



Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

200 SE 4th Street, Abilene, KS 7410-2900
<http://eisenhower.archives.gov>

NEWS RELEASE

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Former WAC on Eisenhower's Staff to Share Recollections

Fran Smith Johnson, now of Gainesville, Georgia, will visit the Eisenhower Library on Tuesday, May 30, and participate in a "conversation," open to the public, with Ms. Elinor Haas of the Eisenhower Library staff at 7:30 p.m. in the Library auditorium of the Eisenhower Center. Ms. Johnson will share her recollections of Eisenhower, his headquarters, and headquarters personnel. Kay Summersby, in her 1948 memoir, "Eisenhower Was My Boss," referred to her "full-time assistant, Frances Smith, a pretty and highly efficient WAC from New York City."

Fran Smith served with Eisenhower's European headquarters in 1945 during the period of the Allied occupation of defeated Germany. She arrived three weeks after the German surrender on May 9. Her secretarial duties included taking dictation from Eisenhower and his military assistants and typing official cables and personal correspondence for the General and his staff. She was also tasked with composing some of the General's responses to his hundreds of "fan mail" letters, and traveled with Ike and his staff on trips within Europe following the end of the war. After Eisenhower's departure from Europe for the United States on November 10, Ms. Smith remained, along with another WAC, at headquarters for six weeks to clean out the General's office. She then returned to the States to resume secretarial work for the General at the Pentagon, where he had succeeded General George Marshall as Army Chief of Staff, and continued to serve as one of Eisenhower's secretaries until her discharge from the WACs in May 1946.

"Fran Smith Johnson is a fascinating woman with fascinating stories to share, and I sincerely hope the public will take advantage of the opportunity to hear Ms. Johnson," commented Dan Holt, director of the Eisenhower Center. Persons interested may call 785-263-6700 or toll free 1-877 RING IKE to reserve a seat. The Eisenhower Library is one of twelve Presidential libraries operated by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.