

I joined the Air Corps in July, 1943, and was first stationed at a B-17 bomber crew training base in Grand Island, Nebraska. Within a week I met a handsome 2nd Lt. and we became quite an item. Later (November, 1943) he shipped out to the European theatre and I entered the Air Evacuation School in Louisville, Kentucky, in early January, 1944.

During training I met my two best friends, Sarah Hooks (Massara now) and Kathryn Haas (Crane). After training the three of us were to the Azores Islands to open a small hospital for the base personnel, and to prepare for nursing the wounded being home from European battlefields.

After nine months, Sarah and I were reassigned to Bermuda for for five months, and then, the three of us were united again when we were assigned to Paris in May of 1945.

The 2nd Lt. I had corresponded with regularly since 1943 - Lyle Mercer - and I were married on September 21 at the American Cathedral in Paris. Most of my squadron attended the ceremony. Then, we first Lts. now, honeymooned in Berlin where he was stationed. He had taken paratroop training in Rome in 1944 and was now a member of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Upon discharge we both attended the University of Washington on the GI Bill. My husband worked on newspapers and as the director of various nonprofit organizations. I taught nursing at a community college for 26 years.

We have two daughters and a son and two grandchildren. Kathryn Haas Crane died but I still keep in touch with Sarah Hooks Massara.

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