The Descriptive Finding Guide for the Joseph H. Famme Personal Papers
SDASM.SC.10045

Robert E. Johnston
San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
2011
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: The Joseph H. Famme Personal Papers
creator: Famme, Joseph H. (Joe)
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10045
Physical Description: 1.2 Cubic Feet, 6 manuscript boxes
Date (inclusive): 1935-1999
Date (bulk): bulk
Abstract: Joseph H. Famme was a prominent contributor to the growth of the aerospace industry, especially in San Diego. The collection consists of engineering proposals, reports, correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings, as well as other documents related to the design of major Convair aircraft.
Language of Material: English
Biographical / Historical
Joseph H. Famme, a native of Baltimore, Maryland, born February 16, 1911, was a prominent contributor to the growth of the aerospace industry, especially in San Diego. He was an engineer and manufacturing executive, helping develop a wide variety of military and commercial aircraft for the Convair Division of General Dynamics and its predecessor organizations, first joining the company in 1936. His many contributions spanned the period from just before the critical World War II years into the age of jet powered flight.
He studied engineering at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and the Johns Hopkins Anniversary, and worked at Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation at Hagerstown, Maryland, Sikorsky Aircraft Company, Bridgeport, Connecticut, as well the Glen L. Martin Company, Baltimore, Maryland. He joined Consolidated in San Diego as a draftsman in 1936, quickly advancing to positions of higher responsibility. In 1940, he was named an Assistant Project Engineer on the LB-30 program, advancing to Project Engineer for the LB-30 and B-24 in 1942. From 1943 to 1945 he was Chief Project Engineer for all B-24 aircraft. During this time he was also called to active duty as an officer in the Air Corps, where he served as an advisor to General Doolittle, supporting the outfitting and repair of B-24s planned for use in D-Day and related operations.
He was appointed Assistant Chief Engineer in 1954, guiding Convair during the transition to turbo-prop and jet engine aircraft, including the XB-46 bomber, XP-5Y and R3Y-1/2 seaplanes, and F-102 and F-106 fighter interceptors, the backbone of U.S. air defense systems during the early Cold War years. He was Project Works Manager for the F-102 and F-106 production, and also headed the Convair production flight test facility at Palmdale, California. In 1961 he was named Vice President, Operations at Convair, and, later that year was named President of the Convair Division of General Dynamics. Mr. Famme retired from General Dynamics in 1966, joining Rohr as Vice President of Engineering, eventually retiring from Rohr in 1971.
He became a general contractor, developing commercial buildings. In semi-retirement he was particularly active supporting various community and philanthropic organizations, including significant service with the Grossmont School District Board of Directors and St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, and, he founded the Home for Guiding Hands in Lakeside, California. He also maintained his many professional affiliations, including the Society of Automotive Engineers, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, the Navy League, Air Force Association, Association of the United States Army, and the American Ordnance Association. He was honored with a lifetime Achievement Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in 2004. Mr. Famme died in Rancho San Diego, California on October 23, 2004.
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.
Immediate Source of Acquisition
This extensive collection of both personal records and published works was donated to the San Diego Air & Space Museum in April 2006. The collection has been fully processed and is open for research.
Preferred Citation
[Item], [Collection], Archives, San Diego Air & Space Museum
Separated Materials
Transferred from Collection
Consolidator, January 1941
Related Materials
Convair/Consolidated Collection
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/albums/72157640987117983

Scope and Contents
The collection consists of engineering proposals, reports, correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings, as well as other documents related to the design of major Convair aircraft such as the B-24, B-32, XB-46, F-102, F-106, 240/340/440 Convair Liners, and the Convair 880 four engine jet transport. The collection has been fully processed and is open for research.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Bennington (Gunboat No. 4)
William Tell (Competition)
General Dynamics Corporation. Convair Division
Convair B-36 Peacemaker
Convair 240 Convair-Liner
Consolidated B-24 Liberator Family
Rohr Corporation
Famme, Joseph H. (Joe)
Box 01 Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers


Box 02

Box 03

Box 04

Box 05
Box 06