



Guide to the
Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks, 1986-2001
PP08.18

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NASA Ames Research Center

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Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary.....	1
Administrative Information	1
Biographical History	2
Scope and Content	3
Indexing Terms	5
Container List.....	6

Descriptive Summary

Title:

Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks, 1986-2001

Collection Number:

PP08.18

Creator:

Caroff, Lawrence J.

Dates:

Inclusive: 1986-2001

Extent:

Volume: 1.25 cubic feet

Repository:

NASA Ames History Office
Moffett Field, California 94035

Abstract:

The Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks include personal, handwritten notes from meetings, conferences, workshops, and conversations with individuals. The collection also includes inserts such as timelines and diagrams relating to the projects being discussed. The collection covers the years between 1986 and 2001 in which Caroff was employed at both NASA Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, California and NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. The notebooks focus primarily on project management, documenting Caroff's involvement with various Infrared Astronomy projects and the NASA Astrobiology Institute. Some of the main projects discussed in the notebooks include Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF), and Kuiper Airborne Observatory (KAO).

Administrative Information

Access:

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights:

Copyright does not apply to United States government records. For non-governmental material, researcher must contact the original creator.

Preferred Citation:

Expanded:

NASA Ames History Office, NASA Ames Research Center. Moffett Field, California. PP08.18, Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks, [Container number] : [Folder number]. [Identification of item]. [Date, if available].

Abbreviated:

NASA ARC. PP08.18, [Container number] : [Folder number]. [Identification of item]. [Date, if available].

Acquisition Information:

Donated by Lawrence J. Caroff in 2008.

Biographical History

Lawrence John “Larry” Caroff was born in 1941 in Windber, Pennsylvania. In 1962 he received a BS in Engineering Sciences from Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. He went on to receive his PhD in Applied Physics in 1967 at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. He was employed at NASA from 1967 to 2001. Between the years 1970 and 2006 he published a number of papers on the topics of astrophysics and infrared astronomy in the *Astrophysical Journal*, the *Journal of Plasma Physics*, *Nature*, and *Proceedings of the Royal Astronomical Society*.

In 1967 Caroff gained employment at NASA Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, California as a Research Scientist. During this time, he did theoretical research in astrophysics and participated in observations from the Lear Jet Observatory (LJO), Kuiper Airborne Observatory (KAO), as well as Mauna Kea and Lick Observatories. In 1980 he was appointed Deputy Chief of the Space Science Division, and later took on the role of Chief of the Astrophysical Experiments Branch, which carried out research in infrared astronomy, instrumentation, atmospheric radiometry, and molecular spectroscopy. In 1985, he was appointed Project Scientist for the KAO, in which capacity he organized and led proposal reviews and served as a liaison to the community of astronomers using the facility.

In 1988, Caroff relocated to NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. During this time, he was Chief of the Infrared, Submillimeter, and Radio Astrophysics Branch (IR/SubMM/Radio Astrophysics) of the Astrophysics Division. He led a successful Infrared Astronomy program there for the next 9 years. During this time he was still involved with the KAO and the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA).

In 1997 he returned to Ames Research Center to serve as Deputy Director during the implementation and developmental stages of the NASA Astrobiology Institute. In 1999, he assumed the role of Deputy Program Manager and then Program Manager for SOFIA, managing that project until his retirement from NASA in 2001.

In addition, Caroff has co-organized a number of workshops including the Exozodiacal Dust Workshop at Ames Research Center (1999), the Pale Blue Dot Workshop at Ames Research Center (2000), and the Debris Disks and Star Formation meeting in Tucson, Arizona (2002). He has also taught classes in astronomy, astrophysics, and astrobiology at Stanford University, University of Oregon, San Francisco City College, and the University of California, Berkeley Extension and Stanford Continuing Education programs.

Scope and Content

The Lawrence J. Caroff Notebooks cover the years from 1986-2001 in which the author worked for NASA at both Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, California and NASA Headquarters in Washington D.C. In general, the notebooks contain Caroff's detailed personal, handwritten notes from meetings, conferences (including teleconferences and videoconferences), workshops, and conversations with individuals. Entries are typically prefaced with the date, participants, and subject of discussion. The papers also include timelines and hand-drawn diagrams related to the concepts being discussed. Some notes are of a technical, mathematic, and/or scientific nature. Additionally, the notebooks contain inserts including memos, bulletins, agendas, schedules, newsletters, budget reports, graphs, and related project materials.

This collection documents meetings related to a number of projects. The projects most extensively discussed are the Kuiper Airborne Observatory (KAO), Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF), and the NASA Astrobiology Institute.

Caroff discusses the KAO between the years 1986-1995. Users meeting and review meeting notes discuss proposal reviews, finances, and justification. Flights are discussed in terms of scheduling, maintenance, and planning. Additionally, technical development notes documenting instruments and telescope configuration are included.

SIRTF is discussed through the years 1986-1995. The science working group meetings, advocacy meetings, progress and project team meetings, and management team meetings are discussed. Main topics covered are budgets, design concepts, advocacy, justification, individual responsibilities, project timelines, and proposed flight schedules. (Since its successful launch in 2003, SIRTF has been known as the Spitzer Infrared Telescope Facility).

Caroff discusses SOFIA throughout the notebooks. Notes from the science consulting group, science working group, science data cycle, and SOFIA Observatory Joint Management Working Group (SOJMWG) as well as discussions with individuals on the topic of SOFIA are included. Main points discussed include budgets, cost estimates, design concepts, technical issues, advocacy, staffing, timelines, and other organizations involved in collaboration including the SETI Institute and the German sector of the European Space Agency.

From the years 1997-2001, Caroff discusses the NASA Astrobiology Institute in depth, including the institute's formative stages. Topics include program planning, advocacy, budgeting and financial matters, as well as technical and program management. The Astrobiology Institute notes mention partner organizations, both universities and international space organizations, and related funding and collaboration. Also included are meeting notes from the astrobiology website group, origins subcommittee, and astrobiology roadmapping.

From 1997-1999, Caroff also discusses the planning and implementation of the Pale Blue Dot Workshop and the Exozodiacal Dust Workshop and consequent development of Nstars Database.

Additional programs are mentioned in terms of program management. These programs are discussed sporadically through the years 1986-1995. All of these were programs initiated by and managed out of the IR/SubMM/Radio Astrophysics Branch at NASA Headquarters. These include the Airborne Astronomy Management Operations Working Group (AAMOWG), Infrared Management Operations Working Group, Infrared Astronomical Satellite, Submillimeter Wave Astronomy Satellite, Cosmic Background Explorer Satellite, Orbiting Very Long Base Interferometer, Two Micron All Sky Survey, Infrared Space Observatory, and collaboration with the Russian Space Agency on Radioastron.

System of Arrangement

Arrangement: Chronological

Indexing Terms

The following terms may be used to index this collection.

Corporate Name

Ames Research Center

United States. National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Geographic Name

Moffett Field (Calif.)

Personal Name

Caroff, Larry, 1941-

Subjects

Astronomy and astrophysics

Cosmic Background Explorer (Satellite)

Exozodiacal Dust Workshop (1997 : Ames Research Center)

Infrared astronomy

Infrared Astronomical Satellite

Infrared Space Observatory

Kuiper Airborne Observatory

Management Operations Working Group (U.S.)

NASA Astrobiology Institute

Orbiting Very Long Base Interferometer

Pale Blue Dot Workshop (1999 : Ames Research Center)

Radioastron

Space Infrared Telescope Facility (U.S.)

Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy

Submillimeter Wave Astronomy Satellite

Two Micron All Sky Survey

Related Collections

Larry A. Manning Papers, 1967-1988 (PP05.04)

Container List

Box	Folder	Folder Title
1	1	Airborne Astronomy, AAMOWG, Book I, June 16, 1986 to July 9, 1987
	2	IR/SubMM/Radio Branch, Book I, February 18, 1988 to July 28, 1988
	3	IR/SubMM/Radio Branch, Book II, July 29, 1988 to November 3, 1989
	4	IR/SubMM/Radio Branch, Book III, November 6, 1989 to March 15, 1990
	5	IR/Radio/SubMM Branch, Book IV, March 15, 1990 to September 11, 1990
	6	IR/Radio Branch, Book V, August 14, 1990 to March 3, 1991
2	1	IR/Radio Branch, Book VI, March 6, 1991 to July 15, 1991
	2	IR/Radio Branch, Book VII, July 16, 1991 to December 31, 1991
	3	IR/Radio Branch, Book VIII, March 6, 1992 to October 1, 1992
	4	IR/Radio, Book I, May 8, 1995 to November 20, 1995
3	1	Ames, Book I, March 11, 1997 to August 6, 1997
	2	Ames, Book II, August 6, 1997 to February 8, 1998
	3	Ames, Book III, February 9, 1998 to June 18, 1998
	4	Ames, Book IV, June 18, 1998 to January 5, 1999
	5	Ames, Book V, January 11, 1998 to July 14, 1999
4	1	Ames, Book VI, July 14, 1999 to March 9, 2000
	2	Ames, Book VII, March 9, 2000 to January 12, 2001