

**Interview of Lillian Malloy
on her service in the U.S. Army Air Corps**

5 Unidentified speaker: It's going.

6
7 Lillian Malloy: My name is Lillian [inaudible 0:05], service name, Malloy. I, uh, heard
8 the news on December 7th, 1941, in my house. My family, we were all
9 there. The minute we heard the news, we all wanted to join the service.
10 Of course, some of them couldn't; they had other responsibilities, but my
11 brother Jack, my brother Carl, my brother-in-law Woody was already in
12 service and myself, we all wanted to hop down and join that minute. We
13 couldn't believe what had happened. Tsk. So, in August of '42, the first
14 day the, uh, enlistment office opened in Battle Creek, I was down signing
15 up to go. I went – I had to go to Kalamazoo and get my examination and
16 then I was received and sworn in. Uh, I went t-, first to a – uh, Des
17 Moines, Iowa, for training. We'd had no uniforms, men's uniforms. We
18 wore completely our civvy dress under the men's overcoats, knit hats, and
19 boots. [laughter] We trained in this at Des Moines and then we were sent
20 to the Des Moines proper. This was at Boone t-, town, where we had our
21 initial training, our basic. Then at Des Moines, at the Plaza Hotel, we had
22 a school set up for administrative work for army administrative work, so
23 we went there. Tsk. It was six weeks altogether that we trained.

24
25 Then we went to the staging area from there, and we were told that certain
26 ones of us were going to be picked to go to a new base that was top secret,
27 so we found ourself on a train going all the back routes down to we didn't
28 know where. We got in a sandy desert, said, 'Oh my god, we aren't gonna
29 be stationed here, are we?' [laughter] We were – that was Eglin Field,
30 Florida. Probably many people have never heard of Eglin and they call it
31 Elgin. It is Eglin. E-G-L-I-N Field. We were an experimental group for
32 the women who were to join the Air Force, tsk, and they experimented.
33 Everything under the sun, even to physical experimentation, but we
34 survived and a year later, they signed us into the regular Air Force – or
35 regular Army Air Force at that time. A little past a year after I was
36 stationed at Eglin, that is all in a book, which was written. We were first.
37 That is available, published by Liz Forbes Dahlgren, written by her, and
38 she has some available anytime anybody's interested, but the first Air
39 Force group [coughing] – it's already recorded so there's no point in my
40 going over it again.

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42 I was sent to o-, uh, for – I was picked to go overseas in the winter of '42
43 and so I went to Oglethorpe – Fort Oglethorpe to get my overseas training.
44 That was a fort where they had German prisoners of war. Tsk. They did

1 all the gardening and all the – and they loved it! They'd never had it so
2 good, but when we had our parades, we girls in the service had one
3 uniform, which was a fatigue uniform, which we wore all the time during
4 our – 24 hours a day. [laughing] That's the only u-, thing we had all
5 during our, our overseas training. We had to dodge bullets, go to PT, go
6 to lectures, all in the same clothes, and it was so humid you couldn't wash
7 them. I tried. And the next morning you tried to put it on, it was still wet
8 and I just packed it full of mud, so I lived with that for the time being.
9 Tsk. Then we had this parade and we girls were all in our muddy
10 uniforms and the civilians standing around watching the parade said, 'Oh
11 look at those girls w-, prisoners!' [laughter] This was funny. We laughed.
12 They thought we were very [callous 6:01], we didn't care about the war,
13 so that is a matter of opinion.
14

15 From there, I went to England aboard the, uh, Queen Elizabeth. Thirteen
16 to a stateroom, and we've all known about that cramped quarters. I went
17 to [inaudible 6:26] in England. I was put in receiving and dispatch of
18 aircraft from the [inaudible 6:32] going over Germany. Tsk. And then
19 after the war, the war was over by about three days, I took a 5-day tour
20 through Ireland, Isle of Man, Scotland, and back to England. Uh, we had
21 a wonderful time, my friend and I, another service girl. In Ireland, she did
22 the Irish jig. On the Isle of Man, we went aboard a, a boat that was
23 assigned to England to – from the United States for the purpose of
24 protecting the island of England and Ireland and Scotland. Then we left
25 the Isle of Man and went to Scotland and we had quite a time there.
26 Everybody was welcoming us with open arms. We went to church on
27 Sunday morning, and we were told by the minister there that FDR was
28 dead. Tsk. They all stood in recognition of FDR and asked us to accept
29 their sympathies and they mourned with us. Tsk. Then my next stop was
30 France – Paris, France. They still hadn't cleaned up the building
31 [laughing] where we were living from after the Germans had lived there.
32 It was full of bugs, filth. We had to all be fumigated as well as the
33 building, [laughter] but that's the first time I ever drank champagne. I
34 went – the first night I was there, I went to the G.I. club and had some
35 champagne and I didn't remember coming home. [laughter] It's a good
36 thing the girls carried me in. [laughter] Never let that happen again. Tsk.
37

38 I stayed in France quite a while, visited all of the city of Paris. I loved it.
39 I would go back tomorrow. From there, to Wiesbaden, Germany, where I
40 was assigned to General [Cannon 9:25] for information education
41 department. He is the man that was responsible for starting United
42 Nations International Children's Emergency Fund; in other words,
43 UNICEF. He's the one that wrote to Danny Kaye and set up all these
44 things. He was the – a general in charge of the air force all over Europe.

1 Tsk. It was a pleasure to work with him. So many interesting things
2 happened under him that I couldn't begin to reveal all of them. [coughing]
3 I think probably the most interesting was watching Eisenhower hold a
4 stab-, staff meeting without his so-called girlfriend who wasn't even seen
5 around and without his really making any decisions. He left it up to his
6 staff. Tsk. It was a joy to work with UNICEF. We set up things for kids.
7 We had – they were just dreams at that time. Danny Kaye was beautiful
8 working with [us 10:55], tsk, and it was set up in Switzerland first, then I
9 had an opportunity to go there and visit [him 11:03]. We also took a
10 survey of all the schools in all the countries and found that the two highest
11 scholastic records were in, were in Switzerland and in Sweden. The
12 lowest, or one of the lowest, was the United States. Course, that was in
13 '45. But please god, help us get better schools for our kids.

14
15 After the war, my greatest responsibility was taking care of my mother.
16 She had gallstones, she had a bad heart. I could have gone back in the
17 service and made a career and I would've loved to do it, but my brother
18 who was responsible with me had been killed in India, so I was left with
19 the responsibility of taking care of my mother. I worked in an office as a
20 bookkeeper and finally wound up as a manager of a marina for – from
21 1948 to 1973 when she died. She was 93 when she died, so there was my
22 life.

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24 Unidentified speaker: She musta had good care.

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26 Lillian Malloy: She had terrific care. Everybody remarked. They thought she was going
27 to die before I took her to Detroit. Tsk. When I took her to Detroit, they
28 couldn't believe it was the same woman, but she loved life, she loved kids,
29 she loved us. She did a lot to prove it.

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