Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

Mary Charles Collection

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2013

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Mary Charles Collection
Date:	1931-1966 (bulk 1932-1936)
Identifier:	NASM.XXXX.0011
Creator:	Charles, Mary
Extent:	1.41 Cubic feet (1 letter-size document box; 2 flat boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Mary Charles Collection consists of documents, photographs, and scrapbooks collected/assembled by (Sarah) Mary Charles between 1931 and 1966. The collection showcases Charles' activity as a liscensed pilot. The bulk of the collection covers the span between 1931 and 1936.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Mary Charles, gift, 1966, XXXX-0011.

Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Amanda Buel, 2013.

Preferred Citation

Mary Charles Collection, Accession XXXX-0011, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

(Sarah) Mary Charles (circa 1887-1972) was a licensed pilot and advocate for women's involvement in aeronautics. She received flying instruction from U.S. Naval Reserve experts at Clover Field, in Santa Monica, California, in 1929, and earned her pilot's license in 1931. Charles participated in the 1931 Cleveland Air Race, where she finished last as a result of engine problems. She did, however, place third in the women's dead stick landing contest.

In 1936, she received instruction in blind flying at Central Airport. Besides being active in the OX5 Club, the Women's International Association of Aeronautics (WIAA), the Ninety-Nines, and The Women Peace Officers Association of California, Charles was also a Captain in the Women's Air Reserve, a group of women pilots organized to fly and give medical treatment in inaccessible stricken areas.

Scope and Contents

This collection, encompassing the years of 1931-1966, includes Women's National Air Corps material, Mary Charles' pilot certificates, OX5 Club material, Women's Air Reserve material, autographed photographs, correspondence, and newspaper clippings relating to women in aviation, as well as three scrapbooks covering the 1931 National Air Races in Cleveland.

Note: The digital images in this finding aid were repurposed from scans made by an outside contractor for a commercial product and may show irregular cropping and orientation in addition to color variations resulting from damage to and deterioration of the original objects.

Arrangement

The Mary Charles Collection is a small collection and, as such, it has no distinct series groupings. Box 1 is arranged in strict chronological order; boxes 2 and 3 are arranged to accomodate a safe fit of the materials in the containers. Titles appearing in brackets [ ] are the archivist's.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Aeronautics
Aeronautics -- Exhibitions
Women in aeronautics

Types of Materials:

Correspondence
Photographs
Publications
Scrapbooks

Names:

Charles, Mary
National Air Races
Ninety-Nines (Organization)
OX5 Aviation Pioneers.
Women's Air Reserve
Women's National Air Corps

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	[Aviator's Certificates. National Aeronatic Association (NAA) and Women's Air Reserve], 1931-1932
Box 1, Folder 2	[Women's Air Reserve Material], 1932
Box 1, Folder 3	[Women's Air Reserve Regulations, 2nd edition], circa 1931-1933 3 Copies (derivative objects)
Box 1, Folder 4	[Photographs of the Women's Air Reserve Aerial Ambulance], circa 1932-1934
Box 1, Folder 5	["My Flying Experience" (Diary)], 1934
Box 1, Folder 6	["Peace by Preparedness - 1935" Women's National Air Corps], 1935
Box 1, Folder 7	[The Women Peace Officers Association of California Yearbook 1935-1936 and Official Program 1936 Convention. Santa Monica, Oct. 15, 16, 17], 1936
Box 1, Folder 8	[Supervisory Training Conference Report. 55th Sub-Depot Army Air Base Lemoore, Calif.], 1942
Box 1, Folder 9	[Poem "...With a Friend"], March 25, 1944
Box 1, Folder 10	[Downie, Don. "Fabulous 'Pancho' Barnes." Flying (March 1949): 36-38, 58-60.], March 1949
Box 1, Folder 11	[Washburn, Viola. Into the Morning. The Story of a Journey Away from Fear. N.p.: The Washburn Foundation, 1964.], 1964 Notes: Due to copyright restrictions, monograph is not digitally available.
Box 1, Folder 12	[OX5 Club of America Roster and Newsletter (Vol. 7, No. 6)], 1965
Box 2, Folder 1	["Red Mountain Views" - Drawings and Poems], January 1934
Box 2, Folder 2	1931 National Air Races. Cleveland. Official Program. Mary Charles -- Participant. U.S. Air Pilot #17050, 1931
Box 2, Folder 3	[Photo Album], 1931-1943
Box 3, Folder 1	[Scrap Book - "Capt. Mary Charles"], 1934-1966