
Register of the Renée Lym Robertson collection

Finding aid prepared by Tanya Yule

Hoover Institution Archives

434 Galvez Mall

Stanford University

Stanford, CA, 94305-6010

(650) 723-3563

hooverarchives@stanford.edu

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Title: Renée Lym Robertson collection

Date (inclusive): 1890-2014

Collection Number: 2015C52

Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Archives

Language of Material: English and Chinese

Physical Description: 10 manuscript boxes, 2 oversize boxes, 1 oversize folder, 1 motion picture film reel(6.1 linear feet)

Abstract: Writings, correspondence, photocopies of government documents, printed matter, photographs, and audiovisual material relating to the early history of aviation in China and to American involvement with Chinese aviation prior to World War II. Includes biographical data on the early Chinese American aviator Arthur F. Lym (Lin Fuyuan, Arthur Fook Yuen Lyn), father of Renée Lym Robertson, and on others involved in the early history of Chinese aviation, as well as information relating to the Civil Air Transport and China National Aviation Corporation.

Physical Location: Hoover Institution Archives

Creator: Robertson, Renée Lym, collector.

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Renée Lym Robertson collection, [Box no.], Hoover Institution Archives.

Acquisition Information

Materials were acquired by the Hoover Institution Archives in 2015.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. To determine if this has occurred, find the collection in Stanford University's online catalog at <http://searchworks.stanford.edu/> . Materials have been added to the collection if the number of boxes listed in the catalog is larger than the number of boxes listed in this finding aid.

Biographical Note

Renée Lym Robertson (Lum May Yook, Lin Mai Yue) was born in Shanghai, China, in 1928. She first came to the United States in 1939, immigrating through Angel Island, and returned to China after World War II in 1945. Robertson permanently moved back to the United States in 1982.

Robertson was actively involved in the aviation community all of her life and helped form the Guangdong Aviation Association in the 1980s, where she served as Vice-President. She was instrumental in providing resources for various Chinese aviation exhibits in Hong Kong, Seattle, San Diego, and San Francisco. Robertson passed away in 2015.

Arthur Lym Biographical Note

1890

December 27 Born, San Francisco, California

1906

After the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, moved to Oakland with sister and brother-in-law, Hong Yow

1911

Managed the Chinatown newspaper Chinese World (Sai Gai Yat Po)

1913

Took flying lessons in San Diego with Glenn Curtiss

Received aviation license number 245 from the Aero Club of America

1914

Offered army commission by Chinese President Yuan Shi-kai and sailed to China

Returned to United States to purchase Curtiss aircraft for the Chinese government

1916

Organized Canton Air Force with childhood friend Tom Gunn

1916

Launched aerial assault on Hainan Island, recapturing the area for Guangdong

1920

Lead first ever aerial bombing raid on the city of Canton, targeting Kwangsi invaders

1925

Married San Francisco native Sarah Chuck Siu Lau in Shanghai

December

1928

Appointed Colonel-in-Charge of the National Aviation Bureau; established aerial photography section

1929

Headed the National Aviation Maintenance Service Division and the National Technical Aviation Division

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- 1932 Appointed Chief-of-Staff of the Canton Air Force
1937 Appointed chief of Shaoguan aircraft factory as Japan invaded China
1938 Moved Shaoguan aircraft factory and staff to the safety of China's interior
1940 Traveled to the United States and South America, fundraising on behalf of the Chinese government to purchase airplanes for the war and raising more than five million dollars
1943-1945 Coordinated the transport of strategic war materials into China via the Burma road and "the Hump"
1962 Died of heart failure in Hong Kong at age 72, buried in Oakland's Mountain View Cemetery

Source: Patti Gully, Arthur Lym Research Materials, Renée Lym Robertson collection, Box 3, Folders 2-3, Hoover Institution Archives

Scope and Content of Collection

The Renee Lym Robertson collection is a diverse assortment of papers, printed matter, clippings, photographs, and audiovisual materials. It includes biographical and family records and research, as well as in-depth research relating to Robertson's father, Arthur Lym (Arthur Fook Yuen Lyn, Lin Fuyuan, Art Lin, Lim Fook Yin). Lym was an aviation pioneer in the United States and China, and a founder of the Canton Air Force during the Second Sino-Japanese war.

The Arthur Lym Research Materials series contains information and research about Lym's career as an aviator starting in 1911. Materials include biographical information, clippings, printed matter, and photographs of Lym dating from 1911 to the 1950s. These materials are from Lym, as well as source research material provided by Robertson. Additional research materials were provided by Patti Gully, Ernest Gann, and Malcolm Rosholt, who had been researching and writing on Chinese aviation and/or Lym.

The Aviation Research Materials series focuses on Chinese and American pilots who flew for the China National Air Corporation (C.N.A.C.) and Civil Air Transport (C.A.T.) during the Second Sino-Japanese War and World War II, respectively. Materials include association bulletins, printed matter, and letters. This series also includes information pertaining to the Guangdong Aviation Association, which was formed by former aviators, local government officials, and friends and family of the Chinese aviation community, including Robertson.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Aeronautics--China.

Chinese Americans.

Lym, Arthur F., 1890-1962.

Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945.

Biographical File, 1939-2013, undated

Box/Folder 1 : 1 Immigration records, 1939-1941, undated

Box/Folder 1 : 2 Correspondence, 1971-2013, undated

Box/Folder 1 : 3 Transcript, interview, 2009

Scope and Contents note

Interview for Angel Island Immigration Foundation, providing background and biographical information about Robertson's life starting at age 10.

Box/Folder 1 : 4 Printed matter, 1958-2011, undated

Scope and Contents note

Newspaper and magazine interviews and articles about Robertson, including details about the Peninsula Hotel in Hong Kong in the 1950s, and clippings of Robertson with Clark Gable.

Box/Folder 1 : 5 Miscellaneous, 1939-1973, undated

Scope and Contents note

Contains blank postcards Robertson received from Art Lym in 1939, a 1973 commemorative pin from China, and an undated certificate of confirmation, Hong Kong.

 Family Papers, 1890-2014

Scope and Contents note

Contains biographical and historical research of the Lim (Lym) family and their early lives in San Francisco's Chinatown. Materials include passenger lists, newspaper clippings, genealogical trees, and vital records of Robertson's parents, Arthur and Sarah Lym. Also included is a photocopied version of Oakland architect Worley Wong's diary, which details the family history in San Francisco and Oakland, California.

Box/Folder 1 : 6 Vital records of Arthur and Sarah Lym, 1890-1970
 Box/Folder 1 : 7 Sarah Lym records, 1948-1952, undated
 Map case Genealogical trees, after 1949
 Box/Folder 1 : 8 Diary of Worley Wong, 1974-1980, undated
 Box/Folder 1 : 9-10 Miscellaneous research, 1899-2010, undated
 Box/Folder 1 : 11-12 Clippings, 1904-2012
 Box/Folder 1 : 13 Printed matter pertaining to Lim Lip Hong, 2014, undated
 Box/Folder 1 : 14, Miscellaneous receipts from Guangzhou Province, 1921-1936, undated
 Box/Folder 10 : 1, Scope and Contents note
 Map case Receipts are assumed to be from Arthur Lym's wallpaper store in Guangzhou Province in the 1920s.

Arthur Lym Research Materials, 1911-2014, undated

 General, 1911-2013, undated

Box/Folder 2 : 1 Immigration records, 1914-1948
 Box/Folder 2 : 2 Aviation papers, 1913-1948, undated; bulk 1943-1948
 Box/Folder 2 : 3 Passports and C.A.T. license, 1935-1948
 Box/Folder 2 : 4 Writing fragments, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 5 Correspondence, 1946-1995, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 6 Printed matter, 1994, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 7 Clippings, 1910-2008, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 8 Research notes, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 9 Exhibition materials, 1983-2013, undated
 Box/Folder 2 : 10 Miscellaneous, 1989-2009, undated
 Scope and Contents note
 Contains research fragments by Robertson; an outline of a filming proposal of *The Life Story of Art Lym; A New Asia (or at Least a New China): Seven Unforgettable Days*, by Paul Bancroft III (1989); *Hong Kong 1997*, by Nancy Kwan; and two pieces of poetry written in Chinese, likely by Lym.

Box/Folder 2 : 11-12 Printed matter pertaining to Hong Kong, World War II, 1942-1984
 Scope and Contents note
 Escape from Hong Kong to Free China, January and February, 1942, by J. A. Duff (inscribed); *After the Battle*, Issue 45 (1984).

Box 10 Scroll, 1948
 Scope and Contents note
 Decorative Chinese scroll written by Chen Haifu to Arthur Lym praising Lym's aviation and military career.

Box 10 Memorial name plate plaque, after 1962

Box 10 C.A.T. medal, 2001
Scope and Contents note
Medal with ribbon honoring Civil Air Transport Employees from 1946-1974, commemorating a Central Intelligence Agency citation.

Gann, Ernest Kellogg, 1953-1993

Scope and Contents note

Ernest Gann was an aviator during World War II, filmmaker, and friend of Robertson. Gann was facilitating a Seattle Museum of Flight exhibit with Robertson in the early 1980s, featuring Art Lym. The miscellaneous folder is a detailed account of expenses pertaining to researching his film *Soldier of Fortune* in Hong Kong, which Robertson was assisting with. For photographs Gann sent to Robertson, see Box 7, folders 73-74.

Box/Folder 2 : 13 Letters received, 1978-1990

Box/Folder 2 : 14 Clippings, 1978-1993

Box/Folder 2 : 15 Miscellaneous, 1953

Gully, Patti (谢昂), 2004-2014, undated

Scope and Contents note

Contains emails and research on Arthur Lym, and research on Chinese aviation conducted by Gully, including a first draft of Gully's Biography of Art Lym written in 2008, with notes and edits provided by Robertson.

Box/Folder 3 : 1 Correspondence, 2004-2014, undated

Box/Folder 3 : 2-3 Manuscript, "Biography of Art Lym," 2008

Box/Folder 3 : 4 Manuscript fragments, "Biography of Art Lym," 2008

Rosholt, Malcolm Leviatt, 1982-1984, undated

Scope and Contents note

Correspondence with Robertson pertaining to research on Lym.

Box/Folder 3 : 5 Letters received, 1982-1984, undated

Box/Folder 3 : 6 Clippings, 1984

Aviation Research Materials, 1942-2013, undated

American Volunteer Group (A.V.G.), 1979-2012, undated

Short, Robert McCawley, 1935-1983

Scope and Contents note

Robert McCawley Short is considered the first American volunteer aviator in China. Born in Tacoma, Washington in 1904, he moved to Shanghai, China, in 1932 to ferry Chinese Air Force fighter bi-planes. Short was the first American pilot casualty of the Second Sino-Japanese War, shot down in 1932 defending the Suzhou station in Jiangsu, China. Materials include reproductions of "The Life of Robert McCawley Short" manuscript written in 1935, correspondence between Edward Short and Lt. Ikuta (the Japanese pilot who shot down Robert Short's bi-plane in 1932), and a response letter to Robertson regarding her request to locate Short's grave. See also: Photographs, Box 7, folder 75 and Box 9, folder 26.

Box/Folder 3 : 7 Manuscript, "Life of Robert McCawley Short," 1935

Box/Folder 3 : 8 Correspondence, 1974-1982

Box/Folder 3 : 9 Letter received, 1983

Box/Folder 3 : 10 Printed matter pertaining to the A.V.G. / Flying Tigers, 1979-2012

China National Aviation Corporation (C.N.A.C.), 1942-2014,

Box/Folder 3 : 11 Letters received, 2014
 Box/Folder 3 : 12-13 Printed matter pertaining to aviators, 1942-2013, undated
 Box/Folder 4 : 1 Printed matter, 1990-2007
 Box/Folder 4 : 2 Clippings, 1990-2008
 Box/Folder 4 : 3 C.N.A.C. Cannon Ball Bulletins, 2004-2013

Civil Air Transport (C.A.T.) 民航空运公司, 1976-2014, undated

Box/Folder 4 : 4-5 Hacker, Sue, 1984
 Scope and Contents note
 Contains a letter sent by Robertson to Hacker about their trip to Canton in 1984, as well as manuscript drafts and published writings by Hacker and Robertson for the C.A.T. Bulletin. Hacker was the secretary for General Chennault (founder of the C.A.T.) during World War II. See also: Photographs, box 7, folders 64-69.

Box/Folder 4 : 6-7 Smith, Felix, 1995-2009, undated
 Scope and Contents note
 Contains writing fragments and press clippings pertaining to Smith's book China Pilot, Flying for Chennault during the Cold War.

Box/Folder 4 : 8 The Bulletin, 1976-2010
 Box/Folder 4 : 9 Air-Log Bulletin, 2001-2010
 Box/Folder 4 : 10 Member directory, 2000, 2014
 Box/Folder 4 : 11 Printed matter, 2008, undated

Early Chinese aviation, 1921-2012, undated

Box/Folder 4 : 12 Printed matter pertaining to pioneers of early Chinese aviation, 1921-2012, undated
 Box/Folder 4 : 13 Printed matter pertaining to formation of the Chinese Air Force, 2009-2010, undated
 Box/Folder 4 : 14 Clippings, 1934-1992

Guangdong Aviation Association, 1977-2009

Scope and Contents note
 Contains records, letters, and information relating to the formation and activity of the Guangdong Aviation Association, founded in 1984. Robertson was the Vice President of the Association. See also: Photographs, box 8.

Box/Folder 5 : 1 Association records, 1984-1992
 Box/Folder 5 : 2 Correspondence, 1983-1986, undated
 Box/Folder 5 : 3-4 Certificates of appointments, 1988-1993
 Box/Folder 5 : 5 Association bulletins, 1988-1995
 Box/Folder 5 : 6 Anniversary announcements of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, 1986, 1996
 Box/Folder 5 : 7 Miscellaneous, 1977, 1986
 Scope and Contents note
 Donation receipts.

Box/Folder 5 : 8 Clippings, 1984-2008, undated
 Box/Folder 5 : 9 Printed matter pertaining to fellowships and reunions, 1992-2009
 Box/Folder 5 : 10 Printed matter pertaining to history of Guangdong Province and war memorial, 1985-1998, undated

Photographs, 1890-2010, undated

Arrangement note

Photographs are arranged by subject, then chronologically thereunder.

- Box/Folder 6 :
1-43, Box/Folder 9
: 1-3
- Renee Robertson, 1940s-2004, undated
- Scope and Contents note
- Contains portraits, travel, and press photographs of Robertson. Includes photographs depicting Robertson with Clark Gable in 1958, while Gable was filming Ernest Gann's *Soldier of Fortune* in Hong Kong; a series of photographs of Robertson at the christening of the *Coral Queen* ship from the Port of Hong Kong with Sir Alexander Grantham in 1958; and travel photographs of Canton in the 1980s and 1990s.
- Box/Folder 6 :
44-84, Box/Folder
7 : 1-19,
Box/Folder 9 :
4-16
- Family, 1890s-2000s
- Scope and Contents note
- Includes cabinet cards and portraits of the Lym and Chuck family in the late 19th and early 20th century, including photographs of Sarah Lym (Chuck) from her first marriage. Also includes photographs of a family vacation in California in the 1920s, ship travel to China, and the Lym family during holidays and at home.
- Box/Folder 7 :
20-57, Box/Folder
9 : 17-24, Box 10,
Map case
- Arthur Lym aviation, 1910s-1960s
- Scope and Contents note
- Contains early aviation portraits of Lym and one photograph of a Chinese military air balloon from the 1910s. The bulk of the photographs are from the 1930s and consist of images of airplanes, flight crews, mechanics, and the Canton aircraft factory. Photographs from the 1940s show Lym stationed in Kunming, India, during World War II and depict airplanes that were being used to fly supplies over the Himalayan Mountains, also known as the "Hump."
- Also includes a photograph of General Lym with James H. Doolittle in the 1940s (Box 9, folder 22); photographs taken by Lym of the Ma On Shan Iron Ore mine prior to the mine moving underground (Box 7, folders 44-48); photographs depicting the Port of Hong Kong in the early 1950s, after the war (Box 7, folders 49-57 and the map case); several panoramic aerial photographs of China (Box 9, folder 20); and a mounted photograph of Bing Chin's wedding, which Lym presided over in 1934 (Box 10, folder 2).
- Box/Folder 7 :
58-61
- China National Aviation Corporation (C.N.A.C.), 1949-2001
- Scope and Contents note
- Includes photographs of Kwan Ming in 1949, Pat Patterson and Moon Chin in 1990, and several photos from the C.N.A.C. reunion at Moon Chin's house in 2001.
- Box/Folder 7 :
62-72
- Civil Air Transport (C.A.T.), 1978-2010
- Scope and Contents note
- Includes photographs from Robertson and Sue Hacker's return trip to Canton in 1983 and a C.A.T. reunion in San Diego in 2010.
- Box/Folder 7 :
73-74
- Gann, Ernest, 1960s-1990s
- Scope and Contents note
- Contains loose photographs included in Gann's letters to Robertson. See also: Box 2, folder 13.
- Box 8, Box/Folder
9 : 25
- Guangdong Aviation Association, 1982-2000s
- Scope and Contents note
- Depicts staff, conference, and banquet of the association and its first meeting. Also includes several photographs of the 19th Calvary Cemetery in Guangzhou Province, the first anniversary celebration of Guangzhou Province and Los Angeles becoming sister cities in 1982, and the Tokyo Aviation Association in 1982.
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- Box/Folder 7 : 75, Short, Robert M., 1932, 1984
Box/Folder 9 : 26 Scope and Contents note
Contains reproduction photographs of Robert Short's memorial service in China in 1932 (Box 9, folder 26) and photographs of the meeting of Edward Short, Lt. Ikuta, and Robertson in Hawaii in 1984 (Box 7, folder 75).
- Box/Folder 7 : 76 Smith, Felix, 1900s-1950s
Scope and Contents note
Contains photographs of Lym and of Smith used for research, originally found within the papers of Smith.
- Box 12 Negatives, 1923 to 1990s, undated
Scope and Contents note
Contains one film negative of Yang Sen-Yi, head of the New South China Aviation Bureau, and his staff in front of the new Rosamond airplane in 1923 (see also: Box 4, folder 12, The Adventurous Travellers - First in the Skies of China); multiple negatives of Renee Robertson from the 1950s, including images used in the Peninsula Hotel anniversary publication (see also: Box 6, folder 2); and miscellaneous family negatives.
- Box 11 Digital image discs, 1900-2008, undated
Scope and Contents note
Includes scanned photographs of Arthur Lym (see also: Box 9, folders 17, 22, 24) and newspaper scans dating from 1900 to 1977 (see also: Family papers, Box 1, folder 11 and Box 2, folder 7, and Arthur Lym Research Materials, Box 2, folder 7). Photographs not also contained in physical format in the collection include "Photos from Baotou, by Monte James" of an eye clinic in China, 2008, and Sisters of Heaven book signing for Patti Gully, 2008.
- Film shelf Motion Picture Film, undated
Scope and Contents note
One 8mm film, untitled.
- Box 11 Videorecordings, 1994-2013, undated
Scope and Contents note
Titles taken from labels.

"A Brief Flight," undated
General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"Anne's," undated
General Physical Description note: One VHS-C cassette

"Aviation tape U.S.," undated
General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"C.N.A.C. Hump," preview, 6 min., undated
General Physical Description note: One DVD

"Legacy China," undated
General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"Memories of Hong Kong 1949," 23 min., undated
General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette
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"The Pilots of the Flying Tigers," 17 min. undated

General Physical Description note: One DVD

"Taped at studio, Canton, U.S.," undated

General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"Yankee on the Yangtze River," movies of Mr. Ernest Allison, C.N.A.C., 25 min., undated

General Physical Description note: One DVD

"In the Blue Sky Miles: To Commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the Establishment of the Guangdong Province Aviation Association," 1994

Language of the Materials : Title written in Chinese

General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"A. Renee Guangzhou," 1996

General Physical Description note: One Hi8 video cassette

"History Channel, C.A.T. and Air America," 2000

General Physical Description note: One VHS cassette

"Legendary pilot Moon Chin usher in a 100th birthday, born in April 13, 1913," 2013

General Physical Description note: One HD WMV Disc

Box 11

Sound Recordings, 1983-1985, undated

Scope and Contents note

Titles taken from labels.

"Pat Patterson and Maggie Britton," undated

General Physical Description note: One compact sound cassette

"China Tape, Ngo Lun," undated

General Physical Description note: One compact sound cassette

Untitled, undated

General Physical Description note: One compact sound cassette

"Aviation BLDG AA, Mr. Ikuta, Air World," 1983 March 23

General Physical Description note: One compact sound cassette

"Pat Patterson interview, Hong Kong," 1985

General Physical Description note: Three compact sound cassettes