



City of Arts & Innovation

Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE:** JANUARY 22, 2020

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: ACCESSION OF WORLD WAR II WOMEN ACCEPTED FOR VOLUNTEER
EMERGENCY SERVICE (WAVES) HATS (3), INSIGNIA (BARS [15], STUDS [1],
CUFFLINKS [2], PINS [11]), AND PHOTOGRAPH BELONGING TO WAVES
LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE MARY BOYNTON INTO MUSEUM'S
PERMANENT COLLECTION

ISSUE:

Recommend that the City Council approve the accession of World War II Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) hats (3), insignia (bars [15], studs [1], cuff links [2], pins [11], and photograph belonging to WAVES Lieutenant Junior Grade Mary Boynton into the Museum of Riverside's permanent collection.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommend that the City Council approve the accession of World War II Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) hats (3), insignia (bars [15], studs [1], cuff links [2], pins [11], and photograph belonging to WAVES Lieutenant Junior Grade Mary Boynton into the Museum of Riverside's permanent collection.

BACKGROUND:

Mary Boynton, mother of Riversider Dr. Wendy Ashmore, served in World War II as a Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVE) Lieutenant Junior Grade. Her hats, insignia, and photograph were exhibited in the Riverside Metropolitan Museum 2011-2014 exhibition *Force of Arms*.

Dr. Wendy Ashmore wrote the following tribute, which was included with the objects in the exhibition.

“REMEMBERING . . . Mary Boynton

“Born and raised in Los Angeles, Mary Boynton (1916-1985) began her service with the Navy as a civilian secretary near the outset of World War II. In 1943, she enlisted in WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), a branch of the US Naval Reserve.

While her younger brother, Jim, served with the Army in the South Pacific, all of Mary's duty postings were stateside. This was true for most WAVES until 1944. Her first destination was Smith College, in Northampton, Massachusetts, the location of the principal WAVES officer training school. She and her classmates were trained there as Seaman Recruits, then Midshipmen, and emerged as Ensigns. As was true of most WAVES, her duties were primarily clerical. By the time she left the Navy at the end of the war, she held the rank of Lieutenant, Junior Grade. In the early 1950s, she applied her WAVES skills to a satisfying office career in Hollywood's cartoon-animation business.

Remembered by Wendy Ashmore, daughter

A family member of the late Dr. Wendy Ashmore (1948-2019) is making this donation on her behalf.

On December 11, 2019, with seven (7) Committee members supporting and four (4) Committee members absent, the Museum's Collections Committee approved a recommendation to approve the accession of the WAVES artifacts into the Museum's permanent collection.

DISCUSSION:

The WAVES hats, insignia, and photograph document the role of American women in World War II. Californian Mary Boynton represents such an individual. The Museum of Riverside does not have an extensive collection of World War II women's military artifacts. The Museum's Collection Committee recommends the accession of the hats, insignia, and photograph of Mary Boynton into the permanent collection as this material helps fill a void in the history collection relating to local women's history and will complement and enrich the Museum of Riverside's existing military collection. The artifacts in this donation are in good condition and have no immediate need of conservation. The storage space required is minimal.

Collection of WAVE-related artifacts:



Collection of WAVE-related artifacts, detail view of smaller artifacts



FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Certified as to availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Approved by: Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager