

Guide to
Phoenix Service Center Collection, 1941-1946

MS 167

2 Boxes

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HISTORICAL NOTE

More appropriately, the Phoenix Service Center, created in April, 1941, could have been referred to as the “Servicemen’s” center, since the intent was to provide “comforts of home” to military personnel passing through Phoenix, on there way to foreign destinations and probable combat zones. When the need for such a facility became apparent in 1941, the Community Defense Council, under the direction of Mr. Barry Goldwater, initiated plans for such a center to be located at North 1st street. Eventually, due to increasing numbers utilizing the facility, it was moved to 339 West Washington st.

Miss Angela Marshall, a member of a very prominent Phoenix family who was accustomed to spending her summers in Mexico City, decided to forego her luxurious lifestyle and dedicate herself to serving the men and women called upon to fight for their country. She soon became director of the Service Center, and remained in that capacity until the closing of the center on June 30, 1946, 10 months after the War ended. The center offered food, shelter, shower and shaving services for servicemen, in addition to dances and other forms of entertainment. Unlike other facilities around the country, Phoenix Service Center provided all amenities cost free! During peak war years, as many as 9,000 servicemen per/day would enter the Center!

Many servicemen passing through the center fell in love with Phoenix, promising to return after the War. Obviously, many of them did, contributing significantly to Phoenix’s incredible post-war population growth.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1.

Folder 1: Scrapbook #1:

Numerous newspaper clippings describing the amenities offered by the volunteer women at the Phoenix Servicemen Center. The articles are dated between Dec. 15, 1941 and February 7, 1942.

Folder 2: Loose items from Scrapbook #1, consisting of news articles detailing war developments and progress and activities at the Service Center in Phoenix.

Folder 3: Scrapbook #2 Newspaper clippings describing the services and activities of the Service Center and the dedication of the volunteer women working there. There is an exceptional article about Miss Angela Marshall, founder of the Center. The articles are dated between Sept., 1944 and Sept., 1945.

Folder #4: Loose items from Scrapbook #2, including articles about the war progression and the Phoenix Service Center.

Box 2. Folder 1: 8 Photos

Gov. Osborne offered cake at Service Center, March, 1946.

Musicians playing at Service Center

Lillian Hirsh, Sophia Dorfman and founder, Angela Marshall, pictured at Service Center Check Room.

Service men eating at Service Ctr. Lunch counter

Service men & volunteers enjoying cake

A "large" serviceman cutting a cake

Large group of volunteers(possibly, Angela Marshall in the middle of the front row), being entertained at Luke AFB, March, 1946.

Accordion player Suzette Carsell, who played for troops in both World Wars (photo taken in 1946)

Folder 2: 8 Photos

Servicemen eating at Service Center, 1st Ave.

Serviceman recording a record to be sent home

Group photo at Service Cntr. 1946

A prize-winning group of servicemen & woman

Volunteer "Marie" at Service counter with servicemen

Volunteer shining shoes at the center

Sailor Joseph Pond and volunteer Bess Stinson being served at lunch counter

Angela Marshall, Marjory Alexander, Helen Pond & Evelyn Tobiesen pose with servicemen

Folder 3: Loose newspaper articles from scrapbooks concerning the Service Center, including an article written June 30, 1946, describing the closing of the center. There is also a notation in this folder indicating the existence of a segregated service center for Blacks, and the fact Native Americans were allowed to use the Phoenix Service Center.

Folder 4: Scrapbook #3

Numerous pages of newspaper articles and photos, describing events and functions of the Phoenix Service Center, in addition to progress being made in the War.