The Descriptive Finding Guide for the Edward L. Leiser Personal Papers
SDASM.SC.10233

San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
2020
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: Edward L. Leiser Personal Papers
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10233

Physical Description: The collection covers aviation history dating back to the first flights and includes extensive background and research material. Description: The collection consists of nine archival boxes; eight measuring 16-1/2” x 13” x 10-1/2” and one measuring 12-1/2” x 10” x 5”.

Date (bulk): bulk
Abstract: The collection covers aviation history dating back to the first flights and includes extensive background and research material. It was the personal collection of Ed Leiser. It focuses on the History of Aviation in San Diego.

Biographical / Historical
Edward L. Leiser was born in Chicago, Illinois on June 13, 1928. He grew up in a Navy family, moving from Washington, D.C. to Honolulu, and several cities in between. The family eventually ended up in San Diego, California where Ed graduated in 1945 from San Diego High School. After taking some flying lessons in Piper Cubs, but without soloing, Ed enlisted in the U.S. Navy. After learning the aviation metalsmith trade in airplane hangars and flying Navy planes as a target drone controller, he was accepted for Officer Candidate School. In 1954, he met and married Nellie A. Kitch. They raised three children, two sons and a daughter. Ensign Leiser joined the fleet aboard the destroyer USS THE SULLIVANS (DD-537) in 1958, and later served on the USS CHUKAWAN (AO-100). In 1965, in San Diego, First Lieutenant Leiser served on the USS COMSTOCK (LSD-19). After several more ships, and the Vietnam War, Lieutenant Leiser retired in 1970 from the Fleet Training Group in San Diego. On July 2, 1970, the day after leaving the Navy, he was hired by the San Diego Aerospace Museum where he worked as Supervisor, and later as Curator of Exhibits until 1966, and then as Historian. By about 1982, the docent program at the Aerospace Museum was taking shape and the volunteers required educating. Ed took on this task and produced weekly and/or monthly information sheets that he provided to the docents, as well as conducting training sessions. Ed Leiser wrote World War I aviation history for the journal Cross & Cockade until about 1974 and then began researching San Diego Aviation History. He composed many volumes detailing San Diego's rich history in aviation. He theorized that aviation began in San Diego with John Montgomery's man-carrying glider in 1883. Ed documented the activities of many San Diego pilots following Montgomery, telling of their trials and tribulations, accidents, and records of achievement. Also documented are the beginnings of the North Island Naval Base, the Army Aviation School, and the Aero Club of America. He also wrote about air shows, aviation activity during World War I, and many more aviation-related topics. The Library and Archives of the San Diego Air and Space Museum houses many of his historical records, including, in a Special Collection, which contains much of his basic research material. Some of his notable works are "San Diego Flying Days," "Out of the Overcast" which were newsletters for the Museum docents' use, "San Diego Aviation by Year," "In Your Face with Air and Space," "Out of the Past This Month at San Diego," and many more well-researched historical pieces.

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to research.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Ryan Aeronautical
SERIES I: Edward L. Leiser Personal

Folder 1 - Leiser, Ed - Writings
Folder 2 - AAHS Article - “Don’t You Wish You Had Been There?”
Folder 3 - Articles by Ed Leiser
Folder 4 - Ed Leiser Personal and Professional
Folder 5 - Correspondence, Folder #1 of 2
Folder 6 - Correspondence, Folder #2 of 2

SERIES II: Aviation History

Folder 7 - History of U.S. Army Air Corps
Folder 8 - U.S. Naval Aviation History
Folder 9 - Aviation History Articles
Folder 10 - Calendar of Aerospace History
Folder 11 - Chronology of Aerospace History, 1918 - 1939
Folder 12 - Index of San Diego Aviation History, Folder #1 of 2
Folder 13 - Index of San Diego Aviation History, Folder #2 of 2
Folder 14 - San Diego Aviation History A-F
Folder 15 - San Diego Aviation History P-Z
Folder 16 - Aviation History This Week (Chronology)
Folder 17 - In Your Face with Air and Space (Aviation Chronology)
Folder 18 - Out of the Past This Week (Aviation Chronology)
Folder 19 - Out of the Past Chronologies
Folder 20 - Out of the Overcast Newsletters 1-100
Folder 21 - Out of the Overcast Newsletters 101-217
Folder 22 - San Diego Aviation (Aircraft and Pioneers)
Folder 23 - Out of the Past This Month at San Diego (Chronology)
Folder 24 - Chronologies - Aviation
Folder 25 - San Diego Flying Days: A Chronology from 1883

SERIES II: Aviation History (continued) Draft San Diego Flying Days

Physical Description: Folders 1-17 containing a draft of "San Diego Flying Days" covering 1882-1928.

SERIES II: Aviation History (continued) Draft San Diego Flying Days

Physical Description: Folders 1-11 containing a draft of "San Diego Flying Days" covering 1829-1936.
SERIES II: Aviation History (continued) San Diego Aviation by Year

Physical Description: Folders 1-32 covering San Diego Aviation History from 1909 to 1945.

SERIES II: Aviation History (continued) San Diego Aviation by Year

Physical Description: Folders 1-31 covering San Diego Aviation history from 1945-1986.

SERIES III: History - General

- Folder 32 -- Calendar of San Diego History
- Folder 33 -- When the Red Lights Went Out in San Diego
- Folder 34 -- General History of San Diego
- Folder 35 - World War I Chronology

SERIES IV: Indexes -- Miscellaneous

- Folder 36 - Album Collection Index No. 1
- Folder 37 - Album Collection Index No. 2
- Folder 38 - Album Collection Index No. 3
- Folder 39 - Fog Index Folder 40 - National Geographic Aeronautics Index
- Folder 41 - New York Times Aeronautics Index 1902-1914
- Folder 42 - San Diego Military Index
- Folder 43 - Traditions Index

SERIES V: Documents

- Folder 44 - Air Corps Inventory 1927, AAHS Journal, Winter 1973
- Folder 45 - Coast Guard
- Folder 46 - Army Aviation in San Diego, 1912-1916, Ray Wagner
- Folder 47 - The Three Musketeers, Merle C. Olmstead, AAHS Journal, Fall 1977
- Folder 48 - Ryan X-13 Experimental Aircraft
- Folder 49 - Partial Manuscript on W. H. Bowlus, pp. 34-59, by “Gary”
- Folder 50 - Log Book - SDAM Log Books Index 2000
- Folder 51 - Log Book - Log Books, 1929 (photocopies)
- Folder 52 - Log Book - Spirit of St. Louis Log Book (photocopy)
- Folder 53 - Log Book - Clifford Charles Adams

SERIES V: Documents (continued)

- Folder 1 - Log Books (photocopies)
- Folder 2 - Log Book - Walter Glenn Barnes Jr., 1938-41 USN (photocopy)
- Folder 3 - Log Book - Miles Blain, 1953-64 (photocopy)
- Folder 4 - Log Book - Douglas T. Kelley, 1926-1929 (photocopy)
- Folder 5 - Log Book - Philip E. “Ted” Myers, 1923-25 Army (photocopy)
- Folder 6 - Log Book - Arnold H. Peik, 1928-46 (photocopy)
Folder 7 - Log Book - Barrett Studley, 1923 USN (photocopy)
Folder 8 - Log Book - Frank M. Taylor, 1936-39 Civil and Army (photocopy)
Folder 9 - Log Book - Thomas A. Watson, 1939-40 USN (photocopy)
Folder 10 - Newsletters - Miscellaneous
Folder 11 - Guide Books/Notes - Docent and Tour Guide Program
Folder 12 - Guide Books/Notes - SDAM Guidenotes, Folder #1 of 3 (#1-10)
Folder 13 - Guide Books/Notes - SDAM Guidenotes, Folder #2 of 3 (#11-21)
Folder 14 - Guide Books/Notes - SDAM Guidenotes, Folder #3 of 3 (#22-31)

SERIES VI: Research Material by Subject

Physical Description:
,Folder 15 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 1883-1929
,Folder 16 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 1930-1939
,Folder 17 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 1940-1944
,Folder 18 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 1945-1989
,Folder 19 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 1990-1999
,Folder 20 -- Aviation Accidents in San Diego – 2000-2005
,Folder 21 -- Pioneer Flyers – Notable California Aviation Accidents
,Folder 22 -- Army Aviation Mortalities
,Folder 23 -- Cemeteries
,Folder 24 -- Crashes Includes envelope with B/W snapshots of damaged planes.
,Folder 25 -- Fatalities
,Folder 26 -- Last Landings
,Folder #1 of 2 Aviation accidents, fatalities, burial locations
,Folder 27 -- Last Landings
,Folder #2 of 2 Aviation accidents, fatalities, burial locations
,Folder 28 -- Aircraft Names / Nicknames
,Folder 29 -- Boeing Aircraft Includes Boeing 247; 314; F4B-1.
,Folder 30 -- Consairway Employee Roster
,Folder 31 -- Convair History
,Folder 32 -- Consairway Aircraft Includes CV-880; 990 Convair Liner; PBY; Seadart;
Consolidated Seaplane article.
,Folder 33 -- Douglas Aircraft Includes DC-2; F4-D.
,Folder 34 -- Drones
,Folder 35 -- Fogel Gliders
,Folder 36 -- Ford Trimotor
,Folder 37 -- Grumman Aircraft Includes Attack Aircraft; A-6A; F2F-1; F3F-2.
,Folder 38 -- Lockheed Aircraft Includes Lockheed 10; 12; 14.
,Folder 39 -- Ryan Aircraft Includes Ryan NYP; FR-1.
,Folder 2 -- Seaplanes, Early
,Folder 3 -- U.S.N. / U.S.M.C. Aircraft
,Folder 4 -- Vought Aircraft Includes FBU – FB.
,Folder 5 -- World War I Aircraft Totals (U.S.) Airports / Airfields
,Folder 6 -- Airport Editorials
,Folder 7 -- Lindbergh Field
,Folder 8 -- San Diego Airports,
,Folder #1 of 2
,Folder 9 -- San Diego Airports,
,Folder #2 of 2
,Folder 10 -- Army Fields 1921
,Folder 11 -- San Diego Airfields First Flights
,Folder 12 -- First Flights Maps / Charts
,Folder 13 -- Maps
,Folder 14 -- Maps and Charts San Diego
,Folder 15 -- San Diego and Imperial County Streets by Categories
,Folder 16 -- San Diego Street Names
,Folder 17 -- Travel & Traffic on Public Streets
,Folder 18 -- Insignia / Markings / Registrations
,Folder 19 -- Aircraft Registrations
,Folder 20 -- DOD Prefix Symbols
,Folder 21 -- Insignia
,Folder 22 -- Radio Codes and Signals
,Folder 23 -- Registrations
,Folder 24 -- Symbols
,Folder 25 -- U.S. Civil Aircraft Registration
,Folder 26 -- U.S. Civil Aircraft Registration Numbers Not Accounted For
,Folder 27 -- U.S. Naval Aircraft Bureau Numbers
,Folder 28 -- U.S. Navy Flight Codes
,Folder 29 -- U.S.N. Markings
,Folder 30 -- U.S.N. / U.S.M.C. ID Codes
,Folder 31 -- Nautical Chart Symbols and Abbreviations
,Folder 32 -- World Aircraft Registration Prefixes People
,Folder 33 -- Allen, Richard Sanders
,Folder 34 -- Bocquel, Joe
,Folder 35 -- Bowlus, William Hawley Articles on Bowlus gliders / Manufacturer Specs on American Commercial Aircraft and Seaplanes / biographical articles on William H. Bowlus.
,Folder 36 -- Cayley, George
,Folder 37 -- Clover, Russell K.
,Folder 38 -- Gaffney, Dorothy
,Folder 39 -- Gibbon, Elwyn H.
,Folder 40 -- Jones, Stan
,Folder 41 -- Kiessig, Edward F.
,Folder 42 -- Kluck, Robert J.
,Folder 43 -- Koontz, Giacinta
,Folder 44 -- Ledger, Glenn
,Folder 45 -- Lindbergh, Charles
,Folder 46 -- MacMurray, Daniel E.D. Articles by and about Daniel E.D. MacMurray III, including X-660-E “Flywurm.”
,Folder 47 -- Montgomery, John J.
,Folder 48 -- O’Dwyer, William J.
,Folder 49 -- Rand, A. Clare
SERIES VI: Research Material by Subject (continued)

Box 8 of 9

SERIES VI: Research Material by Subject (continued) People (continued)

Physical Description:
Folder 1 – Richthofen, Manfred von
Folder 2 – Shore, S. R.
Folder 3 – Storrs’ Album
Folder 4 – Underwood, John
Folder 5 – Walsh, Charles
Folder 6 – Waterman, Waldo
Folder 7a – Whitehead, Gustave
Folder 7b – People
Miscellaneous Includes Bernard F. Roehrig; Thomas F. Faulconer; Ruth Alexander; Percy Prune.

SERIES VII: Research Material – Alphabetical

Physical Description:
Folder 8 – A - Miscellaneous – Article by Archie Atherton / Airport Markings, Signs / Arlington cemetery letter and brochure / SDAM Manned Aircraft Chronology / Names of Army Stations / Air Corps Posts / Airports, Good Neighbors / article, “Lift” from Aerodynamics for Naval Aviators. Folder 9 – Addresses – List, Cartoonists / Albert Simpson Historical Research Center / list, Airlines We Remembered / miscellaneous cards, envelopes, scraps of paper with addresses. Folder 10 – Air Commerce Act of 1926
Folder 11 – Air Corps Reserve
Folder 12 – Army Engines to 1915
Folder 13 – Art
Folder 14 – Aviation Words
Folder 15 – Balboa Park
Folder 16 – Berlin Blockade / Airlift
Folder 17 – Birthdays – Who Shares My Birthday?
Folder 18 – Bookends
Folder 19 – Brodie System
Folder 20 – C - Miscellaneous – PBY article by Ev Cassagneres / Corrigan articles and music / list, San Diego Commanding Officers / article, Chapter VII, The Early Birds -- 2 snapshots of Richard Enos.
Folder 21 – Calendars
Folder 22 – Caterpillar Club
Folder 24 – Daedalus & Icarus
Folder 25 – Dutch Flats
Folder 28 – F - Miscellaneous – Ft. Rosecrans Cemetery brochure; articles, Chapter 204, Ford; NYT Fatal LTA and HTA; Fokker Eindecker; Reuben Hollis Fleet; Air Accidents; Fokker obituary / photocopies of planes and accidents. Folder 29 – First 59 Folder 30 – Flights 1874 – 1908
Folder 31 – Flying
Folder 32 – Flying Clubs – San Diego
Folder 33 – Ford Building
Folder 34 – Four Letter Words
Folder 35 – G - Miscellaneous – Photographs of aircraft, glider pilots’ licenses / article on GPS / Aerospace History This Week.
Folder 36 – Gibbs Handbook
Folder 37 – Gillespie Field
Folder 38 – Gliding
Folder 39 – Historic Preservation
Folder 40 – Honda Point Disaster
Folder 41 – Humor
Folder 42 – Japanese Planes
Folder 43 – K - Miscellaneous – Harriet Quimby Research Conference / Spuds Elyson Anchors in the Sky
Folder 46 – Lighter Than Air
Folder 47 – Lists
Folder 48 – M - Miscellaneous – Metric System, 3 converters / Historical Report, MCAS, 1942- Present / Phil Myers interview / movies with aviation / Groups, Units, Associations Included in Database / article, German Knights of the Air 19145-1918 / photocopies of photo of Frank Courtney, un-ID’d photocopy of photo of 3-year old child.
Folder 49 – Machine Guns
Folder 50 – Measures
Folder 51 – Mesa Flying Club
Folder 52 – Mexican Aviation at San Diego
Folder 53 – NAS Miramar
Folder 54 – Naval Officer Photos (photocopies)
Folder 55 – No Laughing Matter – article
Folder 56 – Northern California AAHS
Folder 57 – North Island Historical Geographical Study of North Island by Jeffrey C. Brown, 1991
Folder 58 – Obituaries
Folder 59 – Ordinance No. 10035, June 25, 1925
Folder 60 – Out of the Overcast Research Material
Folder 61 – Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA)
Folder 62 – Patrol Squadron Flights – 1930x to 1942
Folder 63 – Photographs – 5 images of plane on deck of aircraft carrier
Folder 64 – Photographs of San Diego (photocopies)
Folder 65 – Poetry

Box 9 of 9
SERIES VII: Research Material - Alphabetical (continued)