

The Friends Continue Oral History Project

The Friends began a program to assist the McDermott Library in expanding its Oral History collection. The Academy's Department of History and the Center for Oral History in the Center for Character and Leadership Development have conducted oral history interviews with scores of Academy and Air Force leaders. The interviews conducted over many years are in various stages of completion. Some are completely finished, edited, abstracted, indexed, and available in the Library. However due to staffing shortages, others are transcribed but not edited while some have not even been transcribed. The Friends are providing resources to bring all the oral histories conducted locally to a state where they are readily accessible to the public. This involves providing resources for the transcription, editing, and overall completion of all the oral histories already conducted, as well as assisting with their indexing, transfer to the Library, and posting of abstracts on-line. The obvious

benefit is significant: improved access to important historical material for cadets and researchers.

The Friends' contractor Jessica Maiberger-Horner has taken the lead in this effort, beginning with copies of 19 oral histories of the Academy's Permanent Professors provided by the Department of History. The process is to convert the printed transcripts to digital form (MS Word) using an optical character reader; to provide a final edit of the transcript, correcting transcription errors and adding some helpful editorial remarks, such as explaining acronyms; and to provide the library with a short description of the interview for inclusion in the McDermott Library's Oral Histories Index File. Jess has also rehoused the interview files in acid-free folders and developed formats for editor's notes and disclaimers to be appended to each interview. We are pleased to be able to assist the Academy in bringing to successful conclusion oral history efforts spanning more than 40 years.



Friends' Independent Contractors working in the Library. (L) Jessica Maiberger-Horner, Melissa Robohn and Ashley Swendsen

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President's Message

The world of non-profit organizations supporting the Academy never ceases to amaze me. There are currently seven such organizations ranging from the USAFA Endowment to the Athletic Association and the Falcon Foundation. Each of the seven has a very clear and well-defined mission and a unique organizational structure and system of operation. Together, these seven organizations give about 16 million dollars worth of support to the Academy each year. The Friends are one of the seven and, in nearly every way, unique since we focus on only one Academy entity, the Air Force Academy McDermott Library. The world of the non-profits at the Academy has also evolved over the years and it has become obvious that some changes in the present organization and mode of operations are in order. To facilitate this process, the Presidents and Board Chairmen of each of the non-profits are meeting regularly, under the direction of the Superintendent and led by the USAFA Endowment, to work out a better organizational solution. We'll keep you posted on developments.

These developments do not impact our mission and the focus of The Friends. We continue to support many of the projects that come our way, some of which you will read about in this newsletter. I would like to emphasize the continued importance of donations to The Friends, particularly the donation of personal papers and records that help us in our heritage mission. In these days of electronic media, personal records become more important than ever. If you, or someone you know, have items that would be valuable for the library heritage collections, please contact one of the members of the board or simply email us and we will follow up with you. Of course financial donations are more critical than ever as our mission continues to grow. For all you do we thank you and appreciate your essential support of The Friends mission in this changing world.

Clark Yudkin Research Fellowship

The Clark Special Collections Branch, a working archive located in The Air Force Academy McDermott Library, continues to permanently preserve irreplaceable materials available for use by cadets, military, and civilian researchers. Through the work of The Friends of the USAF Academy Library, dedicated volunteers, and countless others who have so generously donated their materials, this repository keeps the Air Force legacy alive. It is used by cadets, faculty, visiting scholars, and writers of airpower history. In order to promote the use of the materials in Special Collections and to make these materials more available to scholars and researchers, the Clark-Yudkin Fellowship was established.

Since its inception six years ago,

Clark-Yudkin Fellows have come from a variety of universities across the United States as well as from Poland and, this year, Australia. The research topics have been wide ranging and exciting – from the integration of women into the Cadet Wing to pre- and early history of manned flight.

This year Mr. Rob Goudey is arriving in August from Australia to study the Julius Sumner-Miller collection. He is writing a book on the relationship between Professor Sumner-Miller, or “Professor Wonderful”, and Albert Einstein. Professor Sumner-Miller visited the Academy often, meeting with faculty and cadets.

Our Fellow from Poland, Marek Lazarz, came in June of 2016 to do research in support of his efforts to

educate the people of Poland through his capacity as Director/Curator of the Stalag Luft III Museum in Zagan, Poland. His focus was the Eagle Squadrons, an unknown story to the Polish people. Mr. Lazarz also used the Stalag Luft III collection to share and promote the history of the POW camps. As he so eloquently stated, “this history should never be forgotten.”

Our ten Fellows have been amazing scholars and we hope to continue their legacy in the future. If you know of anyone doing research on airmanship, flight, the Air Force Academy, cadets, or graduates, please suggest they look into the Clark-Yudkin Fellowship. All information can be found on The Friends' of the USAFA Library website: www.friends.usafalibrary.com.

2017 Annual Board Meeting and Luncheon

The Friends held the annual Board of Directors meeting on May 9, 2017. The Board meeting was followed by the annual luncheon with a near record turnout. Our speaker was Lt. General Susan Helms, USAF (ret.). General Helms, one of the premier astronauts in our space program, recounted some of her adventures and observations from her space missions. Of particular interest was a movie of the interior of

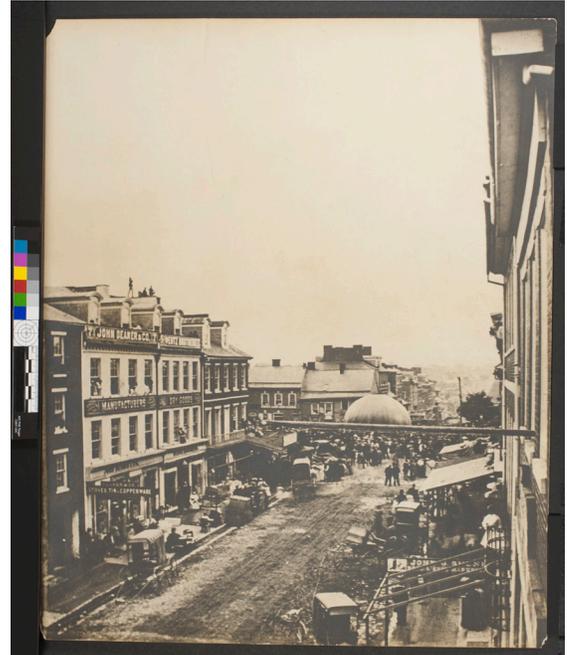
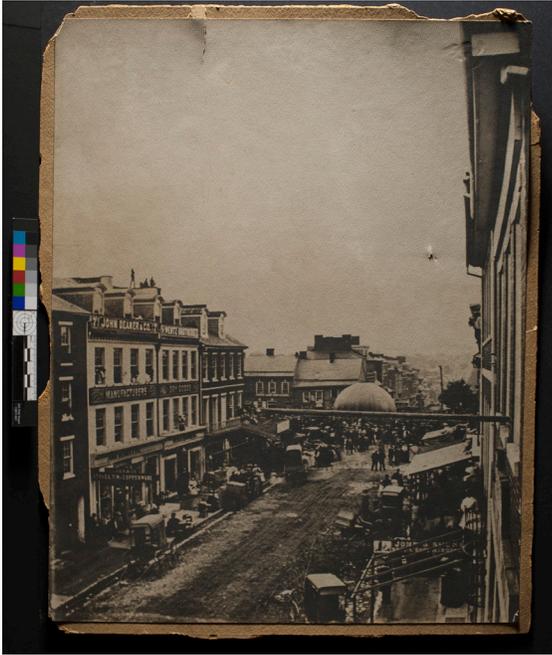
the International Space Station and the activities that take place during a mission.

Our 2018 luncheon will follow the Board of Directors meeting on May 11 at the USAFA Falcon Club. Our speaker will be the Academy Superintendent, Lt. General Jay Silveria. I know you will find his comments enjoyable and insightful. We urge you to attend the luncheon

since this is about the only public way we have of demonstrating the important work of The Friends and our dedication to the vital work that we do. We hope to see you there.

**Save the date:
Annual Luncheon
May 11th.**

Conservation Work Continues in Clark Special Collections Branch



Before and after photos of an early balloon ascension in Pennsylvania by John Wise, who later contracted with the Army for a Balloon Corps during the Civil War. The photograph was purchased by The Friends, then restored by conservator Jennifer Sexton, again with funding from The Friends.

Update From the McDermott Library

Search For New Library Director

After Dr. Scott's retirement last year, the Dean of Faculty appointed a search committee headed by Dr. Steve Jones and Dr. Aaron Byerley. Other members are Col. Kathleen Harrington, Dr. Maxine Fawcett-Yeske, and Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell. The position has been advertised and the committee hopes to have a new director in place in June.

Lance Sijan Anniversary

Air Force Academy cadets commemorated the 50th anniversary of Capt Lance Sijan's death with an event that included an exhibit. Special Collections loaned early drawings of airplanes and other drawings from

Sijan's class with Carl Kielcheski. With the help of The Friends' contractor, the library made available a digital copy of a senior class paper, again from Kielcheski's class, that Janine Sijan remembered her brother had written, as well as numerous other class projects completed by Sijan during his time at the Air Force Academy. The artwork and classwork have been digitized and can be viewed through the Special Collections portal at the McDermott Library website (<https://usafa.library.edu>).

Friends' Independent Contractor

Jessica Maiberger-Horner was contracted as a summer hire by The Friends in the summer

of 2017. She processed additions received to the Hosmer and Fogleman collections. She was then asked to take on more responsibilities as the oral history project coordinator for The Friends. In addition to processing another collection, she now has digitized and proofread about twenty oral histories done with permanent professors and she is looking forward to working on recent interviews done by the Center for Oral History and the Center for Character and Leadership Development. She has enjoyed learning about the Air Force Academy and we are delighted to have her. She has a M.A. in history from Villanova University and experience in the Rutherford Hayes archives.

Credit Card donations can be made using PayPal at: <http://www.usafalibrary.com/donate>

Stalag Luft III on The Friends' Website

Hollywood heroes of 1963—Steve McQueen, James Garner, Charles Bronson, and James Coburn—starred in *The Great Escape*, a popular film about 76 Allied airmen who tunneled out of a Nazi prison camp in March 1944. That camp was Stalag Luft III, and two leaders in the camp later became leaders at the Air Force Academy.



The sixth Superintendent, *Lieutenant General Albert P. Clark*, then a lieutenant colonel, was responsible for security while prisoners prepared for the 1944 escape. The Air Force Academy's first Commandant of Cadets, Major General Robert M. Stillman, also a lieutenant colonel, supervised road building in the camp so prisoners wouldn't walk continually in mud and water.



Lieutenant Colonel Bob "Moose" Stillman

About 50 years after World War II, The Friends supported faculty members Lieutenant Colonel Rod Rice and Professor Bill Newmiller and cadets Jenn Askins ('98), Chris Backus ('99), and Ed Rivera ('99) as they developed Stalag Luft III, a program of photos (often taken by hidden cameras), drawings, and documents depicting life in the Stalag.

Many items came from an extensive collection given to the Academy by General Clark. His collection included camp newspapers, diaries, POW artwork,

letters, and memorabilia. Other Stalag prisoners also donated materials, and an especially valuable collection came from Henry Söderberg, a Swedish volunteer with the International YMCA who had freedom of movement to visit prisoners in Nazi camps.

Now The Friends are preparing Stalag Luft III for presentation on The Friends' website. The program has over 250 images with detailed explanatory text. Topics include the downing and capture of airmen, living conditions in the camp, and activities of American prisoners and German camp officials. Also included are the Great Escape of March 1944 and a dreadful winter march in January 1945 from Stalag Luft III to miserable, overcrowded Stalag VIIA. Finally the program covers the liberation of Stalag VIIA and the prisoners' return to America.

For Hollywood heroes, it's tough to beat *The Great Escape*. For real ones, see Stalag Luft III soon on The Friends' website, www.friends.usafalibrary.com.

On Friday, May 11, 2018, The Friends will host the Annual Luncheon at the USAFA Falcon Club.

Visit The Friends' website at: www.friends.usafalibrary.com

Collections Specialist

Since its founding, The Friends has been dedicated to providing support to the library in multiple ways. The Friends quickly recognized the need to assist the library in supporting acquisition of personal collections of special interest from donors willing to contribute their collections. The McDermott Library's legal restrictions in the solicitation of such collections can be overcome by The Friends who can serve as the intermediary in the solicitation and acceptance of personal donations that will enhance the holdings of the library.

As a vital part of the acquisition process, we recognize the value of

such collections, in a large part, lies in the usability of these assets and the speed with which they can be made available to the end users. We believe it essential to the completion of the acquisition process that donations are assessed, catalogued, and incorporated into media that is easily accessible in a timely manner.

A vital issue within the acquisition process is the donor's knowledge their contribution will not be set aside or join a list of stored acquisitions awaiting processing actions. By ensuring timely processing, The Friends serve to strengthen donor resolve to make sometimes valuable items available to

the McDermott Library.

We are assisting the Special Collections Branch of the McDermott Library in completing the necessary actions to provide donated collections in a format immediately usable to the library. To support that goal, we currently have two full time contractors working with Special Collections and we have recently approved hiring a third professional to work specifically with new collections. We solicit your support of this expanded effort through a donation of your historically significant materials or funds to support our important preservation and processing efforts.