

Roger Douglas Connor

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
National Air and Space Museum
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EDUCATION

George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
Ph.D. in American History, May 2020

George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
M.A. in American History, May 2010

The George Washington University, Washington, DC
M.A. in Museum Studies, History Core, May 2002

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
B.S. in Business Management, May 1993

BOOKS

Time and Navigation: The Untold Story of Getting from Here to There (co-author),
Smithsonian Books, 2015.

Virginia Aviation, Arcadia Press, 2014.

In the Cockpit II: Inside History Making Aircraft of World War II (with Chris Moore),
Harper Collins, 2010.

PH.D. DISSERTATION

Rooftops to Rice Paddies: Aerial Utopianism, Helicopters, and the Creation of the National Security State, George Mason University, 2020.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

“The Strange Tale of Elmo Pickerill” (co-author) *Air&Space*, March-April 2018.

“The Coolest Autogiro You Won’t See at the National Air and Space Museum”
Air&Space, January 2017.

“This Drone Can Save Your Life” *Air&Space*, July 2015.

“Even Lindbergh Got Lost” *Air&Space*, March 2013.

“Gettysburg and Golf Courses: Ike and the First Presidential Helicopters” *White House History*, Vol. 28, Fall 2010.

“Medevac from Luzon” *Air&Space*, July 2010.

"2007: Centennial of the Helicopter?" *Vertiflite*, Fall 2006.

"50th Anniversary Perspectives on the American Helicopter Industry", *Journal of the American Helicopter Society*, January 2006, Vol. 51, No. 1.

“Frank Piasecki Wins the NASM Trophy” *Vertiflite*, Spring 2005.

“Udvar-Hazy Center” *Vertiflite*, Spring 2005.

Various book reviews for *Endeavor*, *Vertiflite*, and *Air&Space*

CONTRIBUTED ESSAYS

“Huey Helicopter” in *Engaging Smithsonian Objects* (ed. Mary Jo Arnoldi), Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2016.

“Bell UH-1H” and “General Atomics MQ-1L” in *Milestones of Flight: The Epic of Aviation with the National Air and Space Museum* (ed. Robert van der Linden), Zenith Press, 2016.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

“Rotors on the Rooftop: The ‘I Want’ Song of Vertical Flight” 75th Anniversary Vertical Flight Society Forum, Philadelphia, May 2019.

“Rotors on the Rooftops: Aerial Utopianism in the City, Yesterday and Today” Society for the History of Technology, Philadelphia, October 2017.

“From Archie to Ack-Ack.” Presented at the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the League of WWI Aviation Historians, June 2017. [Presentation Only]

"Windmills and Eggbeaters: Federal Stewardship of Rotary Wing Technology and the National Security State." National Air and Space Museum History Seminar on Contemporary Science and Technology, November 2016. [Presentation Only]

“Capronis and Chaos: Italian-American Bombing & Aircraft Production in WWI” Over the Front society of World War One, Mid-Atlantic Chapter, Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, September 2016. [Presentation Only]

“Learning to Navigate in the Air: Technological Maturity in Celestial Air Navigation, 1927–31” Royal Institute of Navigation’s “Sea to Sky” conference, Maritime Museum, Greenwich, United Kingdom, June 2016. [Presentation Only]

“Key Technologies for the Creation of the Helicopter" Rotary Wing Short Course, American Helicopter Society Forum, West Palm Beach, May 2016. [Presentation Only]

“Drones in the Museum” Mutual Concerns of Air and Space Museums conference, New York, April 2016. [Presentation Only]

“By the Stars to Victory: Making Aerial Celestial Navigation Practical Between the World Wars" Evening lecture program in conjunction with the "Ships, Clocks, and Stars" exhibition, Mystic Seaport, February 2016. [Presentation Only]

"Helicopters in the City: The Strange Tale of Los Angeles Airways" Keynote Lecture, American Helicopter Society Aeromechanics Conference, San Francisco, January 2016. [Presentation Only]

'The Lattice of Victory: British, Canadian, and American Cooperation in Hyperbolic Navigation, 1940-1945” Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Tizard Mission Symposium, Embassy of Canada, November 2015.

“The History of Drones in Film Making” at the “Lights! Drones! Action! Symposium co-hosted by the U.S. House of Representatives Entertainment Caucus and the D.C. Independent Film Festival, February 2015. [Presentation Only]

“The Black Box: Creating Resiliency in Air Transport for 77 years” Plenary presentation, 33rd annual Digital Avionics Systems conference, Colorado Springs, October 2014. [Presentation Only]

“The Aviation Experiment Station/Langley Field, 1917-18” Over the Front society of

- World War One, Mid-Atlantic Chapter, Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, October 2014. [Presentation Only]
- “Boardwalk Empire of the Air: Aerial Bootlegging in Prohibition Era America”
Transportation, Traffic, and Mobility “Spinoffs of Mobility: Technology, Risk & Innovation” conference, Drexel University, Philadelphia, September 2014.
- “From Queen Bee to Drone Revolution” Evening lecture presented at the College Park Aviation Museum, May 2014. [Presentation Only]
- “Meeting at the Oscilloscope: Wartime Anglo-American Cooperation in Hyperbolic Navigation,” Royal Institute of Navigation, Ideas in movement: the role of conflict and commerce in the history of navigation conference, Maritime Museum, Greenwich, United Kingdom, March 2014. [Presentation Only]
- “So You Think It’s Bad Now...: Politics and Transportation Technology in America”*
Plenary keynote speech, Digital Avionics Systems Conference, Syracuse, October, 2013. [Presentation Only]
- “Finding Their Way – Long Range Air Navigation Development, 1919-1939” From Greenwich to Space, 1730-2030 conference, U.S. Naval Observatory/British Embassy, Washington, DC, April 2013. [Presentation only]
- “Time and Navigation: A New Exhibition” Capitol Hill Executive Service Club, Washington, DC, March 2013. [Presentation Only]
- “Historical Perspectives on Avionics Innovation” Keynote address, Digital Avionics Systems Conference, Williamsburg, Virginia, October 2012. [Presentation Only]
- “Planes, Trains, and Automobiles: Air Travel and Intermodality, A Failure of Vision” (with Dominique Pisano), Transportation, Traffic and Mobility Conference, Madrid, November 2012. [Presentation Only]
- “Finding Their Way – Long Range Air Navigation Development, 1919-1939” AIAA Centennial of Naval Aviation Conference, Virginia Beach, September 2011.
- “Naval Rotorcraft Development, 1930-1945” AIAA Centennial of Naval Aviation Conference in Virginia Beach, September 2011. [Presentation only]
- “Rotary Wing Airmail Programs of the U.S. Post Office, 1931-1940” 67th American Helicopter Society Forum in Virginia Beach, May 2011.
- “Wrecked Rotors: Understanding Rotorcraft Accidents, 1935-1945” 66th American Helicopter Society Forum, Phoenix, Arizona, May 2010.

“Aerial Application and the Rise of American Rotorcraft” 65th American Helicopter Society Forum, Dallas, Texas, May 2009.

American Helicopter Society Historical Film Festival, AHS Forums (2008, 2009, 2010). [Presentation Only]

“Windmills and Air Flivvers: The Selling of Rotary Wing Aircraft, 1930-1950” International Committee for the History of Technology Conference, Victoria, Canada, August 2008; American Helicopter Society, Owego Chapter, Owego, New York, September 2008; American Helicopter Society, Dallas Chapter, Dallas, Texas, September 2008.

“Windmills and Eggbeaters: The Contentious Role of Government in Establishing the Rotorcraft Industry” American Helicopter Society, Patuxent River Chapter/Society of Experimental Test Pilots, Patuxent River Chapter Patuxent River, Maryland, June 2008; American Helicopter Society, Federal City Chapter, Arlington, Virginia, January, 2009. [Presentation Only]

“Kellett’s Eggbeaters: The XR-8 and XR-10” 64th Annual American Helicopter Society Forum, Montreal, Canada, April 2008.

“Turbulent Times: The Role of Government in Establishing the Rotorcraft Industry” American Helicopter Society, Langley Chapter, Newport News, Virginia, March 2008. [Presentation Only]

“Weems and Watches: Charles Lindbergh and the Elite of Air Navigation” Society for the History of Technology Conference, Washington, October 2007; International Community of Flight Conference, Dayton, Ohio, May 2008; Colloque international, La culture aérienne, Objets, imaginaire, pratiques de l’aéronautique, XIXe-XXe siècle, Paris, France, November 2008. [Presentation Only]

“Windmills to Choppers: The Korean War and the Evolution of the Helicopter” 63rd American Helicopter Society Forum, Virginia Beach, May 2007.

Panel discussion on early naval helicopter development with Hal Andrews, moderated by Richard Hallion, AIAA Capitol Chapter, Arlington, Virginia, November 2006. [Presentation Only]

"Grasshoppers and Jump Takeoff: The U.S. Army Air Corps Autogiro Program, 1934-1944," 62nd American Helicopter Society Forum, Phoenix, May 2006.

"50th Anniversary Perspectives on the American Helicopter Industry" American Helicopter Society Vertical Lift Conference, San Francisco, January 2006; 62nd American Helicopter Society Forum, Phoenix, May 2006. [Presentation Only]

"Downwash and Uproar: The U.S. Navy's Troubled Association with the Helicopter in

World War Two," 61st American Helicopter Society Forum, Dallas, May 2005.

"Weighty Matters: How Weight and C.G. Issues Shaped the American Helicopter Industry, 1943-1958," 60th American Helicopter Society Forum, Baltimore, June 2004.

"Eggbeaters & Windmills: The Birth of the American Helicopter Industry" Society of Automotive Engineer's Aerospace Congress & Exhibition, Montreal, September 2003. [Presentation Only]

"Autogiros and Gyroplanes of the National Air and Space Museum." "From Autogiro to Gyroplane: The Past Present and Future of an Aviation Industry," Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, April 2003. [Presentation Only]

Opening Remarks "From Autogiro to Gyroplane: The Past Present and Future of an Aviation Industry," Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, April 2003. [Presentation Only]

"Igor I. Sikorsky: The Helicopter Years," First Flight Centennial Commission History of Flight Symposium, "'They Taught the World to Fly': The Wright Brothers and the Age of Flight," North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, October 2001. [Presentation Only]

"Helicopter Evolution: A Propulsion Perspective." First Flight Centennial Commission History of Flight Symposium, "'They Taught the World to Fly': The Wright Brothers and the Age of Flight," North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, October 2001. [Presentation Only]

EXHIBITS

World War One in the Air (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

World War Two in the Air (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

Modern Military Aviation (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

Innovations: Climate Change (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

Innovations: Urban Air Mobility (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

Time and Navigation (Major permanent 5,000 sq. ft. exhibition, National Air and Space Museum flagship location, opened 2013): Co-curator: conception, development, scripting, artifact selection, interactive development, fund raising

Instrument Storefront Case (Udvar-Hazy Center, 2015): Script writing, artifact selection

Military Avionics Storefront Case (Udvar-Hazy Center, 2017): Script writing, artifact selection

Vertical Flight Exhibit Station Wall Panels (Udvar-Hazy Center, 2004): Script writing, photo research

Vertical Flight Exhibit Station Medium Artifact Case (Udvar-Hazy Center, 2004): Script writing, artifact selection

Helicopter Model Medium Case (Udvar-Hazy Center, 2003): Script writing, artifact selection

AWARDS AND HONORS

Associate Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, 2008

Smithsonian Institution Unsung Hero, 2002

National Air and Space Museum Peer Award, 2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Museum Specialist, Aeronautics Division, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., September 2000 to Present

Curates Vertical Flight and Instrument Collections including maintenance of the collection through acquisition and deaccession. Assists in the conception, organization, and presentation of exhibitions. Conducts research and writing to

support the Collection. Interacts with the public, other institutions and the media on matters regarding the historical development of rotorcraft and other aviation technology.

Lead Customer Service Representative – Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Signature Flight Support, Washington, D.C., August 1999 to September 2000

Pilot Examiner (U.K. CAA BX Authorization)/Assistant Chief Flight Instructor, Ormond Beach Aviation, Inc., August 1997 to February 1999

Supervised the flight training of approximately 1,000 students pursuing U.K. Private Pilots Licenses (PPL). Conducted approximately 250 PPL and IMC flight tests on behalf of the Civil Aviation Authority of the United Kingdom.

Flight Instructor; Airplane, Instrument, and Multi-Engine; Ormond Beach Aviation, Inc.; January 1994 to August 1997

Accumulated 2,500 flight hours of instruction given.

AERONAUTICAL RATINGS

Airplane (4,000+ Hours Total Time):

Commercial Pilot, Single Engine Land and Sea; Multi Engine Land Instrument

Flight Instructor, Airplane; Instrument; Multi Engine

Ground Instructor, Airplane and Instrument

Helicopter (55 Hours Total Time):

Solo and Solo Cross-Country endorsements