

**Marie R Buckridge  
Veteran**

**Michael Russert and Wayne Clarke  
New York State Military Museum  
Interviewers**

**Interviewed on  
August 27, 2013  
Colonie, NY**

**Q:** This is an interview with a Beltran Living Center Colonie New York 27th of August 2003 approximately 1 p.m. interviewers are Mike Russell and Wayne Clark could you give me your full name, date of birth, place of birth please

**MRB:** Marie Rose Sanity Buckridge, Marie sanity **B**uckridge

**Q:** okay where were you born and when were?

**MRB:** I was born in New York City on April 8th 1917

**Q:** okay what was your educational background prior to entering service?

**MRB:** well I went as far as high school at the time and then I received additional training when I left the service

**Q:** Okay do you remember where you were and what your reaction was when you heard about Pearl Harbor

**MRB:** (deep breath) well that was in June what when December 41 a41 I was not aware that there was going to be women in the military it bothered me very much because I love my country and um when I did hear I think the early part of 42 they opened up the military to women officers we were given an aptitude test and if you made 110 or better they offered you the OCS( officer candidate school) those of us who rejected OCS they kept us in the bay until we became the first group of Sergeant Calgary best sergeants and so on and so forth we train the women as they are coming in we were trained by the men only

**Q:** So, you were the first group of women

**MRB:** Of women of noncommissioned officers

**Q:** You joined in October 1942.

**MRB:** That's correct

**Q:** Why did you did you decide to go into the military?

**MRB:** Well I wanted to do my share as I say prior to that they didn't have the women but after that when I went down to be recruited and I like the program they had I felt that I should fit in and it was my advantage to do so.

**Q:** Okay so you join the military the army earning?

**MRB:** At the beginning we were where are me the Women's Army Auxiliary cord that's where WAAC came in

**Q:** Mm-hmm and then you went to the Air corps?

**MRB:** In 42 they did they opened the woman service to the Air Force to the Navy to the Marines and we had better choice of leaving the Army to go to any one of the branches so we didn't have a break in service per se but did get a transfer for one service to another and I selected the Air corps

**Q:** So, why did you do that

**MRB:** I love the air?

**Q:** did you ever fly much?

**MRB:** No no not prior to it because Amelia Earhart was my patron saint laughter

**Q:** Did you ever see her?

**MRB:** Well is a paper you know something well I never saw her met her in person it would have been delightful if I did I would have joined the pilots but see the women did pilot planes prior to original Air Force but they were not affiliated with any part of the service

**Q:** right I think they were called wasps all (other speaker) right

**MRB:** Right and those women you know they did not get no recognition daring

**Q:** mm-hmm okay so you being the first group you were trying to train by men

**MRB:** Correctly

**Q:** what kind of training did you get

**MRB:** vigorous strenuous domineering laughter because the men did not want us in the services we were taking their jobs away and they have set out in your high here heels marching in mind saying go home to your kitchen go home to your kitchen that's where you belong [laughter] they did not want us in service they just wanted to discourage us

**Q:** now initially you tell us what kind of uniforms you get

**MRB:** well it took us a while to get our uniforms but we did get you know but we did get you know regular army uniforms but instead of pants were given skirts

**Q:** But you said most of the uniforms received were men's uniforms

**MRB:** The first shipment of uniforms came from Des Moines, Iowa they forgotten about the women the coats they had no coats, no women's Coats ready for us so because it was really activated in about June that year I'm talking about October and November that year show clothes wise they were not prepared for us to have full contingency of what you would wear

**Q:** Okay so what was it like being a Pioneer in the

**MRB:** Delightful delicious and well if I were to do it all over again 10 times over for the simple reason before I went to service talking to you would have never happened but after the service for being drilled by men having to get out there and put forth your voice

we had to March women and especially when you 300 or 400 women I'm in the front line have the back had to be same as a the front you had a project your voice do they trained us in a big stable horse stable the major guy I was talking to you about he would come and slap us on the side with his whip

**Q:** Oh

**MRB:** Yep we were whipped into shape laughter

**Q:** So, then u were trained by men but then you became the trainer's over the

**MRB:** We became the cadre as the men drew departed the women took their spots we became like company clerks sergeant clerks and supply true sergeant drill sergeant and we and we had one of these and then we had the women from Lops who made it to watch the Canada they were the first women and we were the first contingency that they had to train and work with

**Q:** When did you receive a full woman's uniform

**MRB:** Oh I think I think it was well we didn't have some Christmas because we think they should never going to give us a Christmas present and give us the coats but we did get into bed early spring we were quite long time in the men's coats but that was the only thing we had that were men's

**Q:** Ok I know you were out in Des Moines Iowa

**MRB:** I started in Des Moines Iowa

**Q:** Ok how long were you there?

**MRB:** Well I was here about 6 months for about six months for training.

**Q:** mm-hmm and

**MRB:** Then from there I was transferred as supply sergeant I worked for just a little private of the supply sergeant Des Moines and then from there I worked Alta Utah which was its rightful place and that was for the Air Force being that I transferred from the army into the air force that was my first Air Force Base

**Q:** Ok and what did you do there?

**MRB:** Supply sergeant I ordered supplies for the year company sheets bedding coal is all if they need alterations for their clothes because all the uniforms didn't fit all the women so had we wanted to look as nice and it's precise as we could make we took pride in wearing our uniform

**Q:** So, you were Supply Officer for woman unit then?

**MRB:** Correct

**Q:** Ok how long were you in

**MRB:** Well I was there for about 5 months and then when that started to operate properly and I was transferred had a choice of going down to Florida or to go to Rome Air Force Base in New York and being from New York I took Griffith here for space in Long New York so I was transferred there and I activated the union with one of the entity that activated the unit up in Rome

**Q:** So, that was basically your job was activate units

**MRB:** Correct and from there Rome I went to Newark air force base and there I really had a good time so I transferred from company supplied but they need a lot of headquarter supply because at that time the war was starting the early part of 45 the war was starting to no it was 44 the war starting to Peter down and a lot of the supply that were on foreign soil we had to request foreign soils we had to request what was to stay what was to go so we had to move a lot of the equipment around and well whatever

**Q:** Okay so you stayed in Newark until

**MRB:** I was discharged correct

**Q:** Okay um

**MRB:** and that was in January the end of January in 45

**Q:** mm-hmm okay so basically you took care of the equipment at Newark

**MRB:** Yeah well whatever the company needs if the supply sergeant was there and I would make up the requisitions and whatever but you had to go according to Hoyle it was it you know a tough situation and then we had very heavy lifting to do because we didn't have men to it so being athletically inclined I always had my shoulder to the wheel until I that's injured

**Q:** I was I read that you were injured what happened to you

**MRB:** Was towards the end of Des Moines we they built up new barracks for the cattery the permanent personnel because all the universities were down they still made a stable area but all the cadre the officers and everything they gave us your office's homes and they built a big place for the noncommissioned officer that's why the growing

**Q:** mm-hmm

**MRB:** So from there moving the stuff through down where the stables where and pushing it up to what we call mushroom town because the of the buildings they just mushrooms and like a mushroom coming u through the ground and they came up so fast but moving the heavy supplies from one place to another it was a toll on your energy in the wear and tear of the body was heavy work because we had them men whatsoever and we didn't have those electric push cards that they have today you know or the go carts or whatever we had to do or everything was manual labor we didn't even have what do they call it those little things that take thing to have trust and put it in a warehouse

**Q:** Oh, all the little fork never knows, how are you injured?

**MRB:** By Miss Deamon (?) no I hate I got a very sturdy erupt through my whole system is cause a physical down fall

**Q:** Okay I noticed you said something about playing the harmonica while you were in service?

**MRB:** Yes well at night when we were down in the down in the stables working down there as I was saying the birds would come in at night and if they heard sound they kind of sort of would stay away but by my playing the harmonica which meant it was it's

down near so the birds were trying to nest somewhere else until we all settle down and then they would come in and take over the overhead

**Q:** Yeah you said it was kind of dangerous sleeping at night in there

**MRB:** It was it was now you know why because cause of the birds are not clean [laughter].

**Q:** So, we're the sides open and a stable were you

**MRB:** Oh No it was closed like you towards me close but they had rolled a little holes that they came in at night and day they would nested all over the place yeah managed to do that let me tell you the laundry was heavy we didn't have washing machines and item in our barracks everything was to the laundry

**Q:** mm-hmm how what do you think were some of the things that left the greatest impression on you while you were in service?

**MRB:** Well first of all to be a pioneer in something is so much more memorable you feel as if you saw something grow from the bottom and it just grew and grew and grew and to think of what it is today I'm proud that I have as a part of that at the beginning

**Q:** mm-hmm you were there any others that you stayed in contact with you have become friends with

**MRB:** No when you left the service at that time you were going to get out is it you sure did time the country was starting to settle down and you figure won't let me go home my mother got very sick at the time so I felt my place should be with her

**Q:** mm-hmm

**MRB:** Cause the army you know they gave enough time to make military service

**Q:** Do you remember where you were and your reaction when you heard about the death of President

**MRB:** Roosevelt. About what?

**Q:** The death of President Roosevelt

**MRB:** Well where was I okay that never happened at the end of 42 didn't it

**Q:** No 45 just before the surrender

**MRB:** oh no then I must have been home, no but she came to visit us in Des Moines say hello everyone

**Q:** She did

**MRB:** yeah and wanted to mend reporters I shouldn't say this turn it off (laughter)

**Q:** You can say it

**MRB:** No see the men you should think we were in service, the civilian population that was outside thought the women were going into service to make men which was they kept it so busy we didn't know what an eight-hour day was 24 hours yes and if they had 26 hours they would have kept us occupied 26 hours because there was so much too

and you were needed every time so a hanky panky was out of the question I mean where I was just over that way she was made a very different place but it whatever

**Q:** Did you get to see any USO shows or anything?

**MRB:** Oh yes when I was in the hospital I was in out in Utah in Brimming Utah they have a big hospital there and Bob Hope came and they took all of us and I was on a stretcher and they took all of us down and the aid that I had when said you know he made a fun spot for me so he's coming to it he was visiting us the ones on the stretchers and all of a sudden he saw you know a little more hair on me than the other patients so he said Oh a woman and I said done yes sir so he says don't sir me says however what are you doing here visiting me (laughter) cinema but I am the aid said she had a very serious accident oh she's going to be bearish looks great me on the head and when on

**Q:** Okay um you do you remember you went in service when the end of world war two and we VE Day VJ day?

**MRB:** Happy I was so glad because I had three brothers ever in service also and one of them was out in (unclear) and the other one was in Washington my third brother was over in Austria and they were still finding it tough even though the war ended yeah

**Q:** Do you remember how you felt when you heard about the dropping of the atomic bombs?

**MRB:** (deep breath) well I was kind of relieved feeling that our men would be home sooner because when I was in Utah the cases being in the Air Force we had a lot of the young pilots that were all in the Pacific that was shot at and they came to Bushing General Hospital in Utah and all girls would have to go down to the flight path and kind of lead the planes and you know them and many times when the pilots get out and they saw a girl there and say what are you doing here she says the same as you but they could think they didn't realize you know that women were also on the fields directing the planes coming in and then when they saw the stretcher cases that was sickening

**Q:** mm-hmm

**MRB:** It was very bad young men and then when I was in the hospital I saw of up close that up just awful so that the atomic bomb kind of sort of gave me a little bit of relief knowing less of our men are going to come back in a basket case has a basket case

**Q:** Do you did you ever use the GI Bill at all?

**MRB:** Yes, I did thank goodness

**Q:** In what way?

**MRB:** I went that went to a secretary college and then I also went down here to JCA and I got a degree in library science I did not get bachelors I an associate's associate degree in library science it help me out quite a bit okay

**Q:** Did you ever use the 5220 Club

**MRB:** Oh yeah my husband and I went to Florida on that (laughter)

**Q:** When they do marry?

**MRB:** We got married in 45

**Q:** Was he in the service at all?

**MRB:** He was in the paratroopers a hundred first air born but I knew him prior to going in to

**Q:** Okay um did you ever join any veterans' organizations

**MRB:** Yeah well on the chartered member of the DAV of in Saratoga, Saratoga post and I also belonged to the American region there's a gold post down here

**Q:** How do you think your time in the military service affected your life?

**MRB:** Well, it made me appreciate life's much more knowing that when you're in something like that the camaraderie that you form is it's so genuine and you may have had sisters and brothers at home but when you when you were group there they were there they were your friends and your relatives all combined in one they we associated very well together

**Q:** mm-hmm now I notice in this newspaper article oh yeah that you were and you said that you felt very happy in service while why was that?

**MRB:** I was very contemptible it changed me completely it made a very meek and mild person from me I wasn't making my person tried to go into service when I came out of service now I can help you in the eye and talk without shaking war you know I gave me a lot of confidence poise and the determination yeah and financially it helped me out because I retired from the federal government what do you kind of work did you do with federal government. When I worked for the Air Force and it's a commissary auditor has some statistics the statistical training see without the teeth I cannot talk (laughter) and then I was a librarian for the military and then I became a clerk and I worked in the regular part of the government as a clerk yeah

**Q:** okay all right well thank you very much for your interview

**MRB:** Yeah well, I hope I didn't

**Q:** oh yes, she's got some picture there too yes, we wanted to do that to you hope what

**MRB:** that I'm not boarding you at all

**Q:** No, you did not at all no okay um we can just hold them up here and Wayne can focus on them, I could hold it a few oh so this these were the first buildings you were in that De Moines these were the offices building you were in

**MRB:** right and this was these were all officers and any of them then washed out joined us as Calgary

**Q:** Oh ok now you I see you know yourself pointed out in each one of the pictures

**MRB:** Oh yes that's me

**Q:** Okay now these are where you're wearing the men's coats

**MRB:** Right they didn't have enough women's clothes for us

**Q:** Now when were most of these pictures taken

**MRB:** While this was between when I went in in October no I was I was inducted in October but I went in physically in November until the next June

**Q:** Okay now these are the fatigue hat you're wearing here where these men's fatigues or do they have fatigue have for women

**MRB:** No these with these were men and women all had the same have the same thing they didn't get our ward well put together yet

**Q:** Okay that's you again

**MRB:** This was the contingency that I wanted to go to (unclear)

**Q:** Ok

**MRB:** How they going to come out

**Q:** Oh yeah they will come out very well

**Q:** Now these were some of your friends

**MRB:** Yeah well this is part of our underwear and this was me it's a mail clerk will be in Trenton cagey so you had you had a train for every position ever

**Q:** Okay now that's not you

**MRB:** No no no that was cookie make sure you get the cat's name which is NLD (not in line of duty)

**Q:** Now why did let you have the cat

**MRB:** Well we're not allowed to have him but we used to go to a little ball outside our fence in Utah I mean De Moines Iowa and the farmers they said we have a little playmate for it so they gave some dog and they gave us a little cat and that little cat we had snakes too because our barracks were like raised and at night the snakes would come down from the doubts Utah's very mountainous and they would kind of sort of settle underneath our barracks were on pylons is a what it called?

**Q:** Yes

**Q:** oh, so this is your group marching in Rome New York

**MRB:** Right

**MRB:** but I was sick so I had to stay back but I could not march but I had a bum leg it in time so it was a good excuse to get out.

**Q:** Ok those are copies of orders?

**MRB:** Yep

**Q:** Are you in that picture?

**MRB:** Yeah



**Q:** Good conduct medal

**MRB:** uh-huh that me right there

**Q:** Ok

**MRB:** Isn't that me yeah good kind of metal

**Q:** Oh yes

**MRB:** Yeah okay Hill Field Utah and that was the right up we got in the paper this is me in the day in our room over here naturally see me petting the cat there we go that is me see that was in LOD (in the line of duty) she as my buddy this one here she was my supply sergeant

**Q:** mm-hmm do you know what ever happened to her?

**MRB:** No I would've she would have been the only one I would have liked to have contact with

**Q:** You ever keep any of your uniforms or anything well when I came out weird

**MRB:** we didn't have that much money to get you know to get a good wardrobe so I went and I had mine dyed beautifully yep

**Q:** Now what is the picture?

**MRB:** That picture is the cooks those are the different outfit to the cooks

**Q:** mmhmm yeah

**MRB:** They call him CMD cooks and bakers

**Q:** and what's that bottom picture looks like a fashion show?

**MRB:** Well we were having a shindig of some kind

**MC:** uh-huh where are you in that picture?

**MRB:** I'm not, real gal at the hoedowns a real well you know as supply sergeant you had to order the food also and if you had any money left over you never return money to the to the government oh my storm day

**Q:** Yes (laughter)

**MRB:** So which we if we had anything left over we used to be very good treat ourselves good and get frozen strawberry frozen pies whatever the goodies we didn't get in a regular diet and this gal was not supposed to getting a new commander of the base and what if his rules was no smoking he never wanted to see a cigarette and a woman's face, she just broke all the rules she's sitting in a developing pan pot you know a pan and smoking she cigarette isn't she

**Q:** Yeah, she is

**MRB:** This is the warehouse yeah and this is out in Utah when we went, they took the Red Cross sent us with the group to go hike in the woods and all officer was allowed to carry arms because they had some big snakes out there, I'm in here but I'm hidden

**Q:** Now is that a dance on base or?

**MRB:** Yeah, I like a social but I've got here somewhere well whatever see how I was very shy I never wanted of my picture taken

**Q:** Okay

**MRB:** Whoa yep he can't go with that, that was when with one year old the Air Force I mean was 1 year old the women's air force

**Q:** And that's you right there

**MRB:** Yep

**Q:** So, what the others doing to you

**MRB:** There spanking us you gets spanked for you birthday spanking or birthday spanking yep

**Q:** Okay okay

**Q:** Now this is at Newark when you went to Newark

**MRB:** See how they had a lake separating the men from the women

**Q:** mm-hmm

**MRB:** So we had our gals the driving these buggies and they used to take us all around the base

**Q:** mm-hmm

**MRB:** And then when we had time off when we had time off we (unclear)now this is the original women's stationary and we're starting to save stamps I got as far as two the stamp we had to save

**Q:** Okay, I bet there are not too many of those still around

**MRB:** Now this is my brother was overseas these pictures he sent to me

**Q:** Alright well thank you very much thank you

**MRB:** Oh, I hope it was yeah whatever