

Aviation

The first recorded aeronautical event in North Dakota took place on July 19, 1910. Thereafter, airplanes and aviation would permeate the state's history, including through entertainment, transportation, and education. This pathfinder will lead researchers to several resources available at the North Dakota State Archives highlighting the accomplishments of North Dakota's aviation history.

Archival Collections

10052 Carl Ben Eielson Papers

Scholarship application, examination papers, airline records, posthumous memorials, postal covers, documents, correspondence, awards and published materials. The airline records include schedules, agreements, reports, and correspondence from the Farthest-North Airplane Company and the Alaskan Air Transport Corporation. The documents date from 1926 to 1929 and consist of pilot's licenses, a passport, and membership card. The correspondence dates from 1925 to 1930 and consists of personal letters from Eielson to Joe Snowfield, recommendation letters from military personnel, arctic exploration congratulatory letters and telegrams, and letters to Ole Eielson concerning his son, Carl Ben. He had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Harmon Trophy.

10071 Erling Nicolai Rolfsrud Papers

Correspondence concerning research for a book, *Arsenic and Biscuits*, two book galley proofs, drafts, and a typescript for a book on Carl Ben Eielson entitled "Ben Eielson, An Appreciation" published as "Brother to the Eagle" by Sir Hubert Wilkins (Rolfsrud's pen name).

10109 Richard Virgil Grace Papers

Correspondence, literary manuscripts, scrapbooks, notes, newspaper clippings, and photographs. Papers relate to Grace's service in the world wars and his film and stunt flying career.

10553 Frank E. Vyzralek Collection

Box 87

The collection includes the research files, personal papers, photographs and audiovisual materials of lifelong researcher and former North Dakota State Archivist Frank Edward Vyzralek. The research files include original work and information compiled about agriculture, arts and entertainment, business and industry, city and town life, education, ethnicity, Indians of North America, history, military, people, places, politics and government, religion and transportation.

Useful Search Guidance

Subjects

- Aviation
- Airplanes
- Aeronautical flight
- Movie stunt pilots
- Pilots
- The "Happy Hooligans"

People

- James Buchli, 1945-
- Kelly Flinn, 1970-
- Richard Grace, 1898-1965
- Richard Lee Johnson, 1917-2003
- David C. Jones, 1921-2013
- Florence Klingensmith, 1904-1933
- Duane Larson, 1916-2005
- Terry Scherling
- John Odegard, 1941-1998
- Carl Ben Eielson, 1897-1929

Locations

- New Rockford, North Dakota
- Minot, North Dakota
- Mohall, North Dakota
- Cooperstown, North Dakota
- Davenport, North Dakota
- Grand Forks, North Dakota
- Hatton, North Dakota
- Alaska

Journal Articles

Bismarck to Spokane Via Northwest Airlines in 1936: A Passenger's Memoir
Erling E. Kidahl – *North Dakota History* Vol. 57 Issue 4

10958 William E. "Bill" Shemorry Papers

The collection consists of office files (research, newspaper and magazine clippings, article drafts, and published articles), slides, photographs, negatives, and glass plate negatives related to Shemorry's career as a newspaper publisher, photographer, reporter, historian, researcher and author in Williston, N.D.

11345 Merry Helm Papers

Helm's research for her Dakota Datebook stories, primarily from newspapers and other published sources. Includes notable statewide people, crimes, and stories, as well as a chronology of North Dakota history, beginning in 9500 B.C.

31016 Higher Education, State Board of (University Systems). Administrative Files. Boxes 30, 51, 58, 71, 76, 91

Series consists of correspondence, reports, memoranda, and budgets relating to administration of state colleges and universities.

31406 Aeronautics Commission. Airports Files.

Aeronautics Commission. Airports Files, 1937-2007, 18ft. Series consists of correspondence, plans, reports, plans, specifications, operating procedures, petitions, minutes, and memoranda with cities concerning the planning, development, and operations of ND airport authorities. Case files. Initial accession 1987/12/02. Inventory available. AIRPORT CITY FILE, contains all correspondence with cities regarding airport equipment, city ordinances, grants, Essential Air Service. Would include the history of the airport's creation; creation of airport authorities; members appointed to the authority and when; inspection records and recommendations made to airports, planning projects—series would include construction plans and specifications; operating rules for each airport.

31442 Aeronautics Commission. FAA Cooperative Survey of Airports

Aeronautics Commission. FAA Cooperative Survey of Airports, 1949-1977, 1ft. Consists of survey forms providing data on facilities and services at North Dakota airports.

31448 Aeronautics Commission. North Dakota Aviation Council Files.

Consists of minutes, correspondence, membership rosters, memoranda, reports, by-laws, aviation mechanic awards, and annual conference files.

**32485 Commerce. Administration. Centers of Excellence Commission
Box 1**

Books

Flight of the Odegard: The Inspiring, Improbable Saga of the Takeoff and Non-Stop Flight of the Unparalleled John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences at the University of North Dakota

2007 - Patrick A. McGuire; edited by Richard H. Johnson, Bridey Orth
Call Number: 629.13 M4788f 2007

Wings over Alaska: The Story of Carl Ben Eielson: Born-- July 10, 1897, Died-- November 9, 1929

1959 – Edward A. Herron
Call Number: 629.13092 E34h

Polar Pilot: The Carl Ben Eielson Story

1992 – Dorothy G. Page; conceived and researched by Violet Bjerke; edited by Ada M. and Hiram M. Drache
Call Number: 629.13092 E34p

Alaska's First Bush Pilots, 1923-30: And the Winter Search in Siberia for Eielson and Borland

2009 – Jim Rearden
Call Number: 920 R288a 2009

North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame

1997—North Dakota Aviation Council
Call Number: 629.1300922784 N864

Flight: 100 Years of Aviation

2002 – R.G. Grant
Coloring book used in schools to promote Arikara and English languages
Call Number: 629.13009 G7628f 2002

Odegard, John D

General Information File Biography

Eielson, Carl Ben, 1897-1929

General Information File Biography

Online Resources

Did You Know That

Bottineau Courant article from December 27, 2005

SHSND Photobook

State Historical Society of North Dakota's Online Search Portal for all digitized photographs

Digital Horizons

Online consortium of historic photographs from the collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota

WorldCat

State Historical Society of North Dakota's publication search portal

External Resources

[John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences](#)

Current website of the School of Aerospace Sciences at UND

[Carl "Ben" Eielson](#)

University of Alaska website

State Archives

For more information related to the collections and resources available at the North Dakota State Archives, please email archives@nd.gov or call (701) 328-2668.



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