

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Luella Vernie Daniels was the youngest of Curtis G. and Belle Forshey Daniels' four daughters. She was born October 25, 1906, in the small northeast Ohio town of Montville. Her passion for flying and flyers erupted around the age of twenty, while on a bus trip to Columbus, Ohio. Although she never learned to fly herself, she built a short but eventful career as the secretary to Cliff Henderson, impresario of the National Air Races and many other aviation events during the late 1920s and '30s. In her capacity as the office administrator for Henderson's various production organizations formed in cities throughout the U.S., she rubbed shoulders with many of the world's most famous aviators, including Amelia Earhart, Jacqueline Cochran, Roscoe Turner, Gerd Achgelis, and many others. Other than the National Air Races, her assignments under Henderson included helping to organize the International Aircraft Exposition in Saint Louis, the New York Aircraft Salon, the National Pacific Aircraft and Boat Show, and the International Air Race and Gordon Bennett Balloon Race.

Luella Daniels' career in aviation ended when she married Richard Sawtelle. At this point, she turned to helping her husband run his Fish & Chips Shop in Los Angeles' Farmers' Market. She and Richard divorced in 1956, whereupon she became a secretary to the principal at Hawthorne School in Los Angeles. She retired from professional life in 1972.

It is unclear whether Luella maintained any connection to aviation throughout her middle years, but in later years, she became active in several service organizations and aviation organizations, including the Breakfast Club, an organization of 99ers formed strictly to fly into an airport once a month to have breakfast together. She was also a member of OX-5, and the Early Birds, both early aviators' clubs. Luella Daniels Sawtelle died in Los Angeles, December 26, 1998, at the age of 92.

For more details on Luella Daniels Sawtelle, see her Biography file.

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

INTRODUCTION

The Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection was processed and accessioned in May, 1999. The collection is housed in 2 boxes (one is oversized) and fills 38 folders divided into 19 series arranged primarily chronologically and by type of material. The donor of the collection, Rick Luse, is the nephew of Luella Daniels Sawtelle and brought the collection to IWASM in early 1999, shortly after his aunt's death.

Most of the material in the collection dates from 1929 through the 1930s when Luella served as a secretary and office manager for Clifford and Phillip Henderson, organizers of the National Air Races during that period. The collection is a fascinating assortment of mementos and memorabilia, with a few official business documents from the Hendersons' organizations. Luella collected everything from signatures of aviators to National Air Race bumper stickers to post-event banquet programs; there is also a large collection of photographs, primarily from the 1930 Chicago Air Race. Other items of interest include news clippings from the 1936 Air Races in Los Angeles, and various press releases and handbills printed on official stationery.

Artifacts that were accessioned with the papers include pins and badges from the National Air Races, several Thompson Trophy Race calendars from the late 1930s through the 1947, an original Charles Hubbell painting of a Gee Bee 4, and an autographed 1936 letter to Clifford Henderson from Amelia Earhart. The latter two artifacts are on extended loan from the donor. See accession numbers 1999.21.1B through 1999.21.94.

Taken as a whole, the Luella Daniels Sawtelle collection provides detailed documentation of some aspects of the publicity and organizational machinery behind the National Air Races and some of the related events produced by the Hendersons.

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of an assortment of papers, photographs, publicity materials, miscellaneous souvenirs, and newspaper clippings, the latter relating primarily to the 1936 National Air Races in Los Angeles. The collection spans the late 1910s-- an unidentified photograph of two women, looking through a wire fence, presumably at an early aviation demonstration, through 1996— souvenir envelopes mailed from NASA launch sites.

Because it primarily covers the years 1929-1939, the years that Luella Daniels Sawtelle worked for Clifford and Phillip Henderson, organizers of the National Air Races, the collection is organized both chronologically and by order of relationship to that corporation and its affiliated organizations. However, in certain areas, types of documents supercede the content-based organization of the material, such as with event passes and tickets. Series 1, encompassing 9 folders, contains correspondence, financial documents, event programs, and lists of official standings for the National Air Races. Series 2 through 4 contain similar types of documents for the New York Aircraft Salon, 1930, the International Air Races Gordon Bennett Balloon Race, 1930-1933, and the Pan Pacific Arena, 1936-1938, respectively. Series 5 contains passes and tickets for various levels of participation in the aforementioned. Series 6 contains three miscellaneous aviation related event programs including an *Official Souvenir Program of the Women's Championship Air Races and Pacific Air Pageant* of 1935. Series 7 contains a small selection of membership cards and business cards, including one signed by Roscoe Turner, and another by German aviator, Gerd Achgelis. Series 8 contains an *Official Pictorial Souvenir* publication of the Xth Olympiad held in Los Angeles in 1932. This item is an interesting reference point for the National Air Races, which were advertised around that time as "The Olympiad of the Air." Series 9 contains 2 packets of envelopes, mostly souvenirs from the National Air Races from 1929-1934, and from the Space Program, 1973-1996. Series 10 contains postcards dated from 1911-1933, several of which are aviation related. One, undated is captioned "Cleveland Airport During Air Races" and depicts the farm fields that would eventually become Cleveland Hopkins Airport. Series 12, in 10 folders, contains photographs, mainly air race related, dating from the late 1910s through the 1930s, with many undated items. Many of these photos await identification by a knowledgeable researcher. Until they can be more appropriately organized according to their subject, they have been classed into type of subject, i.e. Airplanes, Individuals and Groups, etc. Of particular interest here are the autographed photos of contestants and other participants in the 1930 and 1932 Air Races. One folder (2) contains several

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

photos of Luella Daniels Sawtelle posing with participants in the 1930 Chicago Air Races. Series 13, 14, 15, all Oversize, contain atlases from the 1930s and 2 copies, one signed by the author, of Elvy Kalep's *Air Babies*. Series 16 contains newsletters from 1991 of the Early Birds of Aviation, a group to which Luella belonged. In one newsletter is a reprint of the minutes of the first Early Birds meeting held on January 2, 1929, which lists the original members and proposed members of that group. Series 17, 2 folders, deals with two other early aviators groups, OX5 and Aviatrix. In these materials, which date from 1983-1991, is a 1990 Christmas form letter autographed by Bobbie Trout and Carol L. Osborne. This series also contains a 1983 directory of Aviatrix, Pioneers of Aviation, and a group photo of the OX-5 Reunion of 1977. Luella Daniels Sawtelle can be found in the upper right quadrant of this photo. Series 19 contains photocopies of most of Luella Daniels Sawtelle's clippings, which clippings span from 1930 to 1975. Most are from the 1936 Los Angeles Times coverage of the National Air Races that year. The originals are loose in the bottom of the Oversize box.

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

SERIES DESCRIPTION

The papers from this collection occupy 28 file folders in one large Hollinger box, and 10 oversize envelopes stored in an oversized box with the loose newspaper clippings. The following descriptions highlight some of the more interesting or historic documents in these series, but they are not comprehensive lists. The letters L.D.S. stand for Luella Daniels [Sawtelle].

BOX 1

Series 1

NAR Materials

Folder 1/9 NAR Correspondence, 1930-1932

Thank you letters to Luella Daniels carbon copies of letters to Henderson brothers from Larry Therkelson regarding a possible Air Show in Portland, OR. Letter of recommendation for unnamed individual from Amelia Earhart to Cliff Henderson.

Folder 2/9 NAR Official Standings of Contestants, 1930-1935

Folder 3/9 Banquet Programs, Invitation to participate in N.A.R., 1930-1931

Folder 4/9 Miscellaneous, 1928-1979

"NAR Spreads Her Wings" a history of NAR; NAR Financial Statements, 1931-32; Official Announcement of Ruth Chatterton Derby; typed report on service charges and participation credentials for NAR sponsors, undated; Cleveland Magazine supplement, September 1979, featuring a history of NAR

OVERSIZE Folder 5/9 NAR Official Publications, 1928, 1931, 1933
1928 Official Program; 1930 Official Directory; 1931 Official Program; 1931 Schedule of Events & Prizes; 1933 Official Program & Log

OVERSIZE Folder 6/9 NAR Official Publications, 1935-1936
1935 Official Log; 1935 Schedule of Events; 1936 Schedule of Events; 1936 Official Publication & Log

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

OVERSIZE Folder 7/9 NAR Directories & Logs, 1937-1939
Presentation copies of Official Directory & Log, 1937, 1938,
1939

OVERSIZE Folder 8/9 Photo of Thank You Placard to Cliff
Henderson for 1936 NAR

OVERSIZE Folder 9/9 NAR 50th Anniversary Commemorative
Calendar, 1979 with reproductions of Chas. Hubbell
paintings

Series 2 New York Aircraft Salon, 1930, undated

1 Folder

Letter of thanks for L.D.S.'s help at New York Aircraft Salon;
Carbon copy of Plan of Development and Progress on
Aircraft Salon; a report to Luther K. Bell, General Manager,
Aeronautical Exposition Corp.

Series 3 International Air Races Gordon Bennett Balloon Race, 1930-1933,
and undated

Folder 1 /2

Contest Bulletin, 1933, announcing racer entry procedures;
tentative rules and regulations, 1933; outline for talk on
International Air Races given by Mr. Merle Luces,
Commonwealth Edison Co., to North Town Kiwanis Club,
193?

OVERSIZE Folder 2/2

Official Program & Log from Curtis Wright Reynolds Airport,
Chicago, 1933

Series 4 Pan Pacific Arena, 1936-1938

1 Folder

Letter of thanks to L.D.S. from Cliff Henderson, 1937; flyer
for 2nd Annual National Pacific Aircraft & Boat Show, 1937;
page of Pan Pacific Arena stationery with comic sketch of
Aircraft & Boat show on verso

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

Series 5 Passes, Tickets, 1930-1939

1 Folder

NAR passes, 1930-1939, including metal NAR executive badge and book of complimentary passes to promenade at 1930 air races; passes from International Air Races Gordon Bennett Balloon Race, 1930, 1933, and undated; Miscellaneous from 1930-1938, and undated, includes a round trip pass for Century Airlines, Inc.; pass for New York Aircraft Salon; executive pass in leather holder for Pan Pacific Arena Aircraft & Boat show

Series 6 Event Programs, 1931, 1935

1 Folder

Official Souvenir Publication of Omaha Air Races, 1931; Official Souvenir Program of Women's Championship Air Races and Pacific Air Pageant, 1935; Program, Luncheon in Honor of the Late Ambassador Myron T. Herrick and Major James H. Doolittle given by Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, 1931

Series 7 Membership Cards, Business Cards

1 Folder

Includes 1 autographed calling card of Gerd Achgelis, German Aviator, and a blank card signed by Roscoe Turner

Series 8 Olympiad Official Pictorial Souvenir, 1932

1 Folder

Booklet published for the Xth Olympiad in Los Angeles.

Series 9 Envelopes, 1929-1996

1 Folder

2 packets in glassine: NAR franked and blank envelopes 1929-1935; U.S. space program franked envelopes with inserts, 1973-1996

Series 10 Miscellaneous postcards, 1911-1933, and undated

1 Folder

Includes one postcard, undated, captioned "Cleveland Airport During Air Races"

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

Series 11 Miscellaneous, 1929-1943, and undated

1 Folder

Letter to Amelia Earhart from Sherman Voorhees regarding a miscaptioned photo of Earhart; partial copies of L.D.S's resume as of 1933; a history of the Thompson Trophy Race; L.D.S's file from the "Women's Air Reserve Medical Detachment; some items pertaining to the Los Angeles Farmers' Market, where L.D.S. worked after her marriage

Series 12 Photos, 1910s – 1930s, undated, 10 Folders

Folder 1/10

Autographed photos-- mostly contestants and participants in 1930, Race, and other air races (?)

Folder 2/10

1930 Air Races-- several shots of L.D.S. posing with participants near planes at an airfield

Folder 3/10

Individuals and Groups-- Mostly photos of pilots and air race officials posing near planes, 1930-1932 (?). Images of women include Phoebe Omelie, Dorothy Hester

Folder 4/10

Portraits-- several of 1930 Air Race officials

Folder 5/10

Airfield landscapes-- some identified as Chicago, probably at 1930 National Air Races

Folder 6/10

Airplanes-- from 1930 National Air Races, Chicago (?).

Folder 7/10

Curtis Airfield—Four aerial and high perspective views.

Folder 8/10

Chicago Rapid Transit Co.—6 images of the First Aid Station at the 1930 Chicago Air Races

Folder 9/10

Banquet—6 photos of a banquet attended by (and in honor of?) L.D.S.

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

Folder 10/10

Photos, Miscellaneous—includes an image of a 1929
Cleveland Air Race Billboard.

Series 13 OVERSIZE 1933-1934 Aviation Atlas

1 Folder

Series 14 OVERSIZE 1939 Rand McNally World Atlas

1 Folder

Series 15 OVERSIZE *Air Babies*

1 Folder

2 copies Elvy Kalep's *Air Babies*, 1 soft-bound, 1 hard-
bound, autographed

Series 16 OVERSIZE Early Birds, 1991

1 Folder

Financial Summary; copy of minutes of first Early Birds
meeting in 1929 with list of members and proposed
members, April and July, 1991 Early Birds of Aviation
newsletters

Series 17 OVERSIZE OX-5 and Aviatrix, 1977-1991

Folder 1/ 2

OX-5 News bulletins, June and August 1991; OX-5 Aviation
pioneers annual reunion program; December 1990 holiday
form letter from Osborne Publisher, Inc., signed by Boffi
Trout and Carol L. Osborne; directory of Aviatrix, Pioneers of
Aviation, 1983

Folder 2/2

Photo of OX5 Reunion, 1977

Series 18 OVERSIZE Powder Puff Derby Commemorative Album

1 Folder

Luella Daniels Sawtelle Collection

Series 19 OVERSIZE Clippings, 1930-1975, and undated

1 Folder

Contains selected photocopies of clippings. Other clippings are loose in bottom of oversize box. Newspapers encapsulated in mylar are in the oversize photo box.