The Descriptive Finding Guide for the Helen S. Shropshire Personal Papers
SDASM.SC.10132

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San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
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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: Helen S. Shropshire Personal Papers
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10132
Physical Description: 0.3 Cubic FeetOne Box
Date (inclusive): 1956-1979
Abstract: Helen Shropshire obtained her private pilot's license from Artie Clay in Monterey, California in 1956. She would become a member of the 99s and compete in the Powder Puff Derby.
Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers by appointment.
Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
[Item], [Filing Unit], [Series Title], [Subgroups], [Record Group Title and Number], [Repository “San Diego Air & Space Museum Library & Archives”]
Immediate Source of Acquisition
The materials in this Collection were donated to the San Diego Air and Space Museum.
Biographical / Historical
Helen Shropshire obtained her private pilot's license from Artie Clay in Monterey, California in 1956. Jack Jella was her instructor for her multi-engine instrument, commercial, and instrument ratings in 1957, 1958 and 1959. Helen was inspired to get her pilot license from one of her customers. During the time Helen and her husband Frank owned the Camera Exchange in Pacific Grove, one of their customers was a very enthusiastic pilot by the name of Dell Hinn. Dell would always talk her exciting adventures in flying and was the catalyst that propelled both Helen and Frank into obtaining their private pilot licenses.
In 1965, Helen and Zoe Dell Nutter organized the formation of the Monterey Bay Chapter of The 99s, sponsored by the Santa Clara Valley and Sacramento Valley Chapter. The installation of the Monterey Bay Chapter was held at Asilomar Conference Center with the Governor of the Southwest Section presiding over the event. Helen was the first chairman of the Monterey Bay Chapter of the 99s.
Helen enjoyed the competition of air racing and entered several of the Powder Puff Derby/All Women Transcontinental Air Races. She and her partner placed 2nd in 1972. Helen also received much recognition for chairing a Monterey County Air Tour for government officials. Helen was 1967 pilot of the year for the Monterey Chapter.
One of her most memorable flights occurred while producing a movie for the Guatemalan Tourist Bureau. While in their country, she had the opportunity to photograph the inside of a volcano from a bomber with the bomb bay doors open and not strapped in. The bomber had been purchased from the United States by Guatemala for $1 and was co-piloted by her husband, Frank. Helen filmed the inside of the volcano while lying on her stomach. Her fascination for the inside of volcanoes brought her into the Crater of the Sun (Haleakala) in Hawaii for aerial photographs. Helen died December 17, 2001 in Monterey, California
Scope and Contents
One box of archival material including: Powder Puff Derby subject files, event programs for conferences, photographs and newspaper clippings.
Related Materials
Related SDASM Collections • Helen Richey Personal Papers • Women of Flight Collection
Related Research Institutions • Museum of Flight, Seattle, WA • Evergreen Museum, OR • Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Wash D.C. • National Museum of Naval Aviation, FL • Oregon Air and Space Museum, OR
Subjects and Indexing Terms
All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race (ATWAR)
Women in aeronautics
Ninety-Nines (Organization)
Women Airforce Service Pilots
Powder Puff Derby
Box 01, 37 folders

Series I: Powder Puff Derby Subject Files, 1956-1974


Series II: Event Programs/conferences


Series III: Photographs


Series IV: Newspaper Clippings