FINDING AID TO
THE PAUL J. WEITZ PAPERS, 1976-1994

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Processed by: Max Campbell, September 29, 2014
Descriptive Summary

Creator Information  Weitz, Paul J. 1932-

Title  Paul J. Weitz papers

Collection Identifier  MSP 172

Date Span  1976-1994

Abstract  Personal notebooks of Paul J. Weitz during his career at NASA. These notebooks document Weitz’s day-to-day activities and accomplishments. Also included are notes from various meetings he attended.

Extent  0.5 cubic feet. 1 mss box

Finding Aid Author  Max Campbell, 2014

Languages  English

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

Administrative Information

Location Information:  ASC

Access Restrictions:  Collection is open for research.

Acquisition Information:  Donated by Paul J. Weitz, November 8, 2014

Accession Number:  20131108

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Subjects and Genres

Persons
Paul J. Weitz

Organizations
NASA
John F. Kennedy Space Center
Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center

Topics
Space Shuttle Program (U.S.)
Skylab Program
STS-51-L (Challenger Disaster)

Form and Genre Types
Notebooks

Occupations
U.S. Astronaut 1966-1987
Deputy Center Director of Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center 1987-1993
Acting Center Director of Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center 1993-1994
Acting Associate Center Director of Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center 1994
Biography of Paul J. Weitz

Paul J. Weitz was born July 25, 1932 in Erie, Pennsylvania. Weitz graduated from Harborcreek High School in Harborcreek, Pennsylvania. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree on a Navy ROTC scholarship in aeronautical engineering from Pennsylvania State University in 1954. Weitz earned his Master’s degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, in 1964.

Weitz was called to duty during the Vietnam War in 1965. He was deployed to the western Pacific and flew A-3s on combat missions. In May of 1966 Weitz was chosen as part of NASA’s fifth group of astronauts. One of Weitz first assignments was the support crew for Apollo 12.

From 1966 to 1973 Weitz did not have a flight assignment. His first flight assignment was for Sky Lab 2. This was the first manned mission to Sky Lab after its initial launch on 14 May 1973. Sky Lab 2 launched on 25 May 1973 with astronauts Pete Conrad, Paul Weitz, and Joseph Kerwin. Their main task was to fix problems with a failed heat shield that did not deploy properly making the inside of the space station too warm.

After Skylab 2, Weitz was selected by NASA to be space craft commander on the Space Shuttle Program’s 6th flight, “Space Transportation System – 6” (STS-6). Launched on 4 April, 1983, STS-6 was the shuttle Challenger’s maiden flight. STS-6 spent 120 hours in Space conducting various experiences including, EVAs, recording lighting activities, and carried three experiments designed by university students called “Getaway Specials.” These experiments were small, compact canisters that allowed for groups or individuals to conduct experiments in micro-gravity on board the Shuttles.

Weitz held the position of Deputy Chief of the Astronaut Office from 1981 to 1987, he was the Deputy Director of the Johnson Space Center from 1987 until 1993, the Acting Center Director of the Johnson Space Center from 1993 until 1994, and Weitz held the position of Acting Associate Center Director of the Johnson Space Center when he retired from NASA in 1994.

Sources:


Collection Description

Scope

The Paul J. Weitz papers (1976-1994; .5 cubic feet) document the time Weitz spent as a U.S. astronaut and as Deputy Director of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. The collection contains 11 notebooks that were used by Weitz to record day-to-day meeting notes and tasks. The first entry is April of 1976 and the last entry is January of 1994. The notebooks contain information about The Challenger accident and Weitz's response to the incident from the day it happened and document what the administration did for the families and general public in the wake of the accident. The Paul J. Weitz papers are organized into 1 series: 11 notebooks contained in one 0.5 cubic feet Mss box.

Arrangement

1. Notebooks, 1976-1994 (0.5 cubic feet). This series contains the 11 notebooks documenting Weitz's time at NASA as an astronaut and as the Deputy Flight Director for Johnson Space Center. Within the notebooks, Weitz mentions the Sky Lab 2 mission, the Challenger accident, and other astronauts including David C. Leestma. Materials in the series are arranged chronologically.


Processing Information

The notebooks have been placed in a manuscript box with plastic bubble-wrap for padding. They have also been placed in chronological order. All paperclips have been removed.
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

(0.5 cubic feet)

1 Box 11 notebooks 1976-1994

Notebook
1. Notebook, titled “P.J. Weitz CB 4/76 – 5/78.” This notebook contains information relating to Spacelab and the Shuttle.
   (Note: This notebook contains information regarding the day of the Challenger accident. It also details the days after.)
11. Notebook, titled “P.J. Weitz” This notebook contains detailed information on the events after the Challenger accident. Meetings about procedures and policies on memorials and what personal effects/remains are to be given back to the families. (Note: This notebook contains a wide range of dates starting from 1986 and ending with 1992 so it was placed at the end of the list.)