

**University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Alaska and Polar Regions Collections  
*Elmer E. Rasmuson Library*  
*PO Box 756808*  
*Fairbanks, Alaska 99775***

## **Guide to the Franklin E. Roach Papers., 1931-1994**

**USUAFV3-145**

Finding aid prepared by Wendi Lyons

Finding aid encoded by Wendi Lyons and Suzette Holman, 2006

Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Historic Publications and Records Commission.

### OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

**Repository Name:** University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Alaska and Polar Regions Collections  
*Elmer E. Rasmuson Library*  
*PO Box 756808*  
*Fairbanks, Alaska 99775*

**Collection Number:** USUAFV3-145

**Creator:** **Roach**, F. E. (Franklin Evans)

**Title:** **Roach**, Franklin E. Papers

**Dates:** 1931-1994 (inclusive)

**Quantity:** 13 cubic feet

**Languages:** EnglishFrench

**Summary:** The bulk of the Franklin E. **Roach** Papers contain his notes, drafts, charts, correspondence, photographs, and publications generated from his research in upper-atmospheric physics. The materials also include **Roach**'s lecture notes, his correspondence files from his work on unidentified flying objects, and some biographical papers.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Franklin Evans **Roach** contributed greatly to the field of upper-atmosphere physics, conducting and publishing many photometric studies of airglow, zodiacal light, and diffuse galactic light. In 1929, he began his early training in astronomy at Yerkes Observatory under Otto Struve. After obtaining his Ph.D. in astrophysics from the University of Chicago in 1934, he began work as the first resident astronomer at the McDonald Observatory in Texas. In 1936, he accepted a position as associate professor at the University of Arizona where he taught astronomy and physics for six years. During World War II, **Roach** initially worked designing military rockets at Cal Tech and then was reassigned to work on the Manhattan Project. He resumed his civilian research after the war, first, working for the Naval Ordnance Test Station in Pasadena and studying airglow at the Cactus Peak observatory and then at the Fritz Peak observatory at the National Bureau of Standards in Boulder, Colorado. He also helped establish an observatory at Mt. Haleakala on the island of Maui in Hawaii. He retired from civil service in 1966.

Interspersed throughout his career were smaller interesting assignments including studying as a Fulbright scholar in Paris in 1951-52; traveling around the world as an airglow observer for the International Geophysical Year in 1957-9; working as a consultant for NASA in briefing and debriefing astronauts in the 1960s; and working on the Condon Report from 1966-1968, a study sponsored by the Air Force to investigate unidentified flying objects.

**Roach** published more than two hundred papers and was awarded a Gold Medal for Exceptional Service by the US Department of Commerce. He died in Tucson, Arizona on September 21, 1993.

### CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The bulk of the Franklin E. **Roach** Papers contain his notes, drafts, charts, correspondence, photographs, and publications generated from his research in upper-atmospheric physics. The materials also include **Roach**'s lecture notes, his correspondence files from his work on unidentified flying objects, and some biographical

papers.

Notes and AK numbers written in pencil on the outside of most objects are from **Roach's** family, presumably as an indication that the files were chosen to be sent to Alaska. The files have been arranged either by subject into series or according to **Roach's** numbering system rather than by the AK numbering system on the outside of each file.

## USE OF THE COLLECTION

### Restrictions on Access

Access limited to Alaska and Polar Regions Collections research room hours

### Preferred Citation

Franklin E. **Roach** Papers. Box #, Folder #, Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

## SUBJECTS

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the online catalog. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons, or places should search the catalog using these headings.

**Roach**, F. E.(Franklin Evans), 1900---Archives  
 McDonald Observatory  
 Naval Ordnance Test Station (China Lake, Calif.)  
 Airglow  
 Atmospheric physics--History--Sources  
 Aurora  
 International Geophysical Year, 1957-1959  
 Unidentified flying objects

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

### SERIES I: PUBLICATION FILES. , 1932-1991

10

9 boxes

**Roach's** publication files consist of reprints of his journal contributions as well as drafts, notes, charts, correspondence, and illustrations used in his research and publications. The reprints, located in the first box, have all been assigned a number by **Roach**. The R series represent his work from 1932-1942; the A series include publications from 1949-1988; the B series are a collection of his minor contributions, including reviews and an encyclopedia entry; and the M series are his publications pertaining to the subject of Red Arcs while at the National Bureau of Standards in Colorado. **Roach** also assigned publication numbers to files which contained documents pertaining to that particular publication. Boxes 2-5 contain files pertaining to publications A101-A237. Unnumbered files where the related publication could not be ascertained have been placed in boxes 6-9 along with **Roach's** card index of his publications.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		
1	Publication Lists; Reprints	
2	Publication files, A36-A130	
3	Publication files, A131-A165	
4	Publication files, A166-A201	
5	Publication files, A212-A <del>227</del> 235	
6	Publication index (card file), unnumbered files	
7	Publication files, unnumbered	
8	Publication files, unnumbered	
9	Publication files, unnumbered	10 Working Papers for Light of the Night Sky

## **SERIES 2. : UFO FILES., 1967-1977**

### 1 box

Contains correspondence, charts, and photographs from **Roach's** work on the Condon Report in 1966-1968 as well as the Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) UFO Symposium in 1969. The series also includes **roach's** correspondence with the general public on unidentified flying objects, some articles on UFOs which reference **Roach**, and an audiotape of **Roach** talking about UFOs to the Hawaiian Astronomical Society in January 1970.

## **SERIES 3: LECTURE FILES, 1959-1983**

### 1 box

This series contains **Roach's** lecture notes and examinations from University courses he taught as well as his correspondence, charts, and notes pertaining to lectures he gave for organizations.

## **SERIES 4: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1931-1994**

### 1 box

Materials include photographs and slides documenting **Roach's** work. Virtually all of the observatories **Roach** worked at are covered as well as much of the equipment he used throughout his career. There is also a collection of slides with illustrations from his journal publications; **Roach** has labeled several of the slides with manuscript numbers. Images also depict many of his colleagues, some personal portraits, as well as a photograph of his gravesite in Boulder, Colorado.

## **SERIES 5: BIOGRAPHICAL PAPERS, 1941-1991**

1 box

**Roach's** biographical papers include copies of his obituaries, a program from his memorial service, an interview transcript from 1941, and a description of the Franklin E. **Roach** memorial scholarship at the University of Arizona. There is also a copy of "Musings and Memoirs of Franklin Evans **Roach**," his autobiography published by his family.

---