Repository:
Seaver Center for Western History, Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Span Dates:
1640 – 1971, undated, bulk is 1920 – 1940

Extent:
Boxes: 22 letter (photographs); 5 oversized (photographs, scrapbooks, newspaper); 4 letter, 1 ½ letter (negatives); 5 record storage, 1 oversized, 1 letter (film reels). 1 oversized folder (photographs)

Language:
English

Conditions Governing Use:
Permission to publish, quote or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder

Conditions Governing Access:
Research is by appointment only

Preferred Citation:
Arthur C. Goebel Photograph Collection, Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History

Special Formats:
2 photograph offset plates in Box 18
1 set of x-rays in Box 2 oversized
1 camera film role in Box 21
1 wood cutout in Box 21

Related Collections:
GC-1079 Arthur C. Goebel Collection
P-268 Aviation Photo Collection

Processing Information:
Processed by Duncan Hodur Scharpf, March 2024
Abstract:
The Arthur C. Goebel Photograph Collection consists of photographs, negatives, film reels, posters, scrapbooks, and a newspaper from his personal and military life, career as a stunt, race, and film pilot, and his travels. The collection emphasizes the early age of aviation in the 1920s and 1930s and shows Goebel performing numerous stunts around Los Angeles and the Dole Air Race from Oakland, California to Honolulu, Hawaii in 1927.

Biographical Note:
Arthur C. Goebel began his piloting career in 1920 when he began to learn to fly, though he would not get his pilot’s license until 1925. He would become a member of the 13 Black Cats in 1925 where he and his fellow pilots and stunt performers would performs stunts for a set price. These stunts included wing walking, flying upside down, transferring from a car to a plane, flying under bridges, and going from one plane to another to replace a lost wheel. These stunts would be recorded and played on newsreels around the country for the entertainment for all. The group would disband in 1929.

Goebel offered lessons in stunt flying from Clover Field in Santa Monica, California and performed in various stunt shows in and around Los Angeles. He would also fly planes in movies such as Three Miles Up, and take aerial photography.

Goebel’s biggest claim to fame is his victory in the Dole Air Race with his navigator Bill Davis flying the Woolaroc. Inspired by Charles Lindbergh’s solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean James D. Dole, founder of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, decided to hold a race that went from Oakland, California to Honolulu, Hawaii with a grand prize of $25,000. Nine planes began the race, and only two would eventually make it to Hawaii. The rest either had to turn around back to Oakland or crashed. Ten people died in the race. Goebel and Davis would arrive in Honolulu after twenty six hours and seventeen minutes in the air, becoming stars across the country.

Goebel would fly from Los Angeles to New York City the following year, completing the trip in eighteen hours and fifty eight minutes becoming the first person to fly nonstop between the two coasts and completing it in the fastest time. Goebel regularly competed in various races after his stunt flying days, winning awards around the country.

Scope and Content:
The Arthur C. Goebel Photograph Collection consists of photographs, negatives, film reels, and scrapbooks from his personal and military life, career as a stunt, race, and film pilot, and his travels. The collection emphasizes the early age of aviation in the 1920s and 1930s in and around Los Angeles. One subject matter is stunt flying with hundreds of photographs showing Goebel and his fellow pilots and stunt performers flying upside down, wing walking, going from one plane to another, and flying under bridges. These stunts would be filmed and played in movie theaters across the country.

Another major topic is the Dole Air Race from Oakland, California to Honolulu, Hawaii in 1927. James D. Dole, founder of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, was inspired by Charles
Lindbergh’s trans-Atlantic flight to create his own race and to see how viable air travel was between Hawaii and the mainland would be to move his products. This is the race that elevated Goebel’s fame around the country when he and his copilot, Bill Davis, won the race. There are no photographs of them flying, instead they are taken before the race in Oakland, after they have won in Honolulu, or celebrating in Santa Monica.

There are photographs that detail different parts of his life including his travels, family heritage, various planes, military career, and portraits. One of the planes in the collection is the Woolaroc which he flew in the Dole Air Race. Many of the negatives are for these pictures.

Of particular note are photographs of Exposition Park from the turn of the 20th century. These include photographs of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, then called The Museum of History, Science, and Art. These are located in photo album in Box 14; in the folder Aerial Photography, Los Angeles in Box 2 – Oversized; Aerial Demonstration Advertisement Posters in Box 4 – Oversized.

There are also photographs of actors, actresses, and others in the film industry from the 1920s and 1930s. Many of these are autographed, some of them to him. These are located in the folder Individuals – Identified in Box 19; Individuals – Identified in Box 1 – Oversized; and Individuals – Identified #1 and Individuals – Identified #2 in Box 4 – Oversized.

Arrangement:

Series 1: Binders, 1640 – 1971
Series 2: Boxes, 1878 – 1972, bulk is 1920s
Series 3: Original Prints, 1640 – 1953, bulk is 1910s – 1920s
Series 4: Stunt Flying, 1862 – 1928, bulk is 1926 – 1928
Series 5: Dole Air Race, 1927, 1952, 1967
Series 6: Geographic Locations, 1870 – 1951, bulk is 1910s
Series 7: Subjects, 1876 – 1971, bulk is 1910s – 1930s
Series 8: Scrapbooks and Newspaper, 1923 – 1954
Series 9: Film Reels, 1914 – 1971
Series 10: Negatives, 1640 – 1971, bulk is 1910s – 1930s

**Series 1: Binders, 1640 – 1971**

Thirty three binders, an index for binders 1-30, and four scrapbooks. The first thirty binders were created by Goebel and document his family in Germany, his life growing up, his career as a stunt and race pilot, and his later life and travels. Binders 31-33 are not mentioned in the index and likely assembled later. The index included has a date range and description of each item in the binder. A copy is included in this finding aid. Two of the scrapbooks are about his family in Buer, Germany and the other two contain pictures of his travels around the world.

**Box 1:** Binders 1-4
Box 2: Binders 5-8
Box 3: Binders 9-12
Box 4: Binders 13-16
Box 5: Binders 17-20
Box 6: Binders 21-24
Box 7: Binders 15-28
Box 8: Binders 29-31
Box 8 – A: Binders 32-33

Index for binders 1-30
Scrapbook – Round Africa Cruise, 1939
Scrapbook – Mediterranean trip, circa 1930s
Views of Buer [Germany] I, 1891
Views of Buer [Germany] II, 1891

Series 2: Boxes, 1878 – 1972, bulk is 1920s

Boxes of pictures that have been put together by Goebel that are based on a central theme. These include his life as a pilot, his interests, and his travels. Some of the pictures in the boxes do not correspond to the title. The titles listed below are the original titles unless surrounded by a bracket. There are two boxes that contain pictures of Mike, his pet dog from the late 1960s until the dog’s death in 1971. Goebel routinely took the dog with him on vacations and gave him birthday parties.

Box 9: Box 1 – Personal Pictures Germany, Japan, USA
      Box 2 – Personal Pictures and Norway
      Box 3 – Personal Pictures, Japan, Germany, New Mexico
      Box 4 – [Art Goebel – Airplanes and Air Races]
      Box 5 – Germany, Japan, Soviet Union

Box 10: Box 6 – Important Pictures 1972, Personal Pictures Arthur C Goebel
        Box 7 – [Wright Brothers, Maps]
        Box 8 – Colorado Rocky Ford
        Box 9 – New Mexico, Belen – Socorro and San Antonio
        Box 10 – Last Prints Mike and Art December 1970

Box 11: Box 11 – “Mike” Cross Country and Belen N Mexico
Box 13 – Sarajevo, Bosnia June 28, 1914
Box 14 – Important Pictures, [German] Royal Family
Box 15 – [Title Cards]

Box 12:
Box 16 – Wright Brothers 1903 – 1948
Box 17 – Rocky Ford, Colorado
Box 18 – South America
Box 19 – Personal Pictures
Box 20 – Texas Family, 1919 – 1970

Box 13:
Box 21 – Sarajevo, Bosnia, Assassination Arch Duke, June 28, 1914
Box 22 – Historical Pictures
Box 23 – Texas Family, 1919 – 1970
Box 24 – Personal Pictures and Aviation
Box 25 – [Titles Cards]

Series 3: Original Prints, 1640 – 1953, bulk is 1910s – 1920s

Original prints of Goebel’s family and friends, and his piloting career. There is also a small photo album that contains aerial photography of Los Angeles and the surrounding area in the 1910s. Original prints. Arranged alphabetically by subject except for the photo album which is first.

Box 14:

Photo Album

Photograph of Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, circa mid 1910s

Artic flight, July 1, 1949
Aunt Francin – Plant City, Florida 1917
Belen, New Mexico – Birthplace February 22, 1898
Brockman, Hampton
Campbell, Babe
Clippings
Clover Field Air Meet – Santa Monica, California 1923
Crissy Field October 19, 1928
Dole Air Race August 16, 1927
Funeral
Glad and Harry
Goebel, Art
Goebel, Art – 21st birthday October 19(?), 1916 Rocky Ford, Colorado
Goebel, Art – Charlie Babb July 6, 1927
Goebel, Art – Clover Field Santa Monica, California 1924 – 1927
Goebel, Art – Group photographs
Goebel, Art – Hawaii
Goebel, Art – Military service
Goebel, Art – “Skywriter” plane (1933)
Goebel, Art with coworkers – Fort Worth, Texas 1920
Goebel, Art with friends – Colorado Springs, Colorado 1915
Goebel, Art with mother
Goebel, Art – WWI
Goebel, Art – WWI uniform (1919)
Goebel Crest 1640
House
Individuals – Unidentified
Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
Luke, Frank
Mines Field – Los Angeles, California August 19, 1928
Negative
Negative photos – WWI
Peterson, Leonard R. “Pete”
R., Daisy
Stunt Flying
Thelma
Two Young Men
Unger, Ivan W.
Vroman, Colorado May 20, 1903
Vroman, Colorado May 20, 1953

Oversize folder:  [World War I] - Panoramic of uniformed military officers

Series 4: Stunt Flying, 1862 – 1928, bulk is 1926 – 1928

Photographs of Goebel and his friends doing various aerial stunts including wing walking, flying upside down, flying under a bridge, and putting on a wheel in midair. Also included are photographs from a trip to Japan and from a non-stop flight from Los Angeles to New York City. A mixture of original and copy prints. Arranged chronologically except for the last two folders which are a mixture of photographs. Folders in the oversized boxes are arranged by size then alphabetically.

Box 15:  
#1a – Travel in the air 1862 – 1865 – 1871 London, England  
#1b – “Chief White Eagle” 1926  
#2 – Stunt Flying  
#3 – Stunt Flying Clover Field, Santa Monica 1926  
#4 – Clover Field, Santa Monica 1926  
#5 – Gene Lavoch – Auto to Plane  
#6 – Stunt Flying  
#7 – Stunt Flying  
#8a – Stunt Flying – Pasadena Bridge 1926  
#8b – Stunt Flying – Arroyo Seco – Pasadena 1926  
#9 – Stunt Flying – Japan  
#10 – Non-stop flight Los Angeles to New York City  
#11 – Stunt Flying  
#12 – Stunt Flying

Box 1 – Oversized:  
Stunt Flying #1  
Midair plane crash #1  
Midair plane crash #2  
Midair plane crash #3  
Stunt Flying #2  
Stunt Flying and shooting
Series 5: Dole Air Race, 1927, 1952, 1967


Box 16: Bill Davis, (?), Art Goebel in front of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, August 1927
- Dole Race – 1 – Oakland #1
- Dole Race – 1 – Oakland #2
- Dole Race – 2A – Hawaii #1
- Dole Race – 2A – Hawaii #2
- Dole Race – 2B – Presentation with Jim Dole #1
- Dole Race – 2B – Presentation with Jim Dole #2
- Dole Race – 2B – Presentation with Jim Dole #3
- Dole Race – 2B – Presentation with Jim Dole #4
- Dole Race – 3 – San Francisco
- Dole Race – 4 – Clover Field #1
- Dole Race – 4 – Clover Field #2
- Dole Race – 4 – Clover Field #3
- Dole Race pilots and navigators, August 1927
- Hawaii – Reunion 1952
- Dole Race 40th Anniversary, Oakland, California, August 1967
- Dole Race Airplane, Breese Monoplane “Aloha,” Pilot Martin Jensen, Navigator Paul Schluter
- Dole Race Airplane – City of Peoria
- Dole Race Airplane, Travel Air 5000 – Oklahoma, pilot Bennet Griffin, navigator Al Henley

Box 1 – Oversized: Dole Race
Box 4 – Oversized: Dole Race
Oversize folder: [Dole Race reunion] – enlarged print with handwritten messages
Series 6: Geographic Locations, 1870 – 1951, bulk is 1910s

Photographs from Goebel’s travels. Because of his life as a race pilot he was constantly traveling and this continued late into his life after he had finished his piloting career. He would also go on goodwill tours around the world on behalf of the United States, particularly Japan. A mixture of original and copy prints. Arranged by geographic location alphabetically.

Box 17:
California, Santa Monica
California, Santa Monica – Clover Field
California, Los Angeles – de Mille Field
Colorado
Colorado, Rocky Ford
Ecuador
Europe – Austria-Hungary #1
Europe – Austria-Hungary #2
Europe – Germany
Hawaii, Mauna Loa, November 21, 1935
Japan
Locations – Identified
Locations – Unidentified
Missouri, Kansas City
New Mexico, Belen
New York – Curtis Museum
Peru

Box 21:
Locations – Unidentified

Box 1 – Oversized:
Japan Trip #1
Japan Trip #2
Locations – Identified
Locations – Unidentified

Box 2 – Oversized:
Japan Trip
Series 7: Subjects 1876 – 1971, bulk is 1910s – 1930s

Photographs relating to various aspects of Goebel’s personal life including his family, various airplanes he flew or his friends flew, events he took part of, his piloting career, and his military career. Includes photographs of airplanes from the 1920s and 1930s. A mixture of original and copy prints. Arranged alphabetically by subject. Oversized boxes arranged by size then alphabetically by subject.

Box 17: Aerial views
   Aerial views, Airfield
   Airplanes – Construction + parts
   Airplanes – Crashes – #1
   Airplanes – Crashes – #2
   Airplanes – Identified
   Airplanes – Unidentified #1
   Airplanes – Unidentified #2

Box 18: Airplanes – Unidentified #3
       Airplanes – Unidentified #4

Art Goebel greets the crew of the “Southern Cross” in Hawaii – En route to Australia – 1928

Art Goebel breaking ground for Knoll Aircraft Factory, Wichita, Kansas 1928

Art Goebel – Flanked by Sioux Indian chiefs, Bismarck, North Dakota 1936

Art Goebel, Frank Clarke, (?)

Art Goebel in plane, Stunt Flying – Photo offset plates

Art Goebel at breakfast in Kansas City with first Powder Puff Derby fliers (1929?)

Art Goebel performing maintenance on JN-4

Art Goebel, R.L. Riss, Guiberson diesel airplane 1932

Art Goebel with two JN-4’s circa 1924

Art Goebel’s skywriting Boeing “Speed Wing”

Babe Kalishek (?), Art Goebel, Gladys Ingle, Bon MacDougal (?) June 14, 1926
Cemetery
Dogs
Events (Races, shows, + appearances) #1
Events (Races, shows, + appearances) #2
Events (Races, shows, + appearances) #3
First flight of aviation December 17, 1903
Gladys Ingle, Art Goebel, Babe Kalishek
Goebel – Airplanes
Goebel – Car
Goebel – Cold War #1
Goebel – Cold War #2
Goebel + David #1
Goebel + David #1
Goebel + David #3
Goebel Family #1
Goebel Family #2

**Box 19:**
Goebel – Groups identified
Goebel – Groups – Location identified
Goebel – Groups unidentified #1
Goebel – Groups unidentified #2
Goebel – Individual identified
Goebel – Individual unidentified
Goebel – Pilot license
Goebel – Portraits
Goebel – Single informal #1 aviation
Goebel – Single informal #2
Goebel – World War II
Group Picture – Wiley Post, Art Goebel
Groups – Identified
Groups – Unidentified

Guiberson diesel powered airplane – Destroyed in crash at McKinney, Texas, May 28, 1932

Harry Tucker (?), Art Goebel, Alan Lockheed

Individuals – Identified

Alma Taylor

Roy Rogers

Shirley Temple

William “Bill” Desmond

Individuals – Unidentified

Box 20: Los Angeles, September 1927. Bill David and Art Goebel

Man on left (?), Art Goebel, Will Rogers, Hap Arnold (?), Los Angeles

“Mike” – pet dog – 1971

Newspaper clipping

Non-photos

OX5 Club

Parachutes

Parades

Pilots

Postcards

Rocky Ford Motorcycle Club alumni, 1967

Scenery

Text

Turbee Davidson, Art Goebel, Alan Lockheed (?) Airplane Yankee Doodle – 1928

TWA

Vacations

Woolaroc – #1

Woolaroc – #2

Woolaroc – #3
Woolaroc airplane at Bartlesville, Oklahoma
Yankee Doodle
Yankee Doodle group picture

**Box 21:**
Art Goebel; Party circa 1940s, 1950s
Art Goebel – Family; Sinking ship
Clover Field Air Meet – 1924 (two copies)
Frontier Days – 1936
Frontier Days – 1938
Group – Unidentified (two copies)
Pony Express route map
Wood cutout

**Box 1 – Oversized:**
Art Goebel – Collage
Airplanes #1
Art Goebel – Group unidentified #1
Art Goebel – Native Americans
Individuals – Identified #1
Scenery
Sphinx and Great Pyramids, Egypt
Airplanes #2
Art Goebel – Airplanes
Art Goebel – Group identified
Art Goebel – Group unidentified #2
Art Goebel – Individuals identified
Art Goebel – Individuals unidentified
Art Goebel – Road trip
Art Goebel’s father
Boats
Check and stock certificate
Clouds
Family reunion (?)

Group – Identified

Individuals – Identified #2
   Dolores Del Rio
   Greta Garbo
   Joan Crawford
   Sue Carol

Individuals – Unidentified

Prussian and German Royal Wedding

Signed appreciation card

Title cards

Woolaroc at airfield

Box 2 – Oversized: Air Exhibition – Dallas, Texas 1932

Club banquet

Great Temple of Ramses II, Abu Simbel, Egypt

Aerial Photography, location unknown

Aerial Photography, Los Angeles
   Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, circa 1921, 1922

Airplanes, blimp

Art Goebel – Airplanes

Art Goebel – Group unidentified

Art Goebel – Individual unidentified

Emma Goebel’s x-rays

Pilots poster

13 Black Cats, 13 Flying Black Cats – 1925

Box 4 – Oversized: Art Goebel – Portraits #1

Art Goebel – Portraits #2

Aerial demonstration advertisement posters
Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and Natural History Museum of
Los Angeles County, circa 1931

Art Goebel – Parents

Individuals – Identified

Gladys Ingle

Newsprint, posters

**Series 8: Scrapbooks and Newspaper, 1923 – 1954**

Scrapbooks that contain newspaper clippings related to Goebel’s piloting career and achievements and to his pilot friends’ careers. Arranged by size.

**Box 3 – Oversized:**  Newspaper: Amarillo Sunday News – Globe, August 14, 1938

Scrapbook – Stunt Flying, 1932

**Box 5 – Oversized:**  Scrapbook “Art Goebel” – Dole Air Race, 1927; Article from 1952;
Article from 1954

Scrapbook “The Ideal Scrapbook” – Stunt Flying, 1923 – 1926

**Series 9: Film Reels, 1914 – 1971**

16mm and 35mm nitrate film reels that show various stunts, travel, newsreels, flying and home movies. The newsreels are what people would see across the country. There are also reels of the Dole Air Race in Oakland, Honolulu, and Santa Monica. Locations also seen in the film reels include Tokyo, Los Angeles, New York City, India, Turkey, Sarajevo, Central and South America, and Africa.

**Box 4:**  Letter box

**Box 5 – 9:**  Record storage

**Box 12 – Oversized**

**Series 10: Negatives, 1640 – 1971, bulk is 1910s – 1930s**

Negatives for many of the photographs in the collection. A majority of the negatives have a description written on their envelope and two indexes are written about the negatives in boxes one and two. Some developed photographs are in envelopes 1, 10, and 21 in Box 3 and a roll of film is in Box 4. Arranged by envelope number. Majority of envelopes were originally numbered by Goebel. Remaining envelopes were numbered by the archivist and is denoted with brackets. A copy of the index for the negatives is included with the finding aid.

**Box 1:**  Index of Negatives

Negatives 1 – 163

**Box 2:**  Negatives 164 – [393]
Box 3: Envelopes 1 – 35
Box 4: Envelopes 36 – [46]
       Pilots poster
Box 5: Photocopies of negatives envelopes 1 – 163
       Photocopies of negatives envelopes 164 – 388

Additional, Separate Indexes:
Please email seavercenter@nhm.org to request a copy.
Series 1 Index (60 pages) P-56 Goebel Index of Binders 1-30
Series 10 indexes (14 pages) P-56 Goebel Index of Negatives Bx1-2superceded