The History of Aviation Collection
The CAT/Air America Archives

Air-Log

January 2001

The James H. Doolittle Library
The George H. Williams Library

Sall Appointed UTD Director of Libraries
Dr. Larry D. Sall has been officially appointed Director of Libraries at the Eugene McDermott Library for the University of Texas at Dallas effective November 1, 2000. He had been Interim Director since July of 1999. Dr. Sall joined the university as Coordinator of Special Collections in 1978. He received a BA degree from the University of Idaho and MA and PhD degrees from Wayne State University. His major field of study for the latter was Modern European History. His dissertation was entitled *The German Press and Kurt von Schleicher, May 1932-March 1933*.

Before arriving at UTD, Sall taught history at Wayne State Univ., Henry Ford Community College and the Univ. of Texas at Arlington. He became interested in archival activities and served as Regional Archivist for West Texas 1974-1977 followed by service as department head for Special Collections and Archives at the Univ. of Texas at El Paso.

Since his arrival on the UTD campus, Sall has developed the History of Aviation Collection by bringing in such important collections as those of the Civil Air Transport, Air America and Gen. James H. Doolittle. He has also developed the Arnold A. Jaffe Holocaust and Wineburgh Philatelic Research Libraries and encouraged endowments to support each of the collections. As an adjunct to his duties, he has translated two books from German into English: *Pioneer Aviator in China* by Max Springweiler (1998) and *Eurasia Aviation Corporation* by Peter Moeller, to be published next year.

Sall’s replacement as Head of Special Collections is Dr. Erik D. Carlson, a 1996 graduate of Texas Tech University. His research fields have been in military and commercial aviation, airline economic regulation and the Pacific Theater during World War II. He has held teaching positions at the Univ. of Texas at Arlington, Texas Wesleyan Univ., Univ. of Dallas, and Dallas Baptist University.

Civil Air Transport Reunion
San Diego was the site for the Civil Air Transport (CAT) reunion of former employees in November. CAT was the American-owned airline that operated in the post-World War II period in China. During its first years it helped supply starving refugees and later evacuated thousands during the Chinese civil war. UTD was represented by Drs. Larry Sall and Erik Carlson and Special Collections staff photographer Rick Biddenstadt. Carlson was introduced to the group and gave a review of CAT-related research activities at the HAC during the past year. Biddenstadt assisted in filming several oral history interviews of CAT members during the reunion weekend.

CAT/Air America Collection Undergoes Growth Spurt
During the last year, the CAT/America collection has acquired a large amount of formerly classified materials from the Central Intelligence Agency. The corporate records from the CIA now fill 62 archival boxes. The new material contains aircraft accident reports, surplus sales documents, Air Asia business reports, Air America dissolution correspondence and legal documents as well as Saigon base monthly reports.

HAC volunteer Milton Bludworth processes these once top-secret materials which represent a significant holding of information on aviation-related CIA activities during American involvement in the Vietnam War. More documents are expected in the coming months. Interested researchers may access the CAT/Air America finding aid at the UTD Library Home Page or contact Dr. Erik D. Carlson at (972) 883-2570.

Meet the Volunteers....
There are currently ten volunteers who travel to UTD from communities in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex each week to assist in organizing the vast collection of aviation materials of the History of Aviation Collection. One of them is Robert “Bob” Kopitzke of Hurst, Texas. Bob is a Chicago area native who graduated from high school in 1947. He joined the Naval Reserves while in high school and served on active
duty for two years in Hawaii during the Korean War.

When released from active duty, Bob obtained Airframe and Power Plant mechanic and commercial pilot licenses while attending Lewis College, Lockport, Ill. where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. He worked as a mechanic and instructor at Lewis and earned a Master of Science degree in Industrial Education in 1956.

Bob worked in various aviation fields until he joined American Airlines as a mechanic in 1966 and was promoted to the training department where he was a classroom instructor on the 727, 747 and 767 aircraft until retirement in 1986. Meanwhile, he was interested in making UTD an aviation research center and served as a curator for the History of Aviation Collection from 1986 to 1988. During that period, he organized the cataloging and movement of three-dimensional artifacts to the Frontiers of Flight Museum and was the museum’s first curator from 1998-1990. Since then he has supervised the work of the HAC volunteers and evaluates the books, magazines and other materials that are offered for the collection.

**Douglas H. Robinson Collection Available for Study**

Among the several outstanding collections of lighter-than-air material on hand at UTD’s Special Collections Dept. is that of Dr. Douglas H. Robinson, physician and historian. His large collection of lighter-than-air manuscripts, albums, articles, audiotapes, correspondence and layout drawings of German airships was donated to the HAC in 1998. He majored in biology and minored in history at Harvard before attending Harvard Medical School. In addition to his medical practice he found time to build a reputation as one of the foremost historians of the rigid airship. He owned and operated a Cessna and was a licensed glider pilot.

Two of Robinson’s major lighter-than-air books are *The Zeppelin in Combat* and *Giants in the Sky*. Another significant work not related directly to lighter-than-air flight is *The Dangerous Sky: A History of Aviation Medicine*, published in 1973, which was written for the layman and relates how medical researchers first investigated the hazards to which flying subjected the body and how the dangers were overcome.

**Current HAC Volunteer Projects**

The History of Aviation Collection volunteers are engaged in a number of activities that are vital to the enhancement of the Special Collections Dept. as a major research facility for aviation historians. Two volunteers have been working for several months on identifying people and planes in the hundreds of photographs in the A. E. Ferko Collection, one of the most extensive aggregations of World War I material on the German air force in the world. In time, these photographs and others in the James L. Kerr, Ola Sater, Iver Penttinen and Royal Cowan collections will be cross-referenced for easier retrieval.

One of the continuing projects is the accumulation and logging of aviation publications that are received from donors or are excess from other libraries. The objective is to have complete sets of English language aviation magazines which can be bound and shelved for easier and safer handling. Magazines are not bound until a year’s series is on hand. Duplicates are offered for exchange, sale or barter with other institutions or collectors.

An on-going project for the volunteers is the organization of 33 boxes of George E. Haddaway files that contain voluminous correspondence, photographs and materials collected over a lifetime by the founder of the History of Aviation Collection. Haddaway spent more than 40 years as an aviation magazine publisher and was a member of a number of aviation organizations. One of his favorites was Wings of Hope that provided aircraft to assist medical needs in the third world countries. Another was the Civil Air Patrol in which he served during World War II. He was very active in the Aviation/Space Writers Association nationally and the Dallas Foreign Visitors Committee locally. One of his non-aviation fun activities was spreading the word about the Chili Appreciation Society International.

**NOTAAM Report**

The North Texas Association of Aviation Museums, an organization of directors of aviation museums in the north Texas area, meets monthly to discuss important issues related to the operation of aviation museums and historical collections. In addition to the History of Aviation Collection, member institutions include the Frontiers of Flight Museum, C.R. Smith/American Airlines Museum, Cavanaugh Flight Museum, Silent Wings Museum, DFW Wing of the Confederate Air Force, Texas Air Command and the OV-10 Bronco Museum. The HAC has a unique fit into this group because of the long-term loan of aviation materials to the Frontiers of Flight Museum. Topics of discussion include public relations, security and collection development. A major topic under consideration now is the development of displays and activities for the centennial of the first successful flights by the Wright brothers in 1903.

Special Collections:
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Bell’s P-59 Airacomet to Fly Again
One of America’s first jet fighters, a P-59A Airacomet, developed at the height of World War II, is being restored to flying condition by a dedicated group at the Planes of Fame Museum, Chino, Calif. Even though it never fired a shot in anger and has been largely forgotten, many lessons were learned and thus contributed much to the early development of succeeding jet fighters.

The P-59 airframe was ordered into development by General H. H. Arnold in September 1941 and assigned to Bell Aircraft Co. for manufacture; its jet engine was manufactured by General Electric Co. The first one flew on October 1, 1943 at Muroc Dry Lake, Calif. Only 66 P-59s were built, including variations, and were developed under strict secrecy.

The plane being restored is believed to be the 10th one built. It was assigned to the 412th Fighter Squadron, then used for classroom instruction at a mechanics’ school. The museum acquired it in 1958. When it is restored, it will be the oldest flying jet aircraft in the world.

Pilot Completes World Flight in a Stearman
Robert Ragozinno of Norman, Okla. completed a solo flight around the world on November 17, 2000. He flew an open cockpit, single-engine bi-wing Stearman, a World War II vintage trainer. He departed Will Rogers Airport, Oklahoma City on June 1 and flying west to east, completed the flight in 170 days. His purpose was to better the time of 175 days by two Douglas World Cruisers, also single-engine, open cockpit planes, flown by Army Air Service two-man crews in 1924. However, they flew east to west from Seattle and had no navigational aids except compasses. Four planes had departed; one crashed in Alaska and another was lost in the North Atlantic.

Ragozinno’s Stearman was equipped with the latest electronic navigation devices and additional fuel tanks. A member of the HAC volunteers was in contact with Ragozinno when he was delayed in Petropavlovsk, Russia awaiting permission from Moscow to depart. When released, he flew to Attu, then at other stops along the Aleutians. These legs were the most difficult hazard for both world flights because of the uncertain weather.

Air Force Memorial Deadline Extended
Congress has voted to extend the deadline to build an Air Force Memorial in metropolitan Washington, D.C. This allows the Air Force Memorial Foundation five more years to finish the fund-raising and break ground for construction. So far, $24.5 million of the necessary $30 million has been raised. The site selected is on Arlington Ridge, adjacent to the Arlington National Cemetery and overlooking the Potomac River.

The proposal has not been without controversy. Although the design has been considered outstanding, a local group called “Friends of Iwo Jima” objected on grounds of increased traffic in the area and encroachment on the Marine Corps Iwo Jima Memorial. Unsuccessful suits to cancel the Air Force Memorial were brought twice in federal court. Now that the House and Senate have extended the deadline, groundbreaking is tentatively scheduled for next fall.

Confederate Air Force May Change Name
Midland-based Confederate Air Force (CAF) members have voted to seek a change in the organization’s name. Faced with a loss of corporate support to sustain the expenses of preserving and operating World War II aircraft, more than 1,800 members believe that a name change is needed to better reflect the mission of preserving and flying more than 130 war birds. The word “Confederate” is said to have cost the organization thousands of dollars in lost corporate donations because it is now politically incorrect and there is no connection between its mission and the Civil War. There are about 9,000 members in 70 chapters in the U.S., France, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand. The CAF operates the American Airpower Heritage Museum in Midland.

A seven-member board is now seeking suggestions for names and will submit four finalists to the membership for a vote next October. The name change would be effective in January 2002.

Air Force Gets Its First Osprey
The first CV-22 Osprey procured by the Air Force is now at Edwards AFB, Calif. for two years of testing. The Osprey is manufactured at Bell Helicopter’s Flight Research Center at Arlington, Texas. The Air Force version has been reconfigured from the MV-22 being procured by the Marine Corps by the addition of multi-mode radar for terrain-following and terrain avoidance, auxiliary fuel tanks and integrated electronic warfare equipment.

Fifty CV-22s are scheduled to replace MH-53J Pave Low helicopters with an operational capability in 2004. Aircrew training will take place at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.