



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Oral History Collection

**OH113: MINNESOTA'S WOMEN VIETNAM  
VETERANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Oral History Interviews**

**OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS**

- Creator:** Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project.  
**Title:** Oral history interviews of the Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project.  
**Dates:** 2000-2007.  
**Quantity:** 40 sound cassettes; 11 transcripts in 11 folders  
**Location:** See Detailed Description section for locations.

**SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE RECORDS**

This project chronicles the lives of Minnesota nurses who participated in the Vietnam Conflict. One focus of the interviews discusses suffering from and helping those who suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). Another aspect of these interviews chronicles postwar involvement including work with veteran's organizations and the development of two monuments dedicated to the military service of women. Some of the subjects discussed include education prior to entering military service; hospital conditions in Vietnam; gender roles in the military; reactions of family members after enlisting; civilian life after Vietnam; involvement in PTSD groups; involvement in the Veterans Administration (VA); creating the Women in Military Service to America Memorial (WIMSA); basic training through the Army Nurse Corps; the Anti-War Movement; thoughts on the Iraq War; creating the Vietnam Women's Memorial; Communism and the Cold War; modern perceptions of the Vietnam Conflict; and the importance of women in the military.

**INDEX TERMS**

*This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.*

**Topics:**

- Post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Vietnam War, 1961-1975.
- Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Medical care.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975 |-- Personal narratives, American.  
Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Women -- United States.  
Women in Military Service for America Memorial (Arlington , Va.).

**Places:**

United States.  
Vietnam.

**Persons:**

Bauer, Catherine (Kay), interviewee.  
Boulay, Donna-Marie (DM), interviewee.  
Bower, Lynn, interviewee.  
Breed, Mary, interviewee.  
Brunner, MaryLu, interviewee.  
Buchan, Valerie, interviewee.  
Crowley, Mary Beth, interviewee.  
Evans, Diane Carlson, interviewee.  
Heikkila, Kim, interviewer.  
Johnson, Edythe, interviewee.  
Rudolph, Ann, interviewee.  
Tyrrell, Mary O'Brien, interviewee.

**Organizations:**

United States -- Army Nurse Corps.

**Types of Documents:**

Interviews.  
Oral histories.

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

### Preferred Citation:

*[Indicate the cited transcript and page or sound recording here].* Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project. Oral History Interviews of the Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project. Minnesota Historical Society.

*See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.*

### Accession Information:

Accession number(s): AV2007.38

### Processing Information:

Processed by: Oral History Office

Catalog ID No.: 6704910

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

*Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note the format (sound recording or transcript) and location shown below.*

### Sound recordings. 40 cassettes.

#### Location

- |          |                                                                      |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OH113.1  | Bauer, Catherine (Kay), April 28, 2005.                              |
| OH113.2  | Boulay, Donna-Marie (DM), June 10, 2005.<br><b>RESTRICTED</b>        |
| OH113.3  | Bower, Lynn, June 20, 2006.                                          |
| OH113.4  | Breed, Mary, September 23 & 25, 2006.                                |
| OH113.5  | Brunner, MaryLu, May 23, 2006.                                       |
| OH113.6  | Buchan, Valerie, October 27, 2005.                                   |
| OH113.7  | Crowley, Mary Beth, May 25, 2005.                                    |
| OH113.8  | Evans, Diane Carlson, May 10 & 15, 2000, April 3, 2001, May 8, 2007. |
| OH113.9  | Johnson, Edythe, June 7, 2005.                                       |
| OH113.10 | Rudolph, Ann, May 26, 2005.                                          |
| OH113.11 | Tyrrell, Mary O'Brien, May 23, 2006.                                 |

**Transcripts. 11 folders.**

**Location**

- |          |                                                                      |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OH113.1  | Bauer, Catherine (Kay), April 28, 2005.                              |
| OH113.2  | Boulay, Donna-Marie (DM), June 10, 2005.                             |
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| OH113.5  | Brunner, MaryLu, May 23, 2006.                                       |
| OH113.6  | Buchan, Valerie, October 27, 2005.                                   |
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| OH113.8  | Evans, Diane Carlson, May 10 & 15, 2000, April 3, 2001, May 8, 2007. |
| OH113.9  | Johnson, Edythe, June 7, 2005.                                       |
| OH113.10 | Rudolph, Ann, May 26, 2005.                                          |
| OH113.11 | Tyrrell, Mary O'Brien, May 23, 2006.                                 |

**MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

**NAME:** Catherine "Kay" M. Bauer  
**DATE:** April 28, 2005  
**PLACE:** Coon Rapids, Minnesota  
**INTERVIEWER:** Kim Heikkila

**PROJECT SERIES:** Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:** Catherine "Kay" M. Bauer was born in Minnesota and attended the College of St. Catherine, where she took up nursing. She enlisted in the U. S. Navy as a nurse and went to Vietnam. When she returned, she married and became a recruiter for the Navy. Bauer also pursued the Women in Military Service to America Memorial (WIMSA) completion in Washington, D.C.

**SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:** Childhood; family; importance of religion; patriotism; college years and switching majors from education to nursing; enlisting in the Navy; the Navy Nurse Candidate Program; family reaction to enlistment; racial diversity and homosexuality in the Navy; working at the Sick Officer's Quarters in St. Albans Naval Hospital; spending time in Japan before being sent to Guam; Great Lakes Naval Training Center; signing up to go to Vietnam; working for USAID (United States Agency for International Development); first impression of Vietnam; hospital conditions; daily life in Vietnam; becoming accustomed to the culture and food of Vietnam; cultural differences in medical practices; treating various diseases and injured soldiers; different cultural views on gender roles; coming back to civilian life in the United States after the war; ambivalence about leaving Vietnam; becoming a Navy recruiter; getting married; politics of war; meeting other nurses who were Vietnam veterans; involvement in the Veterans Administration (VA) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) unit; importance of a women's memorial.

**COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW:**

**SOUND RECORDINGS:**      **User copy:**      4 60-minute cassettes  
                                         **Original:**        4 60-minute cassettes

**LENGTH OF INTERVIEW:**      210 minutes

**RESTRICTIONS ON USE:**        None

**TRANSCRIPT:**                      64 pages

**ACCESSION NUMBER:**            AV 2007.38.1





**MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

**NAME:** Mary Breed  
**DATE:** September 23 & 25, 2006  
**PLACE:** Brooklyn Center, Minnesota  
**INTERVIEWER:** Kim Heikkila

**PROJECT SERIES:** Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:** Mary Breed was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She enlisted in the Army Student Nurse Corps during her senior year of nursing school and was sent to Vietnam. She worked in both the Da Nang evacuation hospital and the Quang Tri surgical hospital. After her return she spent time nursing at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital and Hennepin County Medical Center. Breed was also involved in a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) group and the Vietnam Women's Memorial.

**SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:** Being born in Swedish Hospital; joining the military; growing up poor; the role of religion in her family; the civil rights movements and the Cold War; her brother going to Vietnam; the limited women's professions; attending Bible School in California; the culture of Los Angeles; attending nursing school; exposure to the Anti-War Movement; going through training; getting sent to a neurosurgery headquarters in Vietnam; working in the Da Nang evacuation hospital; bitterness towards the government; her relationship with other nurses; seeing Bob Hope; working at a Vietnamese orphanage; interactions with the Vietnamese; the treatment of women in the military; being transferred to the Quang Tri surgical hospital; returning home due to her father's death; leaving the Army; finding a job at the Veteran's Administration Hospital; nursing in Bangladesh; working in Medical Intensive Care at the Hennepin County Medical Center; participation in a PTSD group; working on the Vietnam Women's Memorial and the physical appearance of the monument.

**COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW:**

**SOUND RECORDINGS:**            **User copy:**        4 60-minute cassettes  
                                                 **Original:**        4 60-minute cassettes

**LENGTH OF INTERVIEW:**        230 minutes

**RESTRICTIONS ON USE:**        None

**TRANSCRIPT:**                        74 pages

**ACCESSION NUMBER:**            AV 2007.38.4









**MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

**NAME:** Diane Carlson Evans  
**DATE:** May 10 & 15, 2000, April 3, 2001, May 8, 2007  
**PLACE:** Various  
**INTERVIEWER:** Kim Heikkila

**PROJECT SERIES:** Minnesota's Women Vietnam Veterans Oral History Project

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:** Diane Carlson Evans was born in Buffalo, Minnesota. She joined the Army Student Nurse Corps and was stationed at an evacuation hospital in Vung Tau, Vietnam. After returning home she founded the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project. Evans has been involved in many Vietnam Veterans organizations including Sister Search, various Vietnam education projects, a documentary on women serving in Vietnam, and the construction of the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington D.C. She has also married and raised children.

**SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:** Growing up on a farm; working odd jobs to pay for nursing school; joining the Army Student Nurse Corps; interning at the Veterans Administration Hospital; life at the evacuation hospital in Vung Tau, Vietnam; treatment of nurses in the military; the role of music; becoming politically conscious; lack of safety at the hospital; her encounter with a Canadian soldier; returning home to animosity from other Americans; founding the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project; suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); involvement with the TV show *China Beach*; portrayal of women Vietnam Veterans in pop culture and the media; being interviewed by the *China Beach* writers; difficulties of civilian nursing after Vietnam; starting a family; visiting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall and a Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Reunion; raising money for the monument; the use of a traveling prototype to gain support for the monument; lack of support from fellow nurses; the original design being denied; securing a site on the National Mall in Washington D.C.; having the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project featured in *60 Minutes*; redesigning the monument and the design contest; supporting the Vietnam Veterans Plaque; educational goals of the Vietnam Women's Memorial; developing a documentary on the subject; involvement in Sister Search; resentment for the government and President Johnson.

**COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW:**

<b>SOUND RECORDINGS:</b>	<b>User copy:</b>	2 60-minute cassettes 3 90-minute cassettes
	<b>Original:</b>	2 60-minute cassettes 3 90-minute cassettes

**LENGTH OF INTERVIEW:** 350 minutes  
**RESTRICTIONS ON USE:** None  
**TRANSCRIPT:** 103 pages  
**ACCESSION NUMBER:** AV 2007.38.7





