

A Short History of Delaware Women and their Service to our Nation

*Together with photographs
and brief biographies of
Some Delaware Women
who have served.*



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been very much a collaborative effort. We are indebted to all the many Delaware women and family members who have submitted photos and biographical information about themselves or their loved ones. Reviewing this material has been for us both exciting and truly educational as we have seen the multitude of ways in which Delaware women have served over generations and the ways in which their service has grown even more varied in recent years. Specifically, we would like to thank the Delaware Public Archives, the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the Delaware Heritage Commission, the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, the Delaware Historical Society, the Delaware General Assembly, the Delaware Department of State, Brigadier General Kennard Wiggins, Jr. of the Delaware Military History Museum, the Legislative Hall Print Shop and the Division of Research of the Legislative Council and all others who have helped for their invaluable assistance.

*Connor Graham, Colonel Debbie Bazemore-Harrington,
and Richard B. Carter, Authors & Editors*

Special Note: By its very nature, a book of this kind is incomplete. We have included as much material as possible, given technical limitations on the size of this booklet and time constraints, but we realize that we're only telling part of the story here. For that reason, we see this present booklet as a beginning, not as an end in itself. We invite additional material to be submitted and will publish a larger edition in the future. If you wish to submit additional photos or biographical materials to us, please send it by email to: DivisionOfResearch@state.de.us, or by regular mail to Division of Research, Legislative Hall, 411 Legislative Ave., Dover, DE 19901. The Division may be reached by phone at 1-800-282-8545 (toll free, in-state only) or at (302) 744-4114.

The Delaware Women's Service Monument

Legislative Hall, Dover, Delaware

Dedicated November 3, 2018

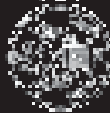
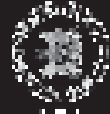
The monument to which this book serves as an addition honors Delaware women throughout our long history, both known and unknown, who have served in defense of our state and our nation. The purpose of both the monument and the book is to pay tribute to the women of the first state who have come forward to protect and defend our state and our nation in military and naval service and in supporting services, both military and civilian.

The monument contains a collection of representative images of Delaware women. The purpose of this accompanying book is to provide additional images and biographical information for as many as possible of those Delaware women veterans we have been thus far able to identify. Recognizing that there are many more women who should be included, we emphasize that this booklet is a beginning, not an end. It is very much a work in progress and we hope to publish an expanded edition in the future as more information is received. Please see the special note at the bottom of the opposite page for detailed information on how to submit new material.

DELAWARE WOMEN'S SERVICE MONUMENT

HONORING WOMEN THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY WHO HAVE

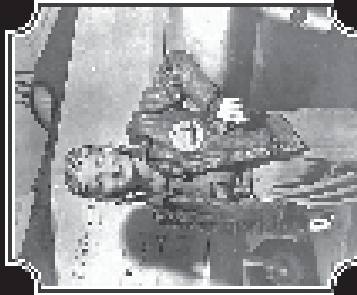
SERVED IN DEFENSE OF OUR STATE AND OUR NATION.



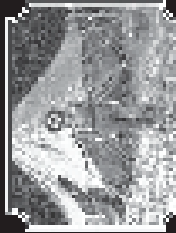
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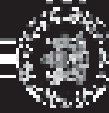
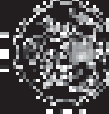
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IN TRIBUTE TO THE WOMEN OF THE FIRST STATE WHO HAVE COME FORWARD TO PROTECT AND DEFEND
OUR STATE AND OUR NATION IN THE MILITARY AND SUPPORTING SERVICES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Those pictured on Side One of the Monument are— 1 - Lieutenant Ruth Haddick Dorsman, 1921 - 2016, A registered nurse, in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in Europe, World War II; 2 - Lt. Col. Nancy Harkness Love, 1914 - 1976, First squadron leader of the first Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) unit at New Castle Army Air Base; 3 - Elizabeth Lawton Cerchio, World War II Navy Hospital Apprentice First Class. Her daughter, Pat Cerchio-Viera also served in the U.S. Navy, retiring with the rank of commander; 4 - Mary Hodgson, RN served as a Red Cross nurse with the 28th Infantry Division in France, 1917-1919; 5 - U.S. Army Nurses in Vietnam, 1960's, were typical of the Many Delaware women who volunteered for service in Vietnam; 6 - A WAF Squadron marching at Dover Air Force Base, 1970; 7 - Lieutenant Margaret Ann Secora Tos of Dover served as a U.S. Army nurse during the Korean War; 8 - Major Linda Morelli of Hockessin became the first airborne-qualified female and the first female helicopter pilot from the Delaware National Guard; 9 - A Worker at an aircraft factory in New Castle, Delaware, during World War II seems to be the personification of the 1940's cultural icon, "Rosie the Riveter."

AS WE MOVE INTO THE FUTURE, DELAWARE WOMEN ARE SERVING OUR NATION IN NEW AND EVOLVING WAYS.



**BUILDING ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF EARLIER GENERATIONS, TODAY'S DELAWARE WOMEN ARE
TAKING ON NEW CHALLENGES IN EVERY ASPECT OF THE MILITARY, INCLUDING COMBAT SERVICE.**

Those pictured on Side Two of the Monument are— 1 - **Captain Jessica Stephenson**, U.S. Army, Afghanistan, a graduate of A. I. duPont High School and West Point, was a highly decorated Apache Helicopter pilot in Afghanistan in 2013 and 2014; 2 - **Sergeant Lisa Mosley**, 82nd Airborne in Iraq, grew up in Wilmington. She is a Disabled American Veteran; 3 - **TSgt Holly Orr**, right, of the **Delaware Air National Guard**, and her friend, **Airman Browne** of another unit while on deployment; 4 - **Senior Airman Rashidah Alston** of the 166th Medical group, Delaware Air National Guard, undergoing a training exercise; 5 - **Colonel Marisa Ianni Tanner**, U.S. Army (Ret.) grew up in New Castle and served in both Iraq and Afghanistan during her 33-year military career; 6 - **Sergeant Lydia M. Judge**, U.S. Marine Corps, a resident of Harrington, Delaware, enlisted in the Marine Corps in November, 2011 and serves as a loadmaster at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, NC; 7 - **Captain Robin Russell Gibbs**, U.S.N.R., grew up in Dover and now commands a reserve unit in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps. She is shown here while on deployment in Afghanistan in 2012; 8 - **SSgt Lissedia Collazo Garcia** of the Delaware Air National Guard shown in the operating room while on deployment in Trinidad.

The service of Delaware women in our earlier history

Delaware has a very long history dating much farther back in time than the date, 7 December 1787, when our state became the first to ratify the newly adopted U.S. Constitution. The period of European settlement began in what is now Delaware in 1631 with the ill-fated Dutch settlement at Zwaanendael near present-day Lewes. Extending much farther back in time was the region's history of Native American settlement. While our knowledge of the role of women in both the earlier historic times and of prehistoric times is limited, one thing is certain—women have played a central role in all of it. It is true that societal norms and mores have limited the official role of women at times during that long history, but it is equally true that Delaware women have found ways to take active parts in events important to the survival of our state and our nation.

It is known, for example, that some Delaware women had an active part in serving with Delaware troops during the Revolutionary War. Some proof of that service is to be found in later Revolutionary War pension applications. We were not alone in that regard. The following is excerpted from an article on the website of the Colonial Williamsburg Education Outreach E-Newsletter on the subject of "Women's Service with the Revolutionary Army." It reads in part:

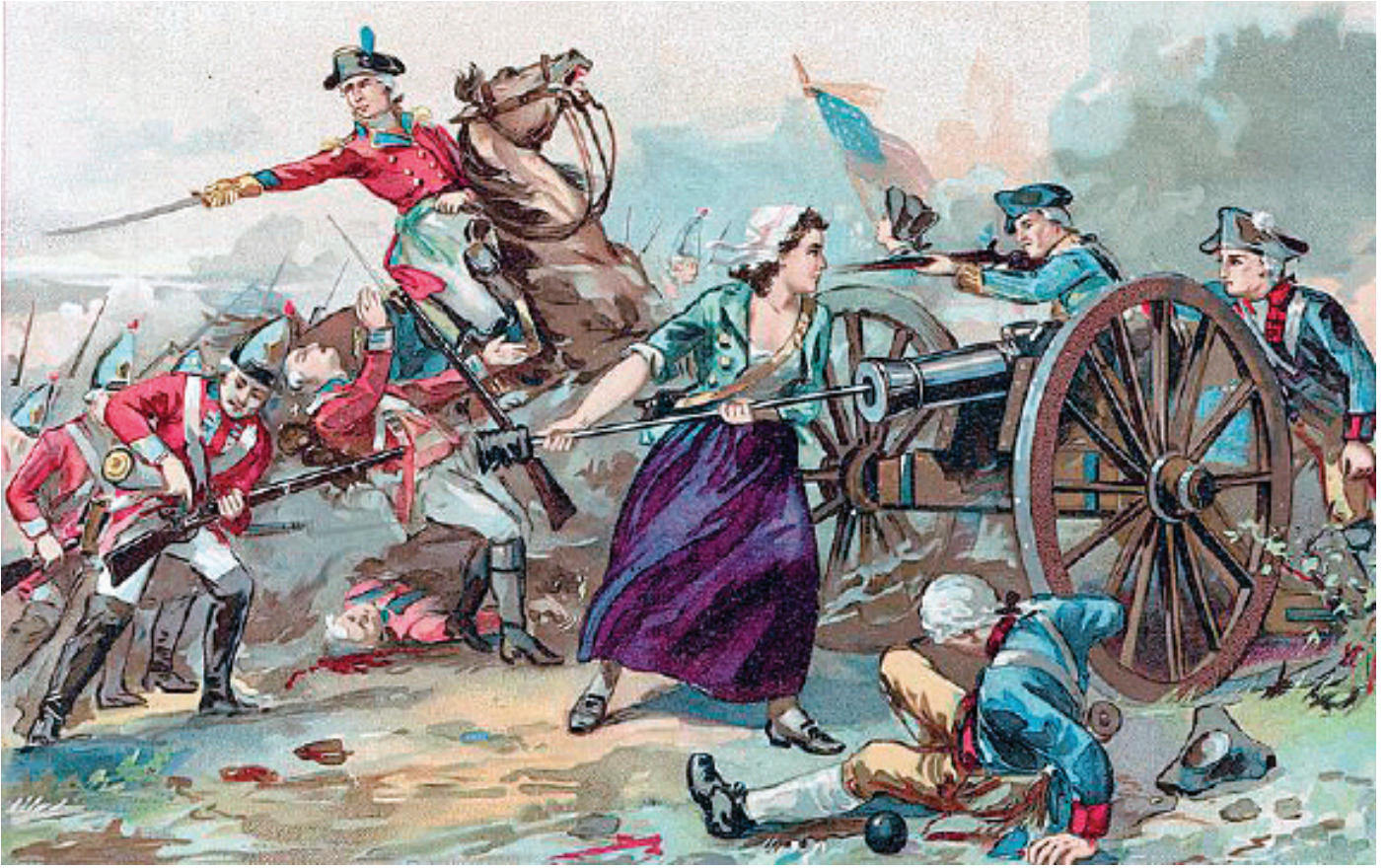
. . . The Revolution was not a one-gender war, however. Many women contributed to the effort, and it is time their stories are told.

Today, women who followed the army are referred to as "camp followers," even though that term was not used in the eighteenth century. Females who followed Washington's army were seeking safety, shelter, food, and work. They needed the army, and while Washington and many officers did not like to admit it, the army needed them. Some officers thought that the presence of women in an army camp distracted the soldiers, claiming that they got in the way of operations, detracted from the professional appearance of the camp, and even enticed soldiers to desert. But, if women were not permitted in military camps, the army stood to lose a number of good soldiers. Men with families in need asked for furloughs or deserted in order to provide for their destitute loved ones. For example, Private Ralph Morgan sought a furlough in December 1775 because his wife and children had no roof over their heads. Morgan received a discharge. Since the Continental Army could not afford to discharge a soldier every time he needed to assist his family, Washington was obliged to permit some women to follow the camps. He wrote to Superintendent of Finance, Robert Morris, "I was obliged to give Provisions to the extra Women in these regiments, or lose by Desertion, perhaps to the enemy, some of the oldest and best Soldiers in the Service." In the same vein, Washington wrote to Major General Henry Knox, "The number of Women and Children in the New York Regiments of Infantry . . . obliged me . . . to allow them Provision or, by driving them from the Army, risk the loss of a number of Men, who very probably would have followed their wives."

General Washington could not afford to lose men because of their families, but neither could he afford to feed every hungry mouth that sought assistance from the army. Throughout the war destitute civilians fled to the army for safety and food, while the army could barely provision its own troops. Washington and his officers attempted to keep the number of dependents traveling with the army to a minimum. On August 4, 1777, Washington wrote,

"the multitude of women in particular, especially those who are pregnant, or have children, are a clog upon every movement. The Commander in Chief earnestly recommends it to the officers to use every reasonable method in their power to get rid of all such as are not absolutely necessary."

Women sewed, mended, and washed clothes for the army. To ensure that only those who were absolutely necessary to the army drew provisions, commanders continually called for reports concerning how many women they had, their marital status, their health and the duties they performed. In 1776, General Andrew Lewis, wrote from near Williamsburg, Virginia, that "Officers of Companies are to return a list of the names and number of women they have, and whether single or married, in order to have them examined." Women who did not pass muster, that is, those who were unmarried, did not perform a necessary task, misbehaved, or were ill, were often sent away. Those fortunate enough to obtain permission to stay were given anywhere from one-quarter to one full ration, depending on what duties they performed.



“Molly Pitcher” – An idealized illustration of the possibly apocryphal heroine known as “Molly Pitcher.” The name “Molly Pitcher,” which did not come into common usage until the Revolutionary War Centennial, may refer to Mary Hays McCauley, who is said to have carried water to American soldiers during the Battle of Monmouth on June 28, 1778, before taking over for her husband on the battlefield after he was no longer able to fight. While it is not entire certain that she existed at all, most commonly she has been identified as Mary Hays McCauley. Born in Pennsylvania in 1754 (or possibly 1744), Mary may have worked as a servant before marrying William Hays, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. During the war, Hays served as a gunner in the 4th Artillery of the Continental Army while Mary became part of the group of women, later referred to as camp followers, who traveled with the army and took on such duties as cooking, washing and caring for sick and wounded soldiers (Excerpted from an article on the History.com website by Elizabeth Nix)

A good portion of women earned their rations by doing laundry and mending for the soldiers and the officers. Colonel Ebenezer Huntington wrote that he was “endeavoring to hire some women to live in camp to do the washing for [him] self and some of the officers.” Laundresses were permitted to remain in the camp as a reward for their own or their husbands’ good service. In a letter to Colonel Lamb, Captain George Fleming pleads the case of an army wife,

“I have been unfortunate in losing Peter Young, by his taking a hearty draught of cold Water [dying]. I propose continuing her [Young’s wife] still a Washerwoman belonging to the Company, as a small recompense for her long Service & late Husband’s, in case she chooses.”

Women also worked as cooks to assist the army and, perhaps, earn extra cash. When soldiers entered the army, they formed “messes.” These messes were generally composed of six men who shared housekeeping chores, including getting water, chopping wood, and cooking meals. However, on occasion, women of the regiment earned extra money by cooking for men who could afford to pay them. Hannah Thomas earned wages for cooking for twelve men in the Quartermaster General’s Department during October 1780. In Fishkill in 1782, Sarah Parsell cooked for the wheelwrights, a Mrs. Creiger cooked for the blacksmiths, and Mrs. Lloyd cooked for the express riders. For 12 days of work done that January, Parsell and Creiger were paid 2 shillings per day. Lloyd worked from May through September at \$10 per month.

Another way for women to earn money and rations with the Continental army was through nursing. The army preferred female nurses to male ones, not only because nursing the sick has traditionally been a fe-

male responsibility, but also because every woman nursing meant one more man freed for fighting in the line. Therefore, commanders desired to hire women to perform the difficult tasks of nursing. Individuals who would care for the sick were in constant demand and short supply throughout the war. Although a woman serving as a nurse could hope to receive regular pay and retain a job throughout the war, the job brought with it hazards. Exposure to deadly diseases such as smallpox and all manner of camp fevers; in addition to being relegated to the dirtiest jobs connected to the medical profession. Officers therefore alternately bribed and threatened women to take up nursing. They promised full rations and an allowance for volunteer nurses or threatened to withhold rations from women who refused to volunteer.

A Congressional resolution of July 27, 1775 allowed one nurse for every ten patients in Continental hospitals. The Congress allowed two dollars per month as a salary for these nurses, though matrons (women who supervised nurses and acted as liaisons to surgeons) were allotted four dollars per month. In 1776, Congress raised nurses' pay to four dollars per month, and in 1777, to eight dollars per month, possibly in an attempt to entice more women into nursing or to retain nurses dissatisfied with their jobs. Despite Congressional efforts to increase the number of female nurses for the army, there remained a shortage throughout the war. Regiments constantly sought women to nurse their sick and wounded.

Nurses' duties were generally related to keeping the hospital and its patients clean. The "Rules and Directions for the better regulation of the military Hospital of the United States" described nurses' duties. They must stay clean and sober, empty chamber pots as soon as possible after use, wash new patients, wash the hands and faces of old patients, comb patients' hair daily, change linen, sweep out the hospital, sprinkle the wards with vinegar (as a disinfectant) three to four times a day, and deliver dead patients' belongings to the ward master. Nurses were forbidden to be absent without the permission of their supervising physicians, surgeons, or matrons.

Women provided all of the above services to the army, content to do so while remaining within their traditional female role. There were some women, however, who chose to break out of traditional gender roles and defend their country by taking up arms against the enemy. A few examples exist of women who, by virtue of circumstances, fought the enemy as women. There were also women who concealed their sex and joined the army disguised as men."^{*}

It is unlikely that females posing as male soldiers was a very widespread occurrence during the American Revolution and there are no recorded cases of this having been done by a Delaware woman. This is reported to have happened again during the Civil War, when several hundred women were reported to have served in combat on both sides of the struggle disguised as men. Again, no Delaware women are known to have been involved.

By the time of the Civil War there were more opportunities for women to serve their country, both as nurses and in other capacities. The role of women in society had expanded in the years leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War, one aspect of which was the beginning of a national movement for women's rights. This is said to have had its official origin at an afternoon tea in Seneca Falls, New York in July, 1848. While its development was not directly linked to women choosing to go into national service during the Civil War, it is clear that the place of women in society was gradually changing.

Delaware women had some limited opportunities to support the war effort within their own state through service as nurses and in other capacities at facilities such as Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River, which became one of the largest Union prisons for Confederate prisoners, and the Tilton General Hospital in Wilmington. Delaware military historian Thomas J. Ryan** writes that Tilton was the primary Civil War hospital in the state, "named for Delawarean Dr. James Tilton, the first Surgeon General of the U.S. Army, from 1813 to 1815. Small in comparison to some of the more massive federal installations, Tilton nonetheless could accommodate 350 patients. The building was constructed of brick, three stories high, and had six wooden wards running parallel to each other, projecting from a wide corridor. Tents erected on the grounds increased the hospital's capacity. Tilton was in operation for two years . . . Typically, in these army hospitals, there were no female nurses until later in the war. Instead, convalescent patients took care of the sick and wounded."

The renowned Civil War nurse Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, said that the Civil War had advanced

^{*}*This is excerpted from a longer Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter article written by Kaia Danyluk, a graduate of the College and William and Mary and former member of the interpretive staff at the Military Encampment.*

the cause of women's rights by fifty years.

During the Spanish American War of 1898, considerable number of Delaware women served as U.S. Army and Red Cross nurses. At least 20 Delaware female Spanish American War veterans were still living in the state as late as the 1950's. Women also served in other capacities, such as working as clerks and secretaries.

Co-author Connor Graham of the Delaware Public Archives has found information from Delaware newspapers about two of Delaware women who served:

Georgeanna Sweetman, Nurse

Georgeanna Sweetman was one of the courageous nurses who volunteered her time during the Spanish-American War. She was a 1899 graduate of the Homeopathic Hospital in Wilmington. During the war, the Army frowned upon the idea of women nurses going to war with the Army. Hence, the principal burden fell upon members and chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution to sponsor nurses and have them sent into Army hospitals. Miss Sweetman was one of the nurses who responded to the call and went into the Army hospitals, sponsored by Miss Sophia Waples of Wilmington and a prominent member of the D.A.R. She died on June 29, 1903 and is buried at Riverview Cemetery in Wilmington. At the time of her death, she was one of the best known nurses in the city.

Anna Griffiths, Nurse (pictured at right)

Anna Griffiths was born in Templemoor, Ireland. Her father died shortly before her birth. She was raised in a convent. At 17, she left the convent to join her mother in England. She came to America to help her sister, who was suffering from malaria. Her nursing career started in 1896 when she graduated from a hospital in Buffalo, N.Y.

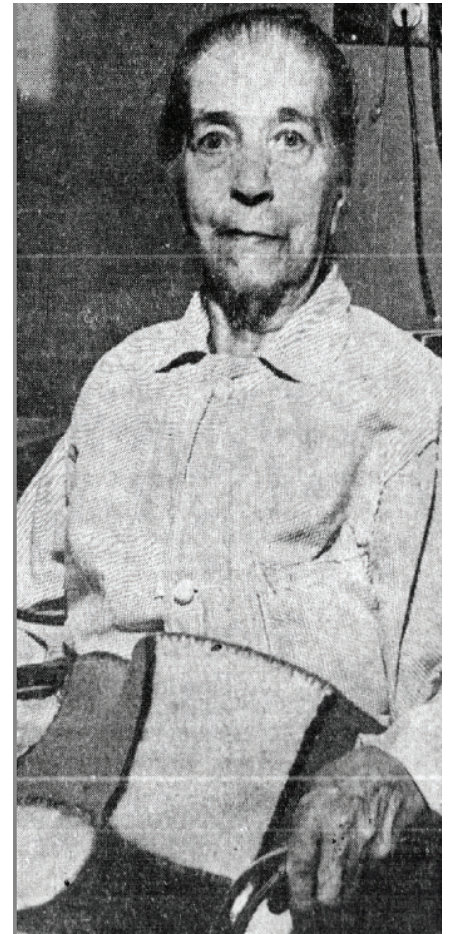
During the war, Anna signed a contract with the Army to serve in field hospitals. She was detailed to Jacksonville, Florida. After her service time was up she signed for another tour of duty with the government and was sent to the Philippine Islands. There she met Richard H. Griffiths, an officer in the constabulary. They were married in Hong Kong in 1911. He died in France during World War I.

She returned to the United States and in the mid-1940s settled in an apartment at 1303 Van Buren St., Wilmington, Delaware. In 1949, she was the chaplain of the Spanish-American War Nurses in Delaware. She created a bit of a stir in February, 1955, when, at age 87, after being grazed by a trolley coach, she refused assistance from an ambulance driver and a police officer, saying, "I don't need any help and I don't believe in doctors."

She died at the Veterans Administration Hospital in June, 1966 at age 97. Mrs. Griffiths was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.



U.S. Army nurses during the Spanish American War, 1898.



*** Thomas J. Ryan is an historian, speaker, and author of "Essays on Delaware during the Civil War: A Political, Military and Social Perspective." Contact him at pennmardel@mchsi.com.*

Delaware Women in service during World War I



Delaware women served their country in many capacities during America's involvement in World War I from April, 1917, until the war ended on November 11, 1918, and in the months thereafter. Some, such as Reba Taylor of Hockessin (*see pp. 71-72*), became involved even earlier—in Miss Taylor's case, she went to Europe as a Red Cross nurse in the first months of the war in 1914. Women also served on the home front as nurses, in war industries, and in other capacities. Those Delaware women about whom we have been able to obtain information for this book all served as either Army or Red Cross nurses and two of them died. For those who survived, their experiences were unforgettable and life-changing.

American nurses in France during World War I.

The remarkable story of the Beardsley Sisters, World War I-era Military Nurses from Lincoln, Delaware

The experience of two sisters from the small southern Delaware community of Lincoln, Ethel Jean and Nell Augusta Beardsley is an eloquent testimonial to the part played by Delaware women in the World War I era. They were two of the seven daughters of Truman A. and Mary Catherine Beardsley. They grew up in the quiet Sussex County town located a short distance south of the much larger community of Milford. Ethel, the older of the two, was born on December 14, 1884, with Nell coming along on November 21, 1886. In the years before the war first Nell and then Ethel undertook nursing studies at the Training School for Nurses, which was affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia.

In 1916, a year before the United States entered the war, Nell, who is remembered as the more adventurous of the two, joined the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. When the war began in 1917, she was able to convince her sister, Ethel, that she should also become a military nurse. On December 14, 1917, Ethel joined the American Red Cross nursing corps and was sent for training to Fort Oglethorpe, on the Georgia-Tennessee border near Chattooonoga. Ironically, it was Ethel who received orders to join the American Expeditionary Force in France. Nell was assigned to the Post Hospital at Fort McKinley in the Philippine Islands after stints at Walter Reed General Hospital in Washington, D.C. and Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco.

Following their wartime service, both sisters returned home. Nell, who died in 1970, spent most of her later years in Philadelphia but passed away in Dover while visiting one of her other sisters. Ethel returned to Lincoln and lived in the family home there until she passed away in 1957. Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel, the widow of Nell and Ethel's nephew, Calvin Clendaniel, recalled that Ethel lived very quietly after she came home from the war, never taking another job outside the home. She believes that she may have suffered from what is now known as "post traumatic stress disorder" (PTSD) as a result of her wartime experiences, which, the family suspects, may have included falling in love while in France, only to lose her beau in the war.



A photograph of Red Cross Nurse Ethel Jean Beardsley of Lincoln, Delaware, taken before her departure for the battlefields of France in 1918, together with her gold class ring from the University of Pennsylvania Hospital's Training School for Nurses.

Information and memorabilia courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel and family of Lincoln, Delaware.



Nell Augusta Beardsley, the younger sister, as seen in a 1918 passport photograph. She had been stationed at the Post Hospital at Fort William McKinley in the Philippine Islands and was preparing to do some sightseeing in Japan on her homeward voyage.

Yet it is Ethel, the quiet sister, who has left future generations a real treasure. For this project, the family loaned us a remarkable 79-page transcript of letters that Ethel exchanged with her mother before and during her time at the front in 1918. These wonderful letters show what it was like for a woman from a small town in southern Delaware to live and experience the war at first hand. Because of space limitations, we can only publish a brief excerpt here, but hope to publish them in their entirety at some future time.

December 14, 1917
Philadelphia

Dear Mother:

Just a card to let you know I am leaving Philadelphia early this evening at 5:47. A great way to celebrate my birthday. Will let you hear how I make out.

Ethel

I awoke in the wee hours of the morning of December 14, 1917, needless to say excited by what proved to be the greatest adventure of my life. The day was spent in making final preparations, and saying goodbye. There was a feeling of sadness too as goodbyes and good wishes were said.

Five-thirty p.m. found me in West Philadelphia station, a full-fledged Red Cross nurse waiting to take a train to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, where I was being sent by the American Red Cross to join the nursing staff at the military hospital there. When I reached the train platform, the first section of my train was pulling out, and it was quite awhile before the next train came. Who can forget the severe cold weather of 1917-1918? As I stood on the platform waiting, the icy wind struck through me and seemed also to be saying goodbye with frigid blasts and stabs. I was glad to see the train come rumbling in. Its approach changed the scene on that railway platform.

Men dressed in the uniform of the U.S. Army and Navy stood in numberless groups with parents, wives, sweethearts, and friends, thus spending their last precious moments before leaving for their various training camps.

As the train drew nearer, groups broke into waves of humanity surging toward the train to the accompaniment of Mothers' prayers, strong hand clasps, tears in eyes, and words of cheer. This was the benediction under which that heavily loaded troop train pulled out of West Philadelphia station December 14, 1917.

We were on our way! The first few minutes after getting on the train were spent in a scramble to find a seat, and in such a crowd who were all out for the same purpose, ones' success depended upon their ability to locate and seize one before anyone else got there. I did pretty well in this game, and found a satisfactory place in which to spend the next twenty-four hours, which according to schedule was the time it would take to reach Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. Such a trip to an inexperienced traveler, as I at that time was, was most interesting. Each hour spent on that troop train added a new leaf to the book of life's memories. And some of those pages are dog-eared and thumb stained as I turn the leaves and live over again the enjoyable times engraved there.

Ten p.m. found me exploring the mysteries in the lower berth of the sleeping car. Wonderful haven of rest for

Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia in 1918, right, and the Post Hospital, below, where Ethel Beardsley worked before she was sent to France.



weary travelers, but as for me I wasn't yet weary so shall call it a cozy corner. A little nook of curtained-in-darkness, except at frequent intervals when an irresistible desire came over

me to put on the light over my head just to look around and make sure that the compartment above showed no signs of disaster as the result of a tremendously heavy sleeper whose snoring ability was wonderfully developed and could not be surpassed by any six persons in the car accomplished and strenuously engaged in this most unforgivable way of sleeping.

However, morning finally came, and soon the train was alive with cheerful greetings from women and men who had left their homes for a cause that gripped every American.

The day was spent in various ways as the train rumbled along down into the heart of the sunny South. Truly the heart of the South is sunny, most lovable and kind, and was not frozen by the heavy blanket of snow and ice which lay in drifts on its bosom in the winter of 1917-1918.

Upon receiving final orders from Red Cross headquarters in Philadelphia, I was instructed to send a telegram while enroute to the chief nurse of the hospital at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia stating the time I would arrive in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where I would change my way of travel to trolley or by auto. I did as I was directed in reference to the telegram, which gave those in authority at the hospital notice of a new arrival and thereby obtain transportation from Chattanooga to Fort Oglethorpe, a distance of ten miles. After following orders to the letter, I sat down and was soon lost in thought as I watched the sun sink into the west and lengthening shadows creep across wood and field. Then twilight soon changed to darkness.

A feeling of loneliness came over me. I realized most keenly that I was a long way from home and friends. This reverie was brought to a close by one passing through the car with news that the train would be six hours late reaching Chattanooga – a message most unwelcome as I realized its arrival would be long after midnight. I clearly remember one weary passenger stepping off the train at Chattanooga at 1:30 Sunday morning. The waiting room of the station was alive with soldiers of every rank, seeming to represent every state in the union, even little Delaware, for I could have answered should there have been roll call. I pressed through the crowd to an information desk and inquired by what means I would be able to continue my journey that night, and was told that all ways of travel, except by private car, ceased at midnight.

I picked up my bag and walked out on the street with the thought of spending the remainder of the night at the Y.W.C.A. The streets around the station were thronging with soldiers who apparently had no idea of letting the old town sleep that night, for it was Saturday, and who can forget what a weekend in town meant to the boys in camp, saying nothing of those who went A.W.O.L.



*Ethel Beardsley's World War I Army dogtags
(courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel).*

I entered a little store where a popcorn machine and peanut roaster were doing their bit to make life happy for the army. Here I inquired as to the Y.W.C.A. A man came from behind the counter and directed me to a street car with instructions as to the location of the house. By this time it was two-thirty a.m., and I was being carried away from the business part of the city into the residential section.

I finally came to the street where I had to get off. How quiet and lonely it was – no one in sight, no friendly lights except street lamps. I walked along carrying my bag that was getting extremely heavy, but not more so than my heart – expecting and hoping to see a beacon light of the Y. M. C. A, when suddenly out of the darkness far down the street appeared a figure walking toward me, the only sign of life to be seen. As it came nearer I saw it was a man whose face was partly wrapped in a bandage. It was his look of invalidism that gave me courage to speak. As he answered my questions he reached for my bag and said, “Come with me. I’ll take care of you as I would want my sister cared for were she in your place.” It seemed I had no choice in the matter for I was dependent on someone for information. He said the Y.W.C.A. was two houses farther down the street. We walked up the steps and rang the door bell. The house was in darkness except for a small flickering light in the hall on the first floor. No one answered the bell. He rang again

and again with no response.

We waited a few moments. No doubt he was trying to think of some way to relieve himself of the responsibility so suddenly thrust upon him.. After a moment’s hesitation he said, “Let’s go to the Y.M.C.A.,” remarking further that as the town was overflowing with soldiers it would be useless to attempt trying to get accommodations in a hotel. He was courteous and, needless to say, very obliging.

We finally reached the Y.M.C.A. There we found the place humming with life. There were groups of soldiers singing song. Mirth and gaiety reigned supreme. My escort elbowed the way to the desk of the night clerk and explained in a tactful manner the difficulty and asked if I might be taken care of there the balance of the night. The clerk looked puzzled and said, “My dear, I haven’t a vacant spot in the house to accommodate a girl. My heart sank. Then he added, perhaps I can make a place for you in the housekeeper’s quarters. Leaving me with a ray of hope he disappeared down the hall. Upon returning he said the housekeeper would take me in. By this time the conversation had attracted several standing near who appeared to be interested in my story. And when the clerk said, “There are no blankets for your cot,” several soldiers offered their blankets. This spirit of unselfishness predominated among our boys from first to last during the war.

I was shown into the matron’s quarters, and found an army cot had been placed there for my accommodation, in spite of the fact that there was only a strip of canvas to lie one. I threw myself down and fell asleep with the tune of “You’re In the Army Now” ringing in my ears. Sleep was like oil on troubled waters for I awoke refreshed and calm; arose and began preparations to continue my journey.

As I passed through the hall into the clerk's office I caught the odor of delicious coffee and hot rolls. The day clerk was on duty by this time. As I approached the desk he put out his hand in a cordial way and said, "You are a Red Cross nurse from Philadelphia, are you not? I nodded in the affirmative and asked for my bill. He answered there are no charges, and insisted upon my going into the dining room for breakfast. I accepted the invitation. He followed me in; showed me to a table; and stepped over and gave my order to a waitress. Receiving this service when others were passing through the cafeteria was appreciated. The dining room workers were hustling at top speed that morning as every place was quickly taken, and long lines of boys in khaki were forming and impatiently waiting to be served.



Ethel Beardsley's linen nurses cap with embroidered Red Cross affixed, and her Red Cross Nurse's medal (courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel).

From the dining room I returned to the office for information as to trolley service to Fort Oglethorpe. The clerk called up the chief nurse. Having done this, he offered to carry my bag down to the car explaining as we walked along details of the trip. While waiting for the car I trust I succeeded in making him realize my appreciation for what the Y.M.C.A. did for me.

Seated in the trolley car I settled down to enjoy the last lap of the journey. The ride by trolley from Chattanooga to Fort Oglethorpe is really wild, especially to one whose trolley riding has been confined to city limits. While traveling through the city its mode of travel was beyond reproach, but the first glimpse of the country changed its attitude from that of a caged animal to one suddenly freed in its native land. I sat tight while it plunged and reared from side to side, dashing around curves, cavorting up and down hills, and on with nothing to impede its progress as it rambled along. It was a lively and thoroughly enjoyed ride. The hills and valleys, clothed in a heavy blanket of snow, which formed huge drifts here and there, added to the splendor and beauty of a picture that will never grow dim in my memory.

In the seat just ahead of me was a lad of about 16 years who appeared to be curious as to where I was going, and finally asked where I was getting off. I gave him the desired information, and he replied that he was also going to the Army Reservation, meaning Fort Oglethorpe, and assured me that he would direct me to the Chief Nurse's office, or any other place I wished to go.

He was as good as his word. Upon arriving he immediately took charge of my bag. We walked quite a distance, passing officers' quarters which formed a circle around a large parade ground. He finally pointed to a house which he explained was one of the houses used for nurses' quarters. I rang the bell and the door was opened by a nurse from Wilmington, Delaware. Could one from Delaware have been given a more pleasing welcome!

I said goodbye to my young friend, and entered the house. The building had been a residence for officers of the regular army. Strange to say there was no official nurses' quarters at that time, and nurses were housed in available homes situated on the Reservation.

As yet the question as to a home for nurses had not become an urgency. I was the thirty-fourth nurse to report for duty at Fort Oglethorpe up until December 16, 1917. Nurses were slow responding to the urgent call from the U.S. Red Cross and from the Army Medical Corps. However, as spring came on our number swelled to more than 150 nurses. The larger number were housed in barracks, which were quickly built to accommodate the increasing numbers. Living in barracks meant a large, long room containing about twenty cots more or less, as the case happened to be, placed about 6 feet apart. Each cot represented a nurse's private room with space enough for a trunk and a small bedside table.



American nurses at an Army field hospital near the front in France, 1918.

...

My first day on duty in a military hospital was a revelation as to what constituted army nursing. Having but a few months previously graduated from a hospital in Philadelphia, our very being moulded and trained in the finest points of professional nursing and held responsible for the patients welfare from a nursing standpoint. Nurses in the army were relieved of much of the routine care of the patient by Medical Corps men who were on duty in all departments and trained to assist the nurse. Many had a natural gift for attending the sick, and were valuable helpers, especially around the wounded whose helplessness required a person with much strength when lifting was necessary. We give many of our Medical Corps boys the praise due them for their good work both in the cantonments in the U.S. and "Over There."

Miss Beardsley's narrative continues, describing her nursing duties at Fort Oglethorpe, her orders for France, her trip to New York to board the vessel that would carry her across the Atlantic, the voyage itself and her arrival in France. What follows are excerpts from letters she wrote her mother at home in Delaware.



U.S. Army field hospital at the front, France, 1918.

Somewhere in France
July 24, 1918

... I suppose you are overflowing with joy and admiration when you read what the yanks are doing over here. Am glad I have no brothers to get into this scrap. But if I had, would be proud of them for they are doing as much as is expected of them and more. They are brave boys.

I wonder if I will ever get anymore mail. Do you know I haven't received a bit, not even a bill, since leaving New York. It is great to dodge the bills, but wish they would send the letters along. It never did

agree with me to write more than one letter before getting an answer. How is every one? I surely would like to see the new baby. Of course, he has brown eyes and dark hair.

Suppose Edgar is a big boy by this time. Would like to see all the kiddies. Shall expect Tommy to be an accomplished musician when I return. My first request will be "Moonlight Sonata."

Somewhere in France
Aug. 20th, 1918

Dear Mother:

This has been an uneventful day. Like to see these days come for then we know our boys are safe. Have spent lots of time getting things in order, for when I come down here everything I owned was out of commission. So between the wash women and myself am beginning to look respectable again. I mailed you a German helmet a short time ago. Hope it goes through O.K.

Just now am in a peaceful spot and nothing to fear. Getting plenty of fresh air, and sunburn. You won't know me when I come home, I'll be so black.

Mail is a small matter with the army just now. In fact you will think so when I tell you I haven't received a letter since I've been in France. It will be several weeks before I can get a letter to you I expect, but just be patient. You will get it. Perhaps you think I should write as often as Nell does, but if you were here you would understand. I am O.K. and hope all are well at home. May this lecture have the desired effect, for I feel you are all worrying too much about me. So long, don't forget.

Love, Ethel

Somewhere in France
Aug. 18th, 1918

Dear Mother:

This is a beautiful night in France, and a little of most everything going on. You know, just enough to make one "sit up and take notice." It is as the boys say: "a great life if you don't weaken." I am on night duty for a change. Expect to remain on one more week. Had much rather be on duty at night, for while this drive is on no one gets much sleep. Our slumbers are disturbed frequently by alarms, such as "gas." This means get on the gas mask in five seconds and sit up until we hear the call "all clear." Then we nestle down under the covers, get nice and warm, when we hear Fritz coming over to pay his nightly call, then boom, boom, go the bombs. While this is going on we are making for cover, dug-outs and anywhere under cover. If he carried bombs only it wouldn't be so bad, but he also carries machine guns. And when they open fire it sounds like the cutout of a motor cycle.

When one hears bullets whispering sweet nothings in one's ears, we get very rude and don't stop to hear what they have to say, but run, Oh boy. We also have fleas to keep us awake in case we fall asleep. Had never thought of it that way before.

We are having very hot days, but the nights are quite cold. I wear two sweaters and tights on duty at night. The summers are not nearly so warm as in the U.S., but I hear the winters are very cold and rainy. I hope we will all be home before winter comes. God only knows the day of our departure. We are here to see it through, and



Nurses in line to get water at a U.S. Army field hospital near the front in France, 1918.

sooner or later the victory will be ours. The Americans are doing great things over here. The Germans don't know what to make of the American soldier. Am so glad I came. This is the place for every American nurse to be right now. When things are quiet we explore the country, even though the most of it is battle ground, it is beautiful.

I want to go to Rome, London, and see more of Paris while here. Have started to save money to do this.

Simdau --Very cloudy. Looks like rain. I hope it does and settle the dust. Am on day duty—again. How well I slept last night. Quiet for a change.

I can sit here in my room and look out over the hills and slopes--see mountains and numerous little towns or "hamlets" as the French call them. We just came down here yesterday. I want to take a long walk. It is an ideal day for it.

Our boys are giving it to the Germans at the front. We can hear the cannon in action, hear the shells as they go across into the German lines. That song, "Where the shot and shell go screaming across the battle field" is all too true. The flashes from guns looks like continuous heat lightning.

Where we were yesterday will be a day long remembered by those of us who were there. Fritz got entirely too affectionate and threw his kisses a little too close. We ran for dugouts, and most of us rolled in, not taking time to look out for steps. We stayed there until he got tired waiting for us to come out. We are closer to the firing line than any of the other nurses on this sector. We feel a little chesty about this, even if we do sit up all night in caves. It isn't a bit of trouble to keep awake. If I were able to write a book, I could make it interesting.

Had a glorious horseback ride yesterday with one of the nurses and a cavalryman. Instead of taking the road, we rode over the hills and fields. How I did enjoy it. I didn't know I could ride, but after the boys fixed us up with trousers and leather leggings, we looked like real soldiers.

In our travels we came across an aeroplane brought down by the allies. There is one blessing--the aviators must be dead before they strike the earth, because they fall for miles.

I am sending \$15. 57 to be paid to Metropolitan Life. It is due in September. Am also sending a German helmet. It isn't anything beautiful, but will give you an idea of the way they protect themselves. But with it all when they are cornered they lose their nerve, throw up their hands and yell "comrad," but that doesn't work with the yanks.

I expect I have written too much. The censor will probably cut out most of it. Will take a chance and send it anyway. I am well taken care of. I hope you won't worry. I am where I want to be with lots of other nurses and feel I am doing what I can in the war. If I should not return, well, there are many who are not coming back. You know that I don't take unnecessary chances. I am thankful that I can be here and do a part in winning the war.

It is nearly time for dinner so will stop and get ready for steak and ect.

If you could send my letters to Zaidee, it would help me out with my writing, for there are times when writing is impossible.

Love Ethel

Somewhere in France
Sept. 3rd, 1918

Dear Mother:

It is nearly lunch time. but perhaps I will get more written than expected as show is not always on time. This is a real fall night, like late October at home. The flowers are still with us. The country right here is perfectly beautiful, much more so than in lots of other places in France.

I don't believe I wrote to you last week, but you would know the reason why had you been here. There were days when we were on duty eighteen hours and more sometimes. When we did get off we just tumbled into bed and that ended it.

I wonder if you got the helmet I sent you. Hope so. Thought it would make a good hanging basket.

I hope Fritz won't come over tonight. It will sure be cold to get up and find a dug-out.

Am sending Edla [one of her sisters] Annette and Rattan*. Will tell her their story when I come home. The aviators wear them in the lapel of their uniforms for good luck. They are made by the French girls.

Can't think of much that I'm allowed to write, so will begin to prepare for bed early in case we are called out tonight. Don't worry about me. I never felt better and am glad to be here. Write me long letters. Love, Ethel



Nurses doing their own laundry at a U.S. Army field hospital, France, 1918.

Somewhere in France
Sept. 9, 1918

Dear Mother:

There is a lull in the work at this time so I will make good my letter writing. It has rained the greater part of the month so far. The sun is shining right now, but that doesn't mean clear weather. I had the morning off duty, and so I had lots of soiled clothes. I didn't know any other way but roll up my sleeves and wash. Would give a lot for a good laundress. But we seem to be unable to get one in France. Suppose if we were near Paris it would be an easy matter to get it done satisfactorily, but now it is do it yourself or go dirty.

Paris is a beautiful city, although its buildings are much lower than in New York. The architecture is wonderful, and the gardens are beyond description. What strikes me so funny is this: if I should get run over in the street, they would fine me and the one who ran over me is let go free.

Things are beginning to stir a bit. Expect we will have a busy night. It is pathetic, or you would think so, if you could see us racking our brains for something; to write. Lunch time and I am hungry again.

Love Ethel

P.S. There is lots to write about, but it wouldn't pass the censor.

* "Annette and Rattan" - This was Ethel's phonetic rendering of "Nénette and Rintintin," tiny yarn-doll good luck charms (right) that became popular in France in 1918. One observer of life in the war-weary city of Paris commented on the fad for carrying tiny yarn-doll good luck charms, noting: "It is taking a long chance in these wild days of war . . . to go about unprotected by a Nénette and Rintintin. Curious little mascot dolls they are, that have taken Paris by storm. . . . But their charm is not to be purchased. Until you have been presented with a Nénette and Rintintin, you have not their sweet protection; and if you have the one without the other, the charm is broken." Several origin stories exist for the dolls. One widely circulated was that they arose as a charm when the German bombing raids began over Paris. Strangely, the name "Rintintin" later became the basis for the popular movie and television American dog-hero, "Rin-Tin-Tin."





World War I American Expeditionary Force Victory Medal awarded to Ethel Beardsley, with brass attachments showing the actions in which she took part (courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel).

sleep at night you are safe and homes and towns are not being destroyed.

Somewhere in France

Oct. 15th, 1918

Dear Mother:

I know you have been blessing me up and down for not writing for more than two weeks. I have been on night duty for some time and so busy that I just didn't take time to do anything but work and sleep. Had eight wards to look after, as I was the only nurse you can imagine how I had to hustle. There were two medical corps men on each ward, but that only meant I knew there was someone on the wards, which was about all. Am on day duty now, am glad to say, and not so much to be responsible for. Now you can expect to hear from me often.

Somewhere in France

Nov. 1st 1918

... Must tell you about the Halloween dance last night. It was given for the enlisted men and how they enjoyed it. Nurses and enlisted men are not allowed to mix socially, but that is off over here, or I mean it isn't such a hard and fast rule in France. The dance ended at an early hour — 10:30 p.m. The hall was elaborately decorated with Halloween decorations, Autumn leaves, etc. They had the most wonderful regimental band. Oh boy, we forgot there was a war on for the time being. The strains of the dear old Missouri Waltz carried us back home. It helped us all, for after seeing so much war we needed a complete change. The French dance very different than the Americans, and the two French men Standing by didn't miss anything. They think we Americans rather snappy, and guess we are in comparison. It took the yanks to wake them up when it came to fighting.

I hope the war will be over soon. We don't take stock in all this peace talk as the German's have this way of getting around the people, or they think they have. Am glad all this is going on here, and not over there. We know that when you lie down to

Somewhere in France

Nov. 15th, 1918

... Have a chance now to catch up with letter writing and do other things at my pleasure also. Have been off duty fifteen days, had influenza while at the front. As our hospital received orders to follow the troops and move on, the commanding officer decided, after waiting until the last minute, that I and another nurse who was quite sick should be sent back to a base hospital to get strong. Much of our regret. So they bundled us up bag and baggage and put us on a French Red Cross train, which was carrying wounded Americans back from the front lines to base hospitals. There were two French nurses on the train, but couldn't speak English. So we were looked after by an interpreter who entertained us in his spare moments. We rode from 5:30 p.m. until 11:30 a.m. Enjoyed it as much as possible. I AM getting to feel more like myself every day. I take long walks and drink in the natural beauties of France, which are many.



An American Red Cross volunteer gives an American patient a can of tobacco at the military hospital at Contrexeville, France, 1918. This was the same hospital where Ethel Beardsley was treated for influenza late in the war (photograph by Louis Hine, courtesy of Shorpy Historic Photo Archive).

3:30 p.m. I began this letter this morning, but several things have happened. Have just returned from a walk around the town—Contrexeville: with one of the nurses who is convalescing also. While we were out we bought a rabbit for supper. The woman had to kill it, so she said we could get it at 4:30 p.m. We will have to make another trip. Hope it will be young and cook quickly.

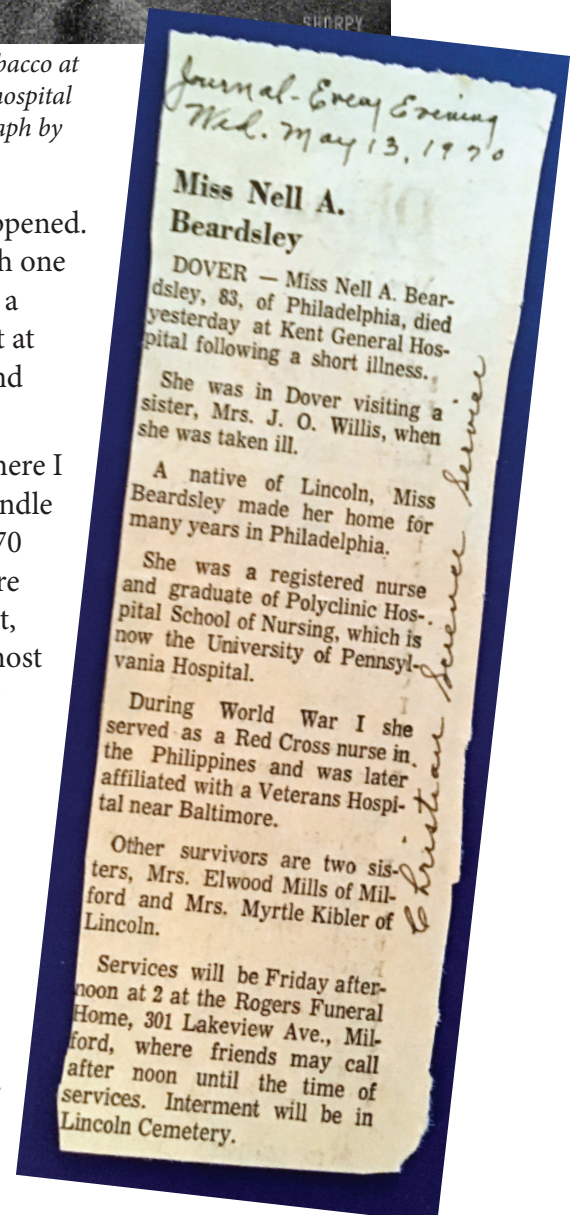
I forgot to tell you how cross I got with a French woman in a store where I tried to buy a nail file—just a plain steel one—not even a wooden handle just like we get at home for 10 cents. She has the nerve to charge me 70 cents for it. I was so provoked I threw it down. That is the way they are trying to do all the Americans. If you want to send me a xmas present, send a nail file. You can wrap it in paper and put it in a letter. It is almost time to go for the rabbit. We are wondering when Uncle Sam will say homeward bound now *le-guere finis*. (War is over).

Hope you and all are well.

Love, Ethel

Obituary for Nell Augusta Beardsley, May 13, 1970. Ethel Beardsley had died in 1957. The remains of both sisters rest in Lincoln Cemetery.

(courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Clendaniel)



Delaware Women in service in World War I



Mary Hodgson of Felton, Delaware

Mary and Edward Hodgson were siblings from a farming family in Felton, Kent County, Delaware. Mary trained as a nurse at the German Hospital (now the Lankenau Medical Center) in Philadelphia, graduating in 1909. She enlisted as a Red Cross nurse with the 28th Infantry Division and sailed for France in May 1917. She was stationed at Le Tréport in Normandy, tending to soldiers and civilians wounded during the conflict, and served for nearly two years. Some five months after the end of the war, in March 1919, Mary returned to Felton and spent a year as County Nurse before moving to California. She is buried in the Los Angeles National Cemetery. Her brother, Edward, also served in France as a soldier.

Mary wrote: *"We have some boys that have been badly blistered with mustard gas, coughing with lungs filled up with fluid. We can help some of them, but too many times all we can do is dope the pain while they cough horribly and pray for their release. My heart is heavy with the cruelty of poison gas which lasts several days after an attack has taken place. Everything is broken as we have never seen on such a scale. But where there is any chance at all, we try to save the poor souls wounded from either army, or the innocent local farmers and their families."*



(Left) Red Cross nurses during World War I at the Delaware Red Cross headquarters at the corner of Delaware Ave. and Jackson St. in Wilmington.

(Photos courtesy of the Delaware Historical Society and Delaware Public Archives. Historical background information courtesy of the Historical Society and Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.) of the Delaware Military History Museum.

Delaware Women in World War I — Sara Brogan

Sara Brogan of Wilmington was one of the 24,000 nurses enrolled by the Red Cross to provide comfort and care to injured soldiers overseas. After receiving her nursing training in Philadelphia, Brogan deployed with the American Expeditionary Forces in May, 1918. Upon arrival overseas, military nurses transferred to one of 17 base hospital units in England or France. It is unclear where Sara Brogan served, but her papers include a copy of a letter from King George V distributed to American military personnel in England, expressing his wish to “shake the hand of every one of you and bid you God speed on your mission.” Brogan became a career military nurse with the Red Cross and the Army Nurse Corps and went on to serve in World War II before retiring in the mid 1950s (courtesy of the Delaware Historical Society).



This document is not a passport but is issued with the approval of the Department of State.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
WAR DEPARTMENT.

Form No. 432-S-A, G. O.
Ed. Feb. 21-18-5,000.

CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY.

No. 12710

I certify that Sara Cordula Brogan (Given name.) (Surname.) is attached to the sanitary service of the United States Army, is authorized to accompany the American Expeditionary (Designate the organization to which attached.)

Force #2 in the capacity of Nurse (Describe function.)

and is entitled to the privileges and immunities provided in Chapter III of the International Red Cross Convention of 1906. A brassard as prescribed in Article 20 thereof, which bears the same number as this certificate, has been issued to the person named. Identification data:

F. (Sex.) 28 yrs. (Age.) Brown (Color of eyes.) Black (Color of hair.)
5 ft. 4 in. (Height, approximate.) 115 1/4 lbs. (Weight, approximate.) W. (Race.)

REMARKS: None (Include here notation of scars, etc., visible when clothed, which will aid in identification.)

C. H. Day Luff (Signature of issuing officer.)
MAJOR, A. G. (Rank and title.)
24 JUN 1918
LIVERPOOL

Sara Cordula Brogan (Signature of bearer.)

Index finger right hand.
Tip of finger this end.
Finger print.

Delaware Women in service during World War II

Nearly every family in the State of Delaware was involved, either directly or indirectly, in the war effort during World War II—a family member or loved one in military or naval service, or the Red Cross, or the Merchant Marine, or a wife, mother or sister working in a defense plant or other war work on the homefront. And while all this was happening, women from Delaware and across the nation were taking part in the war effort in a big way. These photos from the Delaware Public Archives illustrate those momentous times.



Women learning to fire a machine gun at Fort DuPont in Delaware City.



Members of the Women's Army Corps march in Wilmington.



Red Cross nurses take the oath to join the Army Nurse Corps, 1943.



A group of WACs from the New Castle Army Air Base sit in a booth at a local drive-in.

Private Winifred Millet, a WAC at the New Castle Air Field is shown with a canine volunteer in a publicity photo advertising a dog promotion at the base, 1945.



Nancy Harkness Love and WASPS at New Castle, WW II



Three views of Nancy Harkness Love, first Squadron Leader of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) at New Castle Army Air Base, 1942.

WASPS at New Castle Army Air Base during World War II

Opened in May 1943, New Castle AAB was assigned to the Air Corps Ferrying Command 2d Ferrying Group with the 552d Army Air Forces Base Unit being the host unit in charge of the base and its facilities. The primary mission of the airfield was to facilitate the movement of aircraft overseas for delivery to the British and other Allies. Nancy Harkness Love was appointed as the first Squadron Leader of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) at New Castle Army Air Base on 10 September 1942.

Nancy Love was followed in turn by: Betty Huyler Gillies; Cornelia Fort (*killed in service*); Aline Rhonie (Brooks); Helen Mary Clark; Catherine Slocum; Adela Schaar; Esther Nelson; Teresa James; Alma Heflin McCormick; Barbara Poole; Bernice I. Batten; Nancy Batson (Crews); Kathryn Bernheim (Fine); Delphine Bohn; Phyllis Burchfield; Barbara Donohue (Ross); Barbara J. Erickson (London); Betsy Ferguson (Wood); Dorothy Fulton; Helen McGilvery; Gertrude Meserve (Tubbs); Florence Miller (Watson); Esther Rathfelder (Westervelt); Helen Richards (Prosser); Dorothy Scott (*killed in service*); Evelyn Sharp (*killed in service*); Katherine Thompson (Rawls); and Barbara Towne (Fasken). These 25 original WAFS came from some fourteen states.

In August, 1943 the original four WAFS Ferry Squadrons became part of the historic Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASPs). WASPs served as test and ferry pilots and towed targets for student gunners. There is a statue today at the New Castle Airport that honors the women of WASP that served their country in the time of need. On 30 June 1945, the 1596th AAF Base Unit replaced the 552d AAFBU and the 2d Ferrying group was replaced by the 2d Foreign Transport Group.

(Photos and information courtesy of Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr., and Delaware Public Archives. To learn more, see the book *Delaware Aviation* by Jan Churchill (ATP,CFII, USCGAUX) and Brig. Gen. Kennard R. Wiggins, Jr. (DE ANG Retired), Arcadia Publishing, 2014.)

* *These women were from states other than Delaware.*



Images from the Delaware Public Archives of woman pilots operating out of New Castle and other Army Air Corps bases during World War II.



Some 1,100 Americans were Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) in World War II. Thirty-eight died in the line of duty.

Ethel Meyer Finley, Women's Air Service Pilot, WWII



Ethel Meyer Finley in a World War II T-6 aircraft.



Ethel Meyer Finley (1921 - 2006)

Ethel Meyer Finley was a WASP. She won her pilot's license in 1940 in her senior year in college. Her instructor was world-famous Max Conrad. Invited into the military, Ethel Meyer won her WASP wings in September, 1943. She qualified in 12 different types of aircraft and ferried planes from factories, test-hopped planes after repairs, and taught male cadets to fly.

"The WASP instructors were the outstanding members of the squadron," stated an official report at Shaw Field, S.C. Ethel and Air Corps Colonel James A. Finley married following disbandment of the WASPs. Frequent visitors to Rehoboth, where his family had a home, they moved there permanently in 1980. The Finleys had two daughters and a son. Col. Finley died in 1988.

Active in the WASP WWII organization, Ethel has served as national president and as editor of WASP News. She served two terms as director of Region One, which includes Delaware. She was responsible for the region's newsletter and air show participation. She received the Delaware Trailblazer Award in 1995 and was named to the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2001. She was a member of the Board of Directors of Wright Flight Youth Program in Tucson, AZ, and served on the Dover Air Mobility Museum Foundation Board.

She was on the board of the Air Mobility Command Museum Foundation. She holds the Trailblazer Award of Delaware for her work in establishing half-way houses for women and for service on the Delaware Commission for Women. Ethel Meyer Finley of Rehoboth Beach, DE, died on February 24, 2006.

Virginia "Scotty" Bradley Gough, Women's Air Service Pilot WWII

Virginia "Scotty" Bradley Gough (1922 - 2013)

On February 11, 1944, she paid her own way to Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas and reported for training as a member of Class 44-W-7 with 97 other hopeful young women. Her peers immediately selected her as squadron commander. This "honor" meant she was responsible for marching the trainees everywhere, was last in line for the mess hall and first out the door each morning to line up her classmates for more marching.

She moved through the US Army Air Force training program, taking the same classes and flying the same aircraft as male AAF cadets. On September 8, 1944, Scotty and 58 others graduated. One final time she lined them up, and they marched to receive their silver WASP wings.

She was ordered to Williams Army Air Field in Mesa, Arizona, under the command of the West Coast Training Center. She flew ferry missions in the AT-6 and also operated as an engineering test pilot, verifying that repaired, or “red-lined,” planes were safe for the male cadets and instructors to fly.

In 1947, she married Peter Gough, brother of a WASP. The Goughs raised four children: Michael, Joan-Scott, Brad and Connie. They moved to Bethany Beach, Delaware, in the 1960's. Peter Gough, a teacher, died in 1995.

She spoke frequently at local events and schools, and helped establish a WASP exhibit at the Air Mobility Command Museum at Dover Air Base near Dover, Delaware.

The 99's inducted her as a member of their “Forest of Friendship” in 2002, and the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame inducted her as a member in 2007. She was a life



member of the First Flight Society at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina and an Honorary Commander at Dover Air Base in Delaware.

In 2010, the US Congress awarded Scotty and her sister WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that body can bestow, for their outstanding service to our country during World War II. At the ceremony, held in Emancipation Hall in the US Capitol building, she was seated in the front row.

Scotty was quoted “...People asked us, you know, why we did this, why we flew. It was an honor and a privilege for us to serve our country, doing what we loved best, and that was to fly, but to tell you the truth...if I had had the money at that time, I would have gladly paid them for that wonderful training and the opportunity to fly those wonderful airplanes.”

(Photos and information courtesy of Brig. Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.)

Delaware Author, Historian, Pilot, and Aviation Pioneer, Jan Churchill



Delaware has Janet I. “Jan” Churchill of New Castle to thank for preserving the history of America’s pioneering women aviators in World War II. She was among the first Delawareans to be inducted into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2000. A remarkably experienced pilot, she has flown for the U.S. Coast Guard and the Civil Air Patrol and was an F.A.A. safety counselor for 25 years. In 1993, she was presented with a special award by the U.S. Coast Guard for the most missions by either airplane or boat.

Ms. Churchill is the author of numerous books on various aspects of aviation history, including *Pioneer Women Military Pilots at New Castle Army Air Base in World War II*, *On Wings to War*, *Hit My Smoke*, *Classified Secret*, *First South Pole Landing*, *From Delaware to Everywhere*, and *Delaware Aviation* (with Brig. Gen. Kennard R. Wiggins, Jr.

(Photos courtesy of Kennard R. Wiggins, Jr.)



Ellen M. Schaeffer of Lewes, Delaware, U. S. Navy veteran of World War II and Grand Marshall of the 4th Delaware Veterans Parade, 3 November 2018



Left: Ellen in uniform during World War II



Right: Ellen with her USN graduating class. She is in the front row, fourth from left.

Virginia Adams Marvin (Tanzer), U.S. Navy WAVE during World War II

Virginia Adams Marvin Tanzer (1914–1998), who in later life became a much-beloved author and Rehoboth Beach resident, served as a WAVE during World War II. Her daughter, Cat Tanzer, recalls that her mother was trained at Smith College in Northampton, MA, and was a member of either the first or second class of WAVES.

“There she met her commander and lifelong friend, Mary Virginia Harris of Philadelphia. I know they butted heads over mother’s diamond earrings, which she really didn’t want to remove. She wore them all her life. Mary Virginia and mother went on to serve on Maui (Hawaii). Mother watched for planes and edited the Navy newspaper there—*The Island Breeze*.”

“Mother also served with Commander Helen Hull Jacobs, the famous tennis player, and Fran Rich, the sculptor, who WAS in the first class at the officer’s training school and went on to be the traveling speaker for the director of the WAVES.”

“Mother reenlisted after the war in San Francisco. When she got pregnant with me, the Navy was supposed to discharge her. Instead, she received a promotion and I was born in the Naval hospital in Oakland in 1951. I’m guessing she made lieutenant in the Naval Reserves.”



Virginia Marvin Tanzer on Maui with her friend, Mary Virginia Harris.

Lucille Petry Leone, founding director of the Cadet Nurse Corps in World War II

Lucille Petry Leone, 1902 – 1999 was an American nurse who was the founding director of the Cadet Nurse Corps in 1943. Because the Nurse Corps met its recruiting quotas, it was not necessary for the U.S. to draft nurses in World War II. She was the first woman and the first nurse to be appointed as Assistant Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service.

Lucile Petry, the only child of a high school principal and his wife, was born on Jan. 23, 1902, in Frog Heaven, Preble County, Ohio. She was reared in Selbyville, Delaware. She completed a double major in chemistry and English at the University of Delaware in 1924. She received a nursing degree from Johns Hopkins School of Nursing in 1927, and a master's degree from Columbia Teachers College in 1929. She became a clinical nurse instructor at Yale University, and then spent 11 years at the University of Minnesota, where she became an associate professor and Assistant Dean.



Lucille Petry Leone (right, above) is shown receiving the Lasker Award in 1946 from Mary Lasker and President Harry S. Truman. Mrs. Lasker and her husband created the Lasker Foundation in 1942 to promote medical research. The Lasker Award is considered the most prestigious American award in medical research. As of 2015, eighty-seven Lasker laureates have gone on to receive a Nobel Prize.

From 1941 until 1966 Leone worked at the United States Public Health Service.

In 1943, Petry became the founding director of the Cadet Nurse Corps.

From July, 1943, to October, 1945, about 132,000 women were admitted to colleges across the country under the act. In exchange for federal funding, participating colleges were required to establish a 24- to 30-month accelerated education program for nurse candidates. And the women who enrolled had to pledge to “engage in essential nursing, military or civilian, for the duration of the war.”

The program was a success, training 124,000 nurse cadets in basic schools, making it unnecessary to draft nurses for war service. When she retired from government service in 1966, Lucile P. Leone was the Assistant Surgeon General and Chief Nurse Officer. Leone went on to serve as Assistant Dean and a teacher of nursing at Texas Woman's University until 1971. During the 1960s, she served as President of the National League for Nursing.

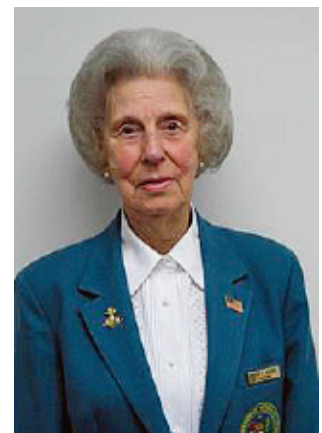
(Photos and information courtesy of Brig. Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.)

WW II U.S. Navy Vet Ruth Harden was first woman to serve on the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs



Ruth Blake Harden of Wilmington was first appointed to the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs by Governor Ruth Ann Minner on April 26, 2001. Mrs. Harden (shown at left in her Navy uniform) was born in Baltimore on June 20, 1923. She enlisted in the U.S. Navy on February 10, 1944 and served with the office of the Naval Inspector of Ordnance at Elkton, MD, until her separation on October 26, 1945.

Mrs. Harden passed away in Wilmington on April 12, 2014 at age 90.



Ruth Harden wearing her Veterans Commission jacket

Civilians who served during World War II

Miss Anita Bailey of Wilmington, civilian missionary in French Indo-China, held prisoner by the Japanese

Miss Bailey is shown at the Wilmington home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Bailey, after her return to the U.S. A civilian missionary in Indochina—now Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos—was held prisoner by the Japanese in the early days of the war after they overran Southeast Asia. After more than a year of captivity, she was returned home in September, 1943. Her brother, Captain Thomas P. Bailey, of the Army Chaplain Corps, was a chaplain with General Patton's Third Army in Europe. After V-E Day he was transferred to the Ninth Division and was stationed at Dachau, the former Nazi concentration camp.



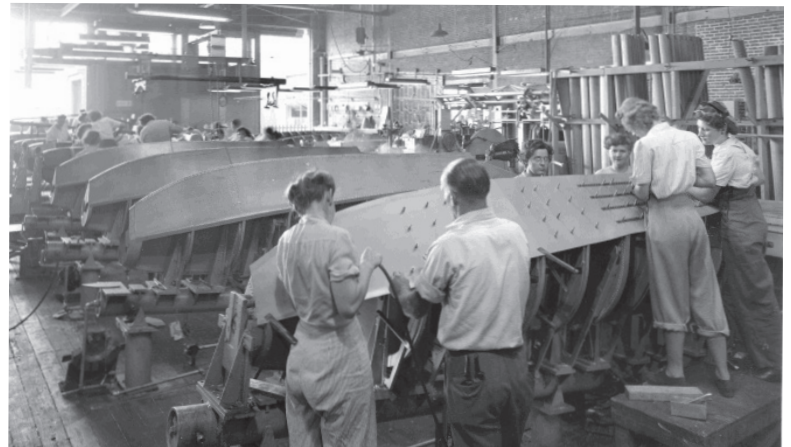
(Photo and information courtesy of the Delaware Public Archives).

Civilian women working in Delaware defense plants during the war

Many hundreds of Delaware women, like millions of American women across the country, came forward during World War II to fill jobs formerly held by men now serving in the military—and in some cases taking on entirely new types of jobs as new technologies and new industrial needs emerged during the war. The photos on this page and the next one are taken from a collection of photos of Delaware women at work during the war in the Delaware Public Archives. The jobs filled by women were not without their dangers. An explosion at a Milford, Delaware, munitions factory in 1943 took the lives of five Delaware civilian women defense workers and injured others (see page 74).



Inspection of DuPont Nylon parachutes after test flight.



Women working on airplane parts at Bellanca Aircraft plant, New Castle.

When the men returned home after the war, many of these jobs were lost to women, but not all. The war had brought permanent changes in the status of women in the workplace and in the kinds of employment open to them.



(Above left) 30-ton crane operator at DuPont plant, Wilmington.



(Above right) Women industrial workers.



(Above) Woman drilling at a New Castle airplane assembly plant.



(Above) Women filled many men's jobs at the Pennsylvania Railroad shops in Wilmington.

(Below) A woman welding a seam on a fuel tank at the Bellanca Aircraft plant in New Castle.



(Above) Woman working in a factory.



HELEN (WENDT) KNAPP

Enlisted in Aug 1944, discharged in May 1946 as Y2c. Boot camp NTS(WR) Hunter College, NY. Duty station/school: Yeoman School, NTS Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, IA; Bureau of Ships, Washington, DC until discharge. Married, two daughters, four grandchildren. Reside in New Castle, DE. No doubt the best decision I made in life was the day I went to the Paramount Theatre in NYC to see Frank Sinatra. I worked on 44th St. at Warner Bros. Pictures in the Foreign Exchange. The movie before the main feature at the Paramount was a Navy PR film. The story told of a woman after the war showing her daughters her album about the part she played in the war effort — boot camp, yeoman school, and her work in the nation's capital all told an impressive story. Hunter was familiar ground as I graduated from school in the Bronx. The Midwesterners were surprised we had trees in the Bronx, as well as the much publicized one in Brooklyn! While at Cedar Falls, I spent many weekends on farms and learned to know and love the farm area, as well as the wonderful families who loved their country and their land. The Navy taught me love of people and the experience prepared me for life. I worked in a people-oriented business, with people from all over the country, and climbed the ladder with success attributed to my Navy experience. I will always be thankful the Lord led me to this wonderful experience.

***Pauline 'Polly' Cervený (Holloway) Wilson***

*Pharmacist's Mate Second Class
– United States Navy WAVES
1943-1945*

Polly Wilson grew up in Richmond, VA and enlisted in the USN WAVES in 1943, and like so many other women during World War II, answered the call to service, joining on September 3 in Los Angeles, CA and becoming active on September 19, when she boarded a transport train for Hunter College in New York City, NY for training. After training she was stationed with the Hospital



Corps in Bainbridge, MD, helping care for wounded sailors who had returned from the war at sea. She was honorably discharged from the WAVES on October 15, 1945 in Washington, DC.

After the war she settled in Delaware, met her husband, H. Blake Wilson, and made the First State her home for over 60 years, living in both Wilmington and Newark. She became a member in 1983 of the WAVES of Delaware Unit 10 chapter of the WAVES National Organization, serving a term as chapter president and participating as an active member, recruiting new members, keeping minutes, assisting with the newsletter, and helping maintain enthusiasm high among her fellow WAVES. At age 99, she now lives near her family in a life-care residence in Madison, MS, but still considers herself a Delawarean and maintains her active membership in Delaware WAVES Unit 10, now renamed the First State Military Women Warriors Unit 10, a local chapter of Military Women Across the Nation. She keeps in regular contact with her fellow members and has returned in recent years to attend chapter meetings.

Harriet B. Rose, Private, Women's Army Corps

Harriet Stager Rose served in the WACs during World War II. She was a cook and a supply clerk both in Cheyenne, Wyoming and at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. She left the Army on April 4, 1946, in order to be married, since married women were not allowed to serve at the time. Mrs. Rose, now 93, lives in Dover.

***Dorothy Johnson Harrison, U.S. Army***

Dorothy Johnson Harrison entered the Army on January 3, 1945 at Fort Oglethorpe, GA. She went to El Paso, Texas for training to be an X-ray technician. She was ultimately stationed at Westover Field, MA, where she worked as an EKG technician. She was discharged in 1946.



Mary Louise Wharton (Richardson) of Dover, U.S. Navy, 1943 – 1945

Mary Louise Wharton Richardson was born on January 22, 1915. She graduated from Dover High School and Keystone State Teachers College in Pennsylvania. From 1936 until 1941, she taught grades 1-6 for the Walker School in Smyrna and Taylor's Bridge School in rural New Castle County.

During the war, Mary enlisted at the Navy Recruiting Station in Wilmington and reported on August 2, 1943 in Philadelphia for recruit training. Her degree gave her the opportunity for advanced rating in the WAVES. She was sent to Storekeeper school and learned how to store, issue, and account for aviation supplies and parts. Mary was assigned to Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Ellyson Field near Pensacola, Florida. Her next duty station was



NAAS, Whiting Field nearby.

Mary performed heavy duty and was a Navy version of "Rosie the Riveter." Her devoted service enabled hundreds of planes to fly, thousands of pilots to be trained, and seaman to serve aboard ships.

Mary was honorably discharged at the Naval Auxiliary Air Station in Pensacola on September 5, 1945. For her service, Mary received the following awards: American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Honorable Service lapel pin. When she returned to Dover, she taught at Dover Elementary School from 1945-1960 and

Arnold Elementary School on Dover Air Force Base from 1960-1978. She died January 16, 2004 in Dover.

(Photo and information courtesy of Ann Baker Horsey)

Pauline Marian Salamon (Davis) U. S. Army Nurse Corps

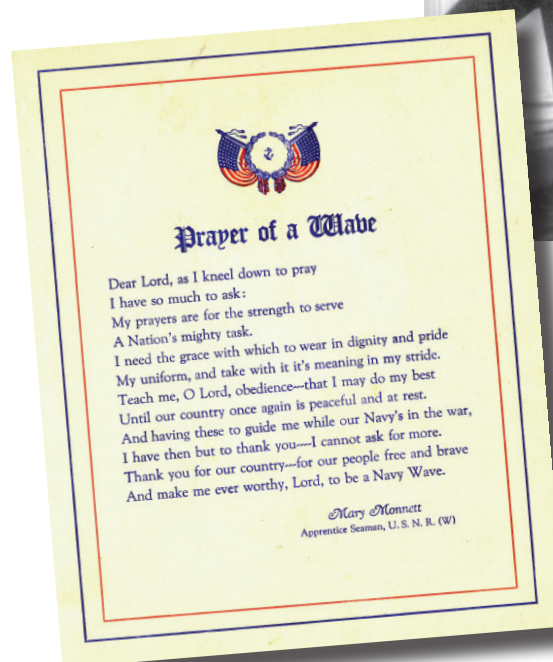


Pauline Davis was born in 1923 in Wilmington, Delaware. She graduated from Wilmington High School and Delaware Hospital School of Nursing, where she became a Registered Nurse. During the war she served at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey and at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. She worked as a Physician's Assistant after the war until 1982, when she retired. Pauline died July 29, 1996 in Dover.

(Photo and information courtesy of Ann Baker Horsey & the Delaware Public Archives)

US Navy Yeoman Helen A. Wendt (Knapp) of Wilmington, 1945

*Both from Mrs. Knapp's
photo album containing
pictures and memorabilia
of her World War II
service in the U.S. Navy*



First Lieutenant Ruth Haddick Dorsman, European Theater, WW II, 1921 – 2016

Ruth Haddick was a registered nurse and proudly served her country in the Army Nurse Corps from 1942 to 1946 during World War II. Her unit landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day plus six, June 12, 1944 and she served as a Post-Op nurse caring for critically wounded soldiers in a Field Hospital that followed the front line across Europe toward Berlin. She recalled that they were regularly two to three miles behind the front lines.



nal article, "German paratroops started landing behind us, so we were moved back into Belgium. The snow was knee-deep and it was very cold. We set up in a school with 18 nurses and 6 or 8 doctors. We were very busy. We were taking in more patients than we had room for." Lt. Dorsman's unit was on the outskirts of Berlin when the war ended. She earned five battle stars.

She served in an Army field hospital during the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944, remembering in a 1994 *News Jour-*

(Photo and information courtesy of Brig. Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr., DE ANG, Ret.)

Dorothy Levitsky Sinner and Ellan Levitsky Orkan of Milford, World War II Army Nurses, awarded French Legion of Honor in 2012 ceremony

In a ceremony at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. in October, 2012, Milford sisters Dorothy and Ellan Levitsky were among 13 World War II veterans to be honored as Knights of the Legion of Honor. 1Lt. Ellan J. Levitsky and 2Lt. Dorothy F. Levitsky both served as nurses with the 164th Field Hospital in World War II. The sisters first arrived in Normandy several months after the D-Day

invasion and also served in northwest Europe during the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944. They were not separated during their service.

After the war, Dorothy worked as a nurse at the VA hospital in Elsmere for 28 years. She passed away at age 98 on Dec. 22, 2015. Her younger sister, Ellan, survives her.



(Left) The Levitsky sisters at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. in Oct., 2012, wearing their new Legion of Honor decorations. Dorothy is at left and Ellan at right.



(Center and Right) The sisters in Normandy, 1944, and visiting the Omaha Beach Cemetery at the Normandy D-Day invasion site in 2006.



(Photos courtesy of Ellan Levitsky Orkan and Rep. Harvey Kenton)

Colonel Louisa Spruance Morse, Civil Air Patrol (1912 – 2009)

Col. Louisa Spruance Morse was a Civil Air Patrol ground instructor in World War II and rose to serve as commander of the Delaware Wing for 23 years. Col. Morse died in Wilmington in 2009 at age 96.

“Louisa was irreplaceable and will be remembered for all time as a pioneering leader in America’s Air Force auxiliary,” said Brig. Gen. Richard L. Anderson, one of two CAP national commanders who served under her as a cadet.

One of only two women inducted into CAP’s Hall of Honor, Morse was active in the organization for more than 60 years, starting as a ground instructor in World War II and rising to serve as commander of the Delaware Wing for 23 years. She was Delaware’s first — and only — female wing commander and also became the first woman to serve on CAP’s National Executive Committee when she was appointed commander of the Middle East Region. In addition, she made major contributions as CAP’s national controller and as founder of the organization’s National Historical Committee.

Morse was a true trailblazer, breaking new ground throughout her lengthy and productive career. During World War II she was a Red Cross first aid instructor in Wilmington. She studied to become an aviation ground instructor and became certified by the Civil Aeronautics Authority. She enlisted in CAP as a private in November 1942 and began teaching officers the basics of navigation, meteorology and civil air regulations, though she herself was not a pilot.

“I was not a pilot, but I’d done a lot of Red Cross instruction,” Morse said in an interview in 2006 for the Civil Air Patrol Volunteer’s 65th anniversary issue. “In those days of the civilian pilot training corps, kids were given ground instruction before they went in the military to get a head start on flying.”

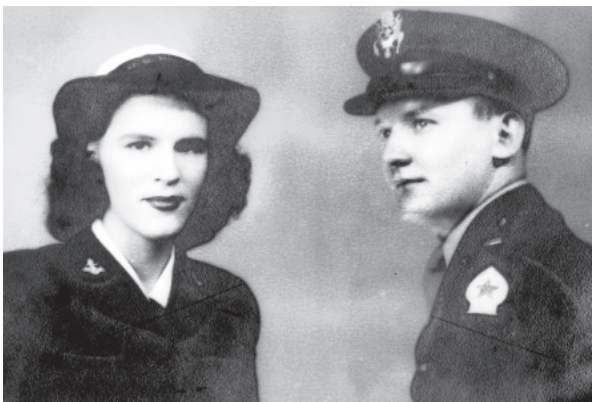
In 1953 she was appointed Delaware Wing commander, and she served diligently until 1976. She was named Wing Commander of the Year for 1969 among CAP’s 52 wing commanders before her appointment in 1976 to the National Executive Committee as Middle East Region commander. She held that post for three years before becoming the national controller of CAP for the next three years. Before she relinquished the post in 1983, Morse was inducted into the CAP Hall of Honor.

(Photo and information courtesy of Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.)



Col. Louisa Spruance Morse early in her Civil Air Patrol career wore the uniform CAP officers wore from December 1944 to August 1951.

Mrs. Jane T. Steele of Newark, Delaware, United States Navy, World War II



Two photos of Mrs. Steele as a member of the United States Navy. She is shown at left with her husband, circa 1945.



Sergeant Rose Mary Dolan (Ralph), U.S. Marine Corps, 1945 – 1946

In 1945 the United States Marine Corps' recruitment posters showed a woman responding to the logo "Be a Marine, Free a Marine to Fight." Rose Mary Dolan (Ralph) enlisted for the duration of the war, plus six months. Boot Camp was carried out at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

Overseas, the battle of Iwo Jima was in its early stages, and Drill Sergeant Seagraves gave Rose Mary's platoon whatever new details were revealed about how the battle was progressing each day in February.

Rose Mary and another recruit, Joan H., had formed a friendship early in their training, one based on quite similar interests. Their attitudes were surprisingly similar, too. They would serve gladly in any situation, as long as they were not sent to Washington, D.C. as clerk typists, as most of the current recruits were assigned. An opportunity to serve as cook strikers (with on-the-job training) at Henderson Hall (outside Washington) was presented to the two "boots." What was never considered were the extent



of heavy physical labor, wearing combat boots (boondockers), odd duty hours, and the temptation to overeat the leftover food, especially, eggs.

Women Marines enlisted individually and, likewise, separated the service individually, with each returning back home, as did many of their male counterparts. Joan and husband Pete returned to Altoona, Pennsylvania.

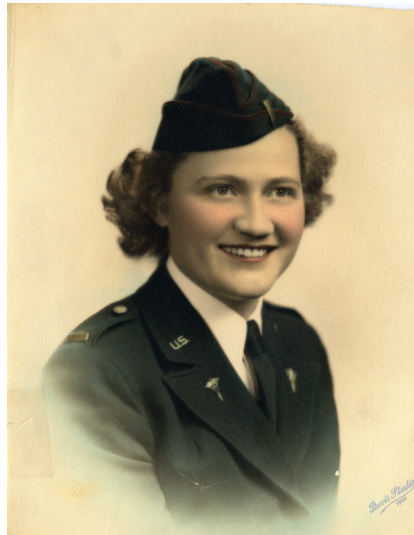
Other friends followed suit: Evelyn and Richard to Louisville, Kentucky; Don to Troy, New York (where he married Claire); and Riley Bill to Carbondale, Illinois (marrying soon, thereafter). Rose Mary, husband Bill, and family ended up in Dover, Delaware after several other Air Force duty stations to which Bill was assigned. With the ending of World War II and everyone's return to civilian life, the friendships formed while serving their country continued through yearly correspondence, well into the 1990s.

Lieutenant Catherine T. Harrity (Johnson), U.S. Army Nurse Corps, 1942 – 1946

Catherine T. Harrity (1921–1993) was born in Wilmington. After graduating from St. Francis School of Nursing in 1942, Catherine enlisted in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps as a reserve nurse, attaining the rank of Second Lieutenant. From Nov., 1942, until Dec., 1944, she was stationed in various base hospitals, including Fort Dix, NJ, Station Hospital, MS, and Ream General Hospital in Palm Beach, FL.

Before departing by ship to serve at a base hospital in England, Lt. Harrity was informed of her destination in the confessional by a Catholic priest. This was one of the confidential methods of communication sometimes used to protect military personnel.

During her service in the European Theatre, Lt. Harrity was also stationed at the 197th General Hospital in St. Quentin, France. In February, 1946, she was honorably discharged with the rank of First Lieutenant.



Lt. Harrity in a formal studio portrait and with a group of her friends on base.

After her return to the U.S., Lt. Harrity resided in Wilmington, eventually marrying James F. Johnson and raising four daughters. She passed away in December, 1993.



First Lieutenant Mary C. Reese, U.S. Army Nurse Corps and Maryknoll Sisters

First Lieutenant Mary C. Reese of Wilmington served as a nurse in the U.S. Army from 1945 until 1946. She served first at Tilton General Hospital at Fort Dix, New Jersey, in the orthopedic section for over five months before getting an overseas assignment.

After leaving Fort Dix, she joined the 147th General Hospital in Honolulu, and served with this unit through a period of foreign duty. She served in the 147th as a general nurse in orthopedics and later as an operating room nurse.

Her awards include the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal.

Before joining the Army, Lt. Reese worked at St. Francis Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. She received her degree in nursing from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. (1945). She attended school at St. Ann's Elementary School, Wilmington, and Ursuline Academy, graduating in 1940, among others.

In October, 1946, after leaving the Army Nurse Corps, Lt. Reese became Sister Mary when she joined the Congregation of the Maryknoll Sisters of St Dominic, in which she has served until the present time—72 years.

In October, 1953, she was assigned to work as a missionary at Kowak in the United Republic of Tanganyika (later



known as Tanzania) as a nurse midwife. Later, she worked in Nassa and at the Government Hospital in Mwanza. Sister Mary then went to Kenya, where she served at Kinango Hospital near Mombasa as a staff nurse.

From 1972 to 1975, Mary was the Head Nurse in Charge at the Maryknoll Sisters Health Center, Bethany Maryknoll, NY.

She returned to Tanzania in 1975, where she was involved in a national maternity and health program for five years. In 1980 she was assigned to the Cathedral Parish in Musoma, where she worked in pastoral ministry and with women's groups, until 1995.

In 1995 Sister Mary became involved with the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which was showing signs of devastation in

Musoma. She started the Youth Alive Center to respond to the young people, orphans, and vulnerable children, as well as people living and dying with AIDS. This center, renamed the Community Alive Center in 2008, remains very active to this day, providing more than 300 children with education essential for their future, as well as support to men and women who find at the Center ways they can cope and learn to live with hope.

On March 7, 2010, after 57 years, she returned to the Maryknoll Sisters Center, Rogers Community in Ossining, NY where she is engaged in many volunteer activities with the elderly until the present time.

YN2 Anne Theresa Lynch, USN, World War II and US Navy Reserve

Yeoman Second Class (YN2) Anne Theresa Lynch (1924-2008), native of Wilmington, Delaware, enlisted in the United States Navy's WAVES after graduating from Alexis I. duPont High School during World War II.

She attended basic training at Hunter College in New York City. She was assigned to the Army's Chemical Warfare Center at Camp Detrick. Following the war, she continued to serve in the U.S. Naval Reserves until 1953. After the war and using her G.I. Bill benefits, she studied business at Beacom College. During her life she worked at the DuPont Company and Hercules Powder Company.



First Lt. Elizabeth A. Feldhusen, U.S. Army Nurse Corps, 1943-1945

First Lt. Elizabeth A. Feldhusen served in the U.S. Army at Fort DuPont in Delaware City, Delaware from 1943 until 1944. Lt. Feldhusen joined the Army on July 1, 1943. Her first duty station was Fort DuPont in Delaware City, Delaware, where she served until 1944.

Elizabeth was transferred next to the 131st Evacuation Hospital out of Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Along with her unit she sailed on the RMS Queen Elizabeth on her way to the European Theatre during World War II.



While in Europe, Elizabeth served in various evacuation hospitals in France, Germany, and Austria. After the German military surrendered, the 131st was assigned in Austria

near a concentration camp in order to take care of recently liberated Polish and Russian prisoners.

During her lifetime, Elizabeth was appointed an assistant district supervising nurse for the New York State Health Department (1957). She was a lifetime member of the New Jersey Audubon Society, donor to the New York/ New Jersey Trail Conference, and served as corresponding secretary for the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc.

Elizabeth A. Feldhusen was born in Brooklyn, New York, April 21, 1918. In her youth, Elizabeth was a member of the girl scouts.

She graduated from the Girls High School of Brooklyn in June 1936. Following high school, she worked various jobs until attending a 3-year nursing program through Kings County Hospital. During that time she attended night school at New York University.

To hear an oral history interview with Lt. Feldhusen, go to the National Holocaust Museum website at: <http://collections.ushmm.org/> and under "Search" type in "Elizabeth Feldhusen." The number of her oral history interview is:

Oral History | RG Number: RG-50.344.0003

Carobelle Sutton Hanssmann, USN, 1915 – 2017

Carobelle Sutton Hanssmann was born in Wilmington and was an early student at Tower Hill School and later a scholarship student at the Misses Hebb's School for Girls, which was succeeded by the Tatnall School, where, In 1932, she was in its first graduating class. She was then



awarded a 4-year college scholarship. Unable to accept it because of the Great Depression, she trained to be a medical technologist at Hahnemann University in Philadelphia. Carobelle then worked at the Homeopathic Hospital in Wilmington and in the medical department at the DuPont Powder Plant in Childersburg, Alabama.

From there, on 1/21/1943, Carobelle enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a W.A.V.E. and went to boot camp at Iowa State Teachers' College in Cedar Falls, Iowa. She was stationed at the U.S. Naval Hospital in San Diego, CA where she served as a PhM/c for 2.5 years.

In 1944, Carobelle married Charles Hanssmann from Philadelphia, who was serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. Returning to Wilmington she worked for 10 years as a research assistant in the Research Department at the A.I. DuPont Institute and then for MedLab, from which she retired.

Mary Claudia Jones Barthelmeh, U.S. Army, World War II

Mary Claudia Jones Barthelmeh (No photograph available) was an Army cadet nurse who graduated from Emory College. She is 94 years old and currently lives in Dover.

Mrs. Barthelmeh is the mother of three children, Audrey E. Jones, Lucilla Esham, and Buck Jones.

Artishia Conaway Stephens of Georgetown, Delaware served as a sergeant with the Tuskegee Airmen of the U.S. Army Air Corps

Artishia M. Conaway Stephens (1924–2011) was born and raised in Georgetown, Delaware. She was a 1940 graduate of Howard High School in Wilmington and later graduated from the Berean Business College of Philadelphia. Her daughter, Judge Marcealeate S. Ruffin, recalls that Artishia wanted to attend Wilberforce University in Ohio but her parents thought that was too far from home and sent her to Berean instead. “Her plan was to attend Berean for a semester and then drop out, wasting her parents’ money. The plan backfired and she graduated.” From 1943 until 1945, she was employed as a stenographer at the Afro-American Newspaper in Philadelphia.



She served in the U. S. Army Air Corps from 1945 to 1949, attaining the rank of staff sergeant. After attending the Army clerk school in Des Moines, Iowa, she was assigned as a stenographer at Lockbourne Army Air Base in Columbus, Ohio. She was later assigned to the 99th Pursuit Squadron, commanded by Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who later became the first four-star general in the U.S. Air Force.

Upon her return to civilian life, Mrs. Stephens became a senior secretary at William C. Jason Comprehensive High School in Georgetown, and remained there when it became the first campus of Delaware Technical and Community College, working as the Owens Campus bookkeeper. She retired after 39 years of state service.

Sergeant Artishia Conaway Stephens of Georgetown, Delaware, who served in the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the famed Tuskegee Airmen just after World War II. She is shown above right receiving an Army Commendation Medal for exemplary performance from her commanding officer, Colonel (later 4-star general) Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Davis was the fourth black man to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he was a member of the class of 1936.

(Information and photos courtesy of Judge Marcealeate Stephens Ruffin and Stephanie A. Stephens)

First Lieutenant Mae A. Montague Bowen, U.S. Army Nurse Corps, 1943

First Lieutenant Mae A. Montague Bowen served in the U.S. Army's 45th Field Hospital in the European Theatre of Operations, making the Utah Beach landing on D-Day. She served as a registered general duty nurse.

Upon honorable separation, she was a first lieutenant. She married on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23, 1944, in Bastogne, Belgium, just before the Battle of the Bulge.



Carolyn Hollenback Brown, U.S. Army, 1951 –1954



Carolyn Hollenbeck Brown was born July 13, 1925, in Hudson, N.Y. She joined the U.S. Army in 1951 and served as a clerk typist in the Provost Marshal's office at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, as part of the Fourth U.S. Army.

She married US Air Force Airman 1st Class Walter E. Brown Jr. on Dec. 4, 1953, and was discharged for pregnancy on Feb. 19, 1954. She attained the rank of corporal during her term of service.

She was the mother of five children, a grandmother and great-grandmother, as well as a talented artist.

She died in Dover, Delaware, at age 92 on July 10, 2018.



Mrs. Brown's eldest son, Jeff Brown, a reporter for the Dover POST newspaper, gave an American flag that was presented to the Brown family in her memory at her funeral to the State of Delaware. It will be on display at the Delaware Public Archives on November 3, 2018, and will become part of the state museum collection thereafter.

Lieutenant Joan Lynn of Dover, U.S. Navy nurse during the Korean War



Three U.S. Navy nurses during the Korean War: the one in the center is Lt. Joan Lynn of Dover. Mrs. Lynn's father, brother, husband and son also served in the Navy. Another son served in the Air Force.

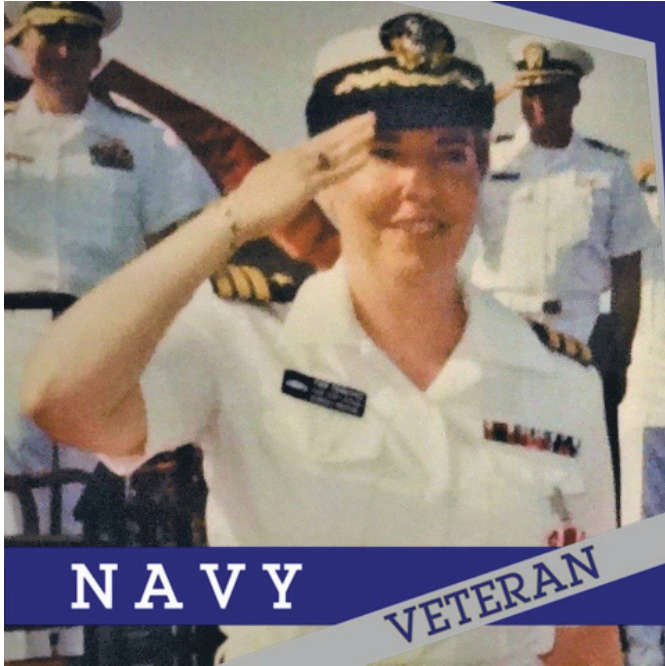
Lieutenant Margaret Ann Secora Tos of Dover, U.S. Army nurse during the Korean War



Lt. Tos served as a U.S. Army nurse during the Korean War. She served from March, 1950, to March, 1952. She and her husband, Leo Joseph Tos, settled in Dover in 1960, where he was stationed in the Air Force and remained after his retirement. Mrs. Tos served for many years as a school nurse.

Mother and Daughter in Service – Commander Pat Cerchio, USN, Retired, and her mother, Elizabeth Lawton Cerchio, USN

A Native of Wilmington, DE and daughter of WWII WAVE, Elizabeth Lawton (Cerchio). Patricia A. Cerchio served over 23 years as an Unrestricted Line Officer in the Navy, specializing in Shore Station Management and Acquisition.



Patricia was commissioned through Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, RI in 1979. She became the first woman officer on the staff of an Aviation Training Squadron (VT-86) in Pensacola, FL.

Her next assignment was at the Navy Command Center at the Pentagon. Then she was selected to be the Business and Financial Manager at the Joint Cruise Missile Project Office (JCMPO), where she managed a \$1.5 Billion budget and bought all the Tomahawk Missiles used during Operation Desert Storm. During this tour, she was selected as one of the first six women lieutenants to be acquisition professionals.

Her only overseas assignment was at the Joint Command Center in Seoul, Korea. Then it was back to Washington, DC, and the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command as the Installation Engineer and later Production Engineer for the Navy's version of the MilStar Satellite Communication System.

In addition to working on the aviation side of the Navy, she also had the privilege of serving with the other two major warfare communities. She served with the Surface Warfare Community as the Executive Officer, second in command, at Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity (SIMA) in Philadelphia, at Naval Education and Training Center in Newport, RI and AEGIS Training & Readiness Center (ATRC) in Dahlgren, VA. Starting with a small shore command with about 400 personnel, this led up to a major one with over 1,000 personnel over seven locations.

During the later part of her career, Patricia had three tours with the Submarine Warfare Community at Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) commands. These included her command tour at their base in New London, CT, where she brought the research center and base through transition and relocation to Newport, RI, and finally as the Chief Staff Officer, second in command, at Division Headquarters in Newport prior to her retirement. The Division Headquarters was responsible for over 10,000 people at locations along the East coast of the US and the Bahamas.

During her command tour, she was responsible for approximately 1,200 military and government personnel, plus over 2,000 contractors and some tenant commands including: Coast Guard Station New London and the Cutter Point Francis. Due to size of her base's pier they had frequent visits from the Coast Guard's Tallship, the Barque, *Eagle* and each of the new Ballistic Missile Submarines, often at the same time.

Patricia took command, 7 July 1995, 50 years to the week, from 10 July 1945, the day her mother, Elizabeth "Betty" Lawton (Cerchio) enlisted in the WAVES during WWII. Betty probably never imagined a woman taking command in the Navy of anything except a WAVES unit, let alone that her future daughter would become the first US Navy Woman in charge of a submarine-centric command.

Following Patricia's retirement, she relocated to Magnolia, DE. She joined the First State WAVES and led the organization



Mother and Daughter in Service

during its transition to the First State Military Women Warriors. She remains a tireless advocate for the military, but especially for her beloved “Sailors, the most amazing people on the planet.”

Hospital Apprentice First Class Elizabeth “Betty” Lawton (Cerchio) enlisted in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) on 10 July 1945. She attended Boot Camp and Hospital Corps School at Hunter College in The Bronx, NY. Prior to joining the WAVES, Betty had been an executive secretary for a large firm in Philadelphia, where she was known for her speed and accuracy in typing. The Navy chose to train her as a Hospital Corpsman while training others in her Boot Camp Class as Yeoman (clerical rating).

Her first duty station was the Naval Hospital at Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. After a few months, she moved to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD where she flew on medivac flights with Transport Squadron VR-1. She was about to start training as a Flight Nurse when most of the WAVES were demobilized in 1946.

A few years after she left the Navy, she married Alfred Cerchio of Wilmington, Delaware; who had built ships at the Philadelphia Navy Yard during the war because he was too old to enlist. They had three children, two sons, and a daughter, Patricia Ann, who became a Commander in the Navy.

Betty also was one of the original members of the First State WAVES, the predecessor to the First State Military Women Warriors.

Dr. Hazel W. Johnson-Brown of Wilmington First African American Woman General of the U.S. Army

Dr. Hazel W. Johnson-Brown of Wilmington, DE, formerly of Chester County, First African American Woman General, (Ret.) of the U. S. Army. Born October 10, 1927 in West Chester, PA, she was the daughter of the late, Clarence L. Johnson Sr. and Garnett Henley Johnson.

Entering the Army Nurse Corps in 1955, General Johnson-Brown served for the first 12 years in various positions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the 8169th Hospital, Japan; Madigan General Hospital; 45th Surgical Hospital; and Fort Sam Houston and Valley Forge General Hospital. From 1967 to 1973, she was assigned as the project director at the US Army Medical Research and Development Command in the Army Medical Department field hospital system.

Upon completion of her doctoral studies, she was appointed Director of the Walter Reed Army Institute for Nursing; the Office of the Surgeon; the 8th Army Command; and Chief, Department of Nursing, US Army Hospital/121 Evacuation Hospital, Seoul, Korea. In these positions, she was the senior ranking US military nurse in South Korea and the Chief Consultant for Nursing Matters to the Senior Medical Officer, 8th Army Command. In 1979, she was selected to the position of Chief, Army Nurse Corps, and promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. General Johnson-Brown became: the 16th Chief of the Army Nurse Corp; the first Chief holding an earned doctorate; the 4th chief to hold the rank of Brigadier General; and the first Black woman General in the history of the US Military Services. Dr. Johnson-Brown died on Friday, August 5, 2011.



Brigadier General Hazel W. Johnson-Brown

Mother and daughter: Veronica E. Weaver, United States Air Force, and First Sergeant Vickie L. Weaver, United States Army

Veronica E. Weaver,
A/2C U.S.A.F.

Ms. Weaver served on active duty from August 10, 1954 until July 18, 1956. She was an AC & W Operator. and was honorably discharged.

Mrs. Weaver currently lives in Dover.



First Sergeant Vickie L. Weaver, a graduate of Smyrna High School, served on active duty with the U.S. Army from December 12, 1980 to July 17, 1986. She served in the U.S. Army Reserve from July 18, 1986 to July 2, 2004, when she was honorably discharged. Her military occupational specialties were 95B and 71L.



Beth Rosebrooks of Dover played a key role in the Cold War as a U.S. Navy Ocean Systems Technician Analyst

Beth Rosebrooks (Clark, Anderson)
of Dover, Delaware, U.S. Navy Ocean
Systems Technician Analyst (OTA),
1985-1989, Cold War

By Beth Rosebrooks

As an OTA, I operated equipment connected to underwater sensors for detection, classification and tracking of targets of interest. OTA's were a key part of the integrated Undersea Surveillance System (USS) and a major player in Anti-Submarine Warfare. During the Cold War there was no direct combat between the Eastern Bloc (Russia and its satellite states) and the Western Bloc (United States and Nato Allies and others).

Anti-Submarine Warfare was a constant battle of readiness and involved espionage and war games. The U.S. was trying to suppress Soviet expansion and eliminate Communism.



Both sides were heavily armed and both knew that when the first nuclear weapon fired, there was the potential to end the world as most know it to be.

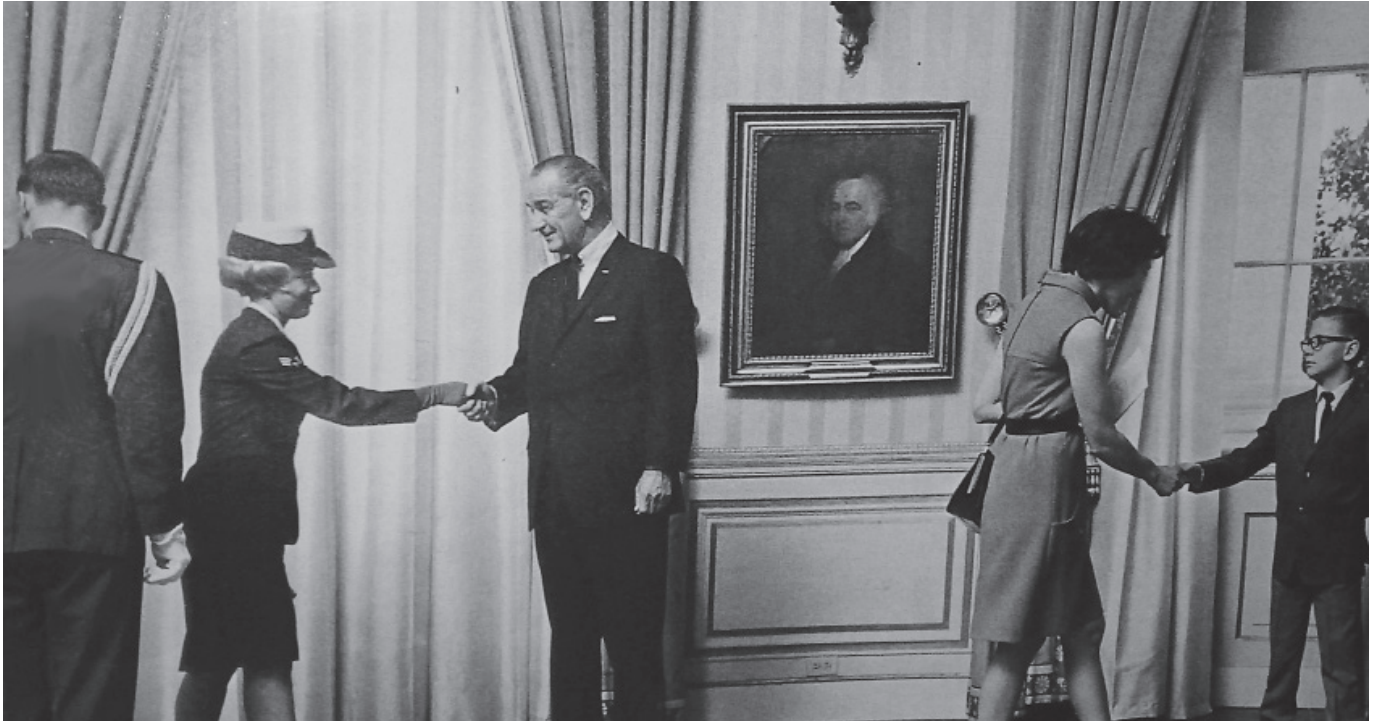
An OTA's job was to detect, track, and identify both enemy and friendly undersea and surface marine traffic. Most of this was done from land-based facilities all over the world requiring Top Secret clearances. We were trained not only to do our jobs while on duty, but to always be on the lookout for Russian spies off duty. OTA's were a known commodity to Russia because of our knowledge of the tracking details within the U.S. Submarine Fleet.

When the Cold War ended and Communism fell in Eastern Europe in approximately 1989, a large part of the OTA rating was no longer needed and it was downsized.



Dover Air Force Base WAF Squadron, 1970. Women were integrated into regular Air Force units in the early 1970's. This was also true of the other military services.

Service during the 1960's and 1970's



Antoinette Bergfelder served in the United States Air Force from 1963 until 1968 at McGuire Air Force Base and finishing her service on Capitol Hill in the Air Force Liaison Office. She is currently serving her 7th year as Board Secretary for The Home of the Brave in Milford. In this photograph, she is shown shaking hands with President Lyndon B. Johnson at The White House. First Lady Ladybird Johnson greets a young visitor at right.

Lynn Hershey Miller of Dover served in the U.S. Air Force from 1966 until 1972

Lynn Hershey Miller completed basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in 1966. After that she was assigned to Amarillo Air Force Base in Texas for administrative training. Her first permanent assignment was Eglin Air Force Base in Flor-

ida where she worked as a keypunch operator on an IBM 026 card punch machine for 2 ½ years. She also worked extra shifts to learn computer operations.



In January 1969, she volunteered for a 3-year tour of duty at Hickman Air Force Base in Hawaii. There she was assigned to HQ PACAF and worked at the message center.

During the Vietnam War, Miller had a top secret security clearance, cross-trained into the computer field and was reassigned to the Data Center where she supervised computer operations until her honorable discharge in February 1972. She currently works with many veterans as she is the Kent County Mentor Coordinator for the Delaware Superior Court Veterans Treatment Court.

Martha E. Ridley Collins, USN

Martha E. Ridley (now Martha Collins) was born in Dover, Delaware in 1933. She graduated from Dover High School in 1951. In September, 1954, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy in Wilmington, Delaware. Her training was in Bainbridge, Maryland. She then went to U.S. Navy Teleman School in San Diego from January 10, 1955 to April 1, 1955. She was stationed at NAVCOMSTA – San Francisco from April 1, 1955 until December 14, 1956. She was discharged on December 14, 1956 and currently resides in Dover.

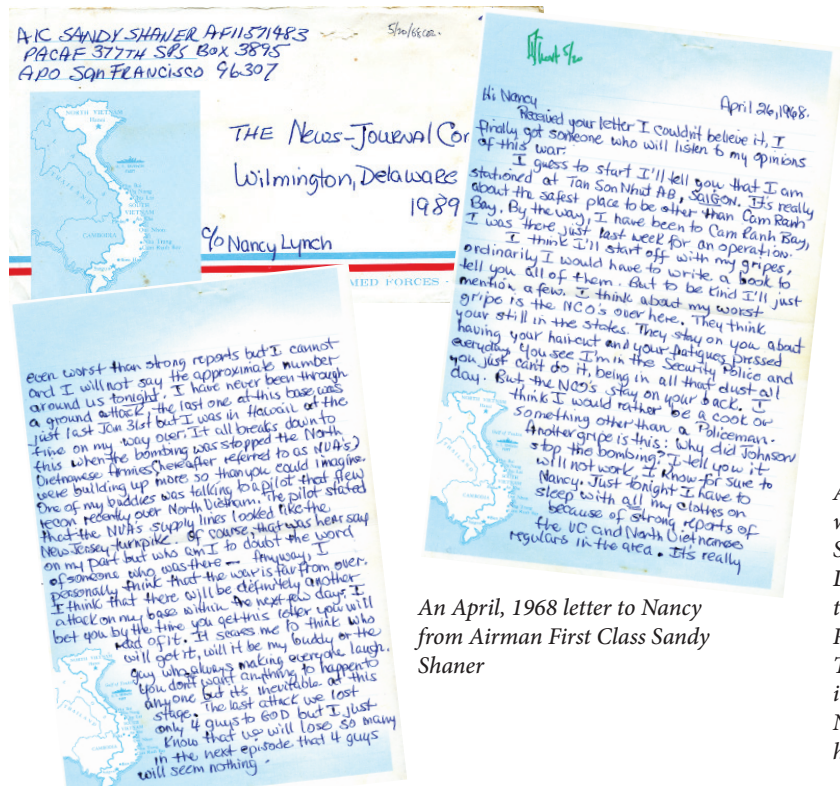


Delaware Women in service during the Vietnam War: the Vietnam Mailbag Collection

Nancy E. Lynch became a general assignment reporter for the *Wilmington News Journal* in the late 1960's, shortly after her graduation from the University of Delaware. In 1968 she was asked by her editors to begin corresponding through a regular weekly column with several hundred Delaware servicemen (and women) serving in Vietnam. This column became "Nancy's Vietnam Mailbag" and it became one of the pivotal experiences of her life. The column ran from 1968 to 1972 and involved many hundreds

of letters back and forth, letters which quickly took on an importance far beyond the borders of Delaware.

Decades later this project resulted in an equally remarkable book by Nancy, *Vietnam Mailbag, Voices from the War, 1968-1972*, published in 2008. The original letters and other materials are now in the collections of the Delaware Public Archives. We share a sampling of them here with you.



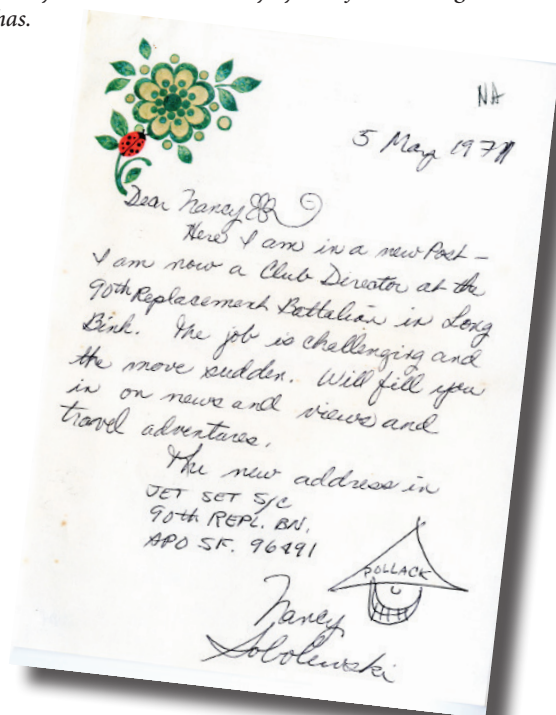
An April, 1968 letter to Nancy from Airman First Class Sandy Shaner



A May, 1969 photo of two young women serving in Vietnam with the American Red Cross, Christina A. Reichel (left) of Silver Spring, MD, and Nancy B. Sebolewski of Newark, DE. They had gone to Vietnam on one-year tours of duty to conduct morale-boosting recreation programs through the Red Cross Supplemental Recreational Activities program. They were two of 100 young Red Cross women then serving in Vietnam with that program. In a May, 1971 letter, below, Nancy Sebolewski tells Nancy Lynch of a new assignment she has.



U.S. Army Nurse Lieutenant Valerie Sloboda sent Nancy pictures of her putting up Christmas decorations in her hospital ward in Vietnam at Christmastime, 1970. She sent a later letter telling Nancy how much their exchange of letters had meant to her.



The Post Vietnam War Era

By Colonel Debbie Bazemore-Harrington

Women have served in every major war in U.S. history. After proving their capacity for combat, opportunities for military women usually expanded following each conflict. The end of the Vietnam War and the all male draft, along with the influence of the Feminist Movement put military women on a path for inclusion with every right afforded their male counterpart, although it took more than forty years after Vietnam to reach equality, as such. Consider the historical timeline of women in the Post Vietnam Era.

Timeline

1973	The “only males” draft ended and the military purposely recruited more women to make up for the personnel shortages. Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional inequities in benefits for dependents of military women. The Navy accepted its first woman chaplain and the first Navy women earned military pilot wings.
1974	Under threat of lawsuits, Pentagon decided to stop mandatory separation from service of pregnant women.
1975	The United States Coast Guard Academy became the first to admit women. Sgt. Leigh Hester became the first woman in U.S. military history to earn the Silver Star having been in direct combat action.
1976	Congress opened other military academies to women.
1977	U.S. Coast guard opened all its jobs to women. Men and women integrated into the same basic and advanced individual training units.
1978	Women were allowed to serve on Navy hospital and transport ships, after restrictions deemed unconstitutional. The Women’s Army Corps was deactivated.
1979	November 1979, 2nd Lt Marcella Hayes becomes the first black female pilot in the U.S. Armed Force when she graduates from Army Flight School.
1981	U.S. Supreme Court upheld the exclusion of women from Selective Service registration and military drafts.
1983	Women deployed in support of Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada as military police officers manning checkpoints, interrogators, and helicopter pilots.
1988	Pentagon task force established a “Risk Rule” to determine where women could serve.

1 Kovach, G. (2015). Chronology: Women’s long history in the military. Retrieved from <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/military/sdut-women-military-service-combat-armed-forces-2015feb14-story.html>.

Post Vietnam War Timeline

1989	Women were engulfed in combat during Panama invasion, including female pilots heavily fired on and military police officers engaged in an infantry-style firefight.
1990-1992	More than 40,000 women served in Persian Gulf war zone in support units, missile crews and aboard Navy tenders, constituting 7 percent of combat force. Long-range weaponry blurred boundary between front lines and the rear. 13 women killed and two were taken prisoner.
1991	Female troops were groped by drunken pilots at Tailhook Convention. Backlash coupled with Gulf War service provoked Pres. Clinton's administration to expand opportunities for military women. Navy put women in command of a naval station, an aviation squadron and a ship. Congress lifted ban on women serving in combat aviation.
1994	Pentagon rescinded its "risk rule" and permitted women to serve on most warships. Women began graduating from training as fighter pilots and other combat aviation jobs. New ground combat exclusion policy kept women out of infantry, tanks, artillery and special operations, as well as combat units of battalion size and smaller. Lt. Kara Hultgreen, 29, the Navy's first female aircraft carrier pilot, died in fatal carrier crash in San Diego after an engine malfunction. She was among Tailhook Convention victims of sexual harassment.
1998	Female aviators flew combat missions for first time, over Iraq no-fly zone.
2000	Two female sailors among 17 Americans were killed in bombing of destroyer USS Cole in Yemen.
2002	A female Marine killed in Pakistan plane crash was the first military woman to die in Afghanistan war.
2005	Army placed women in support units on Iraq front lines, citing manpower shortages. Debate about repealing or strengthening ground combat restrictions ensued. Sgt. Leigh Hester became the first woman in U.S. military history to earn the Silver Star for direct combat action
2008	Army Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody became the nation's first four-star female officer.
2011	Congressional commission recommended ending gender restrictions for all military career fields and combat exclusion policies that barred women from some 200,000 positions. Pentagon began the women in service review.

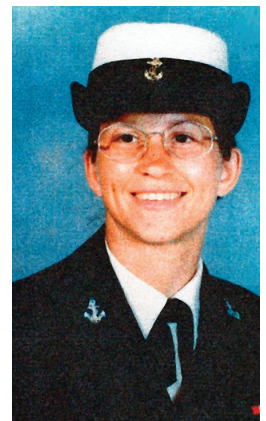
Post Vietnam War Timeline

2012	Two separate federal lawsuits by military women sought to overturn Pentagon restrictions on women in combat, calling them unconstitutional, detrimental to the military and outdated given contributions by women during 11 years at war. Defense Department scrapped its "co-location prohibition" on women serving with men in combat zones and announces that 14,000 positions will be opened to women on an experimental basis, including battalion-level support jobs in artillery, tank and combat engineer units. Services directed to develop "gender-neutral standards for physically demanding job related tasks."
2013	Defense Secretary Leon Panetta ended the direct ground combat exclusion policy and ordered services to open all assignments to women, including infantry, tanks and special operations forces, by Jan. 1, 2016.
2014	Marine Corps created experimental ground combat task force including women assigned to infantry, armor, tanks, artillery. Army selected 31 women who passed Ranger prep course to serve as observers/advisors at Army Ranger school.
2015	In January, Army decided to allow women to attend Ranger school in the spring. September 2015 was the deadline for services to develop and validate gender-neutral standards for all jobs. Decision on whether to ask for exception to bar women from infantry and other direct ground combat jobs expected. Cant Kristen Griest and 1st Lt Shaye Haver became the first women to graduate from Ranger School, August 21st.
2016	Jan 1, 2016 was the deadline for full integration of women into all military jobs, other than any granted exceptions. First 10 women graduated Infantry Officer Basic Course.
2017	First gender-integrated Infantry One Station Unit Training Company graduated the first women infantry noncommissioned officers in March 2017.

Nancy Neumann of Woodside, Delaware, USN, 1974 – 1978

Nancy Neumann grew up in Woodside, Delaware from 1961-1974. She early enlisted into the US Navy in 1973. After graduating from Caesar Rodney High School, Nancy flew to basic training in Orlando, Florida on June 20, 1974.

She was stationed for four years in Norfolk, Virginia at Cinclantfl Naval Air Station. She worked in two different fields. She was a Yeoman (secretary) for the admirals for two years and then a storekeeper for the Naval Supply on the same station. She was honorably discharged on June 20, 1978.



In the 1980's, women became increasingly integrated into full participation in Air Force flight operations



All Female C-5 Crew, Dover Air Force Base, 28 March 1988, all-female C-5 crew flew a European channel mission as part of the U.S. Air Force Women's History Month celebration.



The wing's first female C-5 pilot, 1Lt Gayle I. Westbrook, 3d Military Airlift Squadron, flew her first operational mission on Independence Day 1985. On April 24, 1987 Westbrook became the first female pilot in the 21st Air Force to be certified as an aircraft commander.

Linda Morelli — First airborne-qualified woman in Delaware National Guard and first woman to win military wings while in the Guard

Linda Morelli of Hockessin was Delaware Girl Student of the Year in 1973. Ever on the deans list and leader in sports at McKean High School, she had the “right stuff to soar with eagles.”

She enlisted in the Delaware Air National Guard in 1975 and was named “outstanding graduate” in basic training. In 1977, following graduation from the University of Delaware, she accepted a commission in the Delaware Army National Guard. Because of her impressive academic and military records, she was named aide-de-camp to a general, a first for a female in the Delaware National Guard.

In 1978, Miss Morelli became the first airborne-qualified female in the Delaware National Guard (she has made 30 jumps). In 1980 she won her military wings, the first female to do so while in the Delaware Army National Guard.

Seeking greater opportunity to fly, she transferred to the Arizona Army National Guard as a platoon leader/pilot—the first female pilot in that organization. In 1983, she joined Hughes Aircraft, marketing and flying helicopters around the country, and transferred to the California Army National Guard, where she became a company commander/pilot. When Hughes was sold, she marketed the C-17 “Airlifter” for Douglas. In 1988 she accepted a post with McDonnell-Douglas to field the AH-64 Apache helicopter in the military. In 1993 she became deputy sheriff/pilot for Riverside County, Calif.

Major Morelli's flying career ended in 1999 when she suffered a spinal injury in a take-off crash caused by a mechanical failure. She has more than 5,000 helicopter hours and has master pilot wings.



In 1978, Linda Morelli of Hockessin became the first airborne-qualified female and the first female helicopter pilot in the Delaware National Guard.

Women in the Delaware Air National Guard

On October 22, 1962 a new unit, the “142nd Aeromedical Evacuation Flight,” was added to the Delaware Air National Guard. This unit initially consisted of only four personnel but had an authorized strength of 12 flight nurses and 36 aeromedical evacuation technicians rated for the mission. Many 142nd AEF members augmented active duty crews flying live missions to the US from Europe and Japan.

Linda Van Vechten, an aeromedical evacuation technician, was the first female enlisted person in the Delaware Air National Guard in 1973. Captain Carolyn Doolittle, in 1972, became the first female to command a unit when she was appointed commander of the 142nd Aeromedical Evacuation Flight.

Other photos of Delaware Women in service



*Major Carolyn Doolittle, Flight Nurse,
142nd Aeromedical Evacuation
Squadron Commander, June, 1980*



*SSgt Tracey Davisson and friend, during Delaware Air National
Guard deployment to Trinidad.*



*DE Ang Christmas Ball, 2009: MSgt Kathy Walsh-
Shell and Captain Theresa Hemschoot*

(Photos and information courtesy of Brig. Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.)

***Commander Nancy A. Maihoff, Ph.D.,
U. S. Navy Reserve, Retired***



Commander Maihoff served in the U.S. Navy from 1961 until 1992. She is shown at left at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, and above at the time of her 1992 retirement. She now lives in Dover.

***SKCS Sherri Leslie, U.S. Navy,
Retired, born and raised in Delaware***



Ms. Leslie served in the Navy from 1976 until 2006, with a total of 28 years of service. She served in U.S. Navy Customs Battalion Oscar from Nov., 2004 to Sept., 2005 at Camp Doha, Kuwait.

Cheryl Dennis of Delaware City, United States Marine Corps



Two photos of Cheryl Dennis of Delaware City during her service in the U.S. Marine Corps. Ms. Dennis is the person responsible for starting the Delaware Women's Military Monument project. She suggested the idea to her friend, Delaware State Senator Nicole Poore and the rest, as the saying goes, is history.



Major General Carol Ann Timmons, Delaware's first female Adjutant General, has successfully hurdled every gender-based obstacle she has confronted

Carol Anne Timmons is the perfect model for young women who want a dream fulfilled. Since childhood, she wanted to fly jets. Following graduation from New Castle's William Penn High in 1976, she enlisted in the Delaware Air National Guard (DANG). But the military wasn't sure women should fly in combat, so she switched to the Delaware Army National Guard to fly helicopters. Meanwhile, she earned a B.A. in aviation management at Wilmington College.

In 1980, she graduated from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. The following year, she received Army pilot wings from Fort Rucker, Alabama.

In 1985, Timmons received her Air Force pilot wings from Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma. She has fought in Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Joint Guard, Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Inherent Resolve.

Determined to fly jets, Lt. Timmons transferred to the Air Force Reserve, where she could fly non-combat missions on C-141 transports. During "Desert Storm" (1990-1991) then-Capt. Timmons flew in combat support operations in and out of Southwest Asia.

When the Air Force allowed women to fly combat, Timmons returned to DANG and began flying C-130s. The unit's first female pilot, she flew in support of Bosnia, Kosovo and other global operations. In 2003, her unit was activated for "Operation Iraqi Freedom." She flew as an aircraft commander, accumulating more than 400 hours of combat time, including service as a squadron commander responsible for 14 C-130s, 28 crews and some 200 ground personnel.

While deployed, Timmons was commander of the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, Deputy Commander of the 455th Operations Group and Director of Mobility Forces, United States Air Forces Central Command. She is a member of the Air Reserve Forces Policy Committee and Chair of the Joint Diversity Executive Council. Timmons previously served as the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Representative to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. She has been awarded the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, and other decorations.

During her years in the military, Timmons hurdled every gender-based obstacle confronted. "The successful service of female aircrew members has disproved the myth that women could not perform in the combat mission arena," she says.

The New Castle native, now a Rehoboth Beach resident, has flown 5,000 military hours and 9,000 civilian hours. On May 14, 2011, Timmons became the first female General officer appointed to the Delaware Air National Guard. On February 1, 2017, she was promoted to major general and became Adjutant General of the Delaware National Guard, the first woman to serve in that capacity. She recently announced her retirement, effective March 1, 2019, after some 42 years of service.

(Photos and information courtesy of Brig. Gen. Kennard Wiggins, Jr.)



Captain Timmons has piloted a wide variety of military aircraft during a long and full military career.



Captain Timmons



Major General Timmons, Adjutant General, Delaware National Guard

Lance Corporal Diane L. George, Women's Marine Corps

A Reminiscence by Diane George

In the summer of 1962, after researching all the military branches, I called Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Segura, Marine Corps Recruiter in Lima, Ohio, to find out about the Women Marines. He came to see me and said: 1) You have to be 18 (I was 17); 2) You have to be a high school graduate (I would be a senior in the fall); and 3) You're too fat, you'll never get in! (I weighed 210 lbs.). I thought, "I'll show you!"

On May 20, 1963, I graduated from high school and on September 27, 1963, I turned 18. I also had lost 65 pounds since meeting GySgt Segura and was down to 145. When I reintroduced myself to him, he scheduled me to go to the Cleveland Marine Corps Recruiter's Office on November 22, 1963, to take the test and physical. I passed the written test but failed the physical. I had dehydrated myself from dieting. I was told to go home, drink lots of water and get a doctor's physical waiver that my dehydration was gone. I'll always remember that day in Cleveland, as that was the day President Kennedy was assassinated.

I did what I was told but never got a call telling me to go back to Cleveland. I wrote my Congressman for help and he said he would search for my records in DC. After waiting for what seemed like years, he called and said they could not be found. I then wrote letters to President Johnson and the Marine Corps Commandant and finally got a call to go back to Cleveland for the physical. I was sworn in on January 31, 1964 and flew to Parris Island on February 7 to start Boot Camp.

After eight weeks of boot camp, I graduated on April 8 and was stationed at Parris



Island. My MOS was 0141 – Clerk Typist, and I worked at Recruit Training Regiment S-3 Scheduling, helping prepare the daily schedules for the male recruits going through boot camp. As an amateur artist, I also helped create Christmas decorations; decorated the RTR football team's helmets; drew the hand salute for the SOP manual, and many other things.

I thoroughly enjoyed my enlistment and was Honorably Discharged on January 12, 1966 with the rank of Lance Corporal (E-3). If women Marines had been allowed to have children, perhaps I would have stayed in, but we weren't. Today, I am a proud mother of three and grandmother of two.

I retired from my career at the Baltimore Police Department on July 4, 1996 after 27 years. I worked as legal secretary to the Legal Advisor and also secretary to the Deputy Commissioner, Operations Bureau.

Today I am in the Marine Corps League. I am a member of the DE Devil Dogs Detachment 780 in Seaford, Delaware. I am the Paymaster for both the Detachment and also the Department of Delaware. I created the Detachment's website and am the Web Sergeant. I have had the honor of being selected as Detachment Marine of the Year for 2010-2011 and Department of Delaware Marine of the Year for 2013-2014.

The Marine Corps shaped my life and is still a major part of it. I am very honored to have served.



Diane with Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Segura after joining the Marines

Staff Sergeant Charlene "Charley" Graham, USAF, served as first female recruiter in Chester, PA in 1980

Sergeant Graham, shown at right being sworn in to her new duties by her commanding officer, was written up in a May 2, 1980 article in the *Delaware County Daily Times* headlined, "It's YessssMa'am' at recruitment center in Chester."



Colonel Eugenia Thornton: Breaking the military glass ceiling in a 27-year career

By Eugenia Thornton, Col., U.S. Army, Ret.

Long before the #MeToo movement, women were fighting for job parity on a day-to-day, minute-to-minute basis.

I was one of those women, entering the U.S. Army during the unpopular Vietnam War, when the majority of male soldiers had been drafted and the women were confined within their own corps.

A direct commission, I was in the first class of 80 women officers specifically recruited to test out a theory that women could work with and lead men in order to make the all-volunteer force viable.

At first I was shunned, then barely tolerated, and then exposed to periods of blatant sexual harassment, and institutional or personal gender discrimination before I felt like I was accepted.

I was the first woman to hold every single job I had in my 27-year career.

Through pluck and luck and a lot of really hard work, I persisted, eventually rising to the rank of colonel.

When I pinned on my Eagle insignia, I was one of only a dozen women in the regular Army at my rank or higher.

Today women officers are commissioned through ROTC and West Point. We are Infantry, Rangers, wear three- and four-stars, and serve as state National Guard Adjutant Generals, such as here in Delaware.

Today everyone is talking about the bravery and quiet professionalism of the military-trained combat pilot who commanded Southwest Flight 1390 so competently. Tammie Jo Shults landed her wounded Boeing 737 with a cool head, losing only one life when all her passengers were at great risk.



(Above) Gene Thornton directing traffic in a walled German City, 1973; (below) Gene as a U.S. Army lieutenant colonel in 1992.



Sergeant Lisa Mosley of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division

Sergeant Lisa Mosley grew up in Wilmington. She served on active duty from 1982 to 1987, much of that time with the 82nd Airborne Division, including service during the invasion of Grenada. She served in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1987 to 1990. Sgt. Mosley was called back to active duty in 1991 for the Gulf War, again with the 82nd. She is a Disabled American Veteran.



Sgt. Mosley in Iraq, above, and in Grenada, center and right.



Colonel Marisa Ianni Tanner (U.S. Army, Ret.), a classic “army brat”

Marisa Tanner was born in a U.S. Army hospital in West Germany. As an Army Brat, she grew up in West Germany and at Ft. Benning, Ft. Bragg, Ft. Leavenworth, and, finally, in the Washington, D.C. area. Major holidays were spent at Grandparents in New Castle and summers at Bethany Beach. Following two years of studying Art and Poetry at Salem College, she transferred to the Univ. of Delaware to major in Business. To cut some slack in her rigorous schedule, she chose Physical Conditioning as an elective, thinking it would be aerobics. Reporting to the Field House, she found herself with 55 football players and wrestlers, pressing iron, running up the stadium steps, and doing wind sprints. As a result of this training, she scored a maximum score on her Annual Physical Fitness Test every year for the rest of her military career.



At the urging of some of her classmates who were in the ROTC program, she opted for the ROTC Simultaneous Membership Program and also enlisted in the Delaware National Guard. She took her Basic Training at Ft. Dix, NJ, where she was designated as the Distinguished Military Graduate followed by parachute training at the Infantry School at Ft. Benning, GA. After attending Officer Candidate School, she was commissioned as a 2d Lieutenant in Military Intelligence, becoming an officer years ahead of her fellow ROTC classmates. Because she loved jumping, she transferred to the 11th Special Forces Group (Airborne), U.S. Army Reserve, located at Ft. Meade, MD, serving as Assistant S-2, until she completed the ROTC program and graduated from College, at which time she was selected as the Distinguished Military Graduate of the University of Delaware ROTC Program. As a result, she was given a Regular Army Commission and placed on Active Duty in the Army.

Her Army assignments have included (1) Korea, 1984-1985—Electronic Counter Measures Platoon Leader, 102nd MI CEWI Battalion and Assistant Secretary, General Staff, HHC, 2nd Infantry Division; (2) Ft. Bragg, 1985-1988—Operations Officer, USA Special Security Detachment (ABN) and Battalion S2, 9th Battalion, 4th Psychological Operations Group (ABN), and U.S. Special Operations Command (ABN); (3) Korea, 1989-1990. Chief, Order of Battle, U.S. Army Combat Support Coordination Team, 1st Republic of Korea Army; (4) Ft. Lewis, WA (1990-1993) Assistant S3 followed by Bravo Company Commander, 14th MI Battalion,

201 MI Brigade, and Brigade S2, 210 Field Artillery Brigade, 1st Corps; (5) Ft. Polk, LA (1994-1995) Senior Intelligence Controller (PEMC) and G2 for Joint Readiness Training Center (ABN). (6) Ft. Campbell, KY (1997-1998) G2 Operations Officer and Brigade S2, 2d Infantry Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the first female in the Army to serve as an S2 for an Infantry unit; (6) Pentagon (1999-2002) J2 Intelligence Planner, Joint Chiefs of Staff. She had just finished delivering papers to the Director of Intelligence immediately before the office was struck in the 9/11 attack; (7) Ft. Bragg, NC (2002-004) Deputy Brigade Commander, 525th MI Brigade (ABN), and Chief of Intelligence, 1st Battlefield Coordination Detachment (ABN), 18th Airborne Corps.

She was selected for Battalion Command and chose to command a Recruiting Battalion for the Mid-West. Her Battalion was cited as the best in the Country. She was then deployed to Qatar and Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. In Qatar she served as the Chief of Intelligence, 1st Battlefield Coordination Detachment (ABN), 18th Airborne Corps. In Iraq she was the Intelligence Operations Officer for the C3, Multinational Force-Iraq. Following this, she served as Chief of Mission Command Capabilities Division for the Brigade Modernization Command at Ft. Bliss, Texas. Deployed to Afghanistan, she served at the G2, Deputy Commander-Army/NATO Training Mission Afghanistan/Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan, and the Senior Military Advisor to the Afghan Minister of Defense for Intelligence and the General Staff G2 for the Afghan National Army. Returning to Ft. Bliss, she served at the Joint Task Force North Director of Intelligence until her retirement after 33 years of service.

Among her awards and decorations are the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with one Silver Leaf Cluster and one Oak Leaf Cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Army Achievement Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster.

**Colonel Shirley Beck, U.S. Army,
retired in March, 1996, with
23 years of service**

Colonel Beck is a Delaware woman now living in Texas.



At Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1991, above.

Below is a document she prepared which summarizes her military career.

How I became a Soldier!
What an honor to serve my country.
By: Shirley Beck

When I completed my MSN in Psychiatric Nursing my dentist told me his reserve unit (the 94th General Hospital) needed a head nurse for the hospital psychiatric ward (1971).

In 11/1971 I was sworn in as a Captain. My career began with the solemn commitment to weekend drills once a month and two weeks annual training each year. I soon made a goal to become a Chief Nurse. A Chief Nurse position was available at the 44th Evacuation Hospital in Oklahoma City (11/1989). I applied and was accepted. This meant driving to Oklahoma City each month for drills and annual training each summer for two weeks to support Fort Sill Hospital.

In November 1990 the unit was activated to go to Saudi to support Desert Storm.

We made the twenty-three hour flight out of Altus Air Base with all 400 soldiers on board fully trained by artillerymen at Ft. SILL. (MOPP Gear and weapons) We went to King Khalid Military City and put up the 400-bed hospital in the desert. Water was trucked in and stored in a huge rubber bladder. Latrines and showers were ¼ mile from out tents.

After we returned home in June 1991 I applied for the Nurse Staff Officer position to work with the general at the 807th Medical Brigade. I retired in March of 1996 with 23 years of service.

BECK

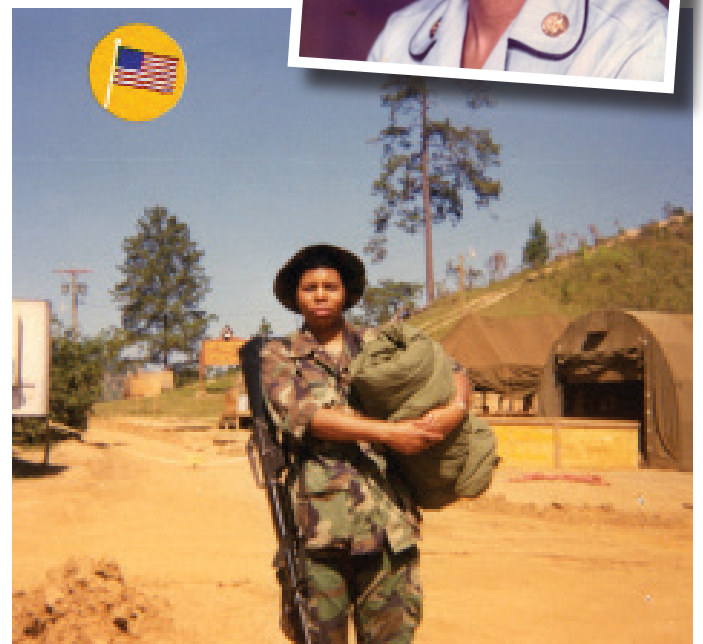
**Sergeant Calmetta Brinkley, Delaware
National Guard, 1977–1987**

Sergeant Calmetta Brinkley of Dover served in the Delaware Army National Guard from 19 November 1977 until 19 November 1987. She was assigned to the 261st Signal Command. During her years of service, she was assigned to Fort Huachuca, Arizona in 1981; Fort Shafter, Hawaii, in 1984; Bright Star, Egypt, in 1985; and Gallant Knight, El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, California, in 1986.



**Sergeant Vivian Starnes, United States
Army, of Dover, Delaware**

Sergeant Starnes retired from the U.S. Army Reserve and the Delaware National Guard in 2000. Among her deployments was Camp Powderhorn, Honduras, where she is seen in the photo below.



Colonel Jenness F. Steele, U.S. Army, a native of Camden, Delaware

Colonel Jenness F. Steele, a native of Camden, Delaware, was commissioned as an Aviation Officer following her graduation from the United States Military Academy (USMA). She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from USMA and a Master of Acquisition and Procurement Management from Webster University.

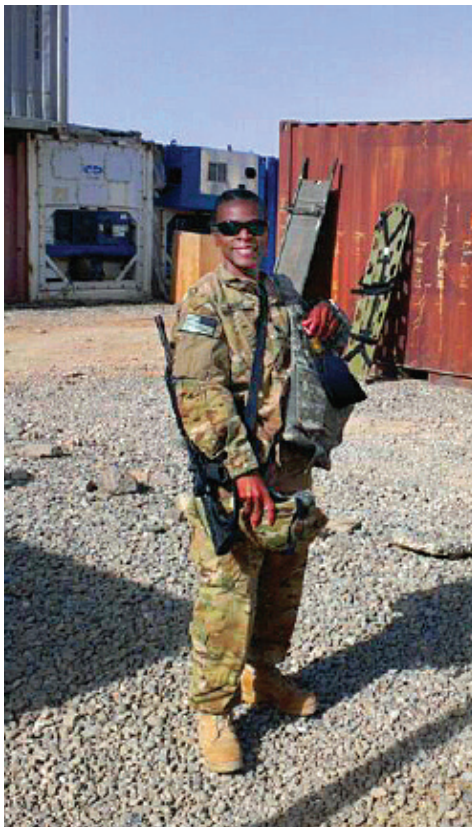
Her key leadership and developmental assignments include Branch Chief, Human Resources Command, Aviation Enlisted Branch (Fort Knox); Commander, 2-227th Aviation Regiment (Fort Hood); J3 Aviation Officer, Special Operations Command-Central (MacDill Air Force Base); Executive Officer, 2-1st Aviation Regiment (Fort Riley); S-4, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Fort Riley); Commander E Troop, 1-17th Cavalry Regiment (Fort Bragg); and Commander, I Company, 4-159th Aviation Regiment (Fort Bragg).



Colonel Steele participated in three operational deployments and one humanitarian relief operation. In 1998, she deployed with B Company, 7-101st Aviation Regiment as a flight platoon leader to Operation Fuer-to Apoyo in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In 2002, she deployed as the Commander of I Company, 4-159th Aviation Regiment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Bagram). In 2003, she deployed as the Commander of E Troop, 1-17th Cavalry Regiment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Kandahar). In 2007, she deployed as the S4, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and the Executive Officer, 2-1st Aviation Regiment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (Tikrit).

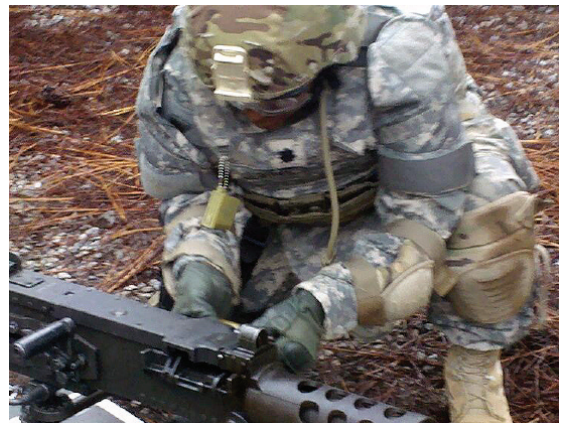
Her awards include: Bronze Star (20LC), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4OLC), Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee, and Senior Army Aviator Badge. She is currently the Deputy Director of the Office of the Director of Army Safety.

Captain Robin Russell Gibbs, US Navy Reserve Nurse Corps, originally from Dover



Captain Robin Russell Gibbs, a U.S. Navy Reserve Nurse Corps officer and a Dover High School graduate, received her Bachelor of Nursing degree in 1987 from the University of Delaware and a Master of Science from Georgetown University in 1999. She currently practices in Virginia as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). Captain Gibbs has 25 years of Navy service and has served at duty stations around the world. Deployed to Afghanistan in 2013, she served as Senior CRNA for a 20-member combat medical support team. She was awarded the Bronze Star for her service. She is officer in charge of one of the largest detachments in the Expeditionary Medical Facility (EMF) at Bethesda, MD. Her detachment trains at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and performs surgery as a stand-alone surgical unit. It is the only one of its kind in the Navy. Captain Gibbs is the mother of three adult children, a grandmother of three, and currently resides in Chesapeake, Virginia.

Two photos of Captain Gibbs during her tour of duty in Afghanistan in 2013.



Family Members who have served:

LeSans L. Alexander, USAF Air Traffic Controller, Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame

LeSans L. Alexander is a service disabled veteran who served 37 years in the Federal Government and Active Duty US Air Force combined, as an Air Traffic Controller. During her tenure, she served in the following positions: Contracting Officer Representative, Air Traffic Controller (Radar/Center/Tower/GCA and Airfield Management with the Army), Depot Program Manager, Flying Hour Program Manager, Logistics Analyst, Airfield Resources and Requirements, Quality Assurance, Travel Program Officer, Wide Area Workflow, Trusted Agent for Civilian



Contractor CAC Cards, Electronics Records Management, Air Traffic Control Fixed and Deployable-Next Generation Program, Radar and Tower Simulators, Aircraft Parts/Fuels, and some Weather agencies.

LeSans has been associated with the following companies: Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Systems Atlanta, Exodyne, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), HQ Air Force Flight Standards Agency (AFFSA), Air Mobility Command (AMC), Air Force Reserves (AFRC), Air

Combat Command (ACC), Secret Service, and the Pentagon. LeSans's Program Management skills and experience in all the areas mentioned above led to her induction into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2016. She is the first African-American female and the first Air Traffic Controller to be inducted.



At left, LeSans is seen receiving a certificate of appreciation from her commanding officer.

Spec. 5 Martha A. Alexander, U.S. Army, saves the life of an unidentified soldier in 1977, while stationed at Fort Hood



Specialist Alexander being honored for her heroism.

Specialist (E-5) Martha Ann Alexander (Paskins), a native of Kent County and Caesar Rodney High School graduate, served in the U.S. Army from 7-31-1974 to 7-30-1977. She was honorably discharged from Hq & A Co., 15th Medical Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division FORSCOM at Fort Hood, Texas, where she worked primarily at a troop dispensary.

Thursday, April 7, 1977

Cav. soldiers' life saved due to actions of medic

An unidentified 1st Cav. Div. soldier could very well owe his life to Spec. 5 Martha A. Alexander, HQ&A Co., 15th Med. Bn., 1st Cav. Div.

She had worked her normal schedule at Troop Medical Clinic No. 8, and as usual, stopped by the 1st Cav. DISCOM Consolidated Dining Facility for dinner.

As she came through the building's narrow entrance, passed the headcount and proceeded into the main dining area, her attention was drawn to a crowd beginning to gather just inside the dining room.

There, surrounded by a stunned crowd, was a soldier on the verge of suffocation. At first glance it seemed evident that the trooper was choking, possibly from food lodged in his throat. A bystander was trying desperately to dislodge the block in the air passage.

Alexander asked spectators what was going on and soon discovered that the choking victim had been experiencing erratic jerking motions when first noticed by the bystanders.

"Closer examination proved the victim to be taking on a cyanotic tinge (bluish color) caused by a lack of oxygen," she said. "I knew that guy was suffocating."

Calling upon knowledge she had gained through three years of pre-nursing classes prior to enlisting in the Army, Alexander recognized these symptoms as signs of possible epileptic seizure.

With this in mind, Alexander wasted no

time in taking charge of the situation. She knew the most important move at this stage of the possible seizure was to open and keep open the victim's air passage. She quickly fashioned a makeshift device from a spoon, padding it with napkins to prevent the victim from breaking his teeth which were already chipped by the intensity of his convulsions, and placed it in his mouth in such a way as to keep the air passage open.

Following through with the procedures she had learned in school, Alexander rolled the victim on his side with assistance from the bystanders, so that the mucous and blood which was blocking the air passage would drain.

By this time, word had been sent to the proper medical authorities, and help was on the way. When the ambulance arrived, Alexander had the situation in hand. The victim's air passage was open, and she had treated him for shock.

Now, the Army has rewarded Spec. 5 Alexander for her quick action on that December eve, by presenting her with an Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM).

But somewhere out there a 1st Cav. trooper knows how close he came to death, if not for the quick actions of a knowledgeable bystander.

"It was a frightful experience," Alexander said. "And to this day, I don't even know his name."

Major Karen Mutz House of Dover: her Air Force and nursing careers have led her in many directions

Major Karen Mutz House retired after a distinguished military nursing career from the United States Air Force Nurse Corps in 1997. Karen graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in 1975 from The College of New Jersey and in 1993 received a Master of Public Administration from Troy University while stationed overseas in Germany.

For the past 40 years, Karen's Air Force and nursing careers have lead her in all different directions—from Medical Surgical nursing in California, Florida, England, and Central America to Maternal-Child nursing in Texas, Florida, and Delaware; from Health Promotion and Staff Education in Greece and Germany to Utilization Management and Review in Dover Delaware.

She also boasts over 20 years in Nursing Management and Leadership. After retirement from the Air Force, Karen was



Director of Nursing in two Assisted Living Facilities and for the past 10 years, she has enjoyed working with the Wesley College nursing students and is currently the Student Success Coordinator for the Bachelor of Science, Nursing program.

Karen proudly and humbly holds the position of Board President for the Friends of the Fallen, a community-based volunteer organization that provides care, service and support to the families of the fallen attending the Dignified Transfer of their loved one at Dover Air Force. She is happily married to Robert House and is a stepmom to two adult daughters and a

“Mimi” to seven grandchildren. Karen resides in Dover, Delaware with Robert and Salli Alli, the dog.



Photos from a long and varied air force career: Major House, left, with surgical unit, David Grout Medical Center, Travis AFB, 1990; right, with the Travis AFB staff deployed to England, 1990; below left, being promoted to the rank of major, Greece, 1988; and, right below, in the air force base nursery, Lubbock, Texas, 1981.



Technical Sergeant Debra A. May, United States Air Force Retired, an Air Force Brat who retired to Dover in 1993

Debra A. May was born at Smokey Hill Air Force Base in Salinas, Kansas. During her childhood, she lived in Kansas, England, California, Alaska, Arkansas, Minnesota and Washington. She enlisted in the Air Force in August, 1972. During a busy Air Force career, she was stationed in, among other places, Korea; Zaragoza, Spain; Rhein Main, Germany; Colorado; Minnesota; Kansas; Texas; and McGuire AFB in New Jersey. She retired in 1992 and moved to Dover in 1993.



Left, Sgt. May as a military training instructor at Lackland AFB, Texas, 1975; Center, Sgt. May teaching at San Antonio, Texas; and Above, Sgt. May with a cat in Korea in 1986.

Sergeant Major Anna M. Lopez, U.S. Army Retired

Some photos of Sergeant Major Lopez taken during a full and active military career.

Right: SGM Lopez in a Blackhawk helicopter flight traveling from Camp Victory Iraq, TF 3rd MEDCOM headquarters to Baghdad Army Hospital, 11 Sept. 2006.

Lower left: SFC Lopez being pinned following completion of a grueling Expert Field Medical Badge Training. She successfully conducted litter carries through trenches over high walls, in and out of ambulances and choppers, triage of patients, CPR and various one-man carries.

Lower Right: SGM Lopez on a Stryker Ambulance in Baghdad, Iraq, 28 Sept 2006.



Sergeant Lydia M. Judge, United States Marine Corps Crewmaster



Sergeant Lydia M. Judge, U.S. Marine Corps. Sergeant Judge, from Harrington, Delaware, enlisted in November, 2011. She is assigned to VMGR-252, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina, where she is a KC-130J Crewmaster.

Senior Airman Donyale Hall, United States Air Force, 1990 – 1994

Donyale Hall (Sellers) served from August, 1990 until August, 1994 as a Communications/Navigations Systems Specialist (2A153). She is a second generation Air Force veteran who proudly served her country in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm. Donyale received her training at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi.

Her first, and last, duty assignment was to Charleston Air Force Base, 437th CRS (AMC) squadron. During her time in service, there were not many women in the aircraft maintenance career field. The adversities she faced were at times disheartening,



Sharon Walker, United States Navy



Sharon Walker (left) during her service in the United States Navy, in a photo taken at RTC in Orlando, FL in 1977. Ms. Walker was a Yeoman First Class and retired from NAF AIMD, Andrews Air Force Base, MD.

but Donyale rose to the challenge of creating acceptance of workplace diversity. Although she did not reap the benefit of her “battles,” women in the military today enjoy a longer, more reasonable time to meet weight standards after pregnancy, and have access to private lactation rooms.

Donyale was honorably discharged after one term of service, achieving the rank of Senior Airman (SRA) and receiving the National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Training Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, and Longevity Service Medal.

For these women, service to our country has been a family tradition —

Master Sergeant Merriella McMillian, Army National Guard and Army Reserve, 1979-2010

Merriella McMillian joined the Army National Guard on July 9, 1979. She served in the National Guard until September 03, 1982. She served in the Army Reserve from September 04, 1982 until May 26, 1990. She served on Active Duty in the Army Guard Reserve from May 27, 1990 until June 30, 2011. During this time, she went overseas to Egypt from Aug. 15, 2005 until Oct. 15, 2005. She went to Kuwait from September 19, 2009 until October 02, 2010. She retired as a Master Sergeant on June 30, 2011 with 31 years 11 months and 22 days.



Sgt. McMillian with her daughter, Shamere Warren

Shamere Warren joined the Army on July 23, 1998. She went to Kosovo from 2005 to 2006 and to Iraq from March 20, 2008 to Dec. 03, 2008. She got out of the Army on Dec. 23, 2009.



Loretta Seeney (Mickens), Sergeant McMillian's sister

Loretta Senney Mickens (below) joined the Army on Oct. 29, 1979. She passed away on Nov. 19, 2013.

Shamere Warren on gate guard

Shamere Warren, left, during her tour of duty in Iraq.



Staff Sergeant Sarah Johnson Seeney (Roman), Sergeant McMillian's sister-in-law

Sarah Johnson Seeney (Roman), left, served in the Army National Guard from Feb 1982 until 1987. Sarah Johnson Seeney joined the Army Reserve in Oct 2003 and served until August 2015 when she retired as Staff Sergeant Sarah Roman.



The remarkable story of onetime Laotian refugee and U.S. Air Force veteran Sable Vance

(Submitted by Ms. Vance)



Refugee Camp to Boot Camp

Sable Vance, a resident of Magnolia, Delaware, is currently working at the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs (DCVA) in Dover. She enlisted in the U.S. Air Force as Sayapheth Sable Phomphakdy, through the Chicago MEPS. She grew up in the Chicago suburb of Elgin. Sable was born in Vientiane, Laos. She and her family had to cross the Mekong River to enter one of the many refugee camps in Thailand. They were very blessed to have John and Donna Ackermann sponsor them through their Christian Church, helping Sable and her family come to America.

On her dream sheet, she selected all overseas Air Force bases, but was handed orders to Dover Air Force Base. She asked her training instructor if they can change the “dream” sheet to “it’s never going to happen” sheet. Sable started her Air Force career with the 436th Services Squadron. She had many humbling and proud experiences working at the Dover Port Mortuary. Sable deployed with the 436th Services Squadron to Baghdad, Iraq in 2003. After her four years of active duty, she joined the Air Force Reserves, where she cross-trained into a Med Tech. She currently serves with the Reserves as a Medical Administrator at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey with the 514th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

When Sable got out of active duty she worked at the DCVA as a casual-seasonal while commuting to Aberdeen, MD, working at the Joint Personal Effects Depot (JPED). When offered a job with the Army’s Casualty & Mortuary Affairs Operations Center (CMAOC) in Alexandria, VA, she took it with the help of Tony Davila, former DCVA director. CMAOC relocated to Fort Knox, KY, and she took that opportunity to move. She came back to Delaware to continue working at JPED when they moved to Dover AFB. After JPED slowed down, she was given an opportunity to work full time at DCVA, helping veterans on a daily basis. She is happily married to one of the embalmers working at the Dover AFB Port Mortuary. “Delaware is a quaint state,” Sable said, “but it has a strong veteran community.”

Another view of Sable Vance with a friend in Iraq



Some women of the Delaware Air National Guard



SrA Rashidah Alston of the 166th Medical group, Delaware Air National Guard, is shown undergoing a training exercise.



Left: TSgt Holly Orr, right, of the Delaware Air National Guard, and her friend, Airman Browne of another unit while on deployment.

Right: SSgt Lissedia Collazo Garcia of the Delaware Air National Guard shown in the operating room while on deployment in Trinidad.



Staff Sgt. Serena S. Justice, United States Air Force

Staff Sgt. Serena S. Justice entered the Air Force in 2011, beginning a promising career as a flight Medic in the 514th Air Mobility Wing, where she served 6 years. In 2017, she transferred to the 166th Medical Group at the Delaware Air National Guard, where she is currently serving as a Staff Sergeant and Medical Technician. In the midst of it all she also studied to become an emergency room nurse and subsequently joined the staff of St. Francis Hospital where she had formerly worked as an EMT.



Colonel Debbie Bazemore-Harrington, United States Army, 1980 – 2005

Colonel Debbie Bazemore-Harrington served in the U.S. Army from August, 1980 until October, 2005 as a Transportation and Logistics Officer. She served as Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Staff Officer, Battalion Commander, and Joint Operations Staff Officer. She served stateside and overseas, in peacetime and in war for organizations including the 5th Training Brigade, US Military Academy at West Point; 2nd Infantry Division; 1st COSCOM; as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Military Surface Deployment and Distribution



Command; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and Military Sealift Command.

She was awarded the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Medal (3rd Award), Meritorious Service Medal (4th Award), Joint Service Commendation, Army Superior Unit Award, Saudi Arabian Kuwait Liberation Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2nd Award), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia

Service Medal with 1 Bronze Service Star, Kuwait Liberation Medal, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

Margaret S. C. Young of Dover served in the U.S. Army from 1971 to 1983

Margaret S. C. Young joined the U.S. Army on December 27, 1971. She served until December 8, 1983.

She spent her first seven years in the army as a member of the Women's Army Corps, the WACs. Her last five years were in regular army units.

Ms. Young did her basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama.



Thereafter, her assignments were Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, 1972–1975; Korea, 1976–1977; Fort Hood, Texas, 1977–1979; U.S. Army, Hawaii, 1979–1982; and Fort Carson, CO, 1982–1983.

Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien Lang, the first woman chaplain for the Delaware Army National



Rev. Dr. A'Shellarien, A.A., B.S., MDiv, STM, ThD and U.S. Army National Guard captain is presently serving as the first woman chaplain for the Delaware Army National Guard at a time when the Delaware Guard also has its first woman Adjutant General.

The Rumsey Sisters, USAF, Ohio Air National Guard, and Delaware Air National Guard

MSgt Michele K. Rumsey (now Rumsey-Blow), *right*, served in the United States Air Force from 1985 to 1987. She also served in the Ohio Air National Guard, 179th Airlift Wing, from 1987 until 2005.



Jennifer Rumsey (now Timmons), *left*, served in the Delaware Air National Guard from 1990-1998. Her rank was Senior Airman, E4.

Dawn L. Hill, USAF Reserves

A native of Milford, Dawn graduated from high school and joined the Air Force Reserves in 1987, serving 6 years at Dover Air Force Base before moving abroad.

Upon her return to Delaware in 1997, she became active in Delaware politics, various non-profits and the Delaware Veterans Post 2 of Dover.



Dawn served in various positions in the Delaware Veterans Post 2 and Kent County Democrat party to include Secretary and Vice Chair. She was awarded the Kent County Distinguished Service Award at the annual Jefferson Jackson Dinner in 2003 and elected the first female Commander at the Delaware Veterans Post #2 on 1 April 2011.

Dawn provides executive support to the Controller General, Joint Finance and Bond Bill Committee members in the Delaware General Assembly and has 23 years of service serving the citizens of Delaware.

She currently resides in Dover and continues to be active and passionate about veterans and non-profits in the First State.

Jackie Robinette (Wilson) Griffith

Jackie proudly enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1992 and served two active duty enlistments at Dover Air Force Base as a Financial Management Analyst. She completed Air Leadership School and her Associate Degree from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) in Financial Management. She was Airman of the Quarter and Year for the 436th Comptroller Squadron.



Jackie furthered her education at Wesley College. For a number of years, Jackie served as the Chief of Policy and Fiscal Analysis at the Office of the Controller General, where she has the pleasure of serving the Delaware General Assembly. She is currently the Director of Government and Community Relations for Delaware State University.

Jackie is a proud mother to a daughter who is a biology teacher at Dover High School and a son who is earning his degree in Environmental Science.

SPC Renee C. Thomas, U.S. Army and Delaware National Guard

SPC Thomas joined the U.S. Army in 1994. She completed Basic Training and Advanced Infantry Training at Fort Gordon, GA. She was Honorably Discharged after completion because of needing to care for an exceptional family member. She then joined the DE National Guard in Feb., 1999, and served proudly until the end of her enlistment. She was honorably discharged in Oct., 2012.

While in the National Guard, she served with 198th and was overseas in Germany in Oct., 2000, when the U.S.S. Cole was hit, putting the unit on alert. She was in the USP&O when the Twin Towers fell. She and her colleagues closed the gate and began armed guard watch. The next day she began duty training soldiers at the Regional Training Institute.

She writes, "I was proud to serve with the Regional Training Institute where I was a Training Technician and assisted OCS, HF Radio school, Domestic Operations with Training. and assisting soldiers for deployments, until 2007. I met so many distinguished visitors and soldiers from the Region and world. I then assisted 721st Troop Command with Battalion Level duties until 2012. I was a Coast Guard Spouse from 1986-1991 initially, Then I joined myself. My husband, Johnny, was retired Coast Guard and assisted with our three children, while I served. I was also motivated to serve by my uncle Harry Felsburg, a Vietnam veteran who recently passed, (1943-2018).



Renee Thomas at Indiantown Gap, PA, 2002

The Wilmore and Lemon Families — A Tradition of Service

Sergeant Carol Y. Wilmore-Holtmeyer, USAF and Delaware National Guard

Sergeant Carol Y. Wilmore-Holtmeyer joined the United States Air Force in August 1974. Her basic training was at Lackland Air Force Base and technical training at Travis Air Force Base. While in basic training her Squadron #3743, Flight 142, made history. The ladies of her company were the last to serve in the capacity of what the men did in physical training and armament. In 1976, she got orders to Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan as an Aircraft Mechanic and became Crew Chief while at Kadena. Sergeant Wilmore-Holtmeyer toured the Pacific Quarter (Guam, Philippines, Panama, Korea, and Australia). She came off active duty in August, 1979. From 1987-1989, Sergeant Wilmore-Holtmeyer served in the Delaware Army National Guard, 198th Signal Battalion, 31M Signal Operator under General Frank Vavala. During this time she received an Army Commendation Medal. She also had two sisters and three first cousins that served under the General at the same time.



Her sister, Cassandra Elaine Wilmore-Regis, Delaware National Guard

E5 Cassandra Elaine Wilmore-Regis served in the Delaware National Guard from October 1977 until December 1989. She went to basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina in the 198th Signal. She went to technical school at Fort Rucker, Alabama for Flight Operations. In 1983 she did cross training for food service in Fort Lee, Virginia. She was in a helicopter accident on August 17, 1984. The helicopter had left Fort Bragg in route to New Castle County, Delaware and stopped in Byrd Field, Virginia for refueling. They were flying in formation and had bad downdraft and the pilot lost control and crashed. After recuperating, she finished 150th Aviation and retired from The Presidio in San Francisco, California in 1989.



Her other sister, Staff Sergeant Veronica Wilmore, Delaware National Guard

Staff Sergeant Veronica R. Wilmore served in the Delaware Army National Guard from October, 1975 until May 31, 1999. She went to basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina in the 198th Signal and also trained in San Diego. During her service she received the Army Commendation Medal.



A cousin, Sgt. Patricia Wilmore-Washington, USAF

Sergeant Patricia A. Wilmore-Washington was a server in the United States Air Force at Grissom Air Force Base in Indiana. She trained at Wright Paterson Air Force Base in Ohio. She served from 1973-1976 as Supply Clerk.



Another cousin, Linda Lemon, Delaware Army National Guard



And still more cousins – all serving at the same time

Veronica Lemon, Delaware Army National Guard



Deborah Lemon served in the 198th Signal Battalion in the Delaware Army National Guard from 1975



Myloni Paige Coker of Cheswold, Delaware, U.S. Army, 2013 – 2017

Myloni Paige Coker was born and raised in Cheswold, Delaware. She attended school in the Capital School District until High School where she choose to go to Polytech to pursue a career in Business. Once she graduated from Polytech, she attended Goldey-Beacom College and graduated in 2011 with her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management.

In 2013, she made the decision to join the Army. Once she completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT), she was assigned to the Washington CID Battalion at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA (Arlington National Cemetery), which investigates felony crimes and serious violations of military law & the United States Code within the United States Army. She was selected as the United States Army Criminal Investigation Command's (USACIDC) Support Soldier of the year

within her first year of service.

Myloni served for four years and decided to separate in 2017. Myloni now works in the Human Resources department at Amazon's customer fulfillment center in New Castle, DE and is continuing her education, with the help of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, at Goldey-Beacom to obtain her Master's Degree in Management.

Sarah Elizabeth Coker of Cheswold, Delaware, joins U.S. Navy in 2014

Sarah Elizabeth Coker was born and raised in Cheswold, Delaware. She attended school in the Capital School District until high school where she chose to go to Polytech for Health Care and Rehabilitation. In 2014, she made the decision to join the Navy. Once she completed boot camp and Construction Electrician "A" school, she was assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133, a Seabee Unit, out of Gulfport, Mississippi. They do humanitarian relief projects and deploy boots on ground to build camps and forward operating bases for Marines and the Army to continue the fight. CE3 (SCW) Coker was deployed twice to the Pacific to the Marshall Islands and Guam.



CE3 Coker in the Marshall Islands, where, in addition to carrying out her duties, she strengthened the partnership between the Marshall Islands and the US, by interacting with local children.



Specialist Coker being awarded Soldier of the Year honors by Major General Mark S. Inch.

Captain Jessica Stephenson, West Point graduate and Apache Helicopter pilot

By Jessica Stephenson

I am proud to call Delaware my home. As an Army Brat, I spent many years away, but always came home for Christmas and Summers, and ultimately graduated from Alexis I. DuPont High School in 2006, rounding out three generations thus far. I went to West Point as one of five Cadets in my class from Delaware, and graduated as one of three.

I spent several years in training (West Point and flight school) before having the opportunity to serve my country in Afghanistan from April 2013-January 2014.

I am an Apache Helicopter pilot and spent those nine months doing my best to protect every American and Coalition Solidier like they were my flesh and blood brothers and sisters. I earned a reputation for having a keen eye and lethally accurate aim with 30mm rounds, 2.75" folding fin aerial rockets, and hellfire missiles. My brigade commander nicknamed me "Hellfire Helen," and I earned the Combat Action Badge, three Air Medals, an Army Commendation Medal, and an Army Achievement Medal while I was overseas.

Awards help to validate the work you are doing is meaningful, but I knew I was making a difference when I spoke to the



Captain Stephenson displays the Delaware flag in Afghanistan in 2013.

soldier on the ground, promising to protect his/her entire unit when I checked in. Some days we upheld this promise, but the days we couldn't bring everyone home have a way of making you more passionate on every other day.

I was featured in a book by Col (Ret.) Will G. Merrill, Jr.* called *Ordinary People: Extraordinary Heroes - Afghanistan and Iraq*. I feel honored to collaborate with Col. Merrill.

He has a fantastic military family of which he is extremely proud. However, his passion for highlighting ordinary people who have chosen to do extraordinary things with their lives deserves high praise from the military community. Each person in his books represents a small fragment of the incredible people in this world. I am honored to be included with these men and women.

I would love to help Delaware highlight it's amazing female veterans.

* Col. Merrill is a descendent of Major General Frank Merrill of "Merrill's Marauders," who fought in Burma in World War II.

And another Delaware flag in Afghanistan, this one from Col. Karen Berry

It's not really an "action shot", but it's a photo I had taken Dec 12, 2016 when I first got to Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. I knew I had a fellow Delaware Army Guardsman deployed and soon found out we had an Delaware Air Guardsman deployed on Bagram as well. I really tried to get the photo taken on Dec. 7th "Delaware Day", but our schedules did not allow us to meet up. From left to right I have Identified the three of us:

MSgt Terri Sanchez DEANG, deployed in support of OFS with the 955 Air Expeditionary Squadron, COL Karen Berry DEANG, deployed in support of OFS as the 335th Signal Command Deputy Afghanistan, and CW3 Miranda Ridgeway DEANG, deployed



in support of OFS with SOJTF-CJ1. We are in Parwan Province, Afghanistan on Bagram Airfield. The backdrop includes what is left of some of the Soviet Bunkers from the 80's. It was great to have 3 other Female military members deployed in support of other Army and Air Force entities at the same location.

That Delaware flag went to Afghanistan when my husband deployed with 10 other Delawareans (all male) in 2010- there's a photo for that one too! It deployed again with my son in 2013 and 2014.

From an e-mail sent by Col. Berry on March 9, 2018

This booklet is dedicated to the memory of those Delaware women, known and unknown, who have given their lives in service to our nation.

Among the thousands of Delaware women who have served our state and our nation throughout our history, the names of most have been lost from the historical record. Some of these women gave their lives in national service. Among them, the names of ten women are known to us. Two of them lost their lives in World War I. Seven died during World War II. The tenth is Senior Airman Elizabeth Loncki of New Castle, Delaware, who was killed in action in Baghdad, Iraq in 2007. Airman Loncki and one other among these 10 Delaware woman, Second Lieutenant Rachel Hannah Sheridan of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, are known to have died as the result of hostile enemy action. We honor the memory of these ten women and other Delaware women, known only to God, who also gave their lives for our nation. Here are their stories, so far as they are known.

Two Young Delaware Nurses Gave Their Lives during World War I

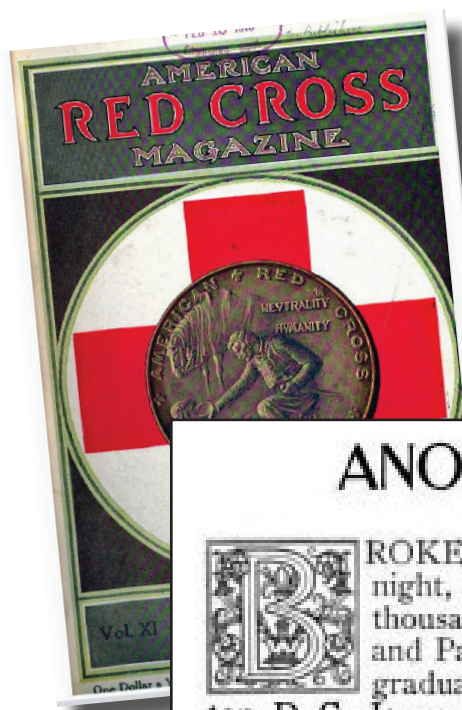


Ruth MacGregor

Two young Delaware women were casualties of the First World War. One of them died at sea as she made her way to France to serve the Red Cross in a front line hospital. The other died on her return home from the stresses and strains of her wartime service in England and France.

Ruth MacGregor of Wilmington, a graduate of Mt. Holyoke College, enlisted in the Red Cross for service in France after training in hospitals in Wilmington and New York City. It was her intention to do hospital work in France, but an attack of influenza on the overseas journey cost her life. She was buried at sea. The Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 to which she fell victim killed some 50 million people worldwide and took the lives of many more service members than died from wartime injuries.

The second, **Reba J. Taylor**, a one-time resident of Hockessin, died in Washington, D.C. shortly after her return from Red Cross nursing duty in Europe in 1916. She had fallen ill as the result of overwork incidental to a heroic record of service in the ranks of American Red Cross nurses who volunteered for wartime service in the early days of World War I before America entered the war in 1917. She was one of the first American volunteers to come forward after the World War began in September, 1914. She went abroad in 1914 and worked in English hospitals for more than a year, caring for Belgian refugees who had escaped to England from the ravages of the German invasion of their homeland and for wounded allied soldiers. After some 15 months of service, she returned home to the U.S. in December, 1915. Having fallen ill on the voyage home, she grew worse and died in Washington, D.C. in January, 1916, soon after her return to America. On the following page is an article about Miss Taylor's passing reproduced from the February, 1916 edition of the *Red Cross Magazine*, noting Ms. Taylor's Red Cross service and her death.



*Delaware Red Cross Nurse
Reba J. Taylor gave her life to
serve the victims of World War I*

ANOTHER LIFE FOR HUMANITY

BROKEN in health after thirteen months of arduous service, day and night, devoted to allaying the suffering and hastening the recovery of thousands of European war sufferers in Red Cross hospitals in Hasler and Paignton, England, Miss Reba J. Taylor, an American Red Cross graduate trained nurse, died at the Homeopathic Hospital, Washington, D. C., January 15, 1916.

Miss Taylor, whose portrait in the uniform she honored appears in connection with this brief mention, was among the first of the many American Red Cross enrolled nurses to indicate her desire to assist actively in the tremendous relief work occasioned by the Great War, and sailed for Europe with the first American Red Cross expeditionary party, on the chartered steamer "Red Cross," in September, 1914. After two terms of six months each had expired and the American Red Cross, owing to a shortage of funds, recalled most of its skilled personnel from Europe, in October, 1915, Miss Taylor volunteered to remain longer in England, and gave nearly three months' additional service, returning to the United States in December. She was very ill when she arrived home and gradually grew worse.

Around a bier draped with a large Red Cross flag and bountifully covered with floral tributes, a group of American Red Cross representatives and nurses joined in the last rites for this self-sacrificing young woman, in the Washington Nurses' Club, Sunday afternoon, January 16.

Miss Taylor graduated from the National Homeopathic Training School, Washington, in 1898.



MISS REBA J. TAYLOR

Graduate American Red Cross nurse, whose health was undermined caring for wounded soldiers in Europe and who died shortly after her return to Washington.

***Two Delaware Service Members lost their lives in World War II:
2Lt. Rachel Hannah Sheridan and Alice Levinia Brittingham.***

**Second Lieutenant
Rachel Hannah Sheridan**

Lieutenant Sheridan graduated from the Delaware State Hospital School of Nursing as a registered nurse. She enlisted in the U.S. Army Nurses Corps on February 5, 1942 at Camp Upton, N.Y.

After stateside training and service, she sailed in January, 1943, for North Africa, where some ten months later she was one of 15 persons who died in an airplane crash in Algeria on November 24, 1943, after the plane had come under hostile fire.



Alice Levinia Brittingham

Alice grew up in Wyoming, Delaware, and enlisted in the U.S. Army on March 1, 1943. She was in the 21st Training Regiment of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. She died of appendicitis at Fort Oglethorpe on May 1, 1943 at age 24.

Delaware women have risked their lives in our nation's defense not just in military service but in other ways as well — as nurses for organizations like the Red Cross and as workers in war industries, for example. Such service is not without danger, as illustrated by the account, below, of five women who lost their lives in a 1943 munitions plant explosion in Milford.

Five Delaware Women lost their lives in an explosion at the Milford, Delaware, Ordnance Plant on Tuesday, March 19, 1943

According to an April 24, 2018 article by writer Terry Rogers for the website, MilfordLive.com, the Milford Ordnance Plant, which manufactured munitions for the war effort, “was in full operation” on March 19, 1943, “when a spark of static electricity ignited gunpowder in one of the manufacturing sheds. The explosion was described as a flash blast that ripped the end out of one of the assembly buildings. Five women working in the end of the powder loading room were killed. Louise Hill of Milford, Katherine Thomas of Milton, Edith Marker of Georgetown, Pauline Maloney of Georgetown and Eleanor Spence of Camden all died in the blast. There were 33 injuries reported as well, five of them serious. Maloney and Hill both died the same day of the blast while Marker, Thomas and Spence died the next day. Although some of the injured were treated and released, Mary Jerman of Milton, Marie Bowers of Georgetown, Madeline Oliphant of Laurel, Alice Mason of Seaford, Mildred McGee of Seaford, Jerdy Jenkins of Greenwood and Whitely Lewis of Laurel suffered serious burns and lacerations. Hill, the only casualty from Milford, was 21 years old, the wife of Harry L. Hill, Jr. She had a five-year-old daughter, Janet Lee. She was survived by a foster mother, Margaret Bland, two brothers, Edwin and William Knipp and a sister, Thelma Rutche, who was a student nurse at the hospital where Hill passed away.”

Five southern Delaware women lost their lives as a result of the Milford Ordnance Plant Explosion on March 19, 1943:

**Louise Knipp Hill, Milford
Katherine Thomas, Milton
Edith Marker, Georgetown
Pauline Maloney, Georgetown
Eleanor Spence, Camden**

Senior Airman Elizabeth Loncki, USAF, of New Castle, Delaware, was killed in action in Baghdad, Iraq on January 7, 2007.



Senior Airman Loncki in Iraq

Elizabeth Loncki grew up in New Castle. She attended Arizona State University before joining the Air Force in 2003. She graduated from NAVSCLEOD on 27 February 2004 before being stationed with the 775th Civil Engineer Squadron at Hill AFB, Utah. When she was deployed to Iraq, she was assigned to the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron in Iraq, where she volunteered to be a member of the 4-person Team Lima, which was responsible for disarming improvised explosive devices (IED's). The team successfully executed 194 missions on the outskirts of Baghdad, resulting the safe disarming of 129 IED's. SrA Loncki was one of three airmen on Team Lima killed by a large vehicle-borne IED in Baghdad on January 7, 2007. She was 23 years old at the time of her death. She was a true Delaware hero.



Senior Airman Loncki



Delaware Women's Military Service Monument 11.3.18

With this book we honor all Delaware women who have served our state and our nation in military service. We dedicate this record to the ten women named here and all other Delaware women, now known only to God, who have given their lives for our state and our nation.



The New Delaware Women's Military Service License Plate

Authorized by enactment of Senate Bill 192 as amended of the 149th General Assembly, sponsored by Senators Bruce C. Ennis and Nicole Poore and Representatives Earl Jaques and Valerie Longhurst. The bill passed the Senate on June 7, 2018 and the House of Representatives on June 26, 2018.

It was signed into law by Governor John C. Carney on July 17, 2018.

The license plate was first made available to Delaware women who have served, or are serving, in the military on November 3, 2018, at Legislative Hall, Dover, in conjunction with the dedication of the new Delaware Women's Service Monument. The artwork for the license plate and a special lapel pin for Delaware women veterans was created by Dover artist Orlando E. Short, Jr.