The Aerospace Professional

The National Aerospace Library

Aeronautical Music

Included among the in the National Aerospace Library’s extensive and diverse collections reflecting the different media in which the development of aeronautics, aviation, aircraft and aerospace technology has been recorded over the years is a small collection of aeronautical music scores.

This collection — representing a musical celebration of the sensation of flight — dates from Man’s first ascents into the air at the very dawn of aerostation through to the early pioneering years of powered flight.

Some of the highlights of the collection are as follows:

1. The March composed for the flight of Mr Lunardi’s Air Balloon at the desire of Sir Watkins Lewes to whom it is dedicated by Samuel Wesley.
2. Lunardi’s Flight … a Favorite Rondo by D Corri (March 1785).
3. The Air Balloon … the Musick by Mr Thos Smart. Words by Mr Oakman.
4. The Air Balloon … set to Music by George Chard.
5. The Air Balloon: a New Song on Mr St Croix’s Ascension at Salisbury, 10 August 1786.
7. The Balloon: to its Finder. Pegasus.
8. Flat-Bottomed Boats.

[“Let Ships and Shipbuilders begone Sir, Since flat bottom’d Boats are the cry, No ships need to sent to the Bay Sir, When such kind of vessels can fly”]

A conservation assessment of these early printed music scores has recently been undertaken at the National Aerospace Library. To ensure that these historic publications can be safely studied by current and future generations of researchers, the collection now needs to be individually archivally encapsulated in an inert polyester laminate sheets/envelopes which would be stored in a made-to-measure acid-free box, the total cost of conserving this historic collection is estimated to be around £600.

If any musically-minded individual member, company or organisation would like to sponsor the cost of conserving these historic early aeronautical music scores please contact:
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