

The President
The White House
Washington, DC
August 6, 1997

Mr. President:

In October the Memorial for Women in Military Service will be dedicated at Arlington National Cemetery. Much attention and recognition has been given to the women in every branch except the more than 1,000 Flight Nurses who served in the Army Air Corp. during World War II.

Initial training was given at Bowman Field School of Air Evacuation in Kentucky. Over 31 squadrons were formed, not all were activated. Many of these were sent as replacements to the already active squadrons. At the end of 1942 and beginning of 1943 squadrons were sent to Burma, Alaska, Africa, Guadalcanal, New Guinea and England. Thousands of wounded servicemen were evacuated from forward battle areas to more secure hospitals for intensive care. These missions were often carried out with fighter cover and most often in combat conditions.

Each squadron was assigned to one of the Air Forces and a Troop Carrier Wing. Supplies were flown into forward areas and the wounded were carried out. At times just an empty run, going to pick up the wounded and then returning them as quickly as possible for further care. The wounded who needed extended convalescence were flown to Australia, Hawaii and the United States.

World War II Flight Nurses Association was organized in 1948. Membership increased after all graduates were contacted. Meetings are held every two years and this year we meet in Washington, DC at the same time the Women's Memorial will be dedicated in October.

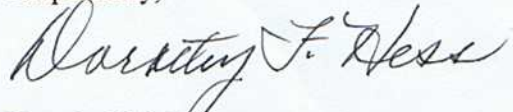
Some history will show the activity of the 804th Medical Air Evacuation Squadron of which I was a member. The 804th was one of the first to graduate with six weeks or more training at Bowman Field, Kentucky. My roommate and I joined the squadron in February, 1943. We left for overseas in May, 1943 from New York City - arrived in Brisbane, Australia June 14, 1943.

Because air evacuation was a new concept, it took some convincing and planning with General MacArthur to have us begin duties. The 804th was attached to the 5th Air Force and the 54th Troop Carrier Wing. Our squadron began at Port Moresby, moved over the Owen Stanley Mountains to Dobadura, then Nadzab, Biak and eventually stationed in the Philippines. Over 95,000 casualties were evacuated by the 804th. The majority of our nurses received the Air Medal for over 250 hours each of combat flying.

Enclosed are photographs of my roommate Harriet Thomas receiving the Air Medal from General Kenney and of me receiving the Air Medal from General Carter. I also included a photo of myself on a flight inside an airplane while on duty.

Hope this information will create some interest in recognizing the flight nurses who gave their talents and some their lives for the war effort.

Respectfully,



Dorothy Fields Hess
3608 NE 97th Ave.
Vancouver, WA 98662
(360)254-1683

Response Sheet # 4

CHECKED MAY 28 2007

First, Middle, maiden, last

Norothy Fields Huss

Birth Date 1/19/22

My friend Harriet Thomas and I were part of a large class that was first to graduate from the Flight School at Bowman Field. The 801st were sent out before the training started. We were assigned to

the 804th 7th Air Evac Sq⁻ were left from New York City, May 16 '43, boarded the Uraguay (a ship converted from a cruise ship) and sailed down the Atlantic coast with Navy escort. The ships in our convoy

continued on thru the Panama Canal and after 32 days arrived in Brisbane Australia. After about a month there we were sent to Townsville for a short stay, then on to Port Moresby, New Guinea.

As the troops captured more Japanese holdings, we moved from Moresby to Pohadusa, across the mountains. It seemed we moved quite frequently - our next was Nadzab, in a lovely valley - then finally Biak - a small island just off New Guinea. Many nurses in our Squadron were leaving to return home after 8 months from Biak. The nurses in the 820th Sq. were right behind us and finally merged with our 804th - Later the group moved to Septe in the Philippines (over)

Our nurses flew almost everyday.
We evacuated over wounded plus Australians
and even some Japanese prisoners.

The airplanes sometimes flew empty to
pick up patients but most of the time
we carried provisions to forward areas,
then loaded patients for the return trip.
Most of our flights were in combat
conditions - many times we had fighter
escort.

I think that most of our nurses
few enough combat hours to be awarded
the Air Medal. General Carter presented
them to our Squadron while we were
in Madag.

The 804th nurses didn't realize there
was a World War II Flight Nurse organization
until 1989 or so - I attended a meeting
in Melbourne, Florida after hearing
about the group, and have been to
several meetings since. Particularly the
Women's Memorial in D.C.

I would like to know if these
nurses from the 804th are still around -

Miss Thelma E. Simmons N 787071
Miss Thelma K. Borman N 726975
Miss Edith M. ROE N 787050
Miss Josephine Wright N 726960
Miss Mildred M. Doane N 787043

I've enclosed a letter also
from the D.C. meeting 8/6/97

Thank you
D. West

PREFACE:

Since the Women in Military Service Memorial will be dedicated soon, I have a concern. Flight nurses have not received commendations for the evacuation of many thousands of wounded during World War II, Korea, Viet Nam, and Desert Storm. Their service to our country is immeasurable. It is time to say thank you for their exemplary performance of duty.

About one thousand Flight Nurses were trained during World War II. Four thousand have received training up to the present.

I hope the following information will be a catalyst to bring attention to their service, most of it volunteered.

World War II Flight Nurses

A copy of the letter to the President was also sent to my Senator from Washington State - no comments were made from the Senator - but the President's office informed us that there were so many requests for special consideration they didn't feel it appropriate to just recognize ours.

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Respectfully,

Dorothy Fields Hess
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(360)254-1683



Lieutenant Harriet Thomas,
Air Medal recipient from General Kenney



Lieutenant Dorothy Fields,
Air Medal recipient shaking hands with General Carter



Lieutenant Dorothy Fields,
Evacuating wounded service men aboard a C-47

fill out and send to:

Mrs Liberty Sakryd, Membership Ch
441 Charles Drive
Melbourne FL 32937

APPLICATION FOR REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP
World War II Flight Nurses Association, Inc.

\$10.00 just a renewal of dues 92.

9-9-1992

Fields Dorothy HESS
Maiden name in service First name Present name

ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES: 3608 718 97th Ave
Vancouver WA
98662
PHONE: (206) 254-1683
BIRTHDATE (OPTIONAL) 1-19-22
SEASONAL ADDRESS _____

As a member, I would be willing to serve on the Board () ; on a committee

I am enclosing \$10 for the year 1992. In addition, I am enclosing \$5 REINSTATEMENT fee. I understand that dues for 1993 are payable before 31 March 1993.

I am also sending \$10 for 1993 at this time. (optional) check

PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION: School of nursing Swedish Hospital City Seattle State WA
College University of Wash. Degree BS. plus 102 grad. credits towards masters degree

SERVICE: Date of entry Feb 9 43 Station Bowman Field Ky. Branch Amy Air Corp

RANKS HELD: 1st Lt.

DISCHARGE/RETIREMENT AT Westover Field Mass. DATE Oct 45

AWARDS, DECORATIONS Air Medal

DUTY STATIONS, DATES, SQUADRON, DUTIES: Pre-school of air evac Western State Hospital Psychiatric nurse -
prior to entry into service

School of air evac attended Bowman Field

Dates attended _____ Class of _____

First assignment Flight Nurse Squadron 804th MAir Evac.

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS, continue on back; add pertinent facts about service experience and/or subsequent life history.



804th MAES — First into Hollandia. Front Row, L-R: Woodie Ray, Rosemary Thompson, Clyde Richardson, Dorothy Fields. Back Row, L-R: Charles McMullen, Thomas Duesing, Elgin Mortensen, Vernon Thorson.