

MARINE CORPS WOMEN'S RESERVE BAND COLLECTION

Processed by the United States Marine Band Library and Archives

USMB

Washington, D.C.

2019

<https://www.marineband.marines.mil/>

Finding aid encoded by USMB Library and Archives, 2019

Collection Summary

Title: Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band collection

Span Dates: 1943-1946

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1943-1945)

Accession No.: A2005-3

Creator: Medin, Bonnie Mae, 1917-2012

Extent: 3 containers ; 1.5 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Library and Archives, U.S. Marine Band, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Private Bonnie M. Medin of McAlester, Oklahoma, reported for duty in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 21, 1943. She was a member of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band, performing on percussion from 1943 until her discharge in 1946. This collection consists of her scrapbook containing personal and professional photographs, military orders, personal and professional correspondence, pamphlets, press clippings, church and concert programs, and postcards which chronicle her time in the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band. The scrapbook starts with documentation of basic training, through the establishment of the band and includes performances and tours. The collection also includes photocopies of photographs, photocopies of newspaper clippings, sheet music, and historical information about the band and its activities.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and listed alphabetically therein.

Names:

King, Bonnie S.

King, Bonnie Smallwood

Medin, Bonnie M.

Rose, Phyllis P.

Smallwood, Bonnie Mae

United States Marine Band

United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve

United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band

Subjects:

Bands (music)

Basic training (Military education)

Camp Lejeune (N.C.)

Military Bands

Women soldiers

Occupations:

Military

Musician

Administrative Information

Provenance

Gift of Bonnie M. Medin née Smallwood in 2005.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

MGySgt D. Michael Ressler accepted all materials in 2005. SSgt Nishana Dobbeck assembled the collection file and created the accession record in 2014. Rachel Horoschak processed the collection and created the finding aid in 2018. MGySgt Jane Cross revised and coded the finding aid for EAD format in 2019.

Appraisal

Books were appraised and either added to the Library's collection or were disposed of. Photocopied duplicate materials and duplicate photographs were removed.

Transfers

According to U.S. Marine Corps historical property procedures, three-dimensional artifacts were separated and accessioned through the National Museum of Marine Corps (NMMC) at accession number 2005.122 (quilt, banner, and award)

Copyright Status

Materials from the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band collection are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Access and Restrictions

The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band collection is open to research. Researchers must contact the Marine Band Library and Archives to schedule a research appointment.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band collection, Marine Band Library and Archives, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
November 22, 1917	Bonnie Mae Smallwood born in Wilburton, Oklahoma
late 1930s - early 1940s	obtains bachelors degree in music education from Oklahoma Baptist University, then teaches music theory, glee clubs, and school bands
December 23, 1939	marries Elmer King of Dallas, Texas
September 21, 1943	reports for duty in the Marine Corps Women's Reserve in Atlanta, Georgia, and proceeds to Camp Lejeune in North Carolina
1943 - 1946	assigned as a percussionist with the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band

Date	Event
after 1946	Secretary of the Women Marine Band and editor of their newsletter "Quarternotes"
October 7, 1948	marries Anthony Charles Medin, a Marine Staff Sergeant in World War II
1981	Co-authors the book <i>Musical Women Marines - The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in World War Two</i>
March 21, 2012	dies and is buried at a veteran's cemetery in Santa Rosa, California

Scope and Content Note

The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band was founded in 1943 as part of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve that served during World War II. The band was organized by Captain William F. Santelmann, Director of the United States Marine Band from 1940 to 1955. The band was stationed at Camp Lejeune, and forty-three members were recruited from major conservatories and from Marine Corps Reserve enlistees with professional training in music. A total of sixty-seven women served in the band during its existence, which included a dance band and a dixieland band. The band completed three national tours and gave a total of 621 performances. The group disbanded with the rest of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve in 1945 and is the only all-women band to have served in the Marine Corps.

Contents of the collection include the scrapbook of Bonnie M. Medin (née Smallwood) with personal and professional photographs, military orders, personal and professional correspondence, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, church and concert programs, magazine clippings, and postcards. Also included in the collection are daily reports of the band's official performances, photocopies of programs, photocopies of newspaper clippings about the band, negatives, official photographs of the band members, group photographs of the band, and contact sheets and slides of the scrapbook of Phyllis P. Rose. There is sheet music for the Women Marines' Waltz and copies of Medin's book.

Organization of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band collection

The collection is organized into 1 series:

- I. Papers, 1943-1946 and undated

Description of Series

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-3	<p>I. Papers, 1943-1946</p> <p>The first two boxes contain Medin's scrapbook, which is comprised of many personal and professional photographs, military orders, personal and professional correspondence, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, church and concert programs, magazine clippings, and postcards, all of which illustrate Medin's enlistment in the Marine Corps, basic training, and time with the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band. Included is documentation and photographs of the band, its members, and its activities, including performances and tours between 1943 and 1946. Box 3 contains daily reports of the band's 543 official performances between December 21, 1943 and November 29, 1945, photocopies of programs from eight band performances, photocopies of newspaper clippings about the band, negatives, official photographs of the band members, group photographs of the band, and contact sheets and slides of the scrapbook of Phyllis P. Rose. There is sheet music for the Women Marines' Waltz and two copies of the book <i>Musical Women Marines - The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in World War Two</i> written by Medin and Ellen Stone Doukoullos.</p> <p>List arranged alphabetically by media format.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/13	<p>Book, 1981</p> <p><i>Musical Women Marines - The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in World War Two</i> by Ellen Stone Doukoullos and Bonnie Smallwood Medin.</p> <p>unbound</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/14	<p>Book, 1981</p> <p><i>Musical Women Marines - The Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in World War Two</i> by Ellen Stone Doukoullos and Bonnie Smallwood Medin.</p> <p>corrected edition, bound</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/2	<p>Concert programs, August – October 1944 and undated</p> <p>photocopies</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/1	<p>Daily report of band activities, 1943 - 1945</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/3	<p>Newspaper clippings and photographs, 1944 – 1945 and undated</p> <p>photocopies</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/4	<p>Photograph, undated</p> <p>Drum Major portrait at Camp Lejeune</p>
BOX-FOLDER 3/5	<p>Photographs, undated</p> <p>Woodwind player portraits: Pfc Margaret Merrell and Pfc Kathryn Scott</p>

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 3/6	Photographs, undated Brass player portraits; Pfc Clara Ella Harpe, Staff Sargent Margaret H. Merrell, Pfc Marjorie Patterson, Pfc Lorraine Miller, and Pfc Barbara E. Marshall
BOX-FOLDER 3/7	Photographs, undated Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band at Camp Lejeune
BOX-FOLDER 3/8	Photographs, undated Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in Washington, D.C.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Scrapbook of Bonnie M. Medin, 1943 – 1944 pages 1 - 76
BOX-FOLDER 2/1	Scrapbook of Bonnie M. Medin, 1943 – 1944 pages 77 – 150
BOX-FOLDER 2/2	Scrapbook of Bonnie M. Medin, 1943 – 1944 pages 151 – 211
BOX-FOLDER 3/10	Scrapbook of Phyllis P. Rose, undated Contact sheets, undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/9	Scrapbook of Phyllis P. Rose, undated photographic negatives
BOX-FOLDER 3/11	Scrapbook of Phyllis P. Rose, undated slides
BOX-FOLDER 3/12	Sheet music, 1943, 1968 Women Marines' Waltz by Tom Knox (music) and Emil Grasser (lyrics)