

# History and Collections at The Women's Memorial



## History and Collections Staff

**Judy Bellafaire,  
Ph.D.**  
Chief Historian

**Britta Granrud,**  
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**Mary Jo Binker,**  
Oral History  
Program Director

## In the News

### SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES GRANT

The Women's Memorial Collection received a federal match grant for \$237,000 from the "Save America's Treasures" program! The Women's Memorial will raise the matching non-federal funds from corporate and private donations. This grant will allow us to provide environmentally sound storage for the collection and buy archival supplies. Funds will also be used to conserve select uniforms and objects, transcribe and duplicate the oral history collection and digitize selected photographs. Please contact us for more information.

### ENTERPRISING WOMEN EXHIBIT

We recently loaned two 1950s Hattie Carnegie-designed Army uniforms and four military Barbie dolls from our collection for a traveling exhibit entitled *Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business*. Some 40 women in business such as Madam C.J. Walker, Elizabeth Arden, Barbie creator Ruth Handler, and Katherine Graham are featured in this exhibit organized by the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University and the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, Massachusetts. It opened at the National Heritage Museum in early October and will travel to New York City, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and Detroit over the next two years. For more information on the exhibit, please visit [www.enterprisingwomenexhibit.org](http://www.enterprisingwomenexhibit.org).

### REQUEST FOR ARTIFACT DONATIONS

Watch for new exhibits! We are working on new special and permanent exhibits and need your help! Consider donating or lending your photographs, documents and artifacts on any of the following topics or for our permanent collection of artifacts.

Between January and May 2003, exhibits on Native American servicewomen, love and marriage in the military, African American servicewomen and women who have died while serving in or with the military will be developed. These special exhibits will be on temporary display at the Memorial and may be loaned to other organizations.

We are also beginning to seek funding, conduct research and compile content and artifacts to build more permanent exhibits and complete the exhibit gallery.

## Collection Overview

In order to make The Women's Memorial the foremost resource on the vast and significant topic of women's roles in US military history, the Foundation mounted a nationwide search for artifacts in July 1994. Thanks to our very generous donors, we currently have over 4,000 collections donated by more than 3,300 donors. We have collections covering 26 eras or specific wars/deployments/operations and representing over 60 services, both military and uniformed civilian.

Our extensive, historically significant collection continues to expand as the servicewomen of today participate in new events and fill new roles and, like the generations of servicewomen before them, make their individual contributions to the defense of our nation. It is comprised of three parts:

- > artifacts and memorabilia such as uniforms, medals, ribbons, equipment and military-issue personal items,
- > photographs, film and video footage representing different eras of history, the varied roles women performed, women and men working together, and the diversity of women who have answered the call to service and
- > oral and written histories by women in service; official documents such as enlistment and discharge papers, transfers and travel orders, awards, and certificates of accomplishment; training manuals; recruiting brochures and posters; diaries, letters, and journals; scrapbooks depicting service years; newspaper and magazine articles about military women; and scholarly works on women in the military.

While not everything from our collection can be displayed in permanent exhibits in the Memorial, the collection is used for many other exciting and dynamic projects—special exhibits in the Memorial, calendars, books, web-based projects, brochures, presentations and educational materials. The collection is also available to outside organizations and museums for similar purposes and is accessible to students, scholarly researchers, journalists, historians, authors, and family members.

## History and Collections at the Women's Memorial

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*What We Don't Record, We Lose*

## Requests from the Chief Historian

Dr. Judy Bellafaire, our Chief Historian, is gathering information on specific topics for upcoming projects. She asks that if you or someone you know have any information on the following subjects, please contact her at (800) 222-2294 or wimsacura@aol.com.

### PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS

The Military Order of the Purple Heart has given a grant to the Women's Memorial to gather information about military women who are Purple Heart recipients. The data will include some information about the recipient, date of the award, and description of the incident resulting in injury and award of the medal.



*"Everyone Has a Story to Tell..."*

## Oral History Program

The oral history inventory currently consists of 265 tapes from all branches of the uniformed services. Most of these histories come from WWII veterans and/or Korean War era veterans. Additional oral histories are needed. Vietnam War and Persian Gulf veterans are especially welcome. To learn more about the oral history program, arrange to be interviewed or to volunteer to conduct oral history interviews, contact the program's director, Mary Jo Binker at (800) 222-2294 on Wednesdays or Thursdays.

### LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Women's Memorial has become a partner organization with the Library of Congress's Veterans History Project, a nationwide effort to collect and preserve audio and videotape interviews with veterans of America's twentieth century wars. As a partner, the Memorial's oral history program is listed on the project's web site (<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/>) and contributes selected tapes and transcripts to the Library's collection.

### WOMEN MARINES ASSOCIATION

The Women's Memorial and the Women Marines Association are working on a pilot project to collect oral histories from former Women Marines for both the Women's Memorial and the Marine Corps Historical Division. To date 22 interviews have been recorded and deposited with the historical division and the Memorial.

### GI BILL EDUCATION

We are interested in talking with and learning about servicewomen from the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War eras who used the G.I. Bill to attend college or advanced training schools.

### KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

We are compiling a book of honor with the names of servicewomen who were killed in action or who were killed in the line of duty. The book of honor will be displayed in the Hall of Honor in the Women's Memorial.

### HERSTORY

The Memorial's how-to guide for collecting military women's oral histories, *HerStory*, is now available in the Women's Memorial Bookstore or through the Memorial's Web site ([www.womensmemorial.org](http://www.womensmemorial.org)). Cost: \$5.

