



**SERVICE BIOGRAPHY OF HELEN EVA BURT
BARNES
Lt. (jg), USNR**

I was born January 8, 1918 in Springfield, Massachusetts, to William and Eva Burt, the fifth of six children. We moved to my grandmother's farm in the small town of Charlemont in the Berkshire Hills when I was 4 years old and I graduated from the local school in 1935. I received a BA degree from American International College in Springfield in 1939, and an MA from the University of Michigan in 1940.

The next three years I taught school in Warren, Michigan. The first year I was paid all of \$990 and slightly more the next two years. Since the Army Signal Corps office in Detroit was paying considerably more, I signed up to work there as an editor of engineer's reports, pretty boring work. The navy blue uniform of the WAVES had a definite appeal for me and I lost no time in getting to the Officer Procurement Office in Detroit.

I was notified on 18 May 1944 that I had been enlisted in the Women's Reserve and would be assigned to the U.S. Naval Reserve Midshipman's School at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, as of 1 June 1944. I received the rank of Ensign on 25 July 1944.

I was sent to the Naval Air Technical Training Center for training in radio and radar at Corpus Christi, Texas, arriving 2 August 1944. There we became acquainted with the terminology related to radio and radar and it was there that I had my first airplane ride as we were taken up to learn to identify targets on the radar screen.

On completion of temporary duty at Corpus Christi on 28 September, I was sent to the Bureau of Aeronautics, Radio and Electronics Division, in Washington, D.C. Here again I was editing engineer's letters and reports and worked under a very strange man, named Commander Mahachek. During part of my tour I lived in Arlington, Virginia, until my roommate and I nearly died of carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty furnace. Later I had a chance to move into the only WAVE Officer's Quarter in D.C., Tabbard Inn, a comfortable walk from where I worked.

I left Washington D.C. on 13, November 1945 for my new assignment, at the Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Camp Kearney, California, where I worked in communications and later as Station Secretary. On 1 February 1946 I was promoted to Lt. (jg). In May of 1946 the Navy Department saw fit to move all personnel from Camp Kearney, San Diego, to El Centro, California, and turn Camp Kearney over to the Marines. So my last 3 months in the WAVES were spent in the desert and I left the service on 1 August 1946.