

1 **Interview of Johanna Baskin Balla Butt on her service**
2 **in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps during WWII and the Korean War**
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5 Ruth Stewart: Johanna B. Butt is being interviewed today, uh, as a member of the Women's
6 Overseas Service League. She is being interviewed on January 14, 2004, at the
7 army residence community in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of the San
8 Antonio Unit of the Women's Overseas Service League. The interviewer is Ruth
9 Stewart, assisted by Carol Habgood. [00:36] Johanna, tell us a little bit about
10 your early life.

11
12 Johanna Butt: Well, I was born in Austria and came to this country with my parents when I
13 was 2½. And, uh, I grew up in St. Louis, Missouri; attended high school and a
14 year of college there. And then, [coughing] I became ill. I had pneumonia quite
15 a few times and the doctors said I had to go a warmer climate. So, I couldn't
16 figure out how to get there because we had no money. And, uh, so I thought,
17 "Well, I'll just be in nursing school." You know, they accept you for a
18 minimum amount of money. In fact, it cost \$85 at that time to go in. And so I
19 went, uh, I picked Phoenix, Arizona. I picked it from the travel folder and I
20 went to a warm climate [laughing]. And, uh, I finished nursing school there and,
21 at that time, that was, uh, I graduated in '43, so the war was on.

22
23 Ruth Stewart: 1:37] What school was that?

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25 Johanna Butt: Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing, it was a 3-year course. And, uh, so
26 then, I, I had intended to, to be a, a flight nurse, and, uh, you know, on a
27 commercial airline at that time. I thought, well that would be, get me away from
28 the hospital.

29
30 Ruth Stewart: [1:56] And be a stewardess at that time.

31
32 Johanna Butt: Be a stewardess, mm-hm. And, so anyway, so I joined the Army Air Corps and
33 I was, uh, went to basic at Lackland Air Force Base, which, at that time was San
34 Antonio Aviation Cadet Center. And, uh, was sent to Big, Big Spring for my
35 first assignment after basic and, uh, I enjoyed it very much, but I made a
36 mistake. I dated the chief nurse's boyfriend and got transferred within 24 hours
37 to the ground forces. So, I went to, to, I went to Camp Barkeley and then to Fort
38 Ru-, Camp Rucker, it was at that time, Alabama, where the unit was activated. I
39 was sent to the 123rd Evac Hospital [inaudible 2:45] Mobile.

40
41 Ruth Stewart: [2:47] And that was in the army, not the air force?

42
43 Johanna Butt: Army. When I got transferred to the ground force, yes, it was all the army – the
44 ground force and the air corps were all one. They could transfer you around to

1 each, either one. So, I went overseas. I had applied for flight nurse's, nursing
2 school at, when I was at Big Spring but, uh, of course, I was transferred to the
3 ground force and I was sent overseas with 123rd Evac. And, uh, when I got
4 there, I'd been there a short time and, um, my application went through for
5 flight nursing school so I went to the personnel tent and I saw it said that the
6 application had been approved, and I said, "Great, I'll leave, I'm leaving," and
7 he said, "No, you're not. You're in an active unit, this is canceled." Bam! That
8 was it. So, then I stayed there. I was there for a little better than a ye-, about a
9 year, a little bit over a year. I came home, and I had enough points. We
10 followed, uh, Patton part of the time. We were [inaudible 3:52] and then we
11 followed General Patton. And it was quite interesting. You know, he was a very
12 interesting person to observe. And, I had met him when I was in Phoenix in
13 nursing school, but, uh...

14
15 Ruth Stewart: [4:08] Tell me a little bit about your interaction Patton and your observations.

16
17 Johanna Butt: Well, I'll tell you, he was a genius in many respects, but he was a [typical 4:17]
18 soldier's soldier and I thought he was too rough [and all 4:21]. I wasn't
19 fascinated with him as a man but one time, he came and inspected our hospital.
20 He came in with our chief nurse and, uh, a commanding officer. And I was in
21 the operating tent, and he walked in, you know, blustering and I threw him out.
22 And, of course, the commanding officer and the chief nurse turned green and I
23 thought, "Oh, this is the end of me!" But he turned around and he commended
24 me for doing my job and I felt big. Anyway, so, uh, then I came back when I got
25 out of the service.

26
27 Ruth Stewart: [4:54] Just a minute, this was your, this was in Europe. [inaudible 4:58]

28
29 Johanna Butt: World War II, I was in France and Germany. [inaudible 5:00] We landed at Le
30 Havre.

31
32 Ruth Stewart: [5:03] And how long were you there?

33
34 Johanna Butt: From, uh, we landed in, let's see, in January of, the beginning of January 1944. I
35 came home in Feb, in February of '45, no, wait a minute, '46. '46.

36
37 Ruth Stewart: [5:21] Okay, so you were there 2 years then?

38
39 Johanna Butt: No, just one year.

40
41 Ruth Stewart: [5:25] '44?

42
43 Johanna Butt: I came back, I got there in '45.

44

1Ruth Stewart: [5:31] After the war? No, it ended in August of '45.
2
3Johanna Butt: Yeah. And we got there in December, actually.
4
5Ruth Stewart: [5:40] Okay.
6
7Johanna Butt: I've got it written down on [inaudible 5:42] And, uh, so anyway, I came back. I
8 was discharged in February of '46. I thought I was discharged but I was just
9 separated. I found out that much later. Nobody gave us any information. So,
10 then, uh, I decided to go back and get my degree. Well, I got married first and
11 my husband was killed and then I decided to go back and get a degree.
12
13Ruth Stewart: [6:12] Was he in the service?
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15Johanna Butt: Yes, he was in the, in the air, air corps.
16
17Ruth Stewart: [6:16] And that's where he met his death?
18
19Johanna Butt: Yes, over in Germany.
20
21Ruth Stewart: [6:21] During the war?
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23Johanna Butt: No, it was after the war.
24
25Ruth Stewart: [6:25] But he was still in the service?
26
27Johanna Butt: Yes, he stayed in the service. And, uh, we got married in Germany. And then he
28 was killed [throat clearing] and I came back and, uh, interestingly, I'd just
29 learned to drive so I brought a car back and I drove it from New York to St.
30 Louis and I didn't even have a valid driver's license. I had a student permit and
31 I got picked up on 6 counts by the police. One was that I backed into a light pole
32 and the light bulb fell off and, uh, then I, it was Saturday evening, so I was
33 taking my mother to see some relatives and so – do you want to hear this? –
34 And, uh, so anyway, I was taking my mother to see some relatives and, so I, I
35 was headed the wrong way, so I turned around, made a U-turn and, um, then I
36 parked in front of the house and we went in. Pretty soon, the police came and
37 picked me up. Susan, my cousin, had been feuding with her neighbor and her
38 neighbor called the police. And they took me in and my mother and dad had to
39 sign my bou-, bond. Of course, when the thing came to court, the judge laughed
40 his head off! He thought it was the funniest thing in the world 'cause I still had
41 my overseas license on there and he said, "You don't have a Missouri license,"
42 and I said, "Well, Missouri is in the USA, isn't it? I have a USA license," so he
43 just was laughing, and it got dismissed. But anyway, so then I went back and

1 got my degree at Washington University in St. Louis. I decided to go back to
2 school.
3
4Ruth Stewart: [8:09] Bachelor of Science?
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6Johanna Butt: Nursing.
7
8Ruth Stewart: [8:13] In where was that?
9
10Johanna Butt: Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. And I had a job then; I was
11 working on my master's and, uh, I was the supervisor at Florence Hospital in St.
12 Louis and, uh, I got a letter from President Truman telling me to get my affairs
13 in order. I didn't realize that I was still in the reserves, in active reserves.
14 Nobody told us when we were discharged, they just, you know, got rid of us.
15 And, uh, anyway, [laughter] so I joined the regular army. They wouldn't mess
16 around like that. And I came back into service in 1951. I was stationed at Fort
17 Campbell with the paratroopers and was sent to Japan and, sent down to 382nd
18 General Hospital in Kanaoka Barracks, which is outside of Osaka, it's about 30
19 miles outside. And, uh, then, uh, I got orders for Korea twice but my, the
20 commanding officer had me taken off the orders and I stayed there as surgical
21 supervisor, operating supervisor. And, uh, we took all the casualties from
22 Korea, so we were considered a casualty hospital.
23
24Ruth Stewart: [9:26] And [throat clearing] that was where now?
25
26Johanna Butt: It was Kanaoka Barracks, 382nd General Hospital in Japan. So then, after that...
27
28Ruth Stewart: [9:40] So here you're taking care of casualties from World War II, then?
29
30Johanna Butt: No, from, uh,
31
32Ruth Stewart: [9:44] From Korea?
33
34Johanna Butt: Korea. They went and got'm within 24 hours. And every time the Koreans had a
35 push, we worked 18 hours a day, straight through. Because we had so many
36 casualties. They were really evacuating them out rapidly.
37
38Ruth Stewart: [10:01] Mm-hm.
39
40Johanna Butt: Well, then I came back [throat clearing] to the States and then I was sent to Fort
41 Sam Houston and taught the enlisted course section for 2 years.
42
43Ruth Stewart: [10:14] When was, when was that?
44

1Johanna Butt: That was in 1954. I was Air Evac, in fact, and, uh, with a patient. And, it really
2 was interesting because they sent me to the wrong hospital and so then I ended
3 up st-, being there waiting for orders, and I bought a car and then they said I had
4 to go by air and I said, “Well, you have to ship my car then,” and they said,
5 “No, we’ll give you TDY,” you know, travel time. So anyway, then I ended up
6 at Fort Same Houston and [throat clearing] I taught the enlisted course section
7 there and, uh, I, uh...

8
9Ruth Stewart: [10:58] What was it you were teaching [inaudible 11:00] OR techs?

10

11Johanna Butt: Operating room techs. But I taught some of the dental subjects, too. In fact,
12 someone, I had took theirs to another assis-, uh, assistant chief nurse there. And,
13 uh, you know, you always get a [inaudible 11:15]. Somebody from the surgeon
14 general’s office came down to do so-, an inspection and, uh, of course the
15 headquarters passed the buck and I ended up having to take care of rounds, you
16 know, the post and all that. So, I was talking to her and told her I’d like to get
17 my master’s; next thing I knew, I got orders to go to school for my master’s. I
18 went to Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio. I, I was there for a year and sent to
19 Madigan and, uh, after that, I went on the [inaudible 11:51] Seattle,
20 Washington. It was very interesting there. I had, uh, applied for transfer from
21 Madigan because I was allergic to something in the Northwest and it was loca-,
22 Fort Lewis is near Tacoma, Washington. Well, Seattle is only 100-something
23 miles up the road and so, after I had asked for a transfer out of the area, they
24 sent me 100 miles up the road. So there I was again. [laughter] But, in
25 recruiting, I traveled most of the time. I had Washington, Oregon, Montana, and
26 part of Idaho as my territory. There are more cattle than nurses in that area. But,
27 uh, I did very well, and I decided not to take the third year there. That was set,
28 went to Fort Bragg and was educational [inaudible 12:41] and assistant chief
29 nurse there. And, uh, uh, I got married there also but I had known my husband
30 before. I had met him on recruiting.

31

32Ruth Stewart: [12:51] This was the second marriage?

33

34Johanna Butt: Yeah, mm-hm.

35

36Ruth Stewart: [12:53] Okay.

37

38Johanna Butt: No, it was really his third, but...

39

40Ruth Stewart: [12:57] Oh, okay.

41

42Johanna Butt: But anyway, and, uh [throat clearing], and, uh, I had met him in Walla Walla,
43 Washington. We got married at Fort Bragg a couple years later and, uh, so I
44 stayed there for quite some time and I had, I had a recruiting program as part of

1 my duties, too, and so I went to see General Westmoreland and he was terrific
2 about supplying all sorts of, uh, things that we needed plus entertainment for
3 the, the student nurses, the, the directors [inaudible 13:37].
4
5Ruth Stewart: [13:38] And what was his position at that point?
6
7Johanna Butt: He was Commander of the Airborne there, I guess.
8
9Ruth Stewart: [13:47] But he was on the same post that you were at Fort Bragg?
10
11Johanna Butt: He was at Fort Bragg, yeah. Mm-hm. He was with the Special Service
12 [inaudible 13:53]
13
14Ruth Stewart: [13:53] Okay. So he was very helpful?
15
16Johanna Butt: Most helpful. His aide told me I couldn't see him, but I went right on in anyway
17 and he didn't throw me out, so, I got what I wanted. And, he was really good.
18 He was all for education, you know, and recruiting and all that. And, of course,
19 the special forces, they put on interesting demonstrations and the Golden
20 Knights put on demonstrations. That impressed the little student nurses who
21 were brought in. And, of course, I got each one of them a nice young lieutenant
22 for a date...
23
24Ruth Stewart: [14:27] [laughter]
25
26Johanna Butt: ...on Saturday nights so they went to the club and danced, ate and danced, you
27 know? So, it worked out very well! But, uh, then I was, my husband and I were
28 transferred to Puerto Rico and, from there, he went to Vietnam and I
29 volunteered to go to Vietnam, but they turned me down because, uh, there was
30 no vacancy in my [MLS and grade 14:51]. And then, so I was going to be sent
31 to Walter Reed. However, my mother-, my younger sister died. My mother, she
32 was 80, and she couldn't cope with it too well, so I asked for transfer to Fort
33 Leonard Wood because my mother was in St. Louis. And, so I got transferred to
34 Fort Leonard Wood and I stayed there 3½ years and retired from there. When I
35 was teaching at Fort Sam, they happened to have, uh, air force and army
36 students because the air force didn't have their training program for the medics
37 yet. They were working on it. And Wilford Hall hadn't been built yet, of course.
38 [inaudible 15:30] then that was built, they started it there, as far as I know. They
39 had it several places though, too.
40
41Ruth Stewart: [15:37] Mm-hm.
42
43Johanna Butt: But, uh, we had air force nurses that signed with us.
44

1Ruth Stewart: [15:40] Mm-hm, mm-hm. Let's go back to your time in Japan. What was it like
2 for you, as a woman, living in Japan?
3

4Johanna Butt: I didn't get out too much, really. But it was very interesting and when I could,
5 you know, I traveled all over and I didn't have to worry. And, of course, one
6 good thing, if you were going with friends, we were all taller than the Japanese
7 then and you could find them easily. But, one time, I was in Kyoto, Japan and
8 they had a riot. And, I was frightened. I got, you know, but I hid in the temple
9 so that nothing happened. There wasn't too much violence but were beating
10 each other a little bit, you know, that sort of thing? But I...
11

12Ruth Stewart: [16:27] What caused the riot? Do you, did you ever know?
13

14Johanna Butt: I don't know. I don't un-, I don't know. At times, they had, periodically they'd
15 have riots. Just like in Puerto Rico, they'd have demonstrations and they
16 demonstrated against the government, you know, and the military. Then I'd
17 have to go in full battle gear to my post. It was the same type of thing in Japan,
18 too. And we had typhoons there that were really severe.
19

20Ruth Stewart: [16:51] Mm-hm.
21

22Johanna Butt: And, of course, every time that we had a typhoon, they brought all the
23 dependents into the hospital and put'm in our rooms and moved us out because
24 we were supposed to be on duty, we didn't need a room.
25

26Ruth Stewart: [17:02] Yeah.
27

28Johanna Butt: And, of course, they always put a youngster who wet the bed in my bed
29 [laughter] and I had to fight getting a new mattress, because, you know, by the
30 time they'd been there a few days, that mattress was not so good.
31

32Ruth Stewart: [17:14] Pretty bad.
33

34Johanna Butt: Yep.
35

36Ruth Stewart: [17:16] Were y-, did you live in the hospital?
37

38Johanna Butt: Yes. See, I lived in quarters all the time until – in fact, when I first went there,
39 there were 4 of us to one room and we were all captains. Can you believe that?
40 And we had one chest of drawers and that was it. And we had a rod that you
41 could hang some clothes on. And had community showers, and that was
42 interesting because every time we'd take a shower, the Jap-, some Japanese
43 workmen would come in and fix something.
44

1Ruth Stewart: [17:45] [laughter]
2
3Johanna Butt: They didn't pay attention to you...
4
5Ruth Stewart: [17:48] Mm-hm.
6
7Johanna Butt: They'd nod at you and you'd nod and then that was the end of it. Of course, you
8 know, they take community baths there, too, so...
9
10Ruth Stewart: [17:56] They're not as prudish as we are.
11
12Johanna Butt: No. It, it was fine. Of course, some of the nurses didn't get used to that.
13
14Ruth Stewart: [18:03] Mm-hm. And, what was the food like for you there? On post or off
15 post?
16
17Johanna Butt: Well, on post, it was the same army rations, you know. It was pretty, pretty
18 good. And, uh, but off post, they had wonderful food. But, of course, you know,
19 you had to be careful about eating it. And I know one time, several of us went
20 down to, uh, down to the south, uh, and we ate raw oysters, which we shouldn't
21 have done. Two of the ladies ended up in the hospital. I managed to stay out
22 and, on my feet, but I should've had better sense.
23
24Ruth Stewart: [18:40] And what about your recreation there?
25
26Johanna Butt: Well, we had a bowling alley that we could bowl, and, uh, we had a swimming
27 pool and there was a golf course but the first time I went to practice, well, I
28 went to practice one day and, the next day, the whole thing had burned down, so
29 that was the end of golf right there. But we'd take short trips when we had time
30 off. But every time I put in for vacation, the North Koreans would have a push
31 and my vacati-, my leave was canceled. So I never got away on a leave. I had
32 planned to cl, cl, climb Mount Fuji one time and another time I was going to,
33 uh, Hong Kong and Thailand but both of those were canceled.
34
35Ruth Stewart: [19:24] What about your life then in Europe, western Europe when you were
36 there?
37
38Johanna Butt: During the war?
39
40Ruth Stewart: [19:28] Mm-hm.
41
42Johanna Butt: Oh, that was miserable. We lived in, lived in, uh, tents, hospital tents – 13 of us
43 to a tent. It was cold and snow and ice and mud and, uh, they had, uh, you
44 know, they used to have to escort us to the latrine because some of the troops

1 around the area, w, w, hadn't seen women for a long time or thought they would
2 never see another one, so they would keep invading our area. But, uh, it was
3 interesting. And I had a talent for building fires. I was a pyromaniac when I was
4 a kid.

5
6Ruth Stewart: [20:10] [laughter]

7
8
9Johanna Butt: And, uh, and then we had a little, uh, you know, those potbellied stoves at home
10 when we first came from Europe and I could keep that fire going always. But
11 that was my job. I built the fires every [laughter], every morning and I didn't
12 have to do anything else in the tent, because we all had little chores. And, uh,
13 one time when we would [inaudible 20:33], one of the gals hung her rubber
14 girdle up beside the stove and I'd built such a good fire that girdle was dripping,
15 and she really gave me the devil. It was my fault! Can you imagine? But we, the
16 conditions weren't good. We had [slip trenches 20:49] most of the time.
17 Sometimes we had latrines and when the water truck came by to give you a
18 shower, it seemed like every time I got my hair soaped up good, we ran out of
19 water. That was the kind of life.

20
21Ruth Stewart: [21:01] Mm-hm.

22
23Johanna Butt: And sometimes, you know, we didn't, the supplies would be cut off. We didn't
24 have rations. One time, we did-, while we were being transferred on a troop
25 train, and the trench stole our rations, so nobody had anything to eat for 3 days.
26 And I wasn't the type to carry candy bars or anything [inaudible 21:19]. I drank
27 water, period.

28
29Ruth Stewart: [21:21] Mm.

30
31Johanna Butt: But, it wasn't bad. I needed to lose weight anyway 'cause I ate, I ate everything
32 in sight. When I was going over on the ship, I'll never forget. We heard all these
33 lies about suppl-, all this news about the supply [lines 21:35] being cut, you
34 know, and this and that. And I thought, "Oh, maybe I'll never eat again!" and so
35 I put down every-, well, of course, I didn't get seasick. The northern Atlantic is
36 very bad. But, since I didn't get sick, I'd go to the mess hall twice a day. We
37 had 2 meals a day, and I'd eat somebody else's portion, too. [laughter] I ate
38 everything in sight. I gained, in those few days, I gained 14 pounds.

39
40Ruth Stewart: [22:01] [laughter]

41
42Johanna Butt: And I couldn't zip my slacks so [inaudible 22:04] of safety pins so I could get
43 off the boat.

44

1Ruth Stewart: [22:08] Decently? [laughter]
2
3Johanna Butt: Yeah, and we had to wade ashore. And that wasn't good. It was cold.
4
5Ruth Stewart: [22:13] Mm-hm.
6
7Johanna Butt: Cold. And they transferred all these trucks to our first encampment and we, we
8 sat there and it was raining and, it was sleeting and snowing. And, you know,
9 there was a rim of ice around your rump where you'd been sitting. It was cold.
10
11Ruth Stewart: [22:29] Most difficult.
12
13Johanna Butt: But it was very, actually it was very good really, we were angry. It seemed that
14 the supply of-, the [inaudible 22:37] officer had misread the orders. We were
15 supposed to go by train but, a couple of days after we were set up already, the
16 train that we were supposed to be on came in and crashed through the station.
17 They were all wooden cars, and everybody was maimed and really, many dead,
18 and we had to go down and work at the scene. Then we were thankful he made
19 the mistake. Another time, he got us behind the German lines, but the Germans
20 thought they were surrounded so they kept surrendering to us. We went in by
21 mistake!
22
23Ruth Stewart: [23:12] That's a wonderful story! [laughter]
24
25Johanna Butt: Well, there are more things that happened. Another time, we sped up and turned
26 on all the lights and everything else and, so, my friend and I we found a horse
27 wandering around and so we started riding this horse around and then the, the
28 troops came in and said that it was a minefield that hadn't been cleared yet and
29 here we'd been riding that horse around! So then we had to go sit quietly 'til
30 they cleared the field.
31
32Ruth Stewart: [23:41] What was your other kind of recreation besides riding horses on
33 minefields?
34
35Johanna Butt: Well, oh, one time the British, uh, the British had captured some police horses
36 and, uh, they told us we could go up there and ride when we had free time. If it,
37 see, whenever they had a battle, they had all these casualties. In between times,
38 we just sat and waited. And, so we went over to the stables and, I'm not much
39 of a rider. I'm the kind that I parted with the company of a horse at least once
40 during a ride. But anyway, so, we went over there, and I told the groomsman, I
41 said – young British soldier – I said, "Why don't you give me a real slow horse?
42 I don't ride well," so he gave me a horse and I looked at it and thought, "That
43 doesn't look slow at all!" But I got on and the others had started off already. I'm
44 in the rear. [throat clearing] I, I'm not a good rider and I just, I didn't know, I

1 guess I just kind of panicked and so the horse took off. And he went to the head
2 of the pack and I thought, “Oh my God! What am I-?” but, instead of pulling
3 back on the reins, I kept yelling. It was a German horse, he probably didn’t
4 understand, “Stop!” anyway.
5
6Ruth Stewart: [24:45] [laughter]
7
8Johanna Butt: So, I slid off. And I thought, “Oh, I’ll never get back on that animal again,” but
9 he stood right there. He stood there by me and he nudged me with his hooves
10 and I wouldn’t get up and then he got his head down and I thought I better get
11 up or he’ll kill me! So I crawled back up on him, which was a job. And then
12 we’re riding again and I’m still out of control and there’s a creek running across
13 the field. So I thought, “Oh, he’ll stop there.” No, he jumped it and I’m with
14 him. I landed on him but then I slid off after that. So then finally it dawned on
15 me, I should pull back on the reins. And, when I did, he did everything I
16 wanted and after that, I rode him all the time. So, but, he almost killed me first.
17 [laughter] I had a total of 20 years and 6 months.
18
19Ruth Stewart: [25:33] And when were you discharged then?
20
21Johanna Butt: In 1970, the [31st of February 25:37] but I always say 01 March, because that’s
22 when I started retirement.
23
24Ruth Stewart: [25:44] Of what year?
25
26Johanna Butt: 1970.
27
28Ruth Stewart: [25:48] ’70, okay. And, since then, what did you do after retiring?
29
30Johanna Butt: Well, my husband had retired a year before. He insisted that I had to either retire
31 or get rid of him, one or the other, so I made my decision and retired. And then,
32 [coughing] we went down to Tucson, Arizona where we had some, bought some
33 land and built a house. And I was going to go to school the following year and
34 work on my PhD. I wanted to do that in Sociology because I figured I wouldn’t
35 have to go to work, I could just volunteer for that stuff. I didn’t plan on
36 working. And, uh, things didn’t work out. The following year, my mother
37 became an invalid and I brought her down to live with us and, that was a full
38 year, after that, my husband became an invalid. By the time I was finished with
39 both of them, I didn’t feel like tying myself down again to school. I’d been tied
40 down so much. You know, if you have an invalid around the house, it’s 24
41 hours a day.
42
43Ruth Stewart: [26:54] Mm-hm. It sure is, yeah.
44

1Johanna Butt: But anyway, so I decided I'd just play.
2
3Ruth Stewart: [27:00] Good. Mm-hm.
4
5Johanna Butt: And I traveled.
6
7Ruth Stewart: [27:02] Yeah. Did you join any veteran's organizations?
8
9Johanna Butt: Oh yes, I belonged to the, I used to belong to the MOWW and the Retired
10 Officers and I joined WOSL and, uh, what else? [coughing] And then, of
11 course, I played golf a lot.
12
13Ruth Stewart: [27:19] Mm-hm.
14
15Johanna Butt: I kept busy in traveling. I would just take at least one trip a month.
16
17Ruth Stewart: [27:24] Mm-hm, an interesting life all the way through.
18
19Johanna Butt: Well, I think so. Not always what I wanted but I was interesting.
20
21Ruth Stewart: [27:32] It obviously was a very interesting life and you certainly put a lot of zest
22 into it all along the way.
23
24Johanna Butt: Well, I had fun. I tell you what, that I was a misfit in the service at first. I really
25 was. Oh, I didn't tell you one time at the beginning of an R&R and it was right
26 before [inaudible 27:51] Day and, uh, the official [inaudible 27:52] Day. There
27 was a rumor that the war had ended, and we were flying from [throat clearing]
28 [inaudible 28:02] Paris, Nice, France up to Paris and we were going to, we had
29 orders for the train, but we hitched a ride on the plane, we thought that would be
30 easier. And we landed. The rumor was that the war was over, and the French
31 were out there with champagne and all that. Of course, my luggage was stolen. I
32 turned around, I was at the airport and I turned my back and somebody sn-, took
33 my luggage. But that was okay. We stayed 2 or 3 days and when we came back
34 to the hospital, they said, the commanding officer, chief nurse took us to the
35 commanding officer and said, "You girls are AWOL." I said, "No, we're not!
36 The war is over! We're only in for the duration, that's all." Well, you know, that
37 didn't set too well, things like that.
38
39Ruth Stewart: [28:44] Yeah. Well, it has been very interesting and appreciate so much still all
40 of this interesting story that you've told us and some very, very interesting
41 sidelights of your life in the, both the army and air force, or air force and then
42 army, whichever way it was. All of which was nice. Thank you very much!
43
44

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