

***WE SERVED TOO!* Rhode Island World War II Women Veteran's Stories**

The Premiere of a play created and directed by Frank V. Toti Jr.

March 22-23 at 7:30pm, March 23-24 at 2 pm.

“We go by many names – daughter, sister, mother, aunt, grandmother – children of the Great Depression. But the name we are most proud of is VETERAN – of the Second World War – We served too! We served too – some 400,000 of us. We women served too – at home and abroad, in offices, in hospitals, in fox holes, recruiting, guarding prisoners of war, training pilots, caring for recovering soldiers, working in the motor corps – there was no job too small or too big for us to do. We heard the call and joined to do our part for our country in its hour of need, from Maine to California, New York to Florida, and many places in between.”

The play *We Served Too!* is an oral history play, gathered from the personal stories of more than twenty local WWII Women Veterans, representing all branches of the service. These women, who are 87-104 years of age, are remarkable and not just for their advanced years. Most people born at that time never left their hometown and did not travel. These pioneers chose a path of adventure and service to our nation during the war years. At the time, the roles available to women were limited – factory, office work, marriage and a family. If college was a possibility, all that could be hoped for was a job as a secretary, teacher or nurse.

When the call went out, more than 400,000 women joined the U.S. Armed Forces. The Army had the WAACS (later WACS), the Navy had the WAVES, the Air Force had the WASPS, and the Coast Guard had the SPARS. Other women went to work for the government in Secret Service, Department of Agriculture and other areas of government in service to the war effort, though they were civilians. Whether stationed in the U.S. or Overseas in the European or Pacific Theatres, each of these women had a strength and determination to forge a path in ‘non-combat’ positions which laid the foundation for the recent opening of combat positions for women. They have rarely heard stories to tell, life experiences that forever changed them, that set them apart from the norm. The play, *WE SERVED TOO!* presents stories of these pioneer women, Rhode Island residents who answered the call and served with distinction.

The play written and directed by Frank V. Toti Jr. includes performances by a group of dynamic local actors: Pricilla Bento, Carole Collins, Cynthia Glinick, Patricia Hawkridge, Lauren Odenwalder, Michele Rogers, Stage Managed by Siobhan LaPorte-Cauley.