

**Barbara Rosenthal Allen**  
**Narrator**  
**Wayne Clarke**  
**Mike Russert**  
**Interviewers**  
**New York State Military Muse**

**Interviewed on 22 March 2006**  
**Interviewed at Delmar Place**  
**Delmar New York**

Barbara Rosenthal Allen: BA  
Wayne Clarke: WC  
Mike Russert: MR

MR: Could you give me your full name, date of birth and place of birth please?

BA: My name now?

MR: Yes

BA: Barbara Rosenthal Allen

MR: What is your date of birth please?

BA: 5.2.25

MR: Where were you born?

BA: Albany New York

MR: Ok. What your educational background before entering the service?

BA: High school and one year of college

WC: Where about did you go to college?

BA: Russell Sage

MR: Do you remember where you were and your reaction when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

BA: I was in my home, and chucked – shocked, absolutely shocked

MR: How did you hear about it?

BA: On the radio

MR: Why did you decide to enlist in the Navy?

BA: (Chuckles) well, I was going with a gentleman who reported to be missing in action so I joined; and no sooner than I joined he appeared on the scene

MR: Why did you select the navy?

BA: m

WC: Was he in the Navy?

BA: Yes ... and , when I went down to New York in those days you had to take a test before your physical and while I was sitting there I met another young lady and we had been friends for over 50r years and unfortunately she passed away last week. But we had a long friendship with our children and grandchildren

MR: So the first time you met was when you were joining the service

BA: Yes in fact she asked if I wanted to go to the draft and I was like what's draft

MR: Both of you went into the service together?

BA: Yes

MR: So that s how you become friends?

BA: Yes

MR: You served together also?

BA: Yes

MR: What was her name?

BA: Lorraine Phillips

MR: Where was she from?

BA: Brooklyn

MR: When you joined, you joined in New York City?

BA: Yes

MR: Where did you go for training?

BA: Hunter College (pause) Great lakes Ill. And then St. Albins Long Island

WC: What was your training like initially was it pretty rigorous and hard or –

BA: Well I was in the medical – it was difficult , it was difficult when we had to take care of those men who had been prisoners and various things , it was quite sad. And I don't think they were thrilled with the women in the service

MR: What kind of specialized training did you receive?

BA: Hospital, lab tech, in fact I went on with that before I retired at 31 years working in a lab

MR: So this was something you learned while in the service?

BA: Yes

MR: ok, as a lab tack, was you a lab tech in the service

BA: Yes

MR: What did you do specifically?

BA: Blood test, urinalysis, the route lab work

WC: Did you wear a nurse's uniform or navy uniform?

BA: A navy uniform, yeah

MR: What kind of rank were you given?

BA: Hospital- oh god it was so long ago, hospital apprentice 3<sup>rd</sup> class I think. Many moons

MR: Did you , so you basically worked with patients who had returned from front line or POW's?

BA: Yes Yes

MR: Did you receive or have any illnesses something you contracted when you were in the service?

BA: No

WC: What type of housing did you have?

BA: Barracks

MR: What hospital were you assigned to?

BA: , let's see, St Abins Long Island and Brooklyn Navy Hospital

MR: Now, you stayed in barracks in both of those places

BA: Yes

MR: What were the barracks like?

BA: Crude, laughs

WC: Did you have bunk beds or regular beds?

BA: Bunk bed, yeah

MR: What was the equipped like that you used?

BA: At that time?

MR: Yes

BA: When I look back now, very old fashion

MR: What were or how were some of the changes in the type of equipment all those years you been in the lab tech

BA: The changes?

MR: Yes.

BA: The changes I've seen now because over the years, 31 years, I worked a lab

MR: Ok but what type of equipment

BA: Equipment, testing all kinds of various things

MR: Ok where there any amusing stories that stand out more than others or inspirational things happen that maybe stand out

BA: Well I met a woman, a wonderful young lady and we were friends ya know for over 50 years and amusing I don't think the men were thrilled with women in service

WC: How did they treat you?

BA: Not very nice

MR: What were your officers like? Were most of the officers where you were doctors?

BA: Yes medical

WC? How were you treated by them?

BA: Efficiently (chuckles)

MR: Ok, what do you think was one of the greatest impressions of this work that you did that you recall?

BA: Well I was very happy to be part of the recovery I felt I was doing something

MR: Were there ever anything unusual duties you had to do?

BA: No as far as medically

MR: Yes

BA: I don't think so

MR: When did you leave service?

BA: 46

MR: Were u able to use the GI Bill?

BA: I didn't take advantage of it

MR: So the education you received you done on your own?

BA: Yes

MR: What was the education you received after service?

BA: After service?

MR: Yes

BA: For what I paid for myself?

MR: Yes

BA: I had one year of college

MR: So you worked then as a lab tech for 31 years

BA: I worked for New York State Health Dept. in the virus unit

MR: That must've been interesting

MR: Oh now where about was that located

BA: Well it was on new Scotland Avenue, next to the Armory

But I think it's gone now Then I think they moved it out to , griffin lab outside the city

MR: Did you ever join any Veterans organization at all

BA: I temporarily did but uh yeah

MR: How do you think your time in the military service changed or had an effect on your life?

BA: Well as I said I met this lovely lady and we were friends for over 50 years

MR: Lifelong friendship

MR: Yeah

MR: Do you think you would've ever gone into lab tech if it wasn't for the service?

BA: Probably not

MR: are there any other thing that you recall or USO shows

BA: Yes I did

MR: What did you see, do you remember?

BA: Oh god it was so long ago

WC: How did the civilian population treat you as a woman in uniform? Were you treated with a lot of respect?

BA: My parents were not happy

MR: They did not like you being in the service?

BA: No, they thought only bad girls did that; but my friends thought it was wonderful

MR: Now after you left service, did you stay in the Albany area?

BA: Yes and I worked at the lab on new Scotland Ave

MR: Now where did your friend stay in New York City?

BA: Yes

MR: Ok. Well thank you very much for your interview