

Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections

**Guide to Collection**

**Ruotsala, Jim, 1934-2007**

**Jim Ruotsala Papers, 1934-2007**

**MS 231**

9 boxes  
4.25 linear ft.

Processed By: Sean M. Lanksbury  
July 2007

**ACQUISITION:** Records were donated to the Alaska State Library Historical Collections by Mr. Jim Ruotsala himself in an ongoing accession process (Acc#2005\_13 ongoing).

**ACCESS:** The collection is available for viewing, however; the photographs may not be photocopied.

**COPYRIGHT:** Request for permission to publish material from the collection must be discussed with the Librarian. Photocopying does not constitute permission to publish.

**PROCESSING:** The initial donation was split into two collections, MS 231 and PCA 469. This collection has been processed at the series level. Original order was maintained when possible. Some items have been transferred to pH-neutral folders and all items were transferred into archival containers.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Juneau resident James "Jim" A. Ruotsala was born in 1934, and a third-generation Douglas and Juneau resident. At the age of nine, he began to frequent the Alaska Coastal Airline Seadrome where he developed his lifelong interest in Alaskan Aviation.

He joined the Alaska State Defense Force and Civil Air Patrol. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1951-56 and as a tank gunner in the Army Reserves from 1958-1963.

Considered one of Alaska's foremost aviation historians, Jim was selected for the 2000 Alaskan of the Year and received the prestigious Denali Award. First published in 1980, Ruotsala has written scores of magazine articles on Southeast and aviation history. He published two major works in his lifetime; *Pilots of the Panhandle: aviation in Southeast Alaska* (in 1997,) and its follow-up, *Alaskan Wings: aviation in Southeast Alaska*, volume 2 (in 2002.)

He kept an aviation photograph collection totaling over 4000 images, many of which were copied from the personal collection of notable Alaska aviators. He also maintained a strong interest in maritime history and kept an extensive collection of historical maritime photographs.

He was a member of many organizations including Pioneers of Alaska, Gastineau Channel Historical Society, Moose Lodge 700, Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion.

Jim Ruotsala died May 27, 2007 at Bartlett Regional Hospital in Juneau, Alaska.

## SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Materials in the collection include letters, pamphlets, clippings, and records primarily related to aviation history and maritime activity in Alaska, particularly the Southeast region.

## SUBJECTS

Alaska aviation 1920-1946.  
Alaska maritime activities.  
Southeast Alaska (Juneau, Douglas.)

## INVENTORY

*The inventory is currently described at the series-level.*

### **Series 1: Papers**

**Box 1-7** Flight logbooks (Ray Renshaw [Juneau Aviator], Dr. Leonard Davies), *U. S. S. Marblehead* night log book, Certificates, Letters, pamphlets and programs, awards, article clippings and photocopies, Juneau Gold Mine records, WWII Military Documents, telegrams, camp cookbook, Biographical info on Jim Ruotsala, original manuscript of *Aviation in Southeast Alaska* book.

### **Series 2: Miscellany**

**Box 1-2** Plaque, decorative pins, and audio cassettes