

**NARRATOR: Keister, Glenadene**

**INTERVIEWER: Troy Reeves**

**DATE: October 8, 2003**

**LOCATION: Sunny Slope, Idaho (near Marsing, Idaho)**

**PROJECT: Women in WWII/Veterans History Project**

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**START OF RECORDING**

00:00	1	Introduction.
00:45	1	Keister was a WAVE, and she attended artillery school in Pensacola, Florida. She talked about a “typical” day while learning at this school, including training on different weapons, living in tents during her few weeks in Florida, and using devices to learn how to shoot at enemy planes and ships. She told numerous stories, including how they used training exercises to help pilots and gunners to aim properly. Her time in Florida was spent in vigorous training; when she did get to go to the beach, she received a harsh sunburn. Keister did not adjust well to the heat, humidity, or the insects that pervaded the training base in Florida.
11:30	5	Military food did not bother Keister; she ate what was prepared without complaining. While at the various training bases, she kept in touch with friends and family through writing letters and waited for mail call each day, hoping to receive a letter or package from someone. She mentioned the people that she wrote letters to, including one person of her age group (either a cousin or friend); she received the letters back from him recently and enjoyed looking over them.
15:00	6	Keister told the story about how she and another woman were sent from Florida to Maine. She befriended this woman because of their height (they were both tall woman) and this woman (Helen Fox) had family in Maine, which led Fox and Keister to request transfers to the Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS) in Brunswick, Maine. Fox’s brother owned a car, so Keister and Fox drove the car into the base. They were able to keep the car, so she talked about how they would save their ration stamps to get enough to drive to a cottage in Maine owned by one of Fox’s relatives. Keister talked about the variety of ration stamps that they would use to drive to the cottage and buy provisions, as well. While at BNAS Keister lived with numerous other WAVES who worked at the base; Keister worked at

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		the ground school with around a dozen other WAVES. Keister told a story about teaching British pilots who trained in the US before returning to Europe to fight the Germans. Keister detailed the various types of jobs that WAVES toiled at while at BNAS.
22:00	7	With prompting from the interviewer, Keister spoke of a “typical” day while teaching at ground school at BNAS. She taught, for example, aerial gunners and pilots to recognize enemy planes and ships. A lot of her job depended on the type of trainees coming through BNAS. Keister was rated as a Specialist G, 3rd class. She talked about what she did with her pay, which included buying gas and food for their trips off base. Keister could feel the humidity of Maine, but enjoy the cooler temperatures. She really enjoyed Maine, particularly because she could drive around the state with her friend Helen Fox.
26:30	8	While at BNAS Keister met her future husband. He worked at the skeet range and always read the newspaper, which intrigued Keister, because she said no one read the newspaper. She talked about courtship, which was interesting because they were good friends before they became engaged and married. She felt, thinking about it, that their marriage worked wonderful because they were always good friends. She talked about the courtship, including what they both did after they mustered out the military. Keister moved back to Colorado and wanted to get a bachelor’s degree before settling down with anyone. <b>[At 29:15 the public listening copy should be switched from side one to side two.]</b> Her husband asked her to attend college in Ohio where he lived. She earned her degree at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. Keister offered two memories about her time in Maine. (She was stationed there between August 1944 to January 1946.) The first story was about Russian pilots staying the night on the base; she felt “spooky” about being on base with the Russians, even though they were allies. The other story was about Marines taking R&R at BNAS; these men had been in the Pacific Theater, and they were not in good shape.
34:30	14	While at BNAS Keister recalled V-E Day, particularly because there were British pilots training at BNAS. So, she remembered going to the bars in Brunswick to celebrate. This story reminded Keister about the fact that she was the first woman to train these British pilots; she went to a USO dance and danced with one of her students from Scotland, who danced wonderfully. They danced together at numerous dances and kept in touch after the War. She did not recall the celebration after V-J Day. Keister thought she would be mustered out soon, but she was not discharged until January 1946.

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		She said that she did not ask any questions, because you do not ask questions in the military. Keister was sent to Illinois to be discharged; her friend Helen Fox was sent to New York.
39:30	15	Keister and her husband went to a reunion at BNAS in the late 1980s. She remembered having a good time and reuniting with a woman (Sally Cheney Buell) that she has spent time with over the last 15 years. With prompting from the interviewer, Keister talked about the various media (radio, newspaper, newsreels) where she would receive news about the War.
44:00	17	Keister mustered out in Chicago, hopped a train, and left for Colorado. She then talked about how being in the WAVES did not really help in her future; her skills in teaching helped her be successful in the WAVES. She did say that living with different types of women taught her tolerance of people. She mentioned that she and her husband have kept in touch with numerous people from the base and that former WAVES or soldiers occasionally stop in to visit. While talking about the wars after WWII, Keister offered her opinions about guard members and reservists fighting the current war and being away from home and work.
48:30	19	Keister's husband worked for Railway Express Agency in Ohio. They lived together in Ohio for a year, and Keister did not like the humidity. Her husband had worked for the Agency for enough years that he could choose a town to relocate. They chose numerous towns in the US West, he bid on jobs (called a billet), and he ended up getting a job in Pocatello, Idaho. They lived in southeast and southwest Idaho for a total of 57 years. According to Keister Pocatello reminded her of Grand Junction, Colorado; she even bumped into a former Grand Junction boyfriend during her first full day in Pocatello.
53:00	21	Keister's husband was transferred to Rexburg, Idaho, and they lived there for over a decade before returning to Pocatello. They lived in Pocatello until 1974 before they moved to southwest Idaho to their current home. Keister's husband retired from the Agency, and Keister found a job at South Junior High in Nampa, Idaho. Keister talked about their home and how they ended up in it. To begin the recording's conclusion, Keister talked about the public's lack of respect for women serving in the military during WWII. She talked about why she served.
58:00	23	During her post-war years, she has met only one other woman who served in the WAVES (except for those she kept in touch with from

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		Maine). She served in the Eastern Star and met another Eastern Star woman who was a WAVES. [At 58:45 the public listening copy moves from side two to tape two side one.] Keister knew many women throughout the state due to her work in the Eastern Star, but only met one or two women who served in WWII. Keister concluded by mentioning that she enjoyed being interviewed for the project and by telling about gunnery school being playfully nicknamed the “College of Mortuary Science.”
61:10	24	<b>END OF RECORDING</b>

**NAMES AND PLACES INDEX**

Brunswick Naval Air Station (Maine)  
Buell, Sally Cheney  
Fox, Helen  
Heater, Gabriel  
Pensacola, Florida  
Pocatello, Idaho  
Railway Express Agency  
Sunnyslope, Idaho (on the Snake River near Marsing)  
WAVES (Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service)  
Wittenberg University (Ohio)