

## War Era Story Project 2012

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In 1941, I had just graduated from High School where I was enrolled in the pre-nursing course. Being a depression child, my family had no money for me to enter nurses training. I was working as a PBX operator when I started hearing radio announcements about getting a “lifetime education free” by joining the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps.

What a wonderful opportunity awaited me. My minister helped me select Bethesda Hospital School of Nursing in Cincinnati. I wanted to attend a school away from Dayton, but not too far. So, this was just right for me. I started training in February 1944. I turned 21 the following September. Due to the shortage of RNs in the hospital, we students were given a lot of responsibilities. We were adequately prepared by our instructors and supervisors, so we felt competent to do our job. At age 23, I was in charge of the labor and delivery floor, my favorite part of the hospital. I had the comfort of knowing I had an intern on duty and an RN supervisor to help when needed.

Nurses’ training was no sacrifice for me, as I received an education, a monthly stipend, uniforms, housing and meals. I made lifetime friends. I had the satisfaction of knowing I was doing my small share toward the war effort. I received so much more than I ever gave. As my husband used to say, once I entered Bethesda, I never looked back.

At times, I feel the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps never received the recognition it deserved; but I don’t think any of us regretted having been a part of such a necessary contribution to the war effort.