

AMERICA'S HERITAGE

Veterans Of The “Forgotten War” Included In National Preservation Effort

(NAPSA)—Some American heroes can finally get the recognition they deserve.

Obscured by a tenuous cease-fire and subsequent Cold War crises, the Korean War is often described in terms of conflict, intervention or police action. Nevertheless, the service and sacrifice of these wartime veterans is a necessary component of our national heritage, and as such, the Library of Congress Veterans History Project (VHP) actively seeks the oral histories, personal papers and photographs of these unsung heroes.

Through the Project, the voices of American veterans have generated an archive of personal military experiences that is now the largest collection of oral histories in the United States. Presently, VHP holds the collections of over 11,000 Korean War veterans. Dispelling the notion of a “forgotten war,” these narratives are both preserved and made available to the nation.

Korean War service featured a series of precedents within the United States military, including social factors such as the racial integration of the services as well as the technological advances of the Jet Age. For example, as a commissioned flight nurse in the newly independent United States Air Force, Mary L. Weiss joined this new generation of aviators that deployed to the Korean peninsula.

Assigned to the 801st Medical Air Evacuation Squadron, Weiss performed a critical role in the medical evacuation of wounded Allied personnel. Airborne triage was pro-



Photo courtesy of the Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Flight nurse Mary L. Weiss in action.

vided aboard both World War II era Douglas C-47 “Skytrains” and the newer C-124 “Globemasters,” which rushed casualties from the Korean battlefields to hospital facilities in Japan.

As a composite record of service, Weiss donated an oral history interview, dozens of original photographs, her service record and an original creative work painted by her husband, whom she served alongside during the Korean War.

These narratives, made accessible through VHP, construct a personal account of American war veterans so future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war. In addition to recorded interviews, VHP also depends on volunteers to donate veterans’ original photographs, letters, military documents, diaries, journals, two-dimensional artwork and unpublished memoirs.

To learn more or participate, visit www.loc.gov/vets.