

**Descriptive Finding Guide for the Andrew F. Lech Personal Papers
SDASM.SC.10088**

Alan Renga

San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives

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2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park

San Diego 92101

URL: <http://www.sandiegoairandspace.org/>

Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives

Title: Andrew F. Lech Personal Papers

source: Lech, Andrew F.

Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10088

Physical Description: 0.36 Cubic FeetOne Box

Date (inclusive): 1905-1995

Abstract: Andrew Lech was an aviation model maker. His highly detailed models have been displayed at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum and the San Diego Air & Space Museum. His models date back to the 1920s.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to researchers by appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Some copyright may be reserved. Consult with the library director for more information.

Preferred Citation

[Item], [Filing Unit], [Series Title], [Subgroups], [Record Group Title and Number], [Repository "San Diego Air & Space Museum Library & Archives"]

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The materials in this Collection were donated to the San Diego Air and Space Museum.

Biographical / Historical

Andrew Lech (1905 - 1991) was a postal worker in Chicago, Illinois. He lived in the suburb of Aurora. He retired from the post office in approximately 1940. He began making scale models on a part-time basis while in high school. He began work on the Spirit of St. Louis model in 1931. It was completed in 1933. It had a wingspan of 36 inches and featured working systems, including fully functioning control systems. In 1940 he was commissioned by the Smithsonian Institution to provide structural and external view drawings of the Spirit of St. Louis. He also constructed fifty precise scale models of various 1900 to 1930s aircraft. In addition, he was commissioned by a patron in Orange County in 1967 to build scale models of experimental aircraft as well as models that were proposed, but never executed. This commission also included dioramas of WWI airdromes.

In 1939 Mr. Lech began a correspondence with Paul Garber, Assistant Curator for aeronautics with the Smithsonian Institution. This culminated in the donation of the model to the Smithsonian in 1972.

Scope and Contents

1 box containing 13 folders of correspondence, photos, drawings, and various printed materials. The information regarding the commissioned models did not include the name of the patron.

Related Materials

Film: Lindbergh Flight F-0062. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=811vOeNYSLM>

F-0685 Ryan Aeronautical Video: From Lindbergh to the Moon <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZA7PEA4NSU>

Video: Ryan Aircraft history VT 0027

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VZHu93WpNs&feature=c4-overview&playnext=1&list=TLQqdCtr_2Ua0

Related Research Institutions: Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Independence Ave at 6th St, SW, Washington, DC 20560 Archives: (703) 572-4045

 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/albums/72157634984265747>

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Model Aircraft

Garber, Paul Edward

Lech, Andrew F.

Lindbergh, Charles A. (Charles Augustus)

Ryan Aeronautical Company

Smithsonian Institution, National Space and Air Museum

Spirit of St. Louis

Box 01**Folder 01 - Smithsonian Institution correspondence**

Physical Description: 1. Letters from Paul Garber, Curator, Smithsonian Museum. 2. Letters from Michael Collins, Curator, Smithsonian Museum. 3. Letters from Robert Mikesch, Curator Smithsonian Museum. 4. Letters from Smithsonian Associates. 5. Smithsonian annual report 1964 and 1968. 6. Letters from Associate Director J. E. Graf. 7. Letters from E.W. Robischon, Manager, Western Region Institution of Aerospace Sciences. 8. Maps of Capitol Mall, including Smithsonian Institution.

Folder 02 - Institutional and business correspondence

Physical Description: 1. Letters from historian Edward Cassagneres. 2. Letters from Ryan Aeronautical Company. 3. Letters from Institution of Aerospace Sciences. 4. Letters from Northrop Institute. 5. Letters from National Aeronautics Association. 6. Letter from National Aeronautics Authority. 7. Letters from Air Mail Pioneers. 8. Letters from San Diego Air and Space Museum. 9. Letters from Solar Turbines. 10. Miscellaneous business correspondence.

Folder 03 - Waco Ten folder

Physical Description: 43 photos. 1. Photos of Waco Ten model. 2. Article with photos and specifications.

Folder 04 - Personal Histories and records

Physical Description: 1. Log of flights by Andrew Lech. 2. Personal event narratives. 3. Event chronologies. 4. Financial and shipping records.

Folder 05 - Spirit of St. Louis model photos

Physical Description: 105 photos. 1. General photos. 2. Detail photos of model showing systems. 3. Photos of Andrew Lech with Spirit of St. Louis model.

Folder 06 - Other models made by Andrew Lech circa 1900-1930

Physical Description: 1. Photos of all Lech models.

Folder 07 - Miscellaneous photos and art

Physical Description: 45 images total - pasted onto paper. 1. Spirit of St. Louis survival kit. 2. Lockheed Sirius art.

Folder 08 - Specifications for Andrew Lech models

Physical Description: 1. Specifications for 36" Spirit of St. Louis model.

Folder 09 - A. Lech personal correspondence

Physical Description: 1. Letters between Andrew Lech and various friends and relatives concerning Spirit of St. Louis model.

Folder 10 - Miscellaneous photos and commissioned model photos

Physical Description: 1. Various historic models commissioned by unknown patron.

Folder 11 - Aircraft technical drawings

Physical Description: 1. 54 drawings of different aircraft from 1900 to 1930 and Spirit of St. Louis drawings.

Folder 12 - Miscellaneous documents

Physical Description: 1. 19 miscellaneous documents in no particular order.

Folder 13 - Media folder

Physical Description: 1. 26 various newspaper and magazine articles and media interviews (transcripts).