

*Guide to the Microfilm Edition of*

**The WAVES: Records  
of the Assistant Chief  
of Naval Personnel  
for Women  
1942–1972**

*A Microfilm Publication by*

**SR** *Scholarly Resources Inc.*  
Wilmington, Delaware

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This Scholarly Resources microfilm publication of *The WAVES: Records of the Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Women, 1942–1972* is produced with the cooperation of the Operational Archives Branch of the Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC.

ISBN 0-8420-4103-6

Manufactured in the United States of America

Scholarly Resources Inc.  
104 Greenhill Avenue  
Wilmington, DE 19805-1897

Telephone 302-654-7713 or 1-800-772-8937 (toll-free)

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## *Introduction*

**T**HIS INTRODUCTION DESCRIBES historical records accumulated by the assistant chief of naval personnel for women, Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel, relating to the development of the Women's Reserve within the United States Naval Reserve (USNR). WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) was the popular acronym for this component of officers and enlisted women in the navy during World War II.

## *History of the WAVES*

Women naval reservists served in the United States military as early as World War I. As the country edged toward mobilization for war, the Civil Service Commission found in March 1917 that it could not meet the needs of naval shore stations for increased clerical assistance in the event of a declaration of war. Although the act of 29 August 1916 establishing the naval reserve force did not use the term "male," the enrollment of women was not taken up on a large scale until the United States went to war against the Central Powers in April 1917. Women naval reservists were classified as yeomen (F) and released from active duty by 31 July 1919.

After the declarations of war against Japan and Germany in December 1941, the same need for clerical and support services that existed during World War I caused the establishment of the Women's Reserve of the USNR by Congress on 30 July 1942; volunteers were permitted to serve only in shore stations within the continental United States. Initial legislation called for only one lieutenant commander and 35 lieutenants; furthermore, no more than 35 percent of the total number of officers could be lieutenants (junior grade).

The need for more support—as well as the need for women to assume different types of duties—quickly outstripped normal supply and caused the removal of previous restrictions on women reservists. Subsequent legislation by Congress on 9 November 1943 provided for one officer in the rank of captain and removed limitations on the lower ranks. An act of Congress on 27 September 1944 enlarged the area to which WAVES could be assigned by redefining the American area to include the territories of Hawaii and Alaska. The removal of this restriction enabled the navy to assign women to Pearl Harbor, among others.

On 27 March 1946 the secretary of the navy authorized the activation of the postwar naval reserve. While participation by women was not established at that time, authority was granted to extend voluntarily the

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length of service for women and to retain five hundred officers and five thousand enlisted women on active duty until 30 June 1948. The Navy Department sponsored legislation for the 80th Congress to authorize the enlistment and appointment of women in the regular navy and in the reserves, which was introduced on 27 March 1946. Although the Senate approved the legislation on 23 July 1947, Congress adjourned before final action on the bill could be taken by the House of Representatives.

During the 81st Congress the navy again requested to include women in the permanent structures of the navy, this time under Title II of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948. This act, also known as Public Law 625, was passed by the Senate on 26 May 1948 and by the House on 2 June 1948. President Harry S. Truman signed the act on 12 June 1948. In July the first enlisted women were sworn into the regular navy; in October the first women officers were sworn in.

In January 1956 proposals for amendments to the Women's Armed Services Integration Act were submitted to Congress. The bill, H.R. 8477, subsequently was passed and was signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on 15 June 1956 to become Public Law 585. Under the new law, women were no longer restricted to the continental United States and Hawaii. Women were also allowed to be stationed permanently at any overseas station, since navy billets were not labeled as either male or female. Since the law was passed, most navy women have enlisted in the medical/dental fields, the various aviation career specialties, and the administrative/clerical field. Women were still restricted from combat duties as well as belligerent ships.

After 1948, and especially after 1956, U.S. Navy women were no longer classified as a separate group. By the 1970s there was neither a need nor a justification for a separate staff under an Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Women. This billet was disestablished in February 1972.

### *About the Records*

The records of the assistant chief of naval personnel for women are part of the collection held by the Operational Archives Branch of the Navy Historical Center in Washington, DC. The records were microfilmed in order with the assistance of the branch archivists there. Series IV, containing approximately two feet of miscellaneous publications, could not be microfilmed as they were composed of previously copyrighted materials. Researchers wishing to consult this series of books and special studies should consult the Operational Archives Branch directly.

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Series I, consisting of subject files from 1940 to 1970, is the largest segment of the collection and is arranged alphabetically. The subject files contain a large amount of policy studies compiled to standardize regulations and procedures for the WAVES in relation to the regular all-male navy. Allotments of billets, both officer and enlisted, and the types of billets to be made available to women are some of the major topics.

Of particular interest are the comparison studies made between 1944 and 1946, which examine a broad range of women's personnel issues, including recruitment, training, marriage, maternity, military protocol, and discharge policies. There are also materials relating to the history of women in the reserves, examinations of British military policies, and reports on ways to make military service more attractive to women. The subject files also contain naval district reports on the activities and performance of women personnel.

Series II consists of the publicity files maintained by the assistant chief of naval personnel for women. These materials reveal two important aspects of the history of the WAVES: First, the amount of material from World War II indicates that the WAVES were as important to the navy for wartime morale, publicity, and public relations as they were for the relief of domestic clerical and support staff billets; second, WAVES units had an extraordinary amount of *esprit de corps*, as the large amount of resource materials on WAVES yearly reunions indicates. Other noteworthy materials in this series include profiles and photographs of WAVES directors, promotional and recruitment materials, and uniform designs and insignia.

Series III contains miscellaneous publications produced by and for the WAVES, as well as yearbooks and recruitment and training materials from the first years of integrated service. The scrap books on roll 20 contain mostly wartime newspaper clippings and promotional navy photographs from and for recruiting drives.



<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
1	0001	Checklist

*Series I. Subject Files, 1940–1970*

This series contains correspondence and related documents on specific subjects relating to the development of the Women's Reserve.

0023	Ad Hoc Committee Report (December 1953): This report discusses increasing the attractiveness of Military Service as a career for women.
0035	Advisory Educational Council — Personnel Recommendation: The Educational Council Advisory to the Women's Auxiliary Reserve. Recommendation for the personnel of the council made at the New York Conference of Educators, Barnard College, Columbia University, 27 April 1942.
0073	Assistants (W) - Miscellaneous (1948–1965)
0470	Bureau of Supplies and Accounts (1942–1948)
0534	Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training Command (CNARESTRA) (1943–1952)
0665	Chief of Naval Air Technical Training Command (CNATECHTRA) (1943–1952) (continued)
0777	Commemorative Coin (1968–1969): In December 1967, the Société Commémorative de Femmes Célèbres of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, commissioned a commemorative coin–medal honoring the women in the U.S. armed forces.
0816	Comparative Study, Officer Personnel Act of 1947
2	1103 Comparative Study (continued)
	1197 Comparison Studies (Men and Women) (1944–1946)
	1270 Conference Reports (1943–1947)
	1338 Danish Atlantic Association, 6–10 June 1961, Copenhagen: The importance of women in the DATO defense structure command area.
	1499 Discharge Policies (1943–1949)
	1658 Discipline (1940–1951)
	1908 District Directors Conference (1943–1946): Conferences of Naval Directors of the Women's Reserve.
	2169 District Directors Conference (1948)
	2238 District Directors Reports (1944)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
3	2472	District Directors Reports (1945)
	2606	District Directors Reports—Future Plans (1946)
	2651	District Personnel Staff Organization (1944–1947): Material of various districts—staff billets.
	2749	Duty Assignments—Officers (1942–1947)
	2833	Eberstadt Committee (1948): Report on women in the military service made to the committee under Ferdinand Eberstadt to study the post-World War II organization of the armed services.
	2849	Enlisted Statistics (1960–1967)
	2857	Future Planning (1943–1947)
	2924	Grenfell Board Report (1954): Implementation of certain recommendations made in the Limited Duty Officer-Warrant Officers Status Report.
	2938	Captain J. B. Hancock Far East Report (1952): Assignment of women personnel to forward areas overseas, recommendations.
	3038	Handbook of Policies for Members of the Women's Reserve (1944)
	3301	Historical—Mainbocher/Reserve Regulations on Uniforms (1943–1960)
	3496	Historical—Women's Reserve (April 1942–June 1943)
	3698	Historical Data Concerning Women's Reserve (June 1943–December 1946)
4	3698	Historical Data Concerning Women's Reserve (June 1943–December 1946) (continued)
	3912	Historical Data—Women's Reserve (June 1943–December 1946)
	4448	Historical—Women's Reserve Circular Letters (1943–1946)
	4523	Historical—Women's Reserve (January–December 1947)
	4601	Historical Matters (1944–1968)
	4722	Justification—Officer/Enlisted:
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. "Performance, Learning Ability and Background Information of Junior Women Officers in the Navy" (Survey researched by Lieutenant Commander Jean Crawford-Smith, RCN, January–May 1963)</li> <li>b. Remarks of President Lyndon B. Johnson to DACOWITS, 28 April 1964</li> </ol>

Roll	Frame	Folder Title
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. "Position of Women in the Armed Services" (Paper signed by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara)</li> <li>d. "Reason for the Women's Reserve" (CNO (OP-o1B): Memorandum for Rear Admiral Alford, 24 September 1964)</li> <li>e. Atlanta <i>Constitution</i> editorial and correspondence (GAO report—Marjory Rutherford, 1965)</li> <li>f. "The Role of Women as Military Persons—Why They Have to be Military Instead of Civilians" (Excerpts from the navy reply to GAO report)</li> <li>g. British "Don't Wed" bonus</li> <li>h. Excerpts from House hearing (Vice Admiral B. J. Semmes), 15 February 1965</li> <li>i. "Proposed Changes to Policy Concerning Separation of Enlisted Women from the Navy by Reason of Marriage" (Pers-B2 memorandum to Pers-K, 5 January 1965)</li> <li>j. Pay and Allowance Costs (1964)</li> <li>k. Utilization (1959 and 1964)</li> <li>l. Hospital Corps Women (1962–1965)</li> <li>m. Fact Sheet (1965)</li> <li>n. Women Officer Strength and Location Sheet (1964)</li> <li>o. Navy Enlisted Women Strength and Location Report (1964)</li> <li>p. Civilian Replacement Programs (ACNO memorandum to CNO of 4 October 1965)</li> </ul>
4	4834	Letters and Memorandums to District/Air Command Directors (1943–1948)
	4947	Lucas Board (1961): Report of board to study existing policies and procedures governing the assignment of officer and enlisted personnel in the navy.
	5001	Marriage Policies (1942–1954)
	5086	Maternity Care (1945–1949)
	5117	Missions and Tasks (1942–1953)
5	5180	Missions and Tasks (1942–1953) (continued)
	5324	Mobilization Study, 1953
	5431	First Naval District (1943–1948)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
5	5462	Fourth Naval District (1943–1947)
	5513	Fifth Naval District (1943–1950)
	5583	Seventh Naval District (1946)
	5586	Ninth Naval District (1944–1967)
	5669	Tenth Naval District (1946)
	5675	Eleventh Naval District (1943–1952)
	5746	Twelfth Naval District (1943–1949)
	5867	Thirteenth Naval District (1943–1949)
	6124	Fourteenth Naval District (1943–1953)
	6437	Fifteenth Naval District (1949–1952)
	6455	Seventh Naval District (1949–1951)
	6477	Naval Reserve (1948–1955)
6	0002	Naval Reserve (1948–1955) (continued)
	0211	Naval Reserve Correspondence (April 1946–December 1947)
	0462	Naval Reserve Correspondence (January 1948–December 1949)
	0714	Naval Reserve Matters (1960–1970)
	0752	Naval Reserve, Women (1947–1956)
	0964	Northampton Midshipmen's School (W.R.) (1943–1945)
	1068	Officers—Plans and Policies (ACDU) (1954–1959)
	1091	Officers—Plans and Policies (Advanced Schools) (1955–1958)
	1148	Officers—Plans and Policies (Changes to Register) (1956–1958)
	1170	Officers—Plans and Policies (Designators) (1953–1959)
7	0002	Officers—Plans and Policies (Promotion) (1953–1959)
	0150	Officers—Plans and Policies (Promotions, Retirement, Discharge) (1953–1959)
	0520	Officers—Plans and Policies (Strength) (1954–1960)
	0686	Officers—Plans and Policies, etc. (1950–1953)
	0852	Officers—Policy, Proposals, etc. (1947–1949)
	1097	Overseas (1944–1946)
8	0002	Overseas (1944–1946) (continued)
	0105	Overseas (1946–1953)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
8	0322	Parental Survey (1958)
	0382	Pay and Allowances (1942–1956)
	0460	Personnel Policy Board (1949–1970)
	0645	Personnel Policy Board—Conference of Civilian Women Leaders (1950)
	0685	Personnel Policy Board—Military Personnel Policy Committee and Subcommittee Projects (1949–1951)
	0891	Personnel Policy Board—Reports of Meetings (1950)
	0913	Personnel Surveys (1955–1968)
	1202	Physical Education Program (1942–1964)
9	0001	Physical Standards (BUMED) (1944–1955)
	0058	Policies for the Administration of Women's Reserve (1943–1969)
	0613	Post-World War II WAVES (1945–1947)
	0857	Projects—Fiscal Year (1948–1960)
	0978	Promotions (1943–1947)
	1087	Promotions (1947–1953)
	1281	Receiving Station, Washington, DC (1944–1949)
10	0002	Recruiting and Procurement Policies (1947–1952)
	0279	Recruiting and Procurement Policies (1952–1953)
	0440	Recruiting and Procurement Policies (1955–1956)
	0575	Reports Recurring 1950–1965 (1943–1954)
	0681	Reports on Trips (1945–1947)
	0943	Research Reports (1951–1952)
	1144	Retention until 1 July 1947 and 1 July 1948 (1946–1958)
11	0003	Retention until 1 July 1947 and 1 July 1948 (1946–1958) (continued)
	0092	Retirement/Separation Policy (USN-USNR) (1948–1968)
	0316	Reserve Officer Personnel Act (ROPA) Correspondence (1954–1957)
	0433	Selection Board (1959–1963)
	0561	Separation Policies (1946–1953)
	0631	Service Etiquette (1959)
	0703	Severn River Naval Command - U.S. Naval Academy (1943–1946)
0705	Songs (1942–1951)	

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
11	0816	Songs and Correspondence Pertaining to (1942–1964)
	0992	Special Barracks Studies (1958–1960)
	1058	Speeches, Statements, and Articles of Captain M. M. Horton (1943–1945)
12	0003	Speeches, Statements, and Articles of Captain M. M. Horton (1943–1945) (continued)
	0267	Training—General (1942–1951)
	0495	Training—Postgraduate School at Monterey (1955–1958)
	0609	Training—Reserve (1948–1952)
	0690	Training—Reserve Officer Candidate Schools (ROCS) (1948–1952)
	0791	Utilization (1948–1966)
13	0002	Various Status of Women Reports (1951–1964)
	0249	Veterans (1946)
	0292	War Manpower Commission (1942–1944)
	0400	WAVES Newsletters (1943–1946)
	0592	WAVES Obligated Service (1960)
	0612	Women's Pavilion for Hemisfair 1968, San Antonio, Texas
	0645	Women in the Regular Navy—Official Correspondence (1946–1948)
	0732	Women Officers School Crest (1964–1969)

### *Series II. Publicity Files, 1942–1972*

This series consists of public relations correspondence, policies, press releases, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks relating to the development of the WAVES/Women's Reserve.

14	0001	Press Releases on WAVES, July 1942 - December 1947
	0271	General Publicity (1943–1944)
	0380	General Publicity—Figures and Statistics (1943–1946)
	0420	Publicity and Advertising Pamphlets—World War II (1943–1947)
	0539	Miscellaneous Publicity (1945–1966)
	0687	Publicity Press Clippings (1948–1950)
	0742	Publicity Press Clippings (1951–1952)
	0871	WAVES Reunion (1951—Philadelphia; 1952—Washington)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
14	0939	Captain Joy Bright Hancock Inspection Tour, March–April 1953—Publicity
	0974	WAVES Reunion (1953—Denver)
	1017	Twelfth WAVES Anniversary Party, August 1954—Publicity
	1102	WAVES Reunion (1954—San Francisco)
	1151	WAVES Reunion (1955—Miami; 1956—St. Louis)
15	1192	WAVES 15th Anniversary Publicity Support—1957: Report of public relations company 1-1 on the publicity project for the national WAVES reunion honoring the WAVES 15th anniversary, Boston, 26–28 July 1957.
	1382	WAVES Reunion (1957—Boston; 1958—Detroit)
	1437	Procurement, Publicity, etc. Lieutenant J. Brown (1958): Report and press releases, special PIO project, Lieutenant Julia A. Brown, and survey of attitudes.
	1506	Publicity Press Clippings (1957–1959)
	1710	WAVES Reunion (1959—Jacksonville)
	1755	WAVES Reunion (1960—Dallas)
	1846	WAVES 19th Anniversary (1961)
	1917	Publicity Press Clippings (1961–1962)
16	0002	WAVES and Women's Press Clippings, Part I (1961–62)
	0173	WAVES and Women's Press Clippings, Part II (1961–62)
	0301	Twentieth Reunion—WAVES (1962—Washington, DC)
	0371	Miscellaneous Press Clippings (1963)
	0599	Miscellaneous Press Clippings (1964)
	0758	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (1965)
	0948	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (January–August 1966)
	1104	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (September–December 1966)
17	0002	WAVES Silver Anniversary Newspaper Clippings, 1967
	0096	WAVES 25th Reunion Trip, 20–23 July 1967

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
17	0129	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (January–June 1967)
	0279	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (June–December 1967)
	0426	Women's News File, September 1963–February 1967
	0493	Women's News File, March–June 1967
	0564	WAVES 26th Anniversary, 1968
	0595	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (January–June 1968)
	0696	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (July–December 1968)
	0872	WAVES 27th Anniversary, 1969
	0918	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (January–June 1969)
	1052	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (July–December 1969)
18	0002	Women's News File (February 1967–December 1969)
	0144	WAVES 28th Anniversary, 1970
	0163	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (January–June 1970)
	0377	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (July–September 1970)
	0535	Women's News File (January 1970–January 1971)
	0635	WAVES Newspaper Clippings (October 1970–February 1971)
	0750	Miscellaneous Press Clippings (1971–72)
	0895	Navy Civil Readjustment Program, Women's Reserve (Lieutenant I. L. Harris, USNR)
	0951	26th Anniversary of the WAVES (USS <i>Wright</i> (CG-2) Photographs), 1968
	0970	WAVES Chorus, Washington, DC; Photographs 1968
	1031	Outmoded Uniforms (1943–1945, 1951) Photographs
	1091	Past to Present (1919–1971): Photographs—a complete set of all WAVES directors, including biographies and photographs.
19	0003	Miscellaneous Photographs and Brochures (1942–1962)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Frame</i>	<i>Folder Title</i>
19	0237	Captain Viola B. Sanders Retirement Ceremony, 1 September 1966
	0258	Hunter Hall Dedication, Bainbridge, MD, 24 February 1967

*Series III. Miscellaneous Publications, 1942–1972*

0275		<i>Up Came a Ripple</i> , by Dorothea J. Byerly, Y3C, USNR, 1943
0322		<i>A Matter of Simple Justice: The Report of the President's Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities</i> , April 1970
0346		Hearings on WAVES Legislation and Public Laws, 1942–1948
0893		<i>How to Serve Your Country in the WAVES or SPARS</i> , 1943
0908		U.S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, MD, Company 2, <i>The Portal</i> , 1954
0945		U.S. Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, MD, Company 31, <i>The Portal</i> , 1955
20	0001	Companies 29–30, Bainbridge, MD, <i>Recruit Training Women</i> , 1961
	0046	20th Anniversary, Bainbridge, MD, <i>Recruit Training Women</i> , 1962
	0091	Scrap Book—Newspaper Publicity from the WAVES-ESSO Recruiting Drive, 1944
	0119	Scrap Book—Publicity on WAVES Recruitment
	0304	Press Clippings from the <i>Boston Daily Record</i> and <i>Sunday Advertiser</i> about WAVES-WAAC-SPARS recruiting campaign conducted by the Hearst Boston newspapers, 1–28 February 1943, with a mass induction ceremony at the Boston Garden on 5 May 1943 (February–March 1943)
	0456	Scrap Book—First Anniversary of the WAVES, 1943

END

