

Agnes Kerr (Nan) Colasanti passed away after a long illness on Saturday night, September 8. She is now with her husband, son and grandson. She was a model mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, full of life and faith. She served our country well as a flight nurse in the US Army Nurse Corps during WW II and carried on her profession as a nurse after the war. Working in the preemie center at St. Joseph Hospital, she assisted in the development of emergency air evacuation programs for premature babies in the 70's. Born a member of the Kerr Clan in Clydebank, Scotland, she was 87 years old and has been an Arizona Resident for 46 years. Nan is survived by her twins Janet Henderson and Jim Colasanti, her daughters-in-law, Jean Colasanti and Maureen Colasanti, son-in-law Gery Henderson, seven grand children and six great-grandchildren. The viewing will be at 6 p.m., Sunday, Sep. 16, and the Rosary at 7 p.m., at Queen of Heaven Mortuary, 1562 E. Baseline Rd, Mesa, AZ 85204. The Funeral Mass will be at 10 a.m., Monday, Sep. 17 at St. Anne Catholic Church, 440 E. Elliott, Gilbert, AZ 85234. Services entrusted to Queen of Heaven Mortuary.



Nancy Smith PH 42

May Jesus have mercy  
on the soul of  
**Agnes Kerr Colasanti**  
May 18, 1920  
September 8, 2007

**I Said a Prayer for You Today**

I said a prayer for you today and  
know God must have heard-  
I felt the answer in my heart  
although He spoke no word!  
I didn't ask for wealth or fame  
(I knew you wouldn't mind)-  
I asked Him to send treasures of  
a far more lasting kind!  
I asked that He'd be near you at  
the start of each new day  
To grant you health and blessings  
and friends to share your way!  
I asked for happiness for you in all  
things great and small-  
But it was for His loving care I  
prayed the most of all!

Queen of Heaven Mortuary  
Mesa, Arizona

Dear Dorothy,

I'm writing to you to let you know,  
my Mom, Nan Colasanti has passed away  
on 9-8-07. She had been sick for a  
long time, but she was at peace when  
she died. I will give you my  
address and phone number if you  
wanted to keep in touch.

Thank you

Janet Henderson (Daughter)  
2442 W. Crocus Dr.

Phx Az 85023

602 863-0012

10-1-07



*Some of this is not quite right  
but on the whole I think she did  
a good job.*

# World War II flight nurse recalls years of service in Europe, Africa

• VET, from 1A

came home and married that young soldier, had three children with him and 45 years of wedded bliss until his death six years ago.

During Nan's three years of war service, she tended hundreds of injured and sometimes dying men. She slept in tents and cold-water showered in North Africa, hiked with a backpack through the mud of Italy, ate K-rations in Southern France, scarce ice cream in Sicily, and had an audience with Pope Pius XII. Once she even stared her own mortality closely in the face.

Nan was scheduled to work an air-evac trip to southern France in summer 1944, but got a short leave instead. And another nurse, Aleta Lutz, took her place.

The plane hit bad weather on its return trip and slammed into the side of a mountain. Aleta was killed in the crash along with the crew and 15 patients. Lutz had the tragic honor of being the first woman killed on a military mission.

Nan was devastated. "I thought how it should have been me ... I wanted to come home and said I'd never fly again."

But it wasn't Nan Colasanti's time and it still isn't. She arrived home safely on May 31, 1945.

At 77, Nan sits comfortably in her living room; smiling a warm, dimpled smile, her naturally dark

hair only mildly salt-and-peppered with gray, and her large blue eyes alive with memories.

"It was exciting and there were times I wondered if I'd get home, but I saw countries I never would've seen" - and had many adventures, she said.

Plus, Nan and her fellow nurses made living history in medical transport.

The two squadrons formed at Bowman Field, Ky., in early 1943; the 802nd Medical Transport Squadron assigned to Europe and the 801st, which assigned 25 nurses to the Pacific theater, were the very first in hundreds of medical transport missions that are now commonplace wartime.

Nan's 802nd squadron alone transported wounded from 10 battle campaigns in Europe and evacuated nearly 116,000 patients.

At the end of the war, each of the two dozen nurses was awarded an Army Air Medal with four clusters - a token of honor and appreciation that signified almost 800 hours of individual flight time.

At the squadron's 50th reunion in 1992 at Brooks Field, Texas, nurses who now serve in medical transport squadrons thanked those first nurses and saluted them as pioneers.

Nan was surprised. "It never occurred to me that I was doing anything special," she said. "It was just a job that had to be done."



Courier/David Manarel

Nan Colasanti, above, reminisces over photographs and memorabilia of her years as a flight nurse in Europe and North Africa during World War II. LEFT: Colasanti during her time in the service.

## Military women memorialized in nation's capital

The Daily Courier

The nation dedicated its first major memorial to the nearly two million women who defended it throughout history this past Oct. 18 at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

About 30,000 women veterans and active duty service women took part in the four-day commemora-

tion, which began Oct. 16.

"Women's service is a page in our country's history books which has seldom been revealed, but (was) celebrated and commemorated throughout the dedication activities," said Jennifer Finstein, spokeswoman for Women in Military Service for American Memorial

Foundation, Inc.

The range of roles and service to the nation exemplified by the women who attended spans nearly a century, from World War I veterans to today's women serving on combat aircraft and ships, she said.

The Prescott VA Medical Center

will host a celebration of women veterans from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Friday in the theater (Building 15), said Carole Wagner, women veterans coordinator at VAMC.

Brig. Gen. Wilma L. Vaught, U.S. Air Force, retired, will be the guest speaker. She will talk about the recently dedicated women's memorial in the nation's capital.