FINDING AID TO
THE SANDOR “ALEX” KVASSAY PAPERS AND
COLLECTION OF AVIATION STAMPS,
1870-2014

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Processed by: Mary A. Sego, April 20, 2015
Descriptive Summary

Creator Information  Kvassay, Sandor “Alex”, 1926-

Title  Sandor “Alex” Kvassay papers and collection of Aviation Stamps

Collection Identifier  MSP 144

Date Span  1870-2014, predominant 1920-1990

Abstract  This collection is primarily comprised of aviation-related stamps and first day covers from around the world. The collection spans the 20th-century but includes examples of 19th century balloon airmail. Just a few of the countries represented are Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, Italy, North and South Korea, Great Britain, the United States, and Vietnam. Included are stamps from Africa, Asia, North, South and Central America, Australia, Antarctica, and many more places. The collection relates to the history of flight, including balloons, Zeppelins, modern aircraft, and well-known aviators. Aviation and flight represented as political and cultural imagery is particularly prevalent in parts of this collection.

Extent  12.40 cubic feet (12 cubic feet boxes and 1 mss box)

Finding Aid Author  Mary A. Sego, 2015

Languages  English, Chinese, French, German, Korean, Mongolian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, among many others

Repository  Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Location Information:  ASC-R

Access Restrictions:  Collection is open for research. The collection is stored offsite; 24 hours notice is required to access the collection

Acquisition Information:  Donation by Sandor “Alex” Kvassay, July 22, 2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession Number:</th>
<th>20140722</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preferred Citation:</td>
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Neil A. Armstrong papers
Subjects and Genres

Persons
Kavassay, Sandor “Alex,” 1926-
Armstrong, Neil A., 1930-2012
Zeppelin, Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich, Graf von, 1838-1917
Earhart, Amelia Mary, 1897-1937
De Gaulle, Charles, 1890-1970
Wright, Orville, 1871-1948
Wright, Wilbur, 1867-1912
Lindbergh, Charles A. (Charles August), 1859-1924

Organizations
Universal Postal Union
United States Postal Service
Lear Jet Corporation
Flight Archives at Purdue University
International Civil Aviation Organization

Topics
Air mail service on postage stamps
Air mail service--History
Postage stamps--United States--History--19th century.
Postage stamps--United States--History--20th century.
Aviators
Aviation
Flight--History
United States. Air Mail Service--History.
Aircraft Industry
World history

Form and Genre Types
Air mail stamps
Books
Calendars
Clippings
Email correspondence
First day covers (Philately)--United States
First day covers (Philately)
Magazines
Postage stamps
Postcards
Postmarks
Stamp collection
Videotapes
Occupations
Aviators
Pilots
Aerophilatelists
Biography of Sandor “Alex” Kvassay and History of the Sandor “Alex” Kvassay papers and collection of Aviation Stamps

Sandor “Alex” Kvassay came to the United States from Hungary in 1948, where he had finished studying law. He became a U.S. citizen through two years of service in the Army. He then went to Wichita for a job at Beech Aircraft before Lear Jet Corporation recruited him as vice president of international marketing. Alex Kvassay sold Beech and Learjet aircraft for 30 years, earning a reputation as the industry’s premier international salesman of his day. Kvassay sold planes for Olive Ann Beech and Bill Lear to world leaders, business moguls and celebrities. He later became a partner with Duncan Aviation.

During his 30 years of selling corporate aircraft around the world, Alex Kvassay crossed the Atlantic Ocean nearly 500 times and the Pacific more than 80 times.

He retired in 1982 and continued to travel the world, including landing on the North and South poles. In early 2010, Murray Smith, owner/publisher/editor of Professional Pilot magazine, an old friend of Alex Kvassay asked Alex to write down his memories of more than 30 years of selling business aircraft internationally, so his collection of reflections could be enjoyed by Pro Pilot readers and his history of marketing private aircraft outside the United States could be preserved.

Since May 2010 he has authored more than 35 individual stories, which have run monthly in Professional Pilot, under the title of “Alex Remembers”. Some of those stories appear in this collection.

Kvassay had a 40 year friendship with Neil Armstrong. E-mails they had exchanged in the 2000s and clippings Kvassay had collected in regards to Armstrong’s life are also found in this collection.

Sources:

Material in the papers, along with: http://www.zoominfo.com/p/Alex-Kvassay/12983292
Collection Description

Scope

The Sandor "Alex" Kvassay papers and collection of Aviation Stamps (1870-2014; 12.40 cubic feet) document the history of aviation and flight through postage stamps, postmarks and envelopes collected from all over the world. The collection spans the 20th-century and the beginning of the 21st-century but includes examples of 19th century balloon airmail.

The stamps are housed in 67 albums and total near 68,000 stamps, envelopes, postmarks and postcards. The collection was assembled over a period of 20 years, with many of the stamps purchased as new issues. The stamps in the collection are all related to aviation; airplanes, history of flight and significant anniversaries, airships, Zeppelin mail, famous aviators and events in world history. Many of the stamps do not have dates.

There are many thousands of mostly unused stamps and souvenir sheets. In addition to the United States, there are 20th century stamps and covers from Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Italy and Colonies, Spain and Colonies, France and Colonies, Netherlands and Colonies, and Portugal and Colonies. In addition there are thousands of stamps from Africa, South and Central America, Latin America, Asia including China, Japan and Korea. Finally there are thousands of stamps from Great Britain and former British Colonies, including Australia, Canada and Provinces, Bahamas, Bermuda, Cyprus and many others. Other countries of the world are also well represented in the collection.

Along with the stamp collection, there is a copy of Kvassay’s autobiography, “Alex in Wonderland: A life of high adventure from war-torn Europe to the world of aviation.” The book focuses on 3 aspects of his life; his Hungarian background and coming to the United States, 30 years selling American-manufactured business aircraft to overseas markets and lastly, his journeys during retirement. Other writings included are his featured stories, “Alex Remembers” published in Professional Pilot.

Lastly, the papers contain a binder of clippings about Kvassay’s longtime friend, Neil Armstrong and correspondence exchanged between them via email in the early 2000s. The binder is restricted, due to third party privacy concerns.

The papers and stamp collection are organized into two series:

Arrangement

1. Aviation Stamps, circa 1870-2000s (12 cubic feet). The collection of worldwide stamps are housed in 67 albums and total near 68,000 stamps, envelopes, postmarks and postcards. There are many thousands of mostly unused stamps and souvenir sheets. The stamps in the collection are all related to aviation; airplanes,
The stamps have been left in original order and in the original binders. Many of the stamps do not have dates.

2. Writings, Neil Armstrong Clippings & Correspondence, and Miscellaneous Items, 1995-2014 (0.4 cubic feet). This series consists of Sandor Kvassay’s autobiography, “Alex in Wonderland: A life of high adventure from war-torn Europe to the world of aviation,” along with stories written by him and featured in Professional Pilot. Another highlight of the series is a binder of clippings about Neil Armstrong, a longtime friend of Kvassay’s. There are also e-mails from the early 2000s in the binder that were sent between the two friends. Miscellaneous items consist of collector calendars from Kansas Aviation Museum and an undated tape, titled, “Lear Jet Country.”

Descriptive Rules

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Processing Information

Original order of the stamps has been retained, and the stamps remain in the original binders. Materials have been housed in polyester sleeves, acid-free folders, and acid-free boxes.
**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION**

**Series 1. Aviation Stamps, circa 1870-2008**
(12 cubic feet)

**Box 1  Europe, Great Britain, circa 1870-2008**

**Binder**

2. “EW 2 – Europe – France,” circa 1870-2008 (includes balloon mail launched at Paris, December 9, 1870 and landed at Grenoble, December 21, 1870)
3. “EW 3 – Europe – Germany,” circa 1900-2004 (includes numerous Graf Zeppelin postcards and stamps, and two 1938 Deutches Reich stamps)
4. “EW 4 – Europe – Great Britain,” circa 1940-1990 (includes D-Day, 1944 card and stamp; stamped postcards of first scheduled commercial flight of British Airways Concorde to numerous destinations; Her Majesty the Queen 60th Birthday stamp, 1986; Royal Wedding Special Heathrow postcard and stamp, 1981; 60th Anniversary of the 1st nonstop Crossing of the Atlantic)
5. “EW 5 – Great Britain/Channel ISL,” circa 1940-2003 (includes 50th and 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain; Jersey Honours Pioneers of Aviation Commemorative postage stamp booklet; various Guernsey and Gibraltar stamps, including a John Lennon and Yoko Ono Married in Gibraltar stamp, March 20, 1969; 100th Anniversary of the first Powered Flight, 2003)

**Box 2  Europe, circa 1900s-2002**

**Binder**

4. “EW 10 – Europe – S-V,” circa 1930s-2002 (majority are from Spain and Turkey)
5. “EW 11 – Europe-Switzerland,” circa 1930s-1990s

**Box 3  East Europe and Russia/Former USSR, circa 1900s-2000s**

**Binder**

1. “EE 1 – East Europe – A-C,” circa 1913-1980s (most from Bulgaria and
Czechoslovakia)

3. “EE 4 – Russia/Former USSR,” circa 1900s-2000s
5. “EE 6 – East Europe – Yugoslavia,” circa 1930s-2000s

Box 4 Australia – New Zealand – Antarctica and the Middle East, circa 1900s-2000s

Binder
2. “ME 1 – Middle East – A-M,” circa 1960s-1990s (most stamps are from Ajman, Abu, Dhabi, Aden, State of Bahrain, Dubai, Iraq, Jordan, “Liban,” and “Manama”)
3. “ME 2 – Middle East – I-K,” circa 1940s-1990s (most stamps are from Israel and Kuwait)
4. “ME 3 – Middle East – O-U,” circa 1960s-1990s (includes stamps from Oman; Qatar, including 100th Anniversary of Aviation; “Federation of South Arabia,” including Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill stamps; Saudi Arabia; “Syrie;” “Umm Al Qiwain, United Arab Emirates; and Palestinian Authority)
5. “ME 4 – Middle East – Yemen,” circa 1930s-1980s (includes stamps commemorating the admission of Yemen to the United Nations; commemoration of the inauguration of Sanaa International Airport; stamps in memory of John Kennedy; inauguration of the new Universal Postal Union Building Bern 1970; 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Yemen Air Way; and 200th anniversary of the first manned balloon flight

Box 5 Asia, 1930s-2000s

Binder
1. “AS 1 – Asia – A-H,” circa 1960s-1990s (includes stamps from Afghanistan; Bangladesh, 100th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union; Brunei, to commemorate the new millennium; Burma, Ceylon; and China)
2. “AS 2 – Asia – I-J,” circa 1940s-2000s (includes stamps from India, 25th Anniversary of Independence, Golden Jubilee of International Flight, Centenary of Man’s First Flight, First Powered Flight 1903 and various British Indian Ocean Territory stamps; Indonesia; Iran, Imperial Iranian Air Force 50th Anniversary; and a Science and Technology Animation Series of stamps)
3. “AS 3 – Asia – Korea,” circa 1950s-1990s (includes various 150th anniversary of Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin; 25th anniversary of the first post-war flight of Lufthansa, 200th anniversary of first manned balloon flight
4. "AS 4 – Asia - L-N," circa 1970s-2000s (includes stamps from Laos; Macau; Malaysia, various new millennium stamps; Mongolia, ten important world events of the XX century and in Mongolia, tribute to modern transportation; and Maldives, various aeroplanes)

5. "AS 5 – Asia – P-V," circa 1930s-1980s (includes stamps from Pakistan, 75th anniversary of first powered flight, 50 years of air mail service, Pakistan Air Force; Philippines, Philippines Airlines 30 years of service, End of World War II, 50th anniversary; Singapore, 25th anniversary of ASEAN; Timor; Thailand; “Indochine Poste Aérienne;” and numerous stamps from Vietnam)

6. "AS 6 – Asia – Bhutan/Hong Kong," circa 1940s-1990s (includes 75th anniversary of the Zeppelin, various stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of C.H. Lindbergh’s Trans-Atlantic Solo Flight, numerous Zeppelin stamps, and stamps featuring aircraft of the 20s, 30, and 40s)

7. "AS 7 – Asia – Cambodia/Maldives," circa 1970s-1990s (include 25th anniversary of Greenpeace; 75th Anniversary of the First Navigable Airships; Leaders of the Pacific Theater WW II; 50th anniversary of the end of World War II; 20th Century Milestones in Air, Car, and Rail Travel; and 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain)

Box 6  Pacific, circa 1930s-2000s

Binder

1. "PA 1 – Pacific – A-N," circa 1940s-1990s (includes Aitutaki; Christmas Island; Cook Islands; Cocos (Keeling) Islands; Fiji, 50th anniversary of Kingsford-Smith’s Trans-Pacific flight through Fiji, 75th and 80th anniversary of the Royal Air Force; Gilbert and Ellice Islands; Guam; Kiribati; Nauru; Niue; Norfolk Island; New Hebrides Condominium)


3. "PA 3 – Pacific – N-S," circa 1930s-2000s (includes stamps from Nouvelle Caledonie; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Penrhyn, Bicentennial of Manned Flight, and The Airships-Self-Propelled Steerable Balloons; Pitcairn Islands; Polynesia; Samoa; Solomon Islands, 50th Anniversary of Guadalcanal; Surf Islands)


5. "PA 5 – Pacific – T-Z," circa 1960s-1990s (stamps include Tuvalu, World War II Aircraft; Tonga; Tokelau; Vanuatu, Air Vanuatu 10th anniversary, and
The New Hebrides participation during WW II; Wallis Et Futuna, 100th Anniversary of the Birth of General Charles De Gaulle

6. “Pacific – Micronesia,” circa 1940s-2000s (includes Pioneers of Flight series, Celebrating One Hundred Years Since the Flight of the First Zeppelin, Pearl Harbor 60th Anniversary, 75th Anniversary of the Flight of the Spirit of St. Louis, Celebrating the Millennium with Man’s First Century of Flight, and Operation Iraqi Freedom)

Box 7 Caribbean, circa 1920s-2000s

Binder
1. “CB 1 – Caribbean – A-B,” circa 1940s-1990s (includes Anguilla, Aruba, Antillen, Antigua, 40th Anniversary of Air Services, 40th Anniversary of the International Civil Aviation Organization; Antigua and Barbuda, 50th Anniversary of the First Jet Flight; Barbuda, History of Aviation: Exploration Through Flight; British Virgin Islands
2. “CB 2 – Caribbean – B,” circa 1940s-1990s (stamps from Bahamas; Barbados, 50 Years of Commercial Aviation in Barbados; and Bermuda)
3. “CB 3 – Caribbean – C-D,” circa 1930s-1990s (includes stamps from Caicos Islands; Cayman Islands; “Republic De Cuba” and Cuba; Curacao; “Republic Dominicana”)
4. “CB 4 – Caribbean – D-J,” circa 1920s-1990s (stamps from Dominca, “First series…Woman to solo the Atlantic, First Flying Doctor, plus others; Guadeloupe; “Republique D’ Haiti,” First Air Mail Flight to Santa Domingo, 1927 by West Indian Aerial Express, envelope and stamps, signed by Pilot Rowe; Jamaica, 25th Anniversary of Air Jamaica)
5. “CB 5 – Caribbean – Grenada,” circa 1940s-2000s (includes 200th Anniversary of the 1st Gas Balloon Flight in America, Jean Pierre Blanchard; 50th Anniversary of Peace in the Pacific; and Famous Female Aviators)
6. “CB 6 – Caribbean – St. Vincent,” circa 1940s-2000s (stamps include 85th Birthday of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth; 25th Anniversary of Apollo XI; and 200 Years of Manned Flight)
7. “CB 7 – Caribbean – L-T,” circa 1930s-1990s (incudes Leeward Islands; Martinique; Montserrat, Special First Day Cover, Inaugural Flight by Montserrat Aviation Services, Ltd.; Nevis; Puerto Rico; Redonda; Saint Lucia; St. Kitts; Turks and Caicos; and Trinidad and Tobago)

Box 8 Mexico/Central America, Canada/N. America, U.S.A., 1920s-2000s

Binder
1. “CA 1 – Mexico/Central America,” circa 1920s-1990s (includes a 1935 Amelia Earhart overprint used with additional franking on flown cover to New
York, addressed to G.P. Putnam; El Salvador; Guatemala; Honduras; Nicaragua

2. “CA 2 – Central America,” circa 1940s-2000s (stamps from British Honduras; Belize; Costa Rica; Canal Zone; and Panama)

3. “NA 1 – Canada/N. America,” circa 1920s-2000s (includes Canada; New Newfoundland; Saint-Pierre Et. Miquelon)

4. “US 1 – U.S.A. vol. 1,” circa 1920s-2000s (includes a few coins with aircraft on them; World War II, 50th Anniversary stamp sheets; Classic American Aircraft; Numerous U.S. Air Mail stamps; American Advances in Aviation)


**Box 9** South America, circa 1930s-2000s

**Binder**

1. “SA 1 – South America – A-B,” circa 1930s-2000s (includes Argentina and Brasil)

2. “SA 2 - S. America – Bolivia/Venezuela,” circa 1930s-1990s

3. “SA 3 – South America – C,” circa 1930s-1990s (includes Chile and Columbia)

4. “SA 4 – South America – Guyanas,” circa 1940s-2000s (includes various sheets of 200th Anniversary of Manned Flight stamps; various sheets from WW II Anniversaries; and Christopher Columbus related stamps)

5. “SA 5 – S. America – Paraguay,” circa 1930s-1980s

6. “SA 6 – South America – E-V,” circa 1930s-2000s (includes stamps from Ecuador; Falkland Islands, First Flight Over Falkland Islands, and 10th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Falkland Islands; Peru; and Uruguay)

**Box 10** Africa, circa 1920s-2000s

**Binder**

1. “AF 1 – North Africa,” circa 1930s-1990s (includes stamps from Algeria; Cyrenaica; Egypt; Tunisia; Morocco; and Libya)

2. “AF 2 – Africa – A-C,” circa 1940s-2000s (includes Angola, Ascension Island
– First Day Cover for 50th Anniversary of Wideawake Airfield; Botswana; Burundi; Republique du Benin; Cameroon; Republique Centrafricaine; Cabo Verde)

3. “AF 3 – Africa – C-F,” circa 1930s-1990s (stamps include Congo; Des Comores (Comoros); ETAT Comorieu; Islamique des Comores; Dahomey; Ethiopia; Afrique Equatoriale; Afrique Occidentale Francaise)


Box 11 Africa, (No AF 7), circa 1920s-1990s

Binder

1. “AF 6 – Africa – G-2,” circa 1960s-1980s (includes stamps from Republic Gabonaise; Republic de Guinee; Guinea Espanola; and Republic de Guinea Ecuatorial)

2. “AF 8 – Africa – M,” circa 1920s-2000s (includes Madagascar; Mauritius; Mayotte; Mozambique - various Zeppelin stamps; Mauritania)

3. “AF 9 – Africa – N-S,” circa 1930s-1990s (includes Niger; Nigeria; Rhodesia; Republic of Francaise; Rwanda; Sahara OCC RASD (Western Sahara); Seychelles; Senegal; Swaziland)

4. “AF 10 – Africa – S,” circa 1930s-2000s (includes stamps from Somalia; South West Africa; Sierre Leone; St. Helena; Soudan)


Box 12 Africa – circa 1930s-2000s

Binder

1. “Africa – I-M,” circa 1930s-1990s (includes IFNI Espana; Republique De Cote D’Ivoire; Africa Oreintale Italiana; Inchiya Etat du Katanga; Kenya; Lesotho; Republique Du Mali; Malawi)


3. “AF 12 – Africa – T-Z,” circa 1950s-1990s (includes Republique Du Tchad; Republique De Haute-Volta; Uganda; Zaire; Zimbabwe; Zambia)

4. “AF 13 – Africa – T,” circa 1940s-2001 (includes stamps from Togo; Transkei; and Tristan da Cunha)

5/14/2015
Series 2. Writings, Neil Armstrong Clippings & Correspondence, and Miscellaneous Items, 1995-2014 (.40 cubic feet)

Box 13

Folder


2. Bound collection of reprints, “Alex Remembers,” Professional Pilot, 2010-2012 (2 copies and one copied story from August 2014)

3. RESTRICTED - Clippings about Neil Armstrong and e-mail correspondence with Armstrong, circa 1999-2013
