

Collection #
M0957
OM 0470

NAVAL AVIONICS, INDIANAPOLIS COLLECTION, 1942–1995

[Collection Information](#)

[Historical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Series Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	8 manuscript boxes; 3 boxes color photographs; 6 boxes black and white photographs; 1 oversize folder.
COLLECTION DATES:	1942–1995
PROVENANCE:	Robert Pedigo, Indianapolis, Indiana, May 2002
RESTRICTIONS:	None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2002.0460

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The government commissioned the Naval Ordnance Plant in Indianapolis in May 1942 to produce the top secret Norden Bombsight which was primarily for the Army Air Corps. These bombsights became available in 1943 and contained an analog computer that allowed for unheard of accuracy in high level bombing. The Norden bombsight was top secret and the general population of Indianapolis did not know what the facility was producing although the plant was awarded the Navy "E" flag for production from 1943–45. In September 1945 the plant was turned over to the Navy and became the Naval Ordnance Plant, Indianapolis. The facility tested and produced various forms of avionics technology for the Navy through the Korean War. In 1956 the name was altered to Naval Avionics Facility, Indianapolis and the operation's direction was more toward research and development for all branches of military service. The operation's importance was upgraded to Center in 1977 and was responsible for researching and developing such military technology as satellites and black boxes as well as guidance and navigation systems on missiles and had a work force of 3,000. It was renamed the Naval Air Warfare Center in 1992 but was closed by the government for budget reasons three years later.

Sources:

Warner, John. "Naval Air Warfare Center." In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows, p. 1043. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994. F534.I55 E4 1994
<http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=8056> accessed 3 March 2008/

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The material in this collection came from the facility's photographic lab and consists chiefly of printed items and photographs. The plant's newsletter, primarily known as *The Beamrider* for most of its life makes up the largest portion of the printed items covering the year 1946–95 and contains information about production and employees. There also are official documents, bulletins, manuals and histories from the 1940s through the 1990s. Included is

information on the purchase of land for the facility in 1942.

The visual items in this collection are photographs of the operation's machines and equipment, personnel and exterior shots of the facility in both black and white and color from the 1950s until 1995.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Company Newsletters, May 1946–July 1995

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
<i>Blinker/Bombsight</i> , May 1946–Jan. 1948	Box 1, Folder 1
<i>Bombsight</i> , Feb. 1948–Dec. 1950	Box 1, Folder 2
<i>Bombsight</i> , Jan. 1951–Dec. 1952	Box 1, Folder 3
<i>Bombsight</i> , Jan. 1953–Dec. 1954	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>Bombsight</i> , Jan. 1955–April 1956	Box 1, Folder 5
<i>Bombsight</i> , May 1956–Jan. 1958	Box 1, Folder 6
<i>Bombsight/Beamrider</i> , Feb. 1958–June 1959	Box 1, Folder 7
<i>Beamrider</i> , June 1959–May 1960	Box 2, Folder 1
<i>Beamrider</i> , May 1960–March 1961	Box 2, Folder 2
<i>Beamrider</i> , March–Dec. 1961	Box 2, Folder 3
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1962–Jan. 1963	Box 2, Folder 4
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1963–Feb. 1964	Box 2, Folder 5
<i>Beamrider</i> , March 1964–Jan. 1965	Box 2, Folder 6
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1965	Box 2, Folder 7
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1966–Feb. 1967	Box 2, Folder 8
<i>Beamrider</i> , March 1967–Dec. 1968	Box 2, Folder 9
<i>Beamrider</i> , Dec. 1968–Jan. 1970	Box 3, Folder 1
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1970	Box 3, Folder 2
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec, 1971	Box 3, Folder 3
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1972	Box 3, Folder 4
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1973	Box 3, Folder 5

<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1974	Box 3, Folder 6
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1975	Box 3, Folder 7
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1976	Box 3, Folder 8
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1977	Box 3, Folder 9
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1978–Jan. 1979	Box 3, Folder 10
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1979–Jan. 1980	Box 3, Folder 11
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan.–Dec. 1980	Box 4, Folder 1
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1981–Feb. 1982	Box 4, Folder 2
<i>Beamrider</i> , Feb. 1982–March 1983	Box 4, Folder 3
<i>Beamrider</i> , March 1983–Jan. 1984	Box 4, Folder 4
<i>Beamrider</i> , Feb.–Dec. 1984	Box 4, Folder 5
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1985–Jan. 1986	Box 4, Folder 6
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1986–July 1987	Box 4, Folder 7
<i>Beamrider</i> , July 1987–April 1988	Box 4, Folder 8
<i>Beamrider</i> , May–Dec. 1988	Box 4, Folder 9
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1989–Jan. 1990	Box 4, Folder 10
<i>Beamrider</i> , Jan. 1990–Feb. 1991	Box 5, Folder 1
<i>Beamrider</i> , Feb.–Nov. 1991	Box 5, Folder 2
<i>Beamrider</i> , Dec. 1991–Aug. 1992	Box 5, Folder 3
<i>Beamrider</i> , Aug. 1992–Feb. 1993	Box 5, Folder 4
<i>Beamrider</i> , March–Aug. 1993	Box 5, Folder 5
<i>Beamrider</i> , Sept. 1993–March 1994	Box 5, Folder 6
<i>Beamrider</i> , March 1994–July 1995	Box 5, Folder 7

Series 2: Documents, Manuals, Printed Materials, 1942–1990s

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Government Land Acquisition, April 1942	Box 6, Folder 1
<i>Aero Digest</i> , 1943–1966	Box 6, Folder 2
Government Publications, 1990s	Box 6, Folder 3

Handbooks and Manuals, 1951–67	Box 6, Folder 4
Correspondence and Memos, 1960–89	Box 6, Folder 5
Naval Air Warfare Center, Organizational Reference Guide, July 1995	Box 6, Folder 6
Official Publications, 1970s	Box 6, Folder 7
Technical Manuals, 1953–62	Box 6, Folder 8
U. S. Navy Photography Technical Bulletins, 1960–65	Box 6, Folder 9
<i>Norden Insight</i> , 1943	Box 7, Folder 1
<i>Norden Insight</i> , 1944	Box 7, Folder 2
Naval Aviation Electronics <i>Digest</i> , Aug. 1949	Box 7, Folder 3
Walleye “Smart Bomb”, 1960s–70s	Box 7, Folder 4
NAC Annual Review, 1979	Box 7, Folder 5
Slide Presentation Scripts, 1960; 1966	Box 7, Folder 6
Slide Presentation, Power at Sea, 1969	Box 7, Folder 7
Navy Installation Survey, 1972	Box 7, Folder 8
Handbooks and Programs, 1960s–70s	Box 8, Folder 1
Promotional Publications, 1970s–90s	Box 8, Folder 2
“Solderfication Program,” 1963	Box 8, Folder 3
<i>Naval Affairs</i> Newsletter, May, 1989	Box 8, Folder 4
Correspondence and Engineering Publications, 1940s–60s	Box 8, Folder 5
Presentation, May, 1958	Box 8, Folder 6
Architectural Blueprints for Building, 1980	OM 0470 Flat Files, FF 15-n
NAC Museum and Documents, 1950s–90s	Box 8, Folder 7
Station History of U.S. Naval Ordnance Plant, Indianapolis, Feb. 1941–Sept. 1945 (1 of 2)--photocopy	Box 8, Folder 8
Station History of U.S. Naval Ordnance Plant, Indianapolis, Feb. 1941–Sept. 1945 (2 of 2)--photocopy	Box 8, Folder 9

Series 3: Photographs of Facility, Individuals and Equipment, 1950s–1990s

CONTENTS

Equipment and Machinery, 1970s–80s

Exterior Base Photographs, 1984–88

General Facility Photographs, 1970s–80s

Military Personnel, 1970s–90s (1 of 2)

Military Personnel, 1970s–90s (2 of 2)

Award Ceremony, 11 January 1985

General Facility Photographs, 1970s–90s

Production Facilities, 1975

Dignitary Facility Tour, ca. 1980s (1 of 2)

Dignitary Facility Tour, ca. 1980s (2 of 2)

Production Photographs, ca. 1960s

Production Photographs, 1961–95

Production Photographs, 1964–77

Production Photographs, 1970s–90s

Production Photographs, 1980s–90s

Facility Photographs, 1969–89

Personnel Photographs, 1950s

CONTAINER

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 1

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 2

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 3

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 4

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 5

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 6

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 7

Color Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 8

Color Photographs:
Box 2, Folder 1

Color Photographs:
Box 2, Folder 2

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 1

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 2

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 3

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 4

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 5

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 6

Photographs:

	Box 1, Folder 7
Personnel Photographs, 1950s–80s	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 8
Production Facility, 1960–72 (1 of 2)	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 1
Production Facility, 1960–72 (2 of 2)	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 2
Exterior Photographs, 1956–94	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 3
Employees, 1960s	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 4
Employees, 1950s–80s	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 5
Awards Ceremony, 28 June 1963	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 6
Planes and Ships, 1950s–60s	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 7
Production Facilities Photos, ca. 1950s	Photographs: Box 2, Folder 8
24 Cardboard Backed Photographs of Facility with cropping marks, ca. 1960s	Photographs: Box 3

Series 4: Subject Picture Cards, 1960s–1995

CONTENTS

Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1960s–90s
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1972–75
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1960s–90s
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–

CONTAINER

Photographs: Box 4, Folder 1
Photographs: Box 4, Folder 2
Photographs: Box 4, Folder 3
Photographs: Box 4, Folder 4
Photographs: Box 4, Folder 5
Photographs: Box 5, Folder 1
Photographs:

90s	Box 5, Folder 2
Subject Photo Cards, Aircraft, ca. 1970s	Photographs: Box 5, Folder 3
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1960s–70s	Photographs: Box 5, Folder 4
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1960s–70s	Photographs: Box 5, Folder 5
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment, 1960s–90s	Photographs: Box 6, Folder 1
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1960s–70s	Photographs: Box 6, Folder 2
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–80s	Photographs: Box 6, Folder 3
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s	Photographs: Box 6, Folder 4
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s	Color Photographs: Box 3, Folder 1
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s	Color Photographs: Box 3, Folder 2
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s	Color Photographs: Box 3, Folder 3
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment, 1994–95	Color Photographs: Box 3, Folder 4
Subject Photo Cards, Equipment and People, 1970s–90s	Color Photographs: Box 3, Folder 5

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0957).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.