Descriptive Finding Guide for Hazel Smothers Personal Papers
SDASM.SC.10136

Gordon Permann
San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
January 17, 2006
2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park
San Diego 92101
URL: http://www.sandiegoairandspace.org/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
Title: Hazel Smothers Personal Papers
creator: Reagan, Ronald
creator: Ninety-Nines (Organization)
creator: Smothers, Hazel
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10136
Physical Description: 1.22 Cubic Feet, 3 boxes
Date (inclusive): 1929-2009
Date (bulk): bulk
Abstract: The Hazel Smothers Personal Papers contains materials relating to Hazel Smothers (1929-), a woman with a long history in private flying. She copiloted her Cessna 172 to a first-in-class finish at the 1969 Powder Puff Derby air race and flew search and rescue missions in her Bell 47 helicopter for the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The collection is composed of two scrapbooks of photos, clippings, correspondence and ephemera compiled by Hazel Smothers and a biography written by her husband, Robert Smothers.

Conditions Governing Use
Some copyright may be reserved. Consult with the library director for more information.

Related Materials
A more detailed, item level finding guide is available at http://www.sandiegoairandspace.org/collections/collection_item.php?id=47
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/sets/72157645151134619/

Related Materials
Digitized images from this collection can be found at https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/sets/72157645151134619/

Scope and Contents
Three 13.25" x 18" x 3" boxes containing: unbound pages of two oversize scrapbook albums, two embroidered "Whirly-Girls" patches, one 8.5" x 11" spiral bound book Whirly Girl, correspondence regarding the donation of the book, and one 8" x 10" photograph. Both scrapbooks contain photographs, personal and official documents, news clippings, correspondence, and ephemera. Most photographs have been removed from the albums and placed into folders for preservation purposes.

Biographical / Historical
Born Hazel Lucile Ramos to Portuguese immigrants on November 22, 1929, near Cayucos, California, Hazel Smothers has a long history as a helicopter pilot and in general aviation.
Within the collection, she is referred to by her birth name, and by her married names. She was married to Ebert "Al" Jordan 1947 – 1966, Dick Johnson 1966 – 1973, and Robert W. Smothers 1986 – present. She received her private pilot certificate on October 19, 1961, helicopter license on January 1, 1968, and multi-engine rating on March 24, 1970. She attained her commercial pilot’s certification (#1513114) on January 31, 1977 for “Airplane, single & multi-engine, Land” and “Rotorcraft and Helicopter”.

Hazel Smothers was a member of the Ninety-Nines, an international organization of women pilots, and became the 122nd member of the Whirly-Girls, an international women’s helicopter pilots association upon obtaining her license. She participated with fellow pilot Wanda Ewing in the 1969 All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race (AWTAR), known popularly as the Powder Puff Derby, winning their class in a Cessna 172.
She was a founding member of the "Posse-Ettes", a wives’ auxiliary of the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Mounted Posse and was an active member from the late 60’s through early 70’s. From 1968-1972, she assisted the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s and Coroner's offices with aerial search and rescue and body recovery missions piloting helicopters and small aircraft owned by Dick Johnson and herself. She received attention in the local and national press for piloting her pink Bell 47G helicopter, used for many of those missions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
The bulk of the materials in this collection were donated to the San Diego Air & Space Museum in 2006.

Preferred Citation
Descriptive Finding Guide for Hazel Smothers Personal Papers
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Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers by appointment.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Cessna 172
Bell 47G
Volunteer workers in search and rescue operations
Helicopters
Airplane racing
Private flying
Powder Puff Derby
All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race (ATWAR)
Helicopters in search and rescue operations
Women helicopter pilots
Women air pilots
San Luis Obispo (county)
Reagan, Ronald
Howard Phelan, Jean Ross
Ninety-Nines (Organization)
Bell Helicopter Company
Smothers, Hazel
Goldwater, Barry, Jr. (Goldwater, Barry M.)
Whirly-Girls (Organization)
**Box 03**

**Folder 03 - Photographs II**

Separated Materials

This folder contains items that were located in an envelope that was stored inside the front cover of Box 03, Album 02.

**Album 02 - SLO Sheriff and Whirly Girls**

Abstract: Unbound scrapbook album devoted to Hazel Smothers’ helicopter career with the San Luis Obispo Sheriffs Department, including her Whirly Girl materials.

Separated Materials

Most photographs from this album have been relocated to Box 01, Folder 02 for preservation purposes.

Separated Materials

An envelope of photographs that was stored inside the front cover of this album have been relocated to Box 03, Folder 03 for preservation purposes.