The Descriptive Finding Guide for the Convair/General Dynamics Atlas Image Collection SDASM.SC.20048

Finding aid prepared by Alan Renga
San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park
San Diego, CA, 92101
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10/01/2015
Title: Convair/General Dynamic Atlas Image Collection
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10300
Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 5.0 Cubic feet Several boxes of negatives and transparencies
Date (inclusive): 1945-2015
Abstract: This collection documents the history of the Atlas Missile program at Convair/General Dynamics.
Conditions Governing Access note
The collection is open to researchers by appointment.
Conditions Governing Use note
Some copyright may be reserved. Consult with the library director for more information.
Immediate Source of Acquisition note
The materials in this Collection were donated to the San Diego Air and Space Museum.
Preferred Citation note
[SDASM Number], [Title], [Convair/General Dynamics Atlas Image Collection], [Repository “San Diego Air & Space Museum Library & Archives”]
Biographical/Historical note
The Atlas was first designed to be an intercontinental ballistic missile, but as ICBM technology advanced and the Atlas was no longer considered cutting-edge, it found a new life, a life perhaps even more important to history: It was modified and used as a space launch vehicle for the last four manned missions of Project Mercury, the first U.S. manned space program, which included the first American, John Glenn, to orbit the earth.
When Lockheed-Martin purchased the Convair/General Dynamics Space Systems Division in 1993, they acquired the nation’s most reliable space launch vehicle, the Atlas, but did not have much use for the records of its earlier heritage. Lockheed-Martin eventually donated the records documenting the Atlas heritage to the San Diego Air & Space Museum. The records gained by SDASM constitute a potential historic national treasure.
In March of 2015 the San Diego Air and Space Museum received a two-year Federal grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to process and catalog 165,000 of the collection’s images, and digitize and place online 50,000 of them.
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/albums/72157649485000247
Scope and Contents note
Approx. 400,000 images documenting the history of the Atlas. The majority of the collection consists of negatives and transparencies, but photos are also included. The images range in size from 2" x 2" to 8" x 10". There are several catalogs which describe the images, but these are incomplete. In addition, many of the images are stored in envelopes which include information about them written on the outside. However, this information can be inaccurate.
The collection is currently being processed as part of a NHPRC grant. 165,000 of the images are being catalogued and 50,000 of those are being digitized and placed on the Museum’s Flickr site.
Related Archival Materials note
Consolidated/Convair/General Dynamics General Collection
Heritage Atlas-Centaur Film Collection
Subjects and Indexing Terms
General Dynamics Corporation. Convair Division.
American space missions
Atlas (missile)--history
Capistrano Test Site
Convair
Gemini Space Program
General Dynamics Corporation. Convair Division
Mercury Space Program
Project Apollo
Space race
United States. National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Series I: Atlas Negatives and Transparencies
Physical Description: Images ranging from 2” x 2” to 8” x 10”. The Museum is currently working on a project to inventory 160,000 images and digitize 50,000 of them. Digitized images are being placed on the Museum's Flickr site:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/albums/72157649485000247