

North Dakota Inventors and Innovators

North Dakota is home to many inventors and other innovative people. This pathfinder will lead researchers to several resources available at the North Dakota State Archives highlighting inventors and innovative people from North Dakota.

Archival Collections

10157 North Dakota Oral History Project Records

Oral history interview transcripts, indexes to recorded oral history interviews, interview referral files, interview files, photographs, lists of donations to the Project, oral history interview transcripts relating to the Governor's Mansion, family histories, biographies, reminiscences, and manuscripts. Most of the records document administration of the Project. Genealogical information and oral history interview transcripts make up the remainder of the collection. Sponsored by the North Dakota American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, the State Historical Society of North Dakota, and the North Dakota Farmers Union, the Project conducted oral history interviews with older North Dakotans and others who were participants in significant events in the history of the state.

10553 Frank E. Vyzralek Collection

The collection includes the research files, personal papers, photographs and audiovisual materials of lifelong researcher and former North Dakota State Archivist Frank Edward Vyzralek. The research files include original work and information compiled about agriculture, arts and entertainment, business and industry, city and town life, education, ethnicity, Indians of North America, history, military, people, places, politics and government, religion and transportation. These broad areas of research are organized further by topic. Notable areas of research include North Dakota photographers, baseball, beer and bottling, mills and elevators, crime, the North Dakota Teachers Insurance and Retirement Fund, North Dakota "Centennial Moments," biographies, place names, Bismarck (N.D.), railroads and steamboats.

Useful Search Guidance

Subjects

- Electric stove
- General Electric
- Head bolt heater
- National Day Calendar
- Cream of Wheat
- Bobcat
- Texas Instruments
- Competitive diving boards
- Home of Economy
- Arctic Cat
- Moon Boot

People

- George Hughes, 1846-1944
- Andrew Freeman, 1909-1996
- Marlo Anderson, 1962-
- Thomas Amidon
- Edward G. Melroe, 1892-1955
- Patrick Haggerty, 1914-1980
- Ray Rude
- M. W. (Bob) Kiesau
- Jean Kiesau, 1914-2008
- Lowell Swenson, 1921-2008
- Dale Barsness, 1935-2015

Locations

- North Dakota

Journal Articles

North Dakota Entrepreneur Hall of Fame
North Dakota Blue Book 2007-2009

10989 Edward G. Patterson Papers

The papers consist of Edward G. Patterson's personal material, including correspondence, political, legal, and financial material, a speech by Patterson, items relating to the Patterson estate sale, and plans for a toy invented by Patterson. Also included in the collection are records relating to Patterson's businesses, including the Patterson Hotel, McKenzie Hotel, Hotel Sheridan, Hotel Northwest, and Peacock Alley. The business records specifically contain correspondence, advertising material, accounting and financial records, legal documents, menus, invitations, construction, design and architectural sketches and specifications, letterhead and envelopes, guest registers, certificates, liquor licenses, and business cards.

20108 Albert Hoiland Papers

Papers consist of correspondence, photographs, and sales brochures relating to several of Hoiland's inventions, including the wildoat separator, cow trainer, highway guards, and a furnace grate.

20819 Andrew L. Freeman Papers

The collection instruction sheets and pamphlets for various models of the Freeman engine/headbolt heaters manufactured by the Five Star Manufacturing Company of Grand Forks (N.D.).

21134 History of the Kodak Collection

Collection consists of "History of the Kodak" by Mina Fisher Hammer (1940) (typed) and newspaper clippings about inventor David Henderson Houston.

21579 Dale Barsness Papers

Consists of an oral history interview, photocopies and scans of printed material from books, news articles, photographs, correspondence, regarding Barsness, the developer of the moon boot. During the interview, Dale discusses his life. Born in Killdeer on April 27, 1935. House under large water tank, lived in Roseglen, parents were grocers. Father died when he was 11, mother remarried & she & her husband bought a farm by Makoti. Barsness considers Makoti as home. Attended UND, graduating in 1957. Sold chemicals that controlled the size of bubbles and sold some to Lawrence Welk Enterprises to control size of bubbles from the bubble machine used on his TV show. Dale was a shirt-tail relation of Lawrence Welk through marriage. He commercialized the silicone rubber that made the moon boot.

Books

Special Report to the North Dakota Economic Development Commission: Concerning the Need for Legislation Which Permits the State of North Dakota to Assist in the Financing of Large Mine Mouth Lignite Burning Steam Plants for Industrial Purposes
1962 - Andrew L. Freeman
Call Number: 553.22 F855s 1962

Progress on Power from North Dakota Lignite: Constitutional Amendment and Senate Bill 343
1963—Andrew L. Freeman
Call Number: 621.312132 F855c 1963

Progress Report on the North Dakota Power Plan to Utilize Our Lignite
1961—Andrew L. Freeman
Call Number: 621.312132 F855p 1961

Cream of Wheat, Popular Breakfast Cereal, Originated in Grand Forks, North Dakota
2001—John Rolczynski
Call Number: 664.756 R744c 2001

The Birth of the Bobcat: Louis & Cyril Kelle
2003—executive producers Marilyn Loegering and Joseph Keller
Call Number: 631.3 B6198 2003

Bobcat: Fifty Years of Opportunity 1958-2008
2007—Marty Padgett
Call Number: 338.76 P1235b 2007b

Freeman, Andrew L
General Information File Biography

Cream of Wheat
General Information File

Online Resources

Ray Rude—North Dakota Inventor
Lane Sunwall—Dakota Datebook Archive on the Prairie Public Newsroom website

SHSND Photobook
State Historical Society of North Dakota's Online Search Portal for all digitized photographs

Digital Horizons
Online consortium of historic photographs from the collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota

WorldCat
State Historical Society of North Dakota's publication search portal

External Resources

[George Hughes Was a Driving Force in Making GE a Leader in Household Appliances](#)
Curt Eriksmoen—Grand Forks Herald website

[Obituary: Home of Economy Matriarch Dies at 93](#)
Grand Forks Herald website

State Archives

For more information related to the collections and resources available at the North Dakota State Archives, please email archives@nd.gov or call (701) 328-2668.



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