Preserving the Archival Histories of Space Flight

Digital Frontiers
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I’m from the government and I’m here to help you ask for your help

- We do not want to reinvent the wheel (poorly), we want you to cross boundaries and work with us
To Boldly Preserve: Archiving for the Next Half-Century of Space Flight

- March 1-2, 2018
- American Institute of Physics, College Park, Maryland
- NSF-funded
- November 1 cfp deadline
Short-term goals/success

- Convince actors to collect their history
- Show them what is important to collect
- Provide toolkits for them
  - Best practices
  - Digital and physical tools
  - Low barriers of entry
Historic Actors: how and who to bring to the table?
Major Themes

- ID-ing Challenges of Digitization
  - on the production end & collecting/archiving end
- Introduction to digital humanities and DIY recording
- Oral History Interviews: retention, navigation
- ID who/what info is overlooked or of new interest
- ID underworked/overlooked records in existence

- Emphasis on including early career public historians, archivists
Who’s Interested

Archives

- AIP
- The Hagley
- Pratt&Whitney
- Univ. AZ
- Purdue (Flight and Space archivist)
- UMD College of Information Studies
- U MN Babbage Institute/Library
- CHF Center for Oral History
- USGS Astrogeology Science Center
- Government Records Branch, Canada
- Embry-Riddle Archives
- MIT Digital Archivist

Historic Actors

- JPL
- Ames
- NRL
- Journalist(s)
- The Planetary Society
### Who do we want to be interested?

**People building in the infrastructure now**
- Oral history promoters/performers
  - AIP
  - CHF
  - OHA
  - Univ programs
  - NPR Storycorps

**Digital preservation experts and activists (especially underrepresented groups)**

**Historic actors**
- Aerospace Industries Assoc.
- AAS
- AIAA
- Commercial Spaceflight Fed
- NSS
- New Space Foundation
- Satellite Industry Association
- Space Frontier Foundation
Space-Related Archives Catalog

NASA History Office intern is working on a list of repositories with space-related collections.

At this stage, the goal is not to be comprehensive, but to open conversations:

- What do we have, where?
- What/who is under-represented?
- How do we keep this current?
- How do we make this accessible?
Some themes for us today

- What do you want to learn?
- What would you like to inform others of or discuss?
- Artifacts
- How to generate at least awareness, at best converts/proselytizers among historic actors

Moving forward:

- March will open the conversation, how might it continue?
- ONR + ___ to sponsor next meeting ~2022(?)
Long-term goals/success

- Our toolkits diffuse to other fields
- Historians adapt good data management
- Archives have resources and space to house materials
“...our discipline is most concerned about producers of space technology. But most of humanity experiences space exploration either as user...or as a source of imagination and enthusiasm. How do we archive the experience of users?”