

Historical Materials at the NASA Ames Research Center

Update to *Research in NASA History: A Guide to the NASA History Program*

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Mission

The NASA Ames History Office explores ways to make the Center's past relevant to its future. Staffed by historians and archivists, the History Office supports research, writing and oral history projects, and helps preserve, store, and provide access to records and artifacts related to the history of the Center.

Collections

Agency Records

This record group includes collections of official records, as defined in the *NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR)* 1441.1D, which were received by the History Office from NASA Ames divisions and codes. The History Office holds the records in these collections in accordance with the retention schedules outlined in the *NPR*. Agency records collections include the **Pioneer Project Records, 1952-1996**, which contains approximately 200 cubic feet of records maintained by the Pioneer Program Management Office at NASA Ames; **Public Affairs Office Records, 1940-2003**, which is largely comprised of news materials, subject files, and photographic materials produced and accumulated by the Public Affairs Office; **Ames Astrogram, 1958-2007**, which contains two copies of every NASA Ames center newsletter produced by the Public Affairs Office; and **Daily Flight Logs, 1949-1950**, which consists of logs kept by the NACA Flight Operations group at Ames.

Personal Papers

The materials in this group contain the personal papers of NASA Ames engineers, administrators and scientists. Included are the notebooks of Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks, which document Caroff's involvement with various Infrared Astronomy projects and the NASA Astrobiology Institute. The papers of **Robert W. Jackson**, who served as Recovery Controller for the Biosatellite program and Flight Director for the Pioneer spacecraft, provide information about the Biosatellite, Magellan, Pioneer and Voyager missions. Scientist **Robert Hogan's** papers document his contributions to the Pioneer Project and the Life Sciences Directorate at Ames. **Elliott Levinthal's** collection contains evidence of his work while on the Viking Lander Imaging Science Team. Mission analyst and aerospace engineer **Larry Manning's** papers largely contain technical analyses about how to send spacecraft to other planets in Earth's solar system. **James Pollack's** papers include the planetary scientist's research files on Mars. Planetary scientist **Alvin Seiff's** papers provide insight into his contributions to atmospheric structure experiments on the Viking, Cassini-Huygens, and Galileo probes. **Donald E. Wilson's** papers document the applications of remote sensing of earth resources and technology transfer efforts to establish Landsat data analysis capabilities in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. Robert E. Slye's Papers include materials related to NASA's Mission Analysis Division, and technology applications research and general administrative activities at NASA Ames Research Center.

Artificial Collections

The **Archives Reference Collection, 1939-2007**, comprised of subject files in paper and digital formats, audio and visual media, and books, provides a sampling of materials that span the history of the Center from its origins in December 1939 through the present. Compared to the other History Office collections, this one presents the best general overview of the organization of Ames, its activities and people. The collection, which is arranged by subject, includes vertical files, photographs, scrapbooks, videos, oral histories, and a small library containing such materials as monographs, reference works, and reports. Items of interest include recordings of presentations from the NASA Ames 1978 Aeronautics Corporate Memory Seminars, which feature notable speakers such as R.T. Jones discussing aeronautics history; B. Wick on low speed aeronautical research; L. Jones on high speed aeronautical research; H. Lomax on computational fluid dynamics; M. White on flight dynamics research and simulation technology; S. Anderson on flight operations research; K. Edenborough on helicopter technology; and L. Roberts on aeronautics capabilities, facilities, and objectives.

The **Histories of Ames Research Files, 1970-2000** contains published and manuscript material written either about NASA Ames Research Center and its projects, or material written by NASA Ames scientists and engineers about research conducted at NASA Ames. Most materials in this collection are secondary sources, arranged chronologically. Included are research materials gathered for the published narrative histories of NASA Ames Research Center by Edwin Hartman (*Adventures in Research: A History of the Ames Research Center, 1940-1965*), Elizabeth Muenger (*Searching the Horizon: A History of Ames Research Center, 1940-1976*), and Glenn Bugos (*Atmosphere of Freedom: Sixty Years at the NASA Ames Research Center*). Unpublished and manuscript materials are also present, such as Walter Vincenti's paper about the research and genius of R.T. Jones, and Russell Robinson's memoir of his time at NASA Ames.

The **Artifact Collection** contains nearly 600 objects generated by the research, programs, accomplishments, and outreach efforts at Ames since the NACA groundbreaking on December 20, 1939. Materials in this collection are arranged into eight series: *Artwork, Awards, Documentation and Paper Artifacts, Ephemera and Memorabilia, Equipment, Exhibits and Signage, Models, and Scientific Instruments*. Areas of note include objects representing contributions to aeronautics research, such as artwork and models of innovative aircraft designs; NACA airfoil design samples; and the Collier Trophy awarded to NACA's Lewis A. Rodert for his aircraft de-icing solutions. Also, there is ample evidence of contributions to planetary exploration, such as artifacts from the Pioneer Project era, including a full-scale model of Pioneer 6-9 spacecraft, several original paintings depicting artist conceptions of planetary encounters by various Pioneers, and awards, like the Columbus Gold Medal awarded to Ames by the City of Genoa for Pioneers 10 and 11. While aeronautics research and space projects are well represented, the collection also reflects a broad array of other competencies at Ames, including supercomputing, airborne science applications, and human factors research.

Access

The archival holdings of the NASA Ames History Office are open to the public. The office does not collect sensitive, classified or otherwise restricted records for its collections, so anyone may visit the archive and access the unrestricted records contained therein. Because the office is located on a secured federal facility, patrons are asked to provide notice in advance of their research visit so that badging and export control regulations can be met. Foreign Nationals will be required to fill in a security form. If you are a Foreign National, plan to provide ample notice before your research visit, as the process for securing authorization to enter the facility can take up to several months.

Related Collections at Other Repositories

National Archives and Records Administration

As the official repository for U.S. Government records, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) holds the largest collection of Ames's records. The Pacific Region facility in San Bruno, California houses hundreds of boxes of documents generated at Ames, spanning from 1939 to roughly 1971. NARA's Pacific Region facility in Laguna Niguel, California and main research facility in College Park, Maryland ("Archives II") also hold documents pertaining to Ames. The most complete Ames records at NARA deal with Ames prior to the formation of NASA, and are a treasure trove of material on aeronautical research and wind tunnel construction in the 1940s and 1950s. For access, researchers must contact NARA directly, though they should first consult finding aids developed by the NASA Ames History Office, which are accessible through the Online Archive of California portion of the California Digital Library (see Online Archive of California, below).

NASA Headquarters History Office

The NASA Headquarters History Office in Washington, DC holds several files of interest specifically on NASA Ames history. First, the *NASA Administration and Organization Files* series contains files devoted to the subject of Ames Research Center in the subseries *Field Center Files*. These records span from 1933 to the present and include reports, correspondence, news materials, photographs, and oral history interviews. Second, within the *Biographies* series are numerous biographical holdings for individuals who figure into the history of Ames Research Center. These files contain various materials, such as speeches, interviews, correspondence, press releases, news clippings, papers and photographs, and are located in multiple subseries, including: Scientists, Astronauts, NACA Administrators, NACA Employees, NASA Administrators, NASA Employees, Government Officials, Political Figures, Historians, and Military.

Online Archive of California

NASA Ames Research Center was among the first of the federal agencies to mark up its finding aids in encoded archival description (EAD), which provides strong search capabilities. Finding aids for collections housed at NARA and for processed collections held at the NASA Ames History Office are available on the NASA Ames History Project portion of the Online Archive of California Web site (see "NASA Ames Research Center" at <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/institutions/NASA+Ames+Research+Center>).