

Lyla Guyer Woodworth
WAVES U.S.N. Specialist Q Communications First Class
3 March 1943 – 1 December 1945



I was born on 6 January 1923 in Stratton Nebraska, later moving with my parents to Blair Nebraska and worked in the County Assistance office before joining the WAVES, where my adventure began. After boot camp at Hunter College I was sent to Washington D.C. where eventually I was housed in WAVE Quarters D and worked at Naval Communications Annex across Nebraska Ave. We were herded in the Navy Chapel on the grounds on the very first day and told that we were to say nothing to anyone about our duties or "we would be shot".

I was working after an indoctrination period, in an office with 3 male officers who spoke Japanese, one WAVE Officer and around 10 secretarial personnel. We were working on messages that were coming through from the Japanese and being decoded in the area and sent to our office. We were a compatible group, but were not privy to very much information about our duties. However, later when we had changes in rank, we were awarded a Sp(Q) designation that was issued especially for those of us who were involved in this situation. I have been informed since that Sp(Q) WAS ONLY USED FOR ABOUT SIX YEARS. Many years later, when reading the Tom Brokaw book, I read about a WAVE who lived in the same quarters and worked in the same area who was working with German messages.

Most of my exciting adventures occurred as a result of my attending services in the Navy Chapel, singing in the choir and belonging to a group called SMWCL (Service Men and Women's Christian League). I was singing in a WAVE trio that appeared to entertain many groups throughout the city. That trio was also a part of a Musical "Naturally Navy" that was presented at the WAVE Quarters. I was Secretary of the SMWCL when we sponsored the appearance of Archduke Otto of Austria, Mrs. Raymond Clapper and others to speak. The highlight of this was the appearance of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and I stood in a reception line with her afterwards. I was also a guest in the home of Dr. Syngman Rhee and his wife one evening.

I had many friends and many nice activities in the D.C. area, but we did NOT discuss our work situations with each other and just enjoyed the camaraderie. One special treat for me was being chosen as part of an Guard of Honor to be posed in the Wardman Park Hotel when Mrs. Roosevelt and many Hollywood stars came for an appearance in honor of President Roosevelt's Birthday Ball to help polio. After the stars went elsewhere to another hotel, we WAVES were allowed to sit in the special area reserved for Mrs. Roosevelt.

After my discharge in 1945 I returned to Nebraska attended Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, married Donald N. Woodworth on 21 July 1946 in Blair. We moved to Denver CO and built and operated a private pre-school and had a family of three children, Lane, Paige and Arden. I am a member of WAVES National Flatwater Unit #98, NE, WIMSA and a member of the United Methodist Church.