



Beatrice Frankel

Marine Corps

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May 13, 1922 - Aug 25, 2009

BIRTHPLACE: New York City, NY

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Staff Sergeant

DIVISION: Marine Corps

THEATER OF OPERATION: American

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Beatrice Frankel Arthur was born in New York City and her parents were immigrants from Europe—her mother from Austria, and her father from Poland. The family, including two younger daughters, moved to Cambridge, Maryland, where Frankel graduated from high school. After high school, she attended Blackstone College in Blackstone, Virginia, for a year, then returned to Cambridge to work for several months as a food analyst at Phillips Packing Company, where she tested products for mold and bacteria. Afterward, she moved to New York and worked various jobs, and volunteered in the civilian war effort as an air-raid warden. Her favorite hobbies were music, reading, and sailing. Two months shy of her 21st birthday, Frankel had to obtain her parents' consent for her enlistment. Recommendations, physical exams, personality appraisals—enlistment was a lengthy process. The Women Reservists organization was so new that the Marine Corps hadn't even created the necessary paperwork, and proceeded to enlist women using US Navy paperwork. On February 20, 1943, Bernice Frankel joined the ranks of the Marine Corps as Private Frankel. Frankel attended the first Women Reservists school at Hunter College in New York. She spent 1944 and 1945 at USMCAS (US Marine Corps Air Station) Cherry Point, North Carolina, where she worked as a driver and a dispatcher. Upon her discharge in September 1945, Arthur had reached the rank of Staff Sergeant. Her discharge paperwork indicates she desired to attend dramatics school, setting her on a path to the stage and screen. She met her husband Robert Arthur and forever has been known as Bea Arthur, a well-known actress, her best as the incisive Dorothy Zbornak on *Golden Girls*. Courtesy of The National WW 2 Museum.