

NEWSLETTER

The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library

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THE GENESIS OF FLIGHT—NOW ONLINE

As a gateway to humanity's 5,000-year heritage of the dreams and achievement of flight, nothing matches the Colonel Richard Gimbel Aeronautical History Collection of the United States Air Force Academy. Charles Lindbergh called it simply "the finest and most valuable collection of aeronautical documents in the world."

Bringing Gimbel's Collection to the Air Force Academy

Richard Gimbel was the son of a founder of Gimbels' department stores, at one time the largest department store chain in America. As an affluent young man, Gimbel was passionate about flying and

book collecting. He knew the latter world well, and by the 1930s he had acquired a widely respected collection of the works of Charles Dickens.

During World War II Gimbel was an administrative officer assigned to the 8th Air Force in England. While there, he bought a box of aeronautical items in a bombed London book store and began his aeronautical collection. He remained in the Air Force after the war and retired in 1951 as Professor of Air Science at Yale University. His aeronautical collection remained at Yale during his lifetime, but he bequeathed it to the Air Force Academy thanks

to the good offices of Lindbergh, Lt. Gen. Hubert Harmon (the Academy's first Superintendent), and Brig. Gen. George Fagan (an early director of the Academy Library and one of the founders of The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library). After Gimbel's death in 1970, his collection came to the Academy.

Gimbel's Collection

The Gimbel Collection contains more than 20,000 items including ancient seals carved from semiprecious stones; books printed soon after the Gutenberg Bible in the 1450s; color prints depicting early aviators and parachutists; letters and manuscripts written by Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Otto Lilienthal, Count von Zeppelin, and the Wright brothers; medallions

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This past February, The Friends completed one of the most significant projects in our history, making *The Genesis of Flight* available on the worldwide web. As a result of this nearly four-year effort, information about the Gimbel Aeronautical History Collection (and The Friends) is now available to anyone in the world with a computer. Over the next few years, we anticipate that awareness of the collection, and its priceless contents will certainly enhance the reputation of the McDermott Library as one of the leading repositories for material on the history of flight in the world. This momentous achievement would not have been possible without the generous support of our patrons who have been essential in the completion of our many projects over the years. I want to thank you all. But success also has challenges and The Friends face one of those now. We are embarking on a major effort to determine what our next areas of emphasis should be and what projects we might undertake to continue our service to both the Academy and the Library. While many of the things we do are the result of inputs from the Library staff, we also need to be responsive to the larger community of our patrons. With this challenge in mind, I am inviting each of you to let us know your suggestions regarding potential areas of emphasis and future projects. We will be carefully considering possibilities over the next few months and will keep you posted on what we decide. Again, thank you for your continued support; we look forward to hearing from you in the near future.



Colonel Richard Gimbel (back row, center) with officers of the B-17 in which he flew his first combat mission

from the 1780s honoring the first manned balloon flights; and images from popular art forms like advertisements, dime novels, and sheet music.

Making the Collection Accessible

Wishing to increase awareness of the collection among cadets, the Academy staff, and the international community of scholars, The Friends published in 2000 an illustrated catalog with representative samples from the Gimbel holdings. Titled *The Genesis of Flight*, the book includes photographs along with introductions and analyses by eminent scholars.

Even as The Friends were publishing the handsome, well-received book, they wanted to do more to increase accessibility to the collection, and in 2011 they

available worldwide.

The Online Program

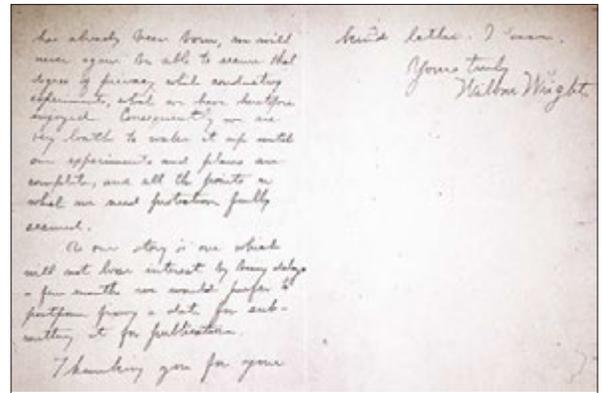
Visitors to The Friends website (www.friends.usafalibrary.com) can tap a “Genesis of Flight” button to:

- Witness the advent of flight as reported in contemporary books, letters, prints, and other media.
- Trace the influence of individual aviators, concepts, and events.
- Learn the history and highlights of the collection.
- Download chapters for offline study.

The online program comprises over 300 images accompanied by enlargements, voiced descriptions narrated by Will Ketterson (a former Chief of Media Relations at the Academy and Vice President of The Friends), scholarly analyses, interactive tables of contents, and search engines.

Six chapters, including a video introduction by Tom Crouch, Senior Curator of Aeronautics at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, describe the collection.

Eight chapters provide annotated illustrations from the collection. Typical of these chapters is “Manuscripts,” introduced and annotated by Professor Clive Hart of the University of Essex, England. It includes manuscripts and personal letters written by notable figures like H.G. Wells, author of *War of the Worlds*; Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, inventor of the first practical airship; and Wilbur Wright. Another chapter covers “Seals,”



Letter from Wilbur Wright, written about 10 months after the first sustained, powered flight

some dating from 3,000 years before the birth of Christ. These seals with their depictions of real and fanciful flying figures were pressed into clay tablets to verify authenticity much as we use signatures today. Archeologists Ellen Morris and Holly Pittman introduced and annotated this chapter.

Each chapter exists in multiple versions, ensuring compatibility with various browsers that account for about 80 percent of all page hits on the Worldwide Web.

Honoring Our Aviation Heritage

By publishing the online *Genesis of Flight*, The Friends acknowledge a debt to Richard Gimbel and the many aviation pioneers who “gave their all of old.” We believe Gimbel would be pleased to know his priceless gift to the Academy is becoming, as well, a gift to those of every time and place “who love the vastness of the sky.”



View of Richmond drawn by a Union balloonist during the American Civil War

resumed discussions about a project to put *The Genesis of Flight* online. Today the completed project makes the riches of the Gimbel Collection

FRIENDS GRADUATE DATABASE UPDATE

We will continue to update the electronic databases maintained on our website. These databases consist of information on Air Force Academy graduates who have their names inscribed on the Graduate War Memorial Wall, who have been detained as Prisoners of War, who are recipients of the Jabara Award, and who have been selected

for other Academy or AOG awards. Our intent is to provide an archive of information to assist in the study of graduates who have become role models for future generations.

In the future, the major problem we will face is obtaining relevant personal information to populate individual files. Privacy legislation has now made it nearly impossible

to acquire such data. The Friends will continue to work around these restrictions, but it is likely that we will not be able to add much to current entries and that new entries will contain much less detailed information.

NEW FRIENDS BOARD MEMBERS 2014

At The Friends annual Board of Directors meeting in May 2014, the Board unanimously appointed two new members: Col. (ret.) James Gaston and Lt Col. (ret.) Steven Pomeroy.

Jim Gaston is a 1963 graduate of the Academy with a master's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma. He flew F-100s in the Vietnam War, is a graduate of the National War College, and served for many years in the Academy's English Department, two years as its acting head. Jim has a long history of support for The Friends and the Academy Library: He produced oral histories in digital video and print for over 30 of the Academy's Superintendents, Deans of Faculty, Commandants, and other key figures; video programs on falconry and on the evasion experiences of World

War II aircrews; and the DVD *Expect Great Things*, the fiftieth anniversary documentary history of the Academy, 1954 – 2004. He rejoins the Board after a three-year absence during which he created the online program *The Genesis of Flight* featuring 300 items from the Academy's Gimbel Aeronautical History Collection.

A new addition to The Friends team, Steven Pomeroy is currently completing a book entitled *An Untaken Road: Strategy, Technology, and the Mobile ICBM*. Steven holds a Ph.D. in the History of Technology (Auburn University), an M.A. in the Humanities (California State University), and a B.A. in History (Pennsylvania State University). He recently retired from the Air Force after twenty-five years of service, including eight in

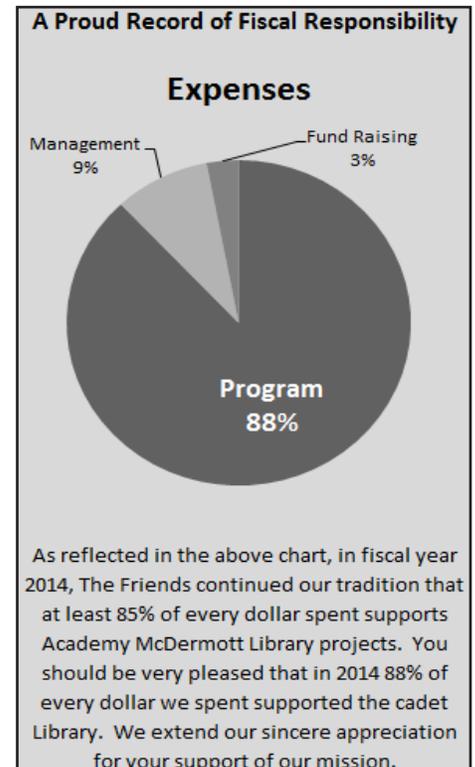
the Department of Military and Strategic Studies, some as its head. His career also included launch control operations for the ground launched cruise missile at Comiso AS, Italy; combat crew duties for the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile at Minot AFB, North Dakota; mission flight control operations for ballistic missile test and space lift launches at Vandenberg AFB, California; and planning and programming for the space force applications mission area at Headquarters, Air Force Space Command. He and his wife, Marnie, a speech-language pathologist and native of Saskatchewan, Canada, have two children. Active within the Colorado Springs community, Steven also serves on the board of directors for the Rocky Mountain Classical Academy.

STALAG LUFT III REUNION



Guests of the Stalag Luft III reunion entering Fairchild Hall.

On August 28, 2014, about 150 attendees of the Stalag Luft III reunion in Colorado Springs, including a dozen former POWs, visited the McDermott Library. The Friends helped with obtaining access and arranging Library tours. Lieutenant General A.P. Clark's scrapbook and papers, as well as camp newspapers and many other World War II collections, were available for viewing. History Department faculty gave a presentation on joint bomber operations, as did the Library staff on the digitized historical materials held by the Academy that are available online at <http://afac.sdp.sirsi.mil>. Judging from the extensive newspaper coverage and the smiles from the former POWs, the visit was a great success. The next day, at the reunion banquet, five Friends Honor Book certificates were presented, including one for Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, Chief of Special Collections at the McDermott Library.



THE FRIENDS 2014 ANNUAL BOARD MEETING AND LUNCHEON



Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson speaks at The Friends annual luncheon

The Board of Directors of The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library held its annual meeting on May 21, 2014. President Phil Caine opened the meeting and briefly reviewed the activities of The Friends during the past year. He commented on The Friends continuing role in preserving Academy heritage as well as the organization's continuing position as one of the key non-profits dedicated to enhancing the quality of the Academy experience. Lt. Col. (ret.) Jim Titus next reported on the award of the Clark-Yudkin Fellowships for 2014. He explained that we were able to award two since the cost of both requests totaled less than the fellowship funding limit. Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell, the Academy Archivist, updated the Board on the continuing importance of the work of Ms. Melissa Robohn, our independent contractor, and thanked The Friends for making her available for critical cataloging work in the Special Collections Branch. Dr. Ruwell also expressed her thanks for the work of Mr. Travis Pollok who terminated his employment the first of the year. Col. (ret.) Andrew Biancur summarized the status of The Friends three online graduate databases, the Memorial Wall, Prisoner of War, and Jabara Award, and stressed their importance in the preservation of Academy heritage. He also reviewed the challenges posed by our inability to

obtain information from official sources as we attempt to update the current databases as well as acquire information for our new project involving distinguished alumni award recipients. Finally, Col. (ret.) Jim Gaston updated the group on the online version of *The Genesis of Flight* and the importance of ensuring that it remains compatible with the most popular browsers. The Board thanked Colonel Gaston for his dedicated work and the quality of his final product.

The President then moved to old business. The first order was the reelection of members of the Board whose term expires in 2014 Col. (ret.) Martin Daack, Lt. Gen. (ret.) Brad Hosmer, Col. (ret.) Phillip Meilinger, and Lt. Col. (ret.) James Titus. All were unanimously approved. The election of officers followed. The slate of Brig. Gen. (ret.) Philip Caine, President; Brig. Gen. (ret.) Erlind Royer, Vice President; Col. (ret.) Andrew Biancur, Secretary; and Col. (ret.) Jock Schwank, Treasurer; was unanimously elected. Treasurer Schwank gave the financial report for FY 2013. This was the first full year under

our new fiscal year structure that begins the year on July 1st and ends on June 30th. He reported that our expenses were within our budget and that there are no significant unresolved financial issues to discuss.

The first item under new business was the reelection of the Executive Committee. Philip Caine, Andrew Biancur, Martin Daack, James Head, Peggy Litwhiler, Jock Schwank, and James Titus were unanimously elected. Col. (ret.) James Gaston and Lt. Col. (ret.) Steven Pomeroy were nominated and elected unanimously to serve on the Board of Directors. The President then proposed the addition of James Gaston, Steven Pomeroy, and Erlind Royer. All were unanimously approved. President Caine asked the Board to approve moving Dr. Don White and Ms. Sue Stone Woodward from Board of Directors to Honorary Board Member status since neither is able any longer to participate in the activities of the Board. Approval was unanimous.

President Caine then opened the floor for discussion of the revised Friends policies.

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*Colonel Gaston demonstrates the new online version of *The Genesis of Flight**

After a short discussion all were unanimously approved. The Board thanked Secretary Biancur for his superb work on the revisions. The Treasurer gave the FY 2014 financial report. He reported that we will end the fiscal year with a surplus over the budget because of several factors, principally the change from two independent contractors to one on January 1, 2014. Investment returns have also been healthy for this fiscal year. The Treasurer then presented the proposed budget for FY 2015. It was unanimously approved. President Caine briefly reviewed several planned FY 2015 projects including revising The Friends website and continuing our conservation efforts in the Special Collections Branch. He also urged the Board to think of new

projects that might be suitable for The Friends to undertake. Lt. Col. (ret.) Gary Howe, Vice President of the Association of Graduates, and Dr. Ed Scott, Director of Academy Libraries, each briefly summarized issues and actions in their respective areas that might impact The Friends. The meeting was then adjourned for the Annual Luncheon.

We are pleased to report that attendance at the luncheon was very good. Prior to lunch, Col. Jim Gaston gave a very informative and well-received presentation on the significance of having *The Genesis of Flight* available on the worldwide web. He also included a brief tutorial on accessing the material. He stressed that this achievement is one of the most significant in The Friends history. President Caine thanked Colonel Gaston for his

outstanding work on bringing this project to fruition. Our luncheon speaker was the Superintendent, Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson. She gave a very informative and well-received talk about her first year as the Superintendent, issues presently facing the Academy, her thoughts on the future of the institution, and the continuing challenges the Academy faces in these difficult financial times. President Caine presented General Johnson a copy of Col. Phil Meilinger's book, *Harmon*, which was published by The Friends, as a memento of her presentation. The next meeting of the Board of Directors and Annual Luncheon will be in May 2015. Watch for further information in early Spring.

CLARK-YUDKIN RESEARCH FELLOWS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015

The Clark-Yudkin Research Fellowship provides short-term financial grants to assist visiting scholars who wish to make use of the archival materials in the Academy Library's Clark Special Collections Branch. Established in 2011, the fellowship is named in honor of the late Lt. Gen. Albert P. Clark, a founder and former president of The Friends, and the late Maj. Gen. Richard A. Yudkin, a generous benefactor of our organization. We are pleased to announce the names of the two individuals who have been selected as Clark-Yudkin Fellows for 2014-2015:



Lt. Col. Joel Higley

Lt Col. Joel E. Higley, USAF, Graduate student, Department of

History, The Ohio State University; Master of Operational Art & Science; Air Command & Staff College, Air University, 2009; B.S., Military History, U.S. Air Force Academy, 1995

Research interests: Airpower history and contemporary joint operations

Project title: "Blue Torch: Laurence Kuter and the Making of the Independent Air Force"

Project summary: A doctoral dissertation that will examine the life and military career of General Laurence S. Kuter (1905-1979). General Kuter was involved in many of the pre-war and World War II developments that foreshadowed the independent Air Force and subsequently played a pivotal role in the USAF during the early years of the Cold War. In the words of one respected military historian, "It is fair to say that of all the early leaders of the Air Force, Kuter is the most important about whom the least has been written."

Dan Gashler, Graduate student, Department of History, State University of New York at Binghamton; M.A., Modern European History, State University



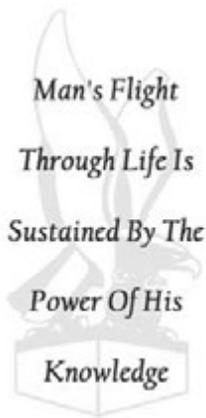
Dan Gashler

of New York at Binghamton; B.A., Archaeology and Linguistics, Brigham Young University

Research interests: U.S. foreign policy, European integration, global history, and memory studies

Project title: "Axis or Allies? Rescuing Downed Airmen over Yugoslavia, 1943-1945"

Project summary: A scholarly article examining how the U.S. Army Air Forces and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) managed to convince both Communist partisans and their bitter political opponents (e.g., the Serbian Cetniks) to jointly assist the evasion efforts of hundreds of downed American and British airmen in German-occupied Yugoslavia during World War II.



General Fogleman discusses his donation with Dr. Ruwell

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*Former Superintendent of the Academy

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ACADEMY LIBRARIES

Thanks to the work of Ms. Melissa Robohn and Mr. Travis Pollok, contracted by The Friends, the Library has been able to digitize and create metadata for many items in the Special Collections holdings. The Library now has over 5,000 scanned items available on its cloud server at <http://afac.sdp.sirsi.net>, as well as the Doolittle photographs and Fred Hill color photographs of WWII available at www.friends.usafalibrary.com. Ms. Robohn, former librarian at Vandenberg AFB, quickly picked up on the cataloging of the Hanscom AFB Research Lab books and has streamlined the process of standardizing the electronic records of the Library's collection of rare books. We miss Mr. Pollok, who completed his history degree at University of Colorado – Colorado Springs and is now working for the Wyoming State Library.

The Friends of the Library continue to support the McDermott Library, particularly in our effort to preserve Air Force heritage. The Friends solicited rare books and artwork, memorabilia, films, and electronic media dealing with aeronautic, space, and airpower themes. Among this year's acquisitions will be papers from General Ronald R. Fogleman (Class of 1963) and former Air Force Chief of Staff (1994-97). Having The Friends offer to defray shipping costs for those materials and provide funding for other projects enables us to maintain our traditional standard of excellence during times of limited budgets.

Academic Year 2013/2014 presented the Library with a variety of challenges. Pressure has been especially heavy on our staffing. Although we faced 40 hours of mandated furloughs, the Library did not close; the staff graciously shifted responsibilities to keep us open. Even so, the Library will have to close on Saturdays during this academic year. For the first time in our history we were without a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) librarian until we were able to transfer a newer librarian into one of those positions. Additionally, a librarian slot was removed from our manning document and transferred to another faculty organization. Finally, the Air Force Civilian Restructuring plan has identified seven people for reduction in force (RIF) between now and September 2016. Additionally, while the library budget has increased by 51% in the last 20 years, the cost of books is up 214% and journals and databases are up a whopping 429% in the same period.

As we begin the Fall 2014 term, we have five fewer librarians and four-and-a-half fewer support staff. We hope to have most of the positions filled before the end of the Fall Term, but sequestration is still running its 10-year course through 2023. So, yes, your support is more important than ever.