

Sixty five years after they served their country, three local WWII Nurses were honored with the World War II Legacy Medallion from the Non-Commissioned Officers Association in a ceremony held Wednesday afternoon at the Tides.

From left to right, wearing the medals, are Liberty Sakryd, of Merritt Island, along with Pat Courtney and Barbara Carson, both from Vero Beach. Standing behind the ladies are Col. Corinne Naughton, commander, 45th Medical Group and Senior MSgt. Virginia Gilliard, 45th Med Group Superintendent.

Photo by Jennifer Macklin



## Nurses teach us heroic price of freedom

By Col. Ed Wilson

Commander, 45th Space Wing

One of the best parts of being your commander is when I get the chance to meet so many great people.

Such was the case Wednesday afternoon at the Tides when I had the opportunity - and very distinct pleasure - of watching Col. Naughton present three former World War II Nurses the Non-Commissioned Officers Association Patriot Medallion of Honor and Remembrance.

What a great honor to meet these wonderful ladies, especially while we all celebrate National Nurses Week, which was created in memory of Florence Nightingale, whose birthday was also celebrated Wednesday.

Just think of the sacrifices



Think of the lives they touched.

Close your eyes and just imagine what it must have been like.

Now think of what our Air Force nurses are doing today, not just here at the 45th Space Wing, but in far-away places like Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, and in every corner of the world.

Close your eyes and just imagine what it must be like. Think of the lives they are touching as you read this right now.

Today, we have more than 8,000

We need each and every one of them. Words can never do justice to the service they provide, and have provided for so many needy people.

I was especially touched by something I read about these medals at the ceremony. It goes like this:

"The heroic values you displayed under extraordinary circumstances - Valor, Sacrifice, Fidelity - must be known and burn in the hearts of every succeeding generation. Your courage and that of your comrade-in-arms has taught us the heroic price of freedom."

And while that statement was written for those heroes of World War II and all other conflicts, those very same words can be said of our nurse heroes today.

"Their courage and that of their comrade-in-arms has taught us the heroic price of freedom."

# World War II flight nurses to be honored

BY JOE CRANKSHAW

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**VERO BEACH** — Three former Air Force flight nurses will be honored for their service in ceremonies in the Tides, the Patrick Air Force Base Non-Commissioned Officers Club in Brevard County on Wednesday.

The Non-Commissioned Officers Association will present its "Legacy Medallion" to retired Lt. Col. Barbara Carson and former Lt. Pat Courtney, both of Vero Beach, and former Lt. Liberty Sakryp of Merritt Island, according to Mary Lofstrom of the Society of Air Force Nurses.

"Many of them flew long hours ferrying wounded, in unarmed aircraft often in enemy air space."

**Mary Lofstrom  
of the Society of  
Air Force Nurses**

The NCOA created the medal in conjunction with the dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, said Richard Schnieder of the NCOA headquarters. It originally was intended for enlisted personnel, but the association included the nurses to thank them for their devotion and service.

"Many of them flew long hours ferrying wounded, in unarmed aircraft often in

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enemy air space," Lofstrom said.

Carson, a veteran of more than 22 years of service, flew with patients during World War II and Korea. She received her nurse training at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City and was assigned to Scott Field, Ill., where she took flight training in Kentucky.

Assigned to an air evacuation squadron in the Philippines, she said she flew patients between the Philippine Islands and New

Guinea. After Japan surrendered, she helped carry American prisoners of war from Japan to Manila.

"They were not in real good shape," she recalled.

Retiring from the Air Force, Carson earned a master's degree in library science, worked briefly in the Fort Pierce library while living in Vero Beach, then went to Connecticut, where she and her sister took care of her mother.

"I am amazed to get an award like this after so long," she said Thursday.

"It is a bit of a shock to receive an award after 65 years," Courtney said, "a

real surprise."

Courtney took her nurse training at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, Pa., and became a nurse in the Army Air Corps in 1943. Trained at Randolph Field as a flight nurse, she was assigned to the Air Evacuation Service ferrying wounded soldiers between hospitals in the United States.

Courtney married her husband, William, an Air Force pilot, and left the service. She moved to Vero Beach while he was assigned to duty in Vietnam, and he joined her when he retired.

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LEGACY MEDALLION

PRESENTATION

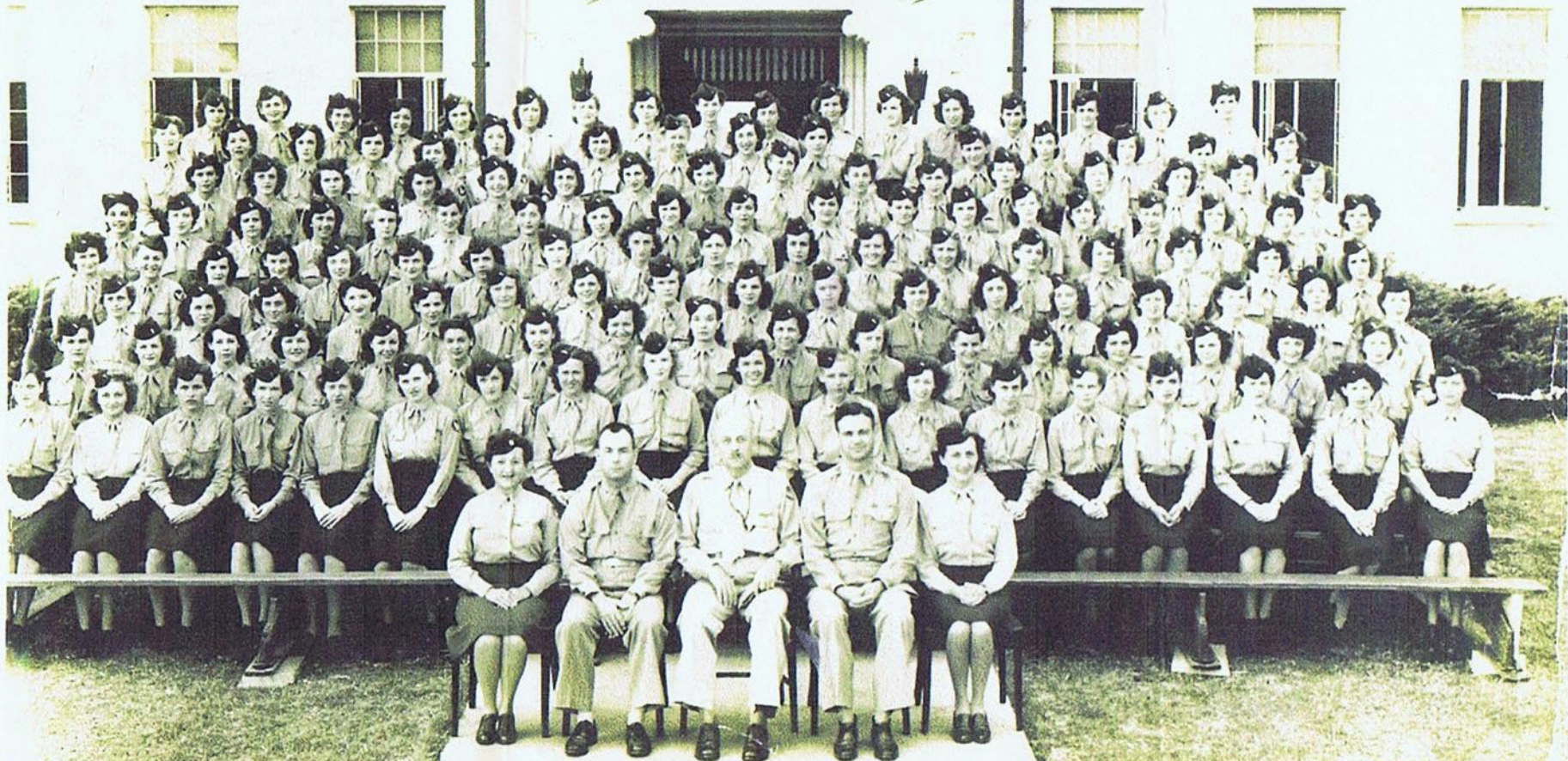
12 MAY 2010

THE TIDES

PATRICK AFB, FL



SCHOOL OF  
AVIATION MEDICINE



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