Women Marines in World War I

Collections Index

Archives Branch
Marine Corps History Division
Quantico, VA
2018
Introduction

The Archives Branch supports the professional military education requirements of Marine Corps residential and distance learning programs. They are the chief repository for reporting units as well as for personal papers of current and veteran Marines. The Archives is open without appointment to both military and civilian patrons, and a professional archivist is always available for assistance. Patrons may bring laptops, digital cameras, and personal scanners for use in the reading room.

Contacting the Archives Branch

Physical address: 2044 Broadway Street, Quantico, VA 22134
Phone: 703-784-4685
Email: mcu_archives@usmcu.edu
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Administrative Information

Restrictions: Collections are open to all researchers

Preferred citation: Researchers wishing to cite these collections should include the following information:

[Name of Collection], [Folder heading], [Collection Number], Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division, Quantico, VA.

Scope and Content

This index highlights collections found in the Archives Branch that document Women Marines during the World War I-era, circa 1916-1918. The criteria for selecting collections for inclusion in this index is limited to those personal papers that contain pertinent materials.

Collections in this index are comprised of official Marine Corps records, documents, and publications; letters and correspondence; manuscripts; photographs; maps; memoirs and reminiscences; clippings and articles; oral histories and interviews; and realia and ephemera.
Women Marines in World War I Collections Index, 1916-1918

Title Mae H. Burns Collection, 1918-1919
Record COLL/54
Location A/11/I/2/1

This three folder collection consists of material related to Mae Burns' World War I service in the Women Marines. The collection contains Burns' identification card for access to the State, War, and Navy Department Buildings in Washington, DC; a letter written on a menu sent to Burns describing a voyage on the White Star Line dated 6 July 1926; and a 8 in. x 10 in. black and white photograph of the officers of the Paymaster's Department, dated 17 March 1920. Also included is a photograph album documenting Burns' service in Washington, DC. The images in the album show Women Marines in uniform around the city; attending the World War I victory parade; and other groups of Marinettes and Yeomanettes. An oversize folder contains one panoramic photograph of the Personnel Headquarters, US Marine Corps, Washington, DC, December 1918. The photograph shows the Marine Corps personnel gathered together. John Lejeune and George Barnett are also visible in the photograph.

Title Laura J. Dennis Collection, 1919-1972
Record COLL/537
Location A/5/I/3/1

This two box collection consists primarily of material from Dennis's research work for the History and Museum Division's publication, "History of the Women Marines". Included are 258 photographs and documents documenting the history of women in the Marine Corps. They cover the entry of women into the Marine Corps in 1918; through World War II; and members of the Women Marines Association at the 25th anniversary and other dinners. Also included is World War I material related to Florin Dennis. Documents include a World War I citation of the 6th Marines; an obituary and memorial card for Dennis; and a letter from John Lejeune to Harry Keller in regards to an American Legion invitation. Also included are two black and white photograph portraits measuring 9 in. x 13 in. autographed by John Lejeune and Smedley Butler.

Title Violet Van Wagner Lopez Collection, 1918-1992
Record COLL/851
Location FF/13/18

This collection consists of a display board with photographs related to Lopez's service in the Women Marines. Included are images of the final review of U.S. Navy and Women Marines of World War I by Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels and Franklin Roosevelt; Van Wagner in her summer khaki uniform; Female Reservists at USMC Headquarters; Women Reserves in front of the White House; and Van Wagner in her winter green uniform. Also included is memorial booklet of remembrance for Violet Van Wagner Lopez, one of the first Marinettes. The booklet contains images of Van Wagner when she enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1918, her discharge certificate; and a newspaper article showing her swearing in ceremony. Also included is a eulogy presented by the Women Marines Association.
This single folder collection contains a manuscript titled "Women Marines in World War I," written by Dawn Alexander Tepe. The undated manuscript, 17 pages in length, describes the singular contribution of Women Marines during World War I, beginning with a brief treatment of the history of women in warfare, dating back to the American Revolution, and early efforts by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels to supply staff for the vast clerical needs of the US Navy. Following the acceptance of females into the Navy, Commandant George Barnett formally requested to enroll women into the Marine Corps in August 1918. Tepe notes America's slow acceptance of the changing roles of women after the war.

Mrs. Carrie E. Thompson (née Kenney) was a World War I Woman Marine. This collection of photographs includes portraits of many several notable Marine and Navy personalities, both military and civilians, of the war and post war era. Included are images of Ben H. Fuller, Charles Lindberg, John A. Lejeune, Wendell C. Neville, William A. Moffett, and John Philip Souza, among others (notable among these is a an engraving of Ulysses S. Grant). There are also photographs of USS Broome, USS California, USS West Virginia; Women Marines on parade; and photographs of Thompson in uniform and in civilian clothes.

This collection consists of documents related to the World War I service of Woman Marine Pearl C. Oagley, 1918-1922. Included are photocopies of Oagley's expiration of enrollment certificate, her Marine Corps discharge, and a studio portrait photograph of Oagley in uniform. Also included, and of particular interest, is a four-page reminiscence titled "Memory Bits of a Girl Marine of World War I," written by Oagley about her training and service experiences. Rounding out the collection is a color photograph of Oagley and other Women Marines at a meeting of the Women Marines Association in Boston, Massachusetts in 1976.

This collection documents the Marine Corps service of Woman Marine Olive Mae Miller during World War I. Included are 5 black and white photographs, depicting images of Women Marines marching in Washington, DC, a studio portrait of Miller, a group photograph of Women Marines, and a photograph of Miller operating an addressograph machine.