

## Mary Dover

“There was a war and I didn’t want to sit and knit.”

She raced through the streets of Bombay in her yellow convertible, she was a stunt rider in the movie *His Destiny* and was Queen of the Banff Winter Carnival. She could ride, shoot, and skate.

Beautiful but practical, privileged but not spoiled, Mary Dover was the granddaughter of North-West Mounted Police Colonel James Macleod.

Early in the Second World War she enlisted in the Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC), and became Lieutenant-Colonel in charge of training. Recruiting women to serve was challenging because a whisper campaign claimed that military women were little more than camp followers. Dover travelled across Canada refuting the rumours, explaining the role that women could play in the war effort.



Mary Dover in Canadian Women’s Army Corps Uniform  
Glenbow Archives NA-5684-1

Persuasive and elegant, she could read maps, polish buttons, run a mess hall, and type a letter. She proved that wars are fought by women as well as men.

## Women at War

Canadian women made vital contributions to the war effort during the Second World War.

From 1942-45 a serious man-power shortage meant women were recruited for jobs vacated by soldiers. Recruits in the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC) drove vehicles, cooked in hospitals or messes, and ciphered or decoded messages. Most held military versions of office jobs and worked as clerks, typists, stenographers, and telephone operators.

The CWAC became the largest women's military force, growing to 22,000 members during the war. Women joined for many reasons, including patriotism and adventure – but their role was essential.

“Our men are still in those battle lines, the fighting does not let up for a moment,” Mary Dover stated while on a CWAC recruiting drive. “Casualty lists still appear as the weeks go by... women are needed. Let us bring them into the CWAC.”

Born: July 1, 1905 – Died: June 9, 1994

## Additional Resources

- **Alberta Champions Society**  
<https://albertachampions.org/Champions/mary-dover-1905-1944/>
- **Heritage Calgary**  
<https://www.heritagecalgary.ca/heritage-calgary-blog/marydover>

## Our Collections

### Glenbow Museum

<https://www.glenbow.org>

### Glenbow Western Research Centre | Glenbow Library and Archives

<https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/glenbowlibraryandarchives>

### Glenbow Library and Archives | Digital Collection

<https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/asset-management/2R340826N9XM?WS=PackagePres&Flat=1>