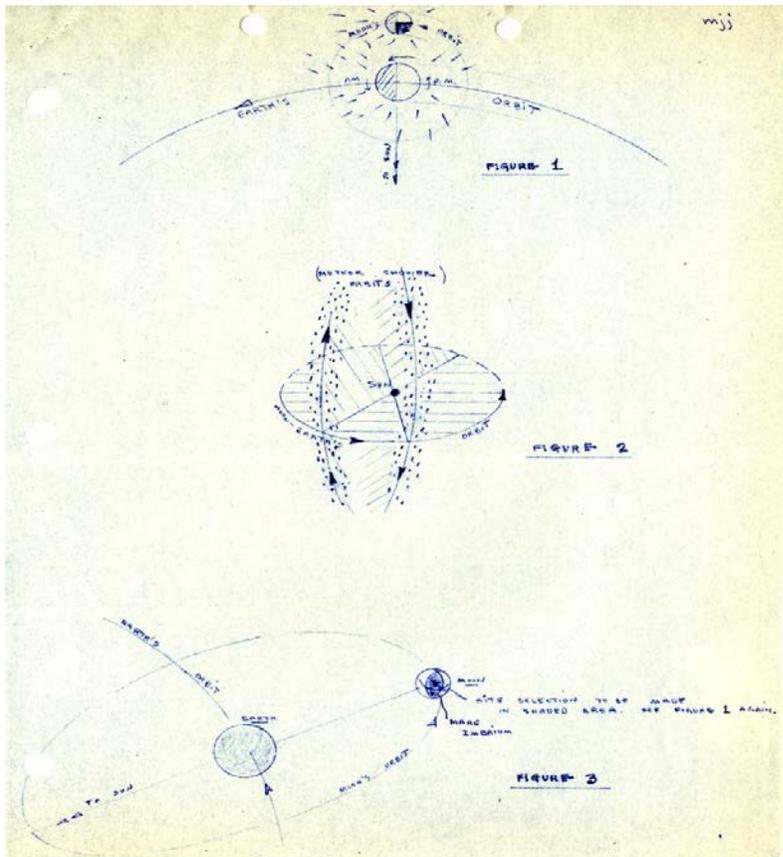


September 2015

Argonne Laboratory's Lunar Station

Argonne National Laboratory is a science and research engineering laboratory situated southwest of the city of Chicago near Lemont, Illinois. Administered by the Department of Energy, Argonne's origins can be traced to the Second World War and the development of the atomic bomb at the University of Chicago. Today it continues to be on the cutting edge of technology and energy development.

In April 1961, Russia had already managed to crash land a rocket on the moon's surface and send a human into space allowing him to orbit the earth. Meanwhile, scientists at the Argonne Lab had been working for more than a year on a plan to put a nuclear power plant on the surface of the moon.



Schematic of proposed lunar nuclear plant

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All National Archives research rooms are closed on Wednesday, September 16, 2015

The National Archives at Chicago is located at:

7358 S. Pulaski Road
Chicago, IL 60629-5898
773-948-9001
chicago.archives@nara.gov

The National Archives at Chicago research rooms are open to the public Monday through Friday, and the second Saturday of every month, from 8:00 AM to 4:15 PM.



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In a memorandum to President John Kennedy, Vice President Lyndon Johnson warned, “other nations . . . will tend to align themselves with the country which they believe will be the world leader. . . . Dramatic accomplishments in space are being increasingly identified as a major indicator of world leadership.” Perhaps placing a nuclear plant on the moon would give America the foothold it so desperately wanted.

The team at Argonne was working largely in the theoretical realm, they admitted. “The moon is so different from that of the earth so that even though it may appear conventional here, it will be unconventional when operating on the moon.” In order to provide power on the moon for astronauts to use in conducting research and experiments, they needed to consider weight and portability as well as sustainability and impenetrability.

A location was tentatively chosen based on observations of meteor activity on the moon from the earth. Using these observations, the scientists selected a site that they believed would suffer fewer meteor collisions than other locations. The initial plans were for a modular plant composed of several small, portable reactor units; however, the scientists also wanted to ensure that repairs could be made from materials available on the moon. Speculating as to what kind of minerals were present within the crust and mantle of the moon, the lunar project team considered implications of a large scale mining and alloy processing operation on the moon’s surface.

Scientists at Argonne recognized in 1960 that “the need for such a plant may arise at any time.” Indeed, the practicality of a lunar laboratory was among the questions posed by President Kennedy in preparation for his May 25, 1961 speech announcing his plan to land a man on the moon within the decade. Alas, authorization for testing and further development of the plant was never received. In a memorandum dated February 1, 1961, from the program director Bernard Spinrad, he explained this and finished with coy encouragement to the team, “Of course, I have no control over extra work done as a hobby.”

This Coming October is Archives Month! Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting

Connect with Chicagoland institutions that collect, preserve, and make accessible the historical materials that tell our collective story.

More than 20 local archives, research centers, and cultural institutions in the Chicago area will offer special events open to members of the public on Thursday–Saturday, October 8–10, 2015.

Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting is an opportunity to discover unique historical materials and engage with archivists, librarians, and museum curators.

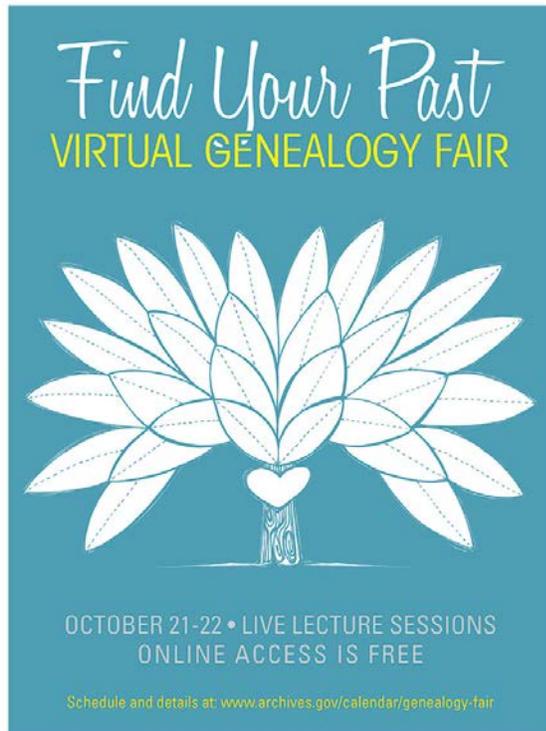
Visitors will enjoy activities such as behind-the-scenes tours, film screenings, or exhibit talks designed to showcase each site’s collections, programs, and services.

For more information or to register for events see the Chicago Area Archivists website:

<http://www.chicagoarchivists.org/Chicago-Open-Archives>.



National Archives Virtual Genealogy Fair Coming in October



Please join the National Archives for the 2015 Virtual Genealogy Fair on October 21 & 22. This will be a live broadcast via YouTube so you can ask our genealogy experts questions at the end of their talks.

Presenters

Speakers will include genealogy experts from National Archives locations across the nation.

Live Lecture Sessions

Lectures will feature tips and techniques for using Federal records at the National Archives for genealogy research. Lectures are designed for experienced genealogists as well as novices. Recorded sessions will remain available online after the event.

Schedule and Handouts

We are currently in the planning stages to select a wide variety of topics for different skill levels for beginners to advanced. Please check this site later, <http://www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair/>.

Online Viewing and Chatting

Online viewing and chatting will be available on the U.S. National Archives YouTube channel. 

You can watch our programming live on [YouTube](#). Click on the YouTube logo to watch the sessions live or catch up later.

Captioning

Live captioning will be available online. If you require an alternative or additional accommodation for an event (such as a downloadable transcript), please send an email to KYR@nara.gov or call 202-357-5225 in advance.

Bankruptcy Case Files Are No Longer at Chicago

The first week of September saw the last shipment of accessioned bankruptcy case files leave our facility. All accessioned bankruptcy case files held by the National Archives and Records Administration are now centralized at the National Archives at Kansas City. The National Archives at Chicago still has the indexes, dockets, journals and other records that can provide researchers with an overview of individual and company bankruptcies that took place in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The Federal Records Center in Chicago will also continue to hold more recent bankruptcy case files that are still owned by the U.S. Courts in our region. However, if you have the case number and you would like a copy of the case file itself, please contact the National Archives at Kansas City at kansascity.archives@nara.gov or 816-268-8000.

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Per the Privacy Act of 1974 we will not share your personal information with third parties.