

September  
2018

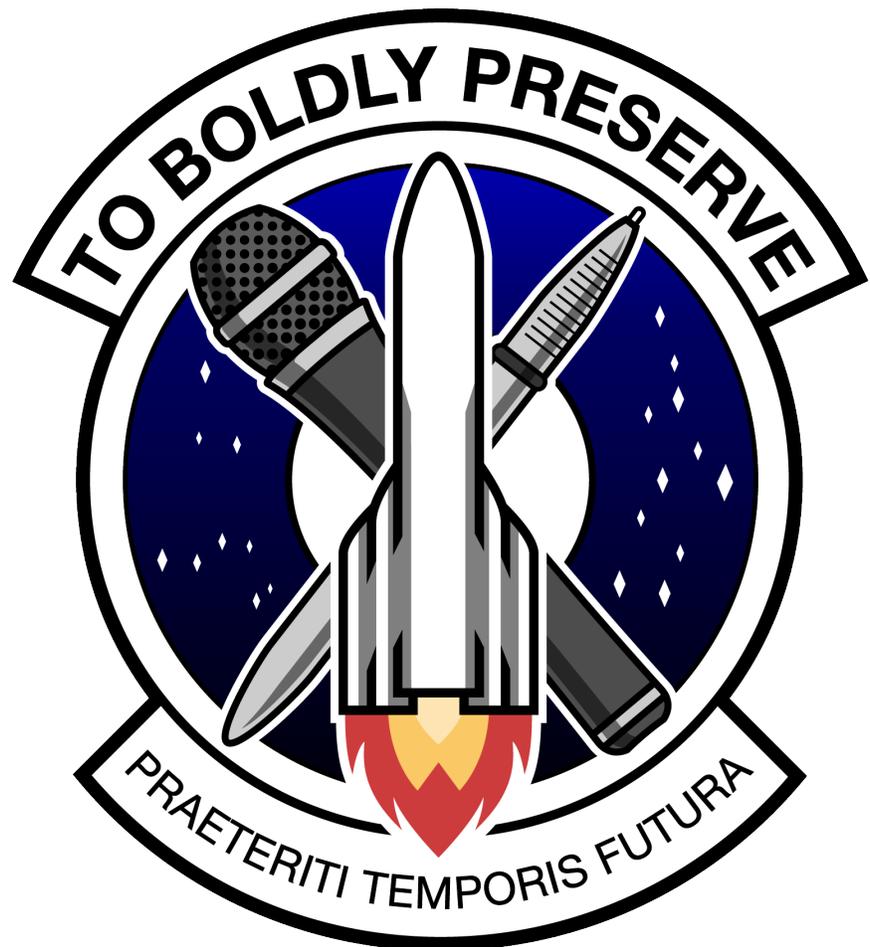
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# To Boldly Preserve

## Welcome

To expand and deepen the conversations and activities started at To Boldly Preserve: Archiving the Next Half-Century of Space Flight this spring, we offer this newsletter.



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## Fall goals

- a. Create the non-profit To Boldly Preserve to provide coordination and organizational permanence and direct the \$25,000 in seed funding for maximum benefit. A formal organization will also allow more people to take active, visible roles in TBP.
- b. Create a website to communicate within the TBP community as well as to our three audiences of creators, preservers/repositories, and researchers.
- c. Create a toolkit for the website to provide information for individuals and organizations to preserve their history.

To encourage collecting what is not now being collected, TBP will focus on two areas:

- Outreach to the space community about why they should actively collect and preserve their history for the transcendence of being remembered. They are making history; shouldn't they ensure that their role will be told?
- Help them collect their history by providing tools, collection strategies, guidance, and other assistance. Provide the ability to train people with basic historical and archival skills and connect them with professionals and their networks. While establishing personal relationships is essential, the website will offer 24/7 accessibility.

Two other activities are publicizing what exists and providing training for medium quality do-it-yourself oral histories (1<sup>st</sup> rule: do no harm). The focus is not on institutions but groups and individuals.

### 1. Outreach

TBP needs both to become part of the background conversation for the space community and to focus on key top-level people. Concentrating on trade organizations and other umbrella groups to endorse and support TBP's efforts will provide access, resources, and legitimacy while allowing those organizations to show how they are providing value for its members.

Action: Traveling roadshow with revolving cast to space conferences, industry associations, &c. about the

importance of preserving primary sources and artifacts. This must be coupled with a discussion of balancing access and privacy for purposes of institutional memory as well as the study of history and public display of cultural heritage.

## 2. Toolkit and website

Once we demonstrate the 'why' of saving their history, we need to be able to supply the 'how'. We need to show firms and organizations the range of feasible options they have. Some of this can be done relatively easily via the website. TBP needs to reach out to local universities, archives, and other groups to create networks that can support these activities. How can we interest local and university archives? What kind of outreach do we need for them?

Action: Create a committee to develop the website and work with the website developer. Collect best practices, guides, and other information. (e.g., e.g., for doing oral history, <http://www.oralhistory.org/web-guides-to-doing-oral-history/>).

The website has three major audiences and should be organized accordingly:

- Creators – the space community broadly defined
- Preservers/Repositories – archivists, curators, and others storing and preserving historical records
- Researchers – historians and others using those records

The goal is to create communities: We need conversation and relationships to work with creators – and for historians to work with archivists and curators.

This well-designed, functioning website would either be part of an existing organization (e.g., the Hagley) or independently hosted via Google Sites or Blogger or Squarespace. Regardless, we need to form a committee to handle its construction, upkeep, and content.

TBP should offer creators levels of involvement and investment ranging from "this is what you can do on your own" to "here are organizations and people who can work with you" as well as the gold standard, Boeing archives and an agreement with Hagley.

### **3. Publicizing what exists**

A short term, easily achievable goal is creating an informal network of archivists and curators to share what their institutions are collecting.

One desirable long-term goal is publicizing what collections already exist, what repositories collect space material, and their collection policies. The challenge is how to gather this information with limited resources.

Action: Create a committee to consider the feasibility of using the IEEE Engineering and Technology History Wiki to create a site where archivists and others can upload their information. TBP would work with IEEE to create the framework (what information do we want?) and then encourage people to contribute. A potentially fruitful source may be graduate students uploading their literature searches.

### **4. Do-it-yourself oral histories**

An untapped reservoir of memories and private papers can be tapped by reaching out to people to conduct oral histories at NASA retiree gatherings, clubs, organizations technical conferences, society chapter meetings, and other social events. In an ideal world, professional historians will conduct these interviews.

In a resource-constrained world, training volunteers to conduct oral history interviews may be more realistic. The goal is to first do no harm, but to collect material that otherwise would disappear. Assuming the alternative is nothing, collecting of decent quality will be a plus. We, however, want to do better. The training needs to instill the importance of structure and guided interviewing, based on their biographies and possibly any materials they may want to donate.

Action: Develop a cadre of people who can train people as low-level oral historians as well as recommend professionally trained interviewers. Ask Chuck House, John Goodman and Nathan Brewer to develop a plan for training and organize a test case, possibly Explore Mars in 2019? How do we organize? How do we promote?

## Historians and archivists

One lesson of TBP was the need for archivists and historians to spend more time learning about each other's profession and to work more with each other. As part of that process, Angel Callahan and Jonathan Coopersmith introduced TBP to the hundred attendees at the August meeting of the Business Archives Section of the Society of American Archivists (<https://www2.archivists.org/groups/business-archives-section>).

Two recent articles on the different professional mindsets are

Alice Dreger, "The Delicate Art of Dealing with Your Archivist," *Chronicle of Higher Education* July 29, 2018 <https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Delicate-Art-of-Dealing/244070>. The article sparked a great deal of response from the archival community, including a [statement by SAA president](#) Tanya Zanish Belcher.

Michael Brenes, "Historians Just Don't Get Archivists. Here's Why," *Chronicle of Higher Education* August 2, 2018 <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/169704> (the CHE article is behind a paywall)

Historians need to actively assist in finding new records and convincing their creators to preserve them. Researchers need to be educated about helping preserve new records: The moral economy of historians should include pedagogy and practices about convincing others to save their history. Part of being a responsible historian is helping preserve records for the future.

## Coverage of TBP

<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2018/archiving-the-final-frontier-preserving-space-history-for-the-future>

Geoff Nunn devoted a Flight Deck podcast to To Boldly Preserve:

<https://soundcloud.com/themuseumofflight/15-preserving-the-future-history-of-space>

## Contact Us

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## Upcoming TBP events

The Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) has a TBP session at its St. Louis meeting (October 11-14). Chaired by Angelina Callahan (Naval Research Laboratory), the discussants are Jonathan Coopersmith (Texas A&M University) Roger Launius (Launius Historical Services) Valerie Neal (Smithsonian - National Air, and Space Museum) Erik Rau (Hagley Library) Asif A. Siddiqi (Fordham University) For more information, see <https://www.historyoftechnology.org/annual-meeting/2018-shot-annual-meeting-10-14-october-st-louis/>

Matt Shindell (NASM) will chair a session on TBP at the Mutual Concerns of Air & Space Museums (November 2-6 in Tucson) with Angelina Callahan (Naval Research Laboratory), Teasel Muir-Harmony (NASM), and Geoff Nunn (Museum of Flight). For more information, see <https://airandspace.si.edu/events/mutual-concerns>

Geoff Nunn will deliver a keynote address to the International Space University (ISU) Executive Education program this fall.

The International Astronautical Congress will meet 21-25 October, 2019 in Washington, DC with the TBP-related theme of "Space: The Power of the Past, the Promise of the Future" (<https://www.iac2019.org/>). Reagan Grimsley (rlg0020@uah.edu) has volunteered to organize a TBP panel proposal. More conference information will be released in October and the proposal submission will be due early in 2019.

## Funding opportunities

The American Institute of Physics provides grants of up to \$10,000 annually to help process archival and manuscript collections in physics, astronomy, geophysics, optics, and other related fields.

The deadline for application is **October 26, 2018**.

For guidelines and a list of previous recipients

see: <http://www.aip.org/history-programs/niels-bohr-library/grants-archives>.

We fund three or four grants a year, and to the best of our knowledge the AIP Grants to Archives programs is unique. I am happy to provide some additional insight into what kind of projects might qualify for funding – please contact me directly if you would like more information. The application process is quite brief for those of you accustomed to government grants or grants from larger funding institutions. I am happy to provide samples of previous successful applications.

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<http://www.aip.org/history-programs/niels-bohr-library>

The NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources (HCRR) Program

(<https://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/humanities-collections-and-reference-resources>) offers a

Foundation grant to “support planning, assessment, and pilot projects that bring together a variety of experts, including humanities scholars, archivists, curators, librarians, preservation specialists, and digital curation/preservation experts, as pertinent to your goals.”

(<https://www.neh.gov/files/grants/humanities-collections-reference-resources-july-20-2017.pdf> and <https://www.neh.gov/files/grants/hum-collections-reference-resources-fags-2017.pdf>). The program offers up to \$50-60,000. Anyone interested in organizing a collaborative submission?

## Other items of interest

### **October 14-16 Artefacts Consortium Meeting: Relevance of Collections**

The 2018 Artefacts meeting at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago will explore how museums and related institutions have defined and maintained the relevance of their collections. This follows up on themes explored in previous Artefacts meetings and described in the volume *Challenging Collections* from the Artefacts XVI meeting. As the editors note in the introduction to this volume, museums today “*must balance a number of functions, not always mutually compatible: exhibition, preservation, research, and education. ... the nature of museums’ relationships with their public has shifted from one of unquestioned authority to a partner in dialogue*” (Boyle and Hagmann 2017). At the same time, humanities scholars have had increased interest in objects, collections, and museums. For a range of stakeholders, collections provoke questions of status and purpose that are, organizational, social, and intellectual.

Registration is open until September 14. For registration and more information, please visit:

<https://www.adlerplanetarium.org/artefacts>

**The 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing on the Moon offers an opportunity to reflect on what we know about the Apollo era and its legacies, what we still need to learn, and how we may best record and interpret the significance of spaceflight in society today and into the future. The National Air and Space Museum Space History Department and NASA History Division invite colleagues whose research and writing extend our understanding of Apollo, the Apollo era, human spaceflight, future space, and related areas to join together in assessing the current state of the field, suggesting new lenses for analysis and interpretation, and considering new paths for future scholarship.**

**Where: Ripley Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC**

**When: Friday, December 7, 2018, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 pm**

**For more info: [NASM-ApolloDialogues@si.edu](mailto:NASM-ApolloDialogues@si.edu); [nealv@si.edu](mailto:nealv@si.edu); [bill.barry@nasa.gov](mailto:bill.barry@nasa.gov)**

## ***Time to Eat the Dogs* podcast**

Michael Robinson (Hartford University), who presented “Casting a wider net: Documenting the world of NASA contractors” at TBP, hosts *Time to Eat the Dogs*, a podcast about science, history, and exploration. He interviews historians, scientists, and journalists about life at the extreme. If you have comments or ideas for guests (including your colleagues and yourself), please let him know.

website: <http://timetoeatthedogs.com>

iTunes: [itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/time-to-eat-the-dogs/...](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/time-to-eat-the-dogs/)

Stitcher: [www.stitcher.com/podcast/time-to-eat-the-dogs](https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/time-to-eat-the-dogs)

email: [timetoeatthedogs@gmail.com](mailto:timetoeatthedogs@gmail.com)

## **Articles of interest**

<https://paw.princeton.edu/article/born-digital-how-social-media-and-paperless-offices-are-reshaping-university-archives>

<https://paw.princeton.edu/article/your-very-own-archive>

Alex Marshall, “Museums Grab History in Real Time,” *New York Times* June 19, 2018, C1, 2.

**Hollywood’s preservation challenge(s)**

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/consumer-electronics/standards/will-todays-digital-movies-exist-in-100-years>

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/computing/it/the-lost-picture-show-hollywood-archivists-cant-outpace-obsolescence>

## **Wanted**

Editor for the To Boldly Preserve newsletter. For more information, contact Jonathan Coopersmith ([j-coopersmith@tamu.edu](mailto:j-coopersmith@tamu.edu)).

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