

# TO BOLDLY PRESERVE

To expand and deepen the conversations and activities started at *To Boldly Preserve: Archiving the Next Half-Century of Space Flight*, this is newsletter 2,1 (January 2020).



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## **To Boldly Preserve organization**

TBP has a new steering committee, three working groups, and a website subcommittee. If you would like to participate in a WG or the subcommittee, please contact one of the WG/subcommittee members.

### **Steering Committee**

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### **Toolkit Working Group**

Jonathan Coopersmith  
Mike Lombardi  
Geoff Nunn  
Erik Rau

Determine content for toolkit webpages; promote TBP preservation goals through publicizing the webpage and reaching out to the space community.

### **Archival Repositories Index Working Group**

Troy Eller English  
Tracy Grimm  
Mike Lombardi  
Molly Stothert-Mauer

Determine the feasibility and optimal workflow for hosting and maintaining an index of existing archival resources.

### **Oral History Working Group**

Troy Eller English  
Mike Geselowitz  
Peter Westwick

Explore options to promote the utility and best practices of oral history training, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) guidance, and promotion.

### **Website subcommittee**

Nathan Brewer  
Geoff Nunn  
Troy Eller English

Determine the optimal arrangement for a web manager to build, update and maintain the webpage.

## **Emily A. Margolis, Field Report from the 2018 Mutual Concerns Meeting**

In November 2018 museum professionals from across the United States and the world assembled in Tucson, Arizona, for the biennial meeting of the Mutual Concerns of Air and Space Museums. First organized in 1988 by representatives of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum (NASM), the conference provides an opportunity for practitioners to collectively address the most pressing issues related to the collection, preservation, and presentation of aviation and space history. Angel Callahan organized a roundtable discussion to introduce the “To Boldly Preserve” initiative to the Mutual Concerns community.

Matt Shindell, Curator of Planetary Science and Exploration at NASM, opened the 90-minute session with an overview of TBP activities to-date, including a brief summary of the two-day symposium at the American Institute of Physics in March 2018 and the follow-up meeting at NASM in July 2018. Geoff Nunn followed with an informative presentation on the changing character of the aerospace industry and consequences for collecting strategies, based on his observations and experiences as Exhibit Developer and Adjunct Curator for Space History at the Museum of Flight.

Chris Browne, Deputy Director of NASM, spoke to the Smithsonian’s concerns and challenges in collecting “New Space” material, with an emphasis on storage requirements. As TBP members identify and acquire material records of contemporary activities in space, a large volume of objects, documents, audiovisual records, and digital artifacts will need to be settled in appropriate homes. In consideration of this matter at the July 2018 meeting, participants suggested the development of an online database to match donors and records with repositories. Since then archivists Patti Williams (NASM) and April Gage (NASA Ames) have been considering the architecture and function of such a resource. They generously shared their progress with me, which informed my introduction of the concept and presentation of projected parameters of a future TBP database.

The Mutual Concerns community’s response to TBP was encouraging. Scheduled for the early morning of the final day of the meeting, the

roundtable attracted more than 40 participants—most of whom stayed for the 45-minute discussion that followed the presentations. The challenge of engaging aerospace companies in preserving their histories—through internal efforts as well as in collaboration with museums, archives, and libraries—was at the forefront of everyone’s mind. Some respondents wondered if “New Space” companies intend to preserve and display their histories in new venues—namely, their own museums or monuments—and what that will mean for the community of space and aviation museums. Others expressed concerns about balancing their commitment to presenting history with donors’ desires for self-promotion.

The successful roundtable proved that space and aviation museums are eager to address the new challenges of collecting “New Space” history, and that they are prepared to seek solutions together. It will be advantageous for TBP to continue this dialogue at future Mutual Concerns conferences.

*Dr. Emily Margolis is the Mellon Postdoctoral Curatorial Fellow at the American Philosophical Society.*

## **Apollo Dialogues**

In December 2018 as a lead in to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Apollo 11, the Smithsonian’s National Air & Space Museum (NASM) hosted a wide-ranging discussion about the current state of the field, new lenses for analysis and interpretation, and new paths for future scholarship. For an external overview of the well-attended meeting, see

<http://www.canadianspace.ca/2018/12/historians-reconsider-apollo-after-50.html>.

## **International Astronautical Congress**

The International Astronautical Congress met in Washington, DC October 20-25, 2019. Session ES5, “Sharing space achievements and heritage: space museums and societies,” included Reagan Grimsley (UAH) on “[One Small Step? Collection Strategies for Libraries, Archives, and Museums In the Space Age](#)” and Geoff Nunn (Museum of Flight) on “[Remembering the Next Apollo: Challenges to Preserving and Presenting the Next 50 Years of Spaceflight](#).” For more details on the session, go to <https://iafastro.directory/iac/browse/IAC-19/E5/5/>.

## **Brian Odom, Report from the NASA in the South Symposium**

The NASA in the South Symposium was held at the University of Alabama Huntsville campus on March 28-29, 2019. Keynote speakers included CNN Presidential Historian Douglas Brinkley, Pulitzer Prize winning author Diane McWhorter, *First Man* author Dr. James Hansen, and former NASA Chief Historian, Dr. Roger Launius, who is now lead for Launius Historical Services.

Historians and archivists from across the country presented on a range of topics including aerospace tourism, economic and environmental impacts, and historical preservation. Two notable presentations came from Jeffery S. Nesbitt of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and Kari Edwards from the University of Mississippi. Nesbitt's presentation explored the architectural development of the Kennedy Space Center Headquarters building while Edwards examined the intersection of space, religion, and tourism at the Cape Canaveral Bible Conference.

One panel discussion in particular, *New Directions and Methods in Space Archives*, spoke directly to the *To Boldly Preserve* theme of understanding the challenges associated with archiving space history at present and over the coming decades. Reagan Grimsley, the head of special collections at the University of Alabama Huntsville, moderated the panel which included NASA's Chief Archivist Robyn Rodgers, Shane Bell from the National Archives and Records Administration in Atlanta, Erin Ryan from W.S. Hoole Special Collections at the University of Alabama, and Michael Manasco from the Salmon Library at University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Key conversations during this panel related to navigating the federal record system, considering the complex issues associated with digitization, surveying the critical need for oral histories from underrepresented groups, and highlighting hidden archival collections within larger university special collections.

Overall the symposium accomplished many important goals furthering the dialogue started at other recent meetings including both *To Boldly Preserve* and the *Apollo Dialogues Workshop* – an event jointly sponsored by the NASA History Office and the National Air and Space Museum which was held in December 2018 in Washington D.C. While much work remains in

terms of building diverse collections and increasing individual access to them, NASA in the South furthered many of these crucially important goals.

*Dr. Brian Odom is the editor of the recently released NASA in the 'long' civil rights movement conference (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2019).*

## **BHC session on “Preserving the Future: The Historian’s Moral Responsibility”**

The 2019 Business History Conference hosted the session “Preserving the Future: The Historian’s Moral Responsibility,” which proposed that that historians have a moral responsibility to actively promote the preservation of corporate and other records. This responsibility is both to those businesses so their history can be fully told and to future generations of researchers. Anders Houltz, Stockholm Centre for Business History, spoke on “To Have a History is to Have a Future: A Common Responsibility for Historians, Archivists, and Corporations.” David Kirsch, University of Maryland, discussed “How Startups End,” and Eric Rau, Hagley Museum and Library, ended the session with “Calling Up the Reserve Army of Appraisers (You).”

## **Upcoming: AAAI ‘To Infinity and Beyond!’**

The British Aviation and Aerospace Archives Initiative (AAAI) is hosting its “‘To Infinity and Beyond!’ Preserving and promoting the records of Britain’s aviation and aerospace heritage” conference February 12, 2020 at Aerospace Bristol:

“This one-day conference is for everyone who cares for the industry’s paper-based and electronic collections, both large and small. It aims to highlight these records’ importance and inspire ways forward in preserving and promoting them to a wide variety of new and established audiences.” (<https://www.aviationarchives.uk/page-1016834.html>). TBP member and Boeing Archivist Mike Lombardi will be one of the seven speakers.

## Upcoming: Third Workshop on Scientific Archives

The call for papers for the **Third Workshop on Scientific Archives** is still open until **January 31, 2020!**

The workshop will take place on 30 June and 1 July 2020 at **European XFEL, Hamburg region, Germany**. The Workshop is organised by the Committee on Contemporary Archives of Science and Technology, of the International Council on Archives (ICA-SUV).

The aim of the workshop is to explore topics in the area of the contemporary archives of science and technology. Possible themes for papers include (but are not limited to):

- Collaborating with scientists to capture contemporary scientific material
- Using scientific archives for outreach and education
- Using and re-using archival resources in current science
- Enabling access to scientific records
- Describing technical and scientific archives
- Managing and archiving research data
- Exploring the role of archives and records in open science
- Capturing diversity in institutional archives
- Scientific archives in a "post-truth" world
- Diversity and inclusion in STEM // Diversity and inclusion in Archives

The organising committee welcomes proposals from (but not limited to) archivists, historians, scientists, engineers, data specialists and curators.

For more details and to submit a proposal, see: [embl.org/archive/workshop](http://embl.org/archive/workshop).

A limited number of travel funds will be available for anyone interested in attending the workshop (speakers and participants). Applications for these will be made between March and April 2020. Further information will follow.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Outterside ([laura.outterside@xfel.eu](mailto:laura.outterside@xfel.eu)) or myself ([anne-flore.laloe@embl.de](mailto:anne-flore.laloe@embl.de)).

<https://www.embl.de/aboutus/archive/working-with-scientific-archives/workshop/>



## Newly Published

John L. Goodman spoke on "An engineer's perspective on space history and Archiving" at TBP. Johnson Space Center published his *History and Archives Contribute to the Success of Space Flight Programs*, NASA/CR-2018-220044, in December 2018 (<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/search.jsp?R=20190000085>).

## Archival Actions of Interest

*Archival Elements*, the annual newsletter of the Science, Technology and Health Care Section of the Society of American Archivists, is soliciting contributions on the resources in your repositories, your exhibits, and the management of scientific, medical, and technical collections. The newsletter's scope is flexible; there have been articles on topics ranging from asbestos studies, to diversity in medicine and science, to rescuing climate data, to nurses in North Carolina. Previous editions of the newsletter are available at <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/science-technology-and-health-care-section/sthc-newsletters-archival-elements>.

Newsletter of the SAA Science, Technology and Health Care Section  
[https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/aelements2019\\_0.pdf](https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/aelements2019_0.pdf)

Ann McGrath, "See No Evil," *AHA Perspectives* March 2019, 16.

Historians are acutely aware that state archives are curated sites reflecting historical and ongoing power structures. Archives are a conversation between those who created them, the people whose records they contain, the archivists who organize and regulate access to them, and the changing audiences who use them."

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2019/may/16/science-museum-plans-500-acre-site-to-show-off-lost-treasures>

The March 2019 issue of *Enterprise & Society* has a special section on oral history.