape• Reference Copies: 1 cassette audiotape |