

GERALD R. FORD. PAPERS RELATING TO HIS U.S. NAVY SERVICE, 1941-75

Collection Type

Federal Records

Extent

1.2 linear feet (ca. 2,400 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Open.

Copyright

Gerald R. Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain.

Processed by

William McNitt, March 1992; Revised, December 2001

Scope and Content Note

Gerald Ford initially applied for a commission in the active Naval Reserve less than a week after the Japanese bombing of the American fleet at Pearl Harbor in 1941. His first choice was to serve in the intelligence branch, so the Navy began a

background check to see if he qualified.

This process took several months and Ford had no promises that a position would be offered, so about two months later he applied for a commission in the physical education branch. In April 1942, he accepted an appointment as an ensign and commenced a month's training with the V-5 Instructor's course at the U.S. Naval Academy. Upon completion of his training, the Navy assigned him to the Naval Aviation Pre-Flight Training School at the University of North Carolina. He taught seamanship, ordnance and gunnery, and first aid, while also coaching all sports participated in by the cadets.

After seven months at the training school, Ford became anxious to get more directly involved in the war effort. He requested that he be reassigned to sea duty and the Navy soon complied. Ford served on the light aircraft carrier USS Monterey from May 1943 to December 1944 as director of physical training, gunnery officer, and assistant navigator. The Monterey participated in nearly every major action in the South Pacific and in support of landings on the Gilbert Islands, Truk, Saipan, and the Philippines.

Following his service on the Monterey, Ford spent the balance of the war at the Naval Reserve Training Command in Glenview, Illinois, and was honorably discharged in January 1946 at the grade of lieutenant commander. He remained with the inactive Naval Reserve until 1963.

Scope and Content of Ford's Navy Papers

President Ford donated to the Library his file of correspondence, personnel forms, orders, and some related publications from his service in the active and inactive Naval Reserve. In addition, he authorized the Library to obtain photocopies of his official personnel file from the Bureau of Naval Personnel to add to this collection.

During the Ford Presidency and in subsequent years, various former shipmates sent him materials on the history of the Monterey, including unofficial daily logs, a scrapbook, and a detailed mimeographed history of the carrier and its role in the war. The Library staff added either the originals or photocopies of these items to this collection and also copied from the Ford Presidential Papers selected documents concerning the 1975 reunion of the Monterey crew.

While this collection is not a complete record of every aspect of Mr. Ford's Navy service, it is useful for determining specific dates and facts about his various wartime roles and for studying the history of the Monterey. Of particular interest are the occasional letters that Ford exchanged with Navy officials during the war concerning his activities or possible reassignments.

Related Materials (As of March 1992)

The Ford Library also has a single folder of Office of Naval Intelligence records from National Archives Record Group 289 concerning the investigation conducted about Ford when he was a candidate for a commission in the intelligence branch of the Naval Reserve. The Library has microfiche of Ford's official Navy personnel file, but that collection is not yet open for research. A partial check of documents on the microfiche shows that this is probably a duplicate of the photocopied Bureau of Naval Personnel material here in the Ford Papers.

White House Central Files Subject File category PP 13-7 (President - Personal: Military Service) contains about 200 pages of correspondence and attachments concerning wartime activities, including letters from former Monterey shipmates and others who served with him. The Ford scrapbooks contain a small amount of material, mostly clippings about Ford's Navy service. Scattered folders from the Ford Presidential Papers relate to the 1975 Monterey reunion in which he participated.

The Library's audiovisual collection contains a videotaped interview with President Ford for the television production "World War II: A Personal Journey," plus several hundred photographs. Some photographs show Ford in uniform on official occasions, while others reveal him in more informal settings such as playing basketball on board the Monterey. Also included are aerial photographs of various battles in the Pacific and pictures taken at post-war reunions of the Monterey crew.

Last Modified Date

2024-04-09

Subject File, 1941-1975.

(Boxes 1-3, 1.2 linear feet)

Correspondence, personnel forms, orders, newsletters, logs, clippings, and publications. The material concerns Gerald Ford's career in the Naval Reserve

during and after World War II and the history of the USS Monterey, the aircraft carrier on which he served for part of the war. Included are materials kept by Ford, copies of his official Navy personnel file, and materials on the Monterey sent to Ford by other former crew members.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 1 - Subject File

| Status | Title |
|------------------|--|
| OPEN | Brooks, Richard - Memories of Flying the Panama Canal with Gerald Ford, September 27, 1943 |
| OPEN | Cadwalader, John - Letter from Gerald Ford re Navy matters, April 23, 1945 |
| OPEN | Cadwalader, John - Memoir Concerning His Service on the Monterey During World War II |
| OPEN / DIGITIZED | <u>Ford, Gerald R. - Application for a Navy Commission, 1941-1942</u> |
| OPEN / DIGITIZED | <u>Ford, Gerald R. - Bureau of Naval Personnel File: Officer Fitness Report Jacket, 1942-1951</u> |
| OPEN / DIGITIZED | <u>Ford, Gerald R. - Bureau of Naval Personnel File: Officer's Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1942-1965</u> |
| OPEN / DIGITIZED | <u>Ford, Gerald R. - Bureau of Naval Personnel File: Officer's Order Jacket, 1942-1946</u> |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Bureau of Naval Personnel File: Officer's Selection Board Jacket, 1942-1967 |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Inactive Naval Reserve: Annual Qualifications Questionnaires, 1947-1962 |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Inactive Naval Reserve: Correspondence, 1948-1963 |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Letter to a Friend, September 1, 1944 |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Navy Orders and Correspondence, 1942-1946 (1)-(2) |
| OPEN | Ford, Gerald R. - Officer's Qualification Jacket, 1945-1946 |

| Status | Title |
|---------------|--|
| OPEN | Glenview Naval Air Station Newsletter, February 1946 (includes story about Gerald Ford's release from active duty) |
| OPEN | Gray, Jerry - Scrapbook on the U.S.S. Monterey (mostly photographs) with Some Later Letters from Gerald Ford |
| OPEN | Hall, James F. - Recollections of Life on the Monterey (1)-(2) |

Box 2 - Subject File

| Status | Title |
|---------------|---|
| OPEN | Publications - "Campaigns of the Pacific War," 1946 (signed by Gerald Ford) |
| OPEN | Publications - "Daybreak for Our Carrier," 1944 (Gerald Ford signed the front papers and a clipping on the Monterey is glued to the end papers) |
| OPEN | Publications - "Flying Magazine," October 1944 (Special issue on U.S. Naval Aviation at War) |
| OPEN | Publications - "Graphic Atlas of the World" (Signed by Gerald Ford on 9/20/43 and annotated to show the travels of the U.S.S. Monterey) |
| OPEN | Publications - "Navy at War: Paintings and Drawings by Combat Artists," 1943 (signed by Gerald Ford) |
| OPEN | Publications - "U.S. Navy War Photographs," 1946 |
| OPEN | U.S. Navy Pre-Flight School, Chapel Hill, NC - Staff (Includes photograph of Gerald Ford) |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Attempts to Save the Last Independence Class Carrier, 2000 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - History (1)-(2) |

Box 3 - Subject File

| Status | Title |
|---------------|---|
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - History (3)-(4) |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Manuscript of Book on the Independence Light Aircraft Carriers by Andrew Faltum (1)-(5) |

| Status | Title |
|---------------|--|
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Newsletters Published by the Crew, 1943-1945 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Photograph by Bob Rogers, Ship's Photographer |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Reunion, 1975 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Rosters of Officers, 1943-1944 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Scrapbook on the Operations of Task Force 58 (Contains plans of the day, radio press news, and clippings), 1943-1944 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Typescript Log of Sea Duty by Dwight Smith, 1943-1945 |
| OPEN | U.S.S. Monterey - Unofficial Log Maintained by Thomas Tolar, 1943-1944 |