

McLean County Museum of History

Gold Star Mothers Collection

Processed by
Mark Wyman / Mary Alice Wills
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1940 - 1979
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	Gift of Susan Joy Kwasigroh Marlett of Heyworth in 2005.

Brief History

The Evergreen Chapter, National Gold Star Mothers, was incorporated on October 14, 1950, by the national organization. (The national Gold Star Mothers was founded after World War I for mothers whose sons died in that war, and apparently there was a McLean County branch then: the Scrapbook includes a *Pantagraph* "25 Years Ago" item of July 4, 1930, which refers to "Bloomington's only gold star mother to make the trip to France." But the national group was reconstituted and gave March 2, 1950, as its date of incorporation.)

At its inception in 1950, members chose Hazel Millard as president of the Evergreen Chapter, and Nellie L. Cruikshank as vice president. The twenty-nine charter members included Rose G. Kwasigroh, who apparently was the last Evergreen Chapter member to attend a national convention, in 1977. The Evergreen Chapter ended its activities by 1979, although a 1976 national convention report noted that the chapter had disbanded.

Scope

This collection includes newspaper clippings, membership lists, convention notes, bulletins, sympathy cards and memorabilia.. Membership applications, letterhead stationery as well as organizational material from the 1949-50 foundation and from 1951-1954, plus financial records. are included. Of the three scrapbooks, two contain memorabilia and photos of conventions. The third and largest is indexed and contains the more serious subject of deceased sons and daughters plus related clippings and organizational materials.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Soldier Newspaper Clippings, *Pantagraph* unless noted

Lt. Evert D. Johnson shot down November 16, 1944 w/photo, No date.

"Lt. Merle Mays, Earlier Missing, Reported Killed," December 11, 1944 w/photo, No date.

"Former ISNU Student Freed From German Prison Camp," First Lt. Ralph Houghton, "Sgt. Apell Killed in Luzon Action," February 14, 1945, Sgt. Melvin William Apell, w/photo, March 17, 1945, p. 5.

"Funeral Rites Scheduled for Merle D. Weed," shot down April 11, 1948 w/photo, No date.

"Rodgers Rites Set," Pfc. Franklin E. Rodgers killed in action July 27, 1951 w/photo, February 4, 1952.

"Corporal Rist Dies in Action in Korean War," February 12, 1954 w/photo, No date.

"Marine Little Dies in Action," Cpl. William Little notified November 11, 1967, w/photo. No date.

"Cpl. Mark Madsen," killed in action December 13, 1968, No date.

Folder 2: Gold Star Mother Newspaper Articles, *The Pantagraph* unless noted

- 1950s** "Gold Star Mothers To Organize," September 29, 1950.
"The Newly Formed Gold Star Mothers..." w/photo, *McLean County Courier*, October 20, 1950.
The Gold Star Mothers Memorial Day, Evergreen Chapter photo, *McLean County Courier*, May 25, 1951.
"25 Years Ago," Jan. 25, 1953, Richard T. Mays installed as president of Evergreen Chapter.
"On Eastern Trip," Mr. and Mrs. Richard Mays attend national Gold Star Mothers convention, September 25, 1953.
"Mrs. Cruickshank Heads Gold Star Mothers Chapter," November 27, 1953.
"Attend Gold Star Mothers Convention," no month/day, 1955.
"Mothers to Pick Officers Today," September 20, 1955.
"To Hold Open House Sunday, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Boaz, 4/photo, January 25, 1955.
"Gold Star President Visits Here," w/photo, March 27, 1955.
"Gold Star Head Visits Here," w/photo, April 30, 1956.
"City Honors Its Dead," w/photo, May 31, 1956.
"Gold Star Mothers To Visit the Amish," September 8, 1957.
"Gold Star Mothers Ask Grave Pilgrimage Fund," September 29, 1957.
"Alaska Bound Lambs Feted," w/photos, November 4, 1958.
"Gold Stars' Elect Mrs. Millard to Post," w/photo, November 18, xxxx.
"Mrs. Millard Dies-Wife of Mark Millard," 2 articles, 1 w/photo, no date, 1959.
- 1960s** "Gold Star Mothers To Hear of Convention," November 9, 1960.
"National Gold Star Mothers Here for Annual Conclave," w/photo, *Winona Daily News*, November 21, 1961.
"President of Gold Star Mothers Visit Chapters," w/photo, no date, 1962.
"Gold Star Mothers in Convention Here," w/photo, September 29, 1963.
"Heads Gold Stars," w/photo, October xx, 1963.
"A Tribute is Paid to Gold Star Mothers, *Hollywood, Fla. Sun-Tattler*, September 24, 1965.
"To Hear Report On Convention," October 10, 1965.
"Attend Gold Star Mothers Convention," September 28, 1966.
"Army Awards Medals: Medal To Parents," w/photo, September 30, 1967.
"Melvin E. Glover," obit, December 23, 1969.
"Gold Star Mothers Meet This Week," w/photo, *St. Paul Dispatch*, September 27, 1968.
"Attend Convention," October 4, 1968.
- 1970s** "Mrs. McNatt," obit, March 14, 1970.
"Mrs. Charlotte Kuhlmann is dead at 80," February 18, 1971.
"Chenoa Gold Star Mother's resolution accepted in Dallas," July 26, 1971.
"She's The Mother Of 17 Children: Lura Brazeau," w/photo, January 18, 1973.

“Nation’s Gold Star Mothers Cannot Forget,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, September 27, 1974.

“Funks Grove,” September 30, 1976.

“Bessie Boaz marks 90th birthday,” May 18, 1977.

“Lest We Forget,” June 7, 1977.

NoDate “Millard Picked for Post on Fire, Police Board,” w/photo.

“War Mothers Will install Mrs. Mays,” w/photo.

“Gold Star Mothers Top Officer,” w/photo.

“Mrs. Hulda Winter,”

“Tells of Trip to Gold Star Mothers Convention,”

Ten short articles copied on one page: “Star Mothers presented New Flag,” Soldiers Mothers Club to Install Mrs. Boaz,” w/photo, “Women to Form McLean County Gold Star Group,” “Couples Attend Meetings While Touring East,” “In Memoriam,” Burton Family, “Gold Stars to Entertain National President,” “Mrs. Therese Glover,” obit, “To Leave Today For Iowa Trip,” “Gold Star Chap. Meets,” “In Kentucky Hospital,” Two photos; Cemetery on Iwo Island, American cemetery near Teheran, Iran.

Folder 3: Convention Itineraries and Bulletins

“The Gold Star,” February, 1953, 8 pages

“The Gold Star,” Oct-Nov, 1953, 2 pages

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc”. Annual convention Sept. 25-29, 1957

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc”. Annual convention Sept. 24-28, 1958 (2 copies)

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc”. Board meeting, Sept. 24, 1963 (2 copies)

“National Presidents Annual Report,” Sept. 1971 – Sept. 1972

“Convention Call,” itinerary for Sept. 24 – 28. 1973.

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #3, July 1966

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #4, July 1973

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #4, August 1975

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #1, November 1976

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #1, February 1977

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #1, November 1977

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #3, May 1979

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #1, November 1978

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #2, February 1979

“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.” Bulletin #4, August 1979

Folder 4: Poetry, Misc.

An assortment of poems, prayers, newspaper clippings and handwritten expressions of sympathy for a soldier’s death and the anguish of those left behind.

Folder 5: Application Forms and Stationery

National Gold Star Mothers, Inc. application forms, letterhead stationery and envelopes are included.

Folder 6: Funeral Programs

Funeral programs and notices of remembrance

Folder 7: Lists, Addresses, Short Bios., Expenses

Address lists, addresses on notes, 3 short bios of soldiers, notes on convention expenses (mid 1960s).

Folder 8: Organizational Materials

1949-50 noted rift in Gold Star Mothers and servicemen. The National Gold Star Mothers Incorporated was formed.

Folder 9: Convention Correspondence

1952 – 1979, 17 items of correspondence addressed to Rose Kwasigroh regarding conventions. One envelope (1952) addressed to Mrs. Frances Mays, 1 handwritten note.

Folder 10: Convention Miscellaneous, Memorabilia

1956 – 1974, 6 National Gold Star Mothers, Inc. convention ribbons, menus, programs, memorials.

Folder 11: Convention Financial Records

6 sheets of receipts and disbursements, 1955, 1963 and not identified.

Folder 12: Membership Lists

1966 Evergreen Chapter Gold Star Mothers list,
1972 National Gold Star Mothers list,
Typed membership list,
Typed list WWII Service connected deaths (5 pages),
Typed/hand written nationwide membership list (13 pages),
Handwritten Bloomington/Normal list.
Typed Bloomington/Normal list.
Typed Evergreen Chapter National List of members deceased sons or daughters,
“The National Gold Star Mothers, Inc.,” letterhead w/handwritten names,

Folder 13: Gift Agreement

Gift agreement signed by Susan Joy Kwasigroh Marlett on June 5, 2005,

Bible

A gift from the Pearl Harbor Chapter, American War Mothers, November 21, 1950.

Scrapbook 1: (large blue official one)

Includes a variety of clippings and organizational materials. The major items are indexed under: "Organization, Gifts To Chapter," "Newspaper Clips, Photos, Etc.," Lists-Mothers & Deceased Sons and Daughters," "Deceased Sons, Daughters Photos, Clippings, Etc.," Chapter Events & News By Years."

Most are World War II deaths, but one reported was for Cpl. Raymond Morrissey, killed at the outset of the Korean War. Morrissey was listed as the war's first casualty posted by the Army. In his honor the Bloomington City Council named Morrissey Street for him.

Contains typed list of sixteen (sic) charter members, photos of members, Wayne Townley's 1956 address on the history of Memorial Day events in Bloomington, clippings and reports on conventions, etc.

In 1952 there were Gold Star Mothers chapters in only three Illinois cities: Chicago, Rockford, and Bloomington.

Scrapbook 2: (trip book)

Ephemera from National Gold Star Mothers conventions.
Included are convention programs, and postcards.

Scrapbook 3: (large white)

Contains convention photos, some with identifications; newspaper clippings, and a 1963 membership list with twenty-seven names.