



JUDITH GWENDOLYN MACK JOHNSON
USNR, YEOMAN 1/c

Statistics:

Born: 14 November 1916, Jersey City, New Jersey
Died: NOT YET! As of March 2000

Enlisted: U.S. NAVY RESERVES - WAVES March 1944, New York City
Discharged: U.S. Naval Training Center, Farragut, Idaho, January 24,
1946

Reported for duty 20 April 1944 at Hunter College in the Bronx, New York. Assigned to "Singing Platoon" and because of musical enthusiasm, class was assigned to the top floor and rehearsed at dawn each day in the basement!!! All this in addition to all other "boot camp" activities and performances.

After an "interesting" train ride to Cedar Falls, Iowa, USNTSCH (Y-W) Yeoman, including troop train overnight in the Chicago Stockyards, we were trained in the Navy way of doing things.

After three months there, and leave to my home in East Orange, New Jersey, I boarded a train (not officially a "troop train") for Athol, Idaho, with many, many Navy personnel bound for the USNTC at Farragut, Idaho. It was a fun trip, all of us facing the unknown of the wild west; the WAVES to be Ship's Company, and sailors to boot camp and service schools.

During Ship's Company duty at Farragut I was assigned to a number of duties; last and most interesting was as yeoman to the Commander of the Retraining Command there. As yeoman to the captain in charge, I supervised an office of yeoman doing record-keeping for sailors jailed for medium offenses in the Pacific Theater, and some for the Atlantic Theater of Operations. In addition to secretarial duties, I made contacts with the visitors to the facility, many of whom were parents of sailors incarcerated. It was difficult to answer the question: "What has the Navy done to my little boy? He was such a good boy at home." Note: many of the boys were in the 17 to 21 age range. I was 29!

At the end of hostilities in Japan - "VJ Day," operations continued in releasing both incarcerated sailors, and Ship's Company personnel in our office. It was my turn to be discharged in January 1946.

A detachment of U.S. Marines had accompanied the prisoners from Camp Pendleton, and shared offices with we Naval personnel. An atmosphere of cooperation was experienced. One of the marines became a good friend of mine. He was discharged after seven years duty, including being an "Island-hopping" Marine (as called by the media)!!, as of 12 October 1945, just a few weeks after VJ Day.

Yes - I married my Marine in April of 1946 after my discharge!!! An amusing name-recognition in later years: Linden Johnson.

Another of my WAVES yeomen from my office married her Marine. We still keep in touch -- after many moves by both families, they live in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and we live(d) in Clarkston, Washington. My husband died in 1991 at the Seattle Veterans Hospital.

Since I'm not service-connected, I could not join with my husband in the Disabled American Veterans organization, so I joined its Auxiliary. After many, many years, I am finally giving up Adjutant/Treasurer duties this year -- 2000.

Our WAVES organization "found" me in 1997. It is a great organization and we must remember to bring in as many members as possible, as we are leaving this earth in record numbers in recent years. Perhaps we could change membership eligibility and goals to include current U.S. Navy women personnel, no longer called WAVES.

P.S. Since 1946 I have kept busy with a lot of different activities. I never went back to New Jersey to live, just to visit. After discharge we remained in the Spokane area with our own furniture repair business....then to California where we went to Palos Verdes College (near Long Beach) until it became defunct in 1950. GI's had been their main source of recruiting, but that fizzled. There were a number of secretarial jobs in southern California until I went to work for the Boeing Company at Vandenberg Air Force Base as Records Management person for 14 years, transferred to Edward AFB Boeing office for 2 years, then transferred to Boeing Seattle, still on the records management team, until retirement the end of 1979 -- 20 years!

After that we visited our daughter and family in Clarksville, TN, and settled here in the Lewiston-Clarkston valley. Our daughter and family now live in Georgia, our son in Mesa, AZ., and a grandson is in school in

TX studying for the ministry. My granddaughter is in Lancaster, CA area with her two little daughters, and my little 7-year-old grandson, (my son's little one), lives in Mesa with his daddy and mommy. I visit them occasionally, and miss them.

As I mentioned before, I have done Adjutant-Treasurer duties for the DAV Auxiliary Unit in Lewiston, ID, and do lots of volunteer work, as well as a lot of church activities, in addition to attending the meetings of my favorite "girls" of the WAVES unit in Spokane, WA.

Throughout all my life, music has been an underlying love and activity, as it says in my high school yearbook of 1934 from East Orange High School in New Jersey.

God bless all our women volunteers in the service of our country.