



NMSU Library News Release

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University Library Receives AIP Grant to Process Tombaugh Papers

The New Mexico State University Library has been awarded \$10,000 by the American Institute of Physics (AIP) to process and preserve the unpublished papers of the late Clyde W. Tombaugh. The funding will help NMSU to make this large and valuable research collection, estimated at more than 150 cubic feet of materials, accessible to researchers. Grant monies will be used to purchase archival supplies needed to specially house the papers, as well as to pay for temporary staff participating in the arrangement and description of these materials. The principal investigator for the project is Archives and Manuscripts Librarian Marah deMeule.

The Tombaugh family donated the papers to the Library's Rio Grande Historical Collections earlier this year. The papers span Tombaugh's entire life. Included are materials illustrating his childhood on a Kansas farm, when he developed an early interest in astronomy. They trace his employment at Lowell Observatory, where he made the discovery of the planet Pluto, through his participation in the development of rocketry at White Sands Missile Range, and document his research and teaching in planetary astronomy at New Mexico State University. The papers are significant not only for their documentation of Tombaugh's life and work, but also for their evidence of the history of astronomy and related sciences.

The AIP was founded in 1931, to support the "advancement and diffusion of knowledge of the science of physics and its application to human welfare." Headquartered in the Washington, DC area, the Institute now serves over 100,000 members. Through its Center for History of Physics, the AIP preserves and makes available to researchers materials documenting the history of physics, astronomy, and related disciplines. The Center also provides grant funding to help other organizations collect and maintain valuable primary source materials.

For more information or to make a donation to continue the preservation of this collection contact Marah deMeule at (505) 646-4726 or email marahde@lib.nmsu.edu.