

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

MF144 Women in the Military


NAFOH Oral History Recordings

November 2023

Colonel Frances Auclair, interviewed by Kim Sealy and Sarah Lawler, Part 2

Frances M. Auclair

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mf144>

 Part of the [Military History Commons](#), [Oral History Commons](#), [United States History Commons](#), and the [Women's History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Auclair, Frances M., "Colonel Frances Auclair, interviewed by Kim Sealy and Sarah Lawler, Part 2" (2023). *MF144 Women in the Military*. 69.
<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mf144/69>

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in MF144 Women in the Military by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

Content Warning: Libraries and archives collect materials from different cultures and time periods to preserve and make available the historical record. As a result, materials such as those presented here may reflect sexist, misogynistic, abusive, racist, or discriminatory attitudes, actions, or ethnic slurs that some may find disturbing, harmful, or difficult to view.

Interviewee: Frances Auclair
Interviewer: Kim Sealy
Transcriber: Katie Wing
November 29th, 2001
NA 3245

[Begin Interview, Begin CD 1(c# 2357), Track 1]

Kim Sealy: This is Kim Sealy. It is Thursday November 29th, 2001 and I am joined with Sara Lawler and we are interviewing Colonel Francis Auclair of the Maine Air National Guard on her experiences as a woman in the military.

Sara Lawler: This is Sara Lawler and Kim Sealy and we're interviewing Colonel Auclair and the date is November 29th. When and where were you born?

Francis Auclair: I was born in March of 1951 in Lewiston, Maine.

S. Lawler: and I guess maybe you should say your name and your title just so it's on tape.

F. Auclair.: Colonel Fran Auclair and I'm the vice air wing commander for [101st unit] here in Bangor.

S. Lawler: What is your educational background?

F. Auclair: I have a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in human relations.

S. Lawler: Where did you receive that education?

F. Auclair: My Baccalaureate I got at the University of Southern Maine and my master's I got at Troy State University in Alabama.

S. Lawler: Can you tell me what your parent's names are and their occupational and educational backgrounds?

F. Auclair: Both my parents were born in the Lewiston- Auburn area. My mothers name was Theresa LeBeck. She graduated from high school in probably, I'm trying to think way before my time, I don't know 40. I'd say she probably graduated in 1940 from Lewiston high school. She joined the Army; she ran away and joined the Army much to her mother's displeasure. My father didn't graduate from high school. He left school in the eighth grade because his father had Parkinson's and he was the oldest son. His first name was Conrad and he also joined the Army during World War II. He was drafted.

When they came back they met and got married in the late 40s.. They are both deceased at this point. My father mainly worked in the shoe shop in the Lewiston Auburn area as a child. My mother off and on, some times she'd work, some times she'd not. I have a younger brother so once he was born she stayed home.

S. Lawler: What made you decide to enlist in the military?

F. Auclair: I was bored. I really was. I was in college in Boston. It was in the late 60s early 70s, right in the middle really of Vietnam, I had always been fascinated by the military because my mother used to tell me such wonderful stories about you know, she loved to travel so when she went in the service she got to go to the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and it was always such a positive thing in her life. Even though she enlisted during a war time, at that time women were kept pretty far away from anything dangerous.

She would tell me as I was growing up about the wonderful things she got to see in the Philippines and New Zealand and Australia. She fell in love with Australia so that was always a positive thing in her life.

I was going to college, I was going to a small liberal arts college in Boston; though I had a scholarship, academically I had to pay for my room and board and there were no classes. I started my junior year and we had no classes literally, everybody was protesting. So even if you went to class, your professors weren't there. I think I had three classes from like September through, I left in the end of November right about this time of year, right after Thanksgiving break. I got credit for one course.

I came back home to Lewiston Auburn and I got a job, I think I was a nurses aid or something like that in a local nursing home, got a little apartment while I tried to decide what I was going to do with my life. I decided that I really didn't want to be in Maine.

[End Track 1, Begin Track 2]

F. Auclair: I don't want to be in the home town and I knew going back to college was sort of a dead end deal. Everybody in Boston, I mean just every major University people were protesting which was good in one sense because we got to go to a lot of free concerts. If you were trying to get an education, it was a little hard. I went to the library one day to get some books and I went by the recruiting station and I looked and said well all right and I walked in asked them what they had available. They told me and I ended up going into the Navy, trained as a hospital corpsman, in that medical line.

I went home and told my dad who was still alive at the time, my mom had passed away. He was not excited. I was 20 at that point and back then you had to be 21. Women had to be 21. Girls couldn't make decisions because they were brainless until they were 21 where suddenly they got smart. So I said I wanted to go in the service and he said no. I said well you need to sign and he said I'm not going to sign and I said well you either

sign now in February or in January, or in March I'm going anyway. It was a matter of eight weeks. I'm going. I've made my decision, I really want to go. So he ended up signing and I left the first week in February and went to boot camp. I turned 21 in boot camp. It was ok. I didn't have a cake though. That's how I got into the military.

S. Lawler: Now what part was your mother in? When did she enlist?

F. Auclair: She was in the Army in the 40's, right I want to say, I should know these dates but I think she enlisted in 1943 and she stayed in for four years as did my father. They were only a couple months apart in age so going with their birthdates. He got drafted and she enlisted so they were in for four years a piece until the end of the war. In 45 they both got out.

S. Lawler: Is that where they met?

F. Auclair: No, they came back home and they were at a mutual acquaintance house and that's how they met. They had grown up six miles apart, same age, gone to school at the same time you know in a small neighborhood and they had never met. They were like 25, 26 when they finally met. It was strange because even when they were in the service, they were in the same geographic areas.

S. Lawler: Well, you talked about how your dad reacted to you enlisting, what about your friends or maybe the rest of your family?

F. Auclair: I really, maybe I was a little self absorbed at that point you know. I didn't really, I was always a little independent so some of my friends thought I was really brave and I couldn't figure out what really brave was. To me it was just an avenue to continue schooling and get paid. One of the reasons I know that I went in so it wasn't a predominate reason, is I wanted to get the GI bill because I knew I wanted to finish

school and I knew I had really blown my opportunity in college, there was no way they were going to give me another [] so I'm sitting there, how am I going to do this?

My parents, my mother had died at that point. My father still had my younger brother at home so there wasn't a whole lot of money at home, so I thought well I'll join the service for a couple of years and be eligible for the loans when I get out, which is what I did. I ended up finishing college while I was in the service actually. When I came back all I had to do was my school in teaching, that's all I did at the University of Maine, my student teaching was one course.

S. Lawler: Where did you do your basic training?

F. Auclair: At Bain Bridge, Maryland which is where all the women, it was segregated. It was just women down on a little peninsula down there, a peninsula surrounded by the ocean and I went in February and I graduated in April and it was miserable the whole eight weeks.

[End Track 2, Begin Track 3]

F. Auclair: As far as the weather goes, it was cold and we were the last group of women to go through there. After that, they started sending them to Orlando and they started mixing them at that point. I went in 1972, we were the last group of women. We were about 250.

S. Lawler: 250 women out of about how many men do you think?

F. Auclair: Well, I don't know because there were no men there. We didn't because we couldn't. At that point, 72 the war was more or less coming down but the draft was still in effect in 72 so the men kept going but they went to a different base.

S. Lawler: What did you think about that when you knew that the men and women were split up?

F. Auclair: That was the norm back then. I don't think anybody gave it a thought because even in colleges a lot of times they were separated you know. That was just the norm. The big thing was knowing that the classes behind us were, they were going to be segregated. You've got to be kidding me. They are going to be living on the same floors as you are, sharing bathrooms. I mean that was a big thing in the early 70s. Even in college, all the dorms were segregated. It was the norm, never gave it a thought.

S. Lawler: Do you feel that your training prepared you for your job?

F. Auclair: Yes, because after I went there I went to a place called Great Lakes, which was on Lake Michigan for mym what's called corpsman training. It was a pretty intense twelve week course. Basically it's like an EMT, a more intense EMT training. You get trained in a lot of the basics for emergency care to include war time basics which are different than going to a car accident and that was integrated and that was sort of fun. However, the barracks were not. They were two streets away from us but during class we were integrated and that was sort of fun. It was your typical 18, 19, 20 year olds goofing off with each other all the time, trying to figure out where we're going to go party that night or if we were going to party that night, that type of thing.

S. Lawler: What was your military job?

F. Auclair: I've had many.

S. Lawler: At the time of basic training.

F. Auclair: Nothing. In basic training, nobody has a job. It's just basic training.

S. Lawler: What did they train you for?

F. Auclair: As a hospital corpsman. It's actually spelt corps man, C-O-R-P-S-M-A-N and that's basically we were the emergency medical technicians for the military all from different branches. There were different levels of training. There was the basic course and there were other courses. If you did well in the military it was on achievement type base; so if you graduated in the top percent than you had a choice on what school you wanted to go to. If you graduated in the bottom of your class [] type thing so I had some friends that became lab technicians or x-ray technicians and things of that nature. A lot of the guys in my class went forward to what they called fleet marine school which was really highly technical because all of those guys went to Vietnam. They just focused on war time medical emergencies and those guys were all attached for the most part to the marine corp group [battalion] so they would go out and they would be the medic. You've seen the glorified movies where the corpsman is out there, that type of training was available for the men, not the women. There was a lot of stuff not available for women. A lot of jobs were for men only. So there were a lot of things even if you wanted to do it, you couldn't.

S. Lawler: What was your feeling about that when you were younger see that?

F. Auclair: It pissed me off basically. I mean there were some things that didn't, I never had any great yearn to and still don't, most military people don't; there's no great yearn there to go to war and fight. Nobody wants to do that but you want to be able to have choices on what you did and there were some things that some women wanted to do and that's fine. I can respect

[End Track 3, Begin Track 4]

F. Auclair: what they wanted to do, nothing I wanted to do. On the same token, there were things that I wanted to do but at the time, culturally at the time we were just beginning. It was funny because our whole generation was just beginning to protest and speaking out and everybody was just left as silent lambs. This is what boys do and this is what girls grow up to be, you know and you sort of went uh huh, yeah and then our generation said why not?

So I mean you had all that going on top of everything else. Everyone is just trying to find their place, trying to figure out, some people got lost in that I think. They really did. They stayed in that protesting, questioning mode for years and never got out of it, late 70s and early 80s they were still where they were ten or twelve years before, which was there choice. Why would you want to do that? I mean you really believe in this cause about everything else. Some had families some didn't have families and you look at them, especially women but they didn't, for weeks they protested but they didn't get on anything else. They dropped out of college. They didn't get married. I mean you spend your life going from one cause to another. It was very self sacrificing. I don't think they ever had an identity of who they were. If you took away the cause, who is this person, what do they want for themselves, what were their dreams and their hopes and there were a few of those, not many but there were some that you looked at ...

S. Lawler: Do you think that enlisting and being there, do you think that in some way helped you realize what you wanted to do or did you already know?

F. Auclair: No, I didn't. I listen to some of my friends now who actually their kids are grown and out of college but I don't think I knew what I wanted to do. I'm still not sure I

know what I want to do and maybe that's just me but I never had, I like working with people and I knew that whatever job I would do would have to somehow involve people.

When I was growing up, there wasn't too much; you could become a teacher. In the back of my mind I thought well maybe college, maybe I'll be a college professor, I could do that. I didn't necessarily want to go back and deal with high school kids because I remember just too close, I have vivid memories of what I was like in high school and I didn't want to have to do that. It was somewhere between teaching and maybe the medical field but all I knew is that I really enjoyed being with people.

I couldn't envision myself working in any field like technology where that's all you did. Very few in my generation, very few women went into engineering. They just never talked to you about it. So there wasn't a whole bunch, you had to go digging for those [careers]. So whatever I wanted to do, I wanted to be involved with people.

My four years in the service, I had a good time but when my opportunity came to re-enlist, I said I'm not going to do it. There were other mitigating circumstances but at the time [] because I didn't understand what was going on. Now I understand how they're treated. They got to war and everybody has everything and at the end of the war, there's no more money now so you just mark time. I said no, I want to go to school or I want to go away from the East Coast. I ended up being on the East Coast for four years, and oh we don't have any money to do that, congress cut our budget. If you want

[End Track 4, Begin Track 5]

F. Auclair: to go anywhere you have to pay for it yourself.. I didn't go in the military to do that so I got out to go to school. I had no, I just wanted to be able to do what I wanted to do, whatever that was, if I could ever figure it out. I liked going to school.

S. Lawler: You were never deployed to war were you?

F. Auclair: No.

S. Lawler: Can you describe what a typical day in the military was like for you?

F. Auclair: back then or now?

S. Lawler: I think throughout, since you've been in what was it like?

F. Auclair: I think for the first and it happened to me throughout my career there were certain times, if we're talking about the normal day to day work, situation dependent where we are as far as what's going on with the nation, what's going on with the military. I've been in through different wars. When I first joined, it was right in the middle of Vietnam. It was different back then because once I got all the schooling done, I was stationed in a hospital in Chelsea Massachusetts. When you go across the bridge, there used to be a naval hospital right down there. That was a really busy hospital because it was considered one of the triage hospitals for the returned veterans from Vietnam.

When they get to the west coast, they fly into the West Coast; they triage them by where they came from. They tried to send them if they were injured, if they needed a lot of rehab, they tried to send them to the closest place to their home. So even if you got your legs blown off in Vietnam and you were from the East Coast, they would get you to San Diego or San Francisco and in trying to place you in a hospital in East Coast so that you could be close to your family. They wouldn't keep you unless specialist if you needed to go to down South but that was their mentality, trying to get people as close to their families as they could.

So even though I was working in the maternity/OB-GYN area, the hospital itself was really busy. They had a lot of orthopedic rehab so we had a lot of young guys

coming back learning how to walk, learning how to feed themselves. It was really busy. We'd get to work about seven in the morning and you would just be busy the whole time, a lot of patients; believe it or not there were a lot of babies being born in the military at that point. I think since we were a hospital a lot of families were around and we had quite a few people.

And when we didn't work in the hospital, we were on call in the emergency room. We spent a lot of time with the guys. Number one most of us were away from home. There was nothing there but a hospital and a hospital is different than a base just like a medical center is different than going down Main Street, the atmosphere. Once you get medical people together, they have that same mindset, talking the same acronyms. There was nothing there but a hospital so everything was centered around patient care and the patient. So even our off time a lot of times we'd go out in the summer time get a bunch of guys especially if they were depressed and roll them down to the softball and make them coach the women against the men you know just to get them out and do things.

It was pretty concentric in our views on life because we were in Boston. We could care less what was going on across the river. We were so involved with the patients. We were just having fun ourselves. There were some long days. Since I've been here, again it's been different dependent on whether we're in Kosovo, [different courses]

[End Track 5, Begin Track 6]

F. Auclair: September 11th here and it's a matter of coming in now more or less an administrative job just trying to stay one step ahead of everybody, coordinating everything, watching out for our folks. It's like any organization, the further away you are from people, the less they are people you know. They become things or numbers. And

our folks that are still here, they still have to work. They still have families; the power still goes out and the furnace breaks and they may not be here.

We've been working really hard especially since September to make sure that we take care of everybody and all of their needs, as much as they want us to without overstepping the bounds of what they want. Fighting the Washington politics, the typical but really its gone quite well. It's like managed chaos. At first it was chaos. We've been working a long time, some of them without a day off nine hours, twelve, fourteen hour shifts. Trying to adhere to the process to make sure people are not overworked, not overstressed, not over anything, their personal life is ok.

For some folks, they love what they do. Most of the folks love what they do. It's a matter of making sure they don't love it so much that the families suffer, keeping that delicate balance. It's like anything else when you get involved in something you really like to do and suddenly that's challenged or whatever you tend to become a little bit over zealous. Sometimes you have to step back and say ok, lets put this in perspective. Younger people tend to become over zealous quicker than older people and I think that's the norm as it should be. Number one they can, they have the energy to do that but we do give them some gently reminders about what's really important. We try to persuade them, my position and the manager's position is we have a job to do and expect everybody to do a good job.

Sometimes you have to give a little bit more time-wise and energy-wise than you normally would and sometimes you may have to go away for awhile but that doesn't mean that everything else in your life has to stop. You have to manage that somehow with whomever you're with, your life partner at that point what you want to do.

So it's a little vague for me now as I come in and take care of one on one personal problems a lot. The people of Maine this time around I don't know if it was because it was a pack but we've had very few problems. I haven't had to address any. Sometimes some of our guys have to go away for military. We get calls from employers saying what are you doing?

When it first happened, we were out here twelve, fourteen hours a day up all night long. They really were, they were bringing guns to the game, make sure [] or something like that, if you go out to a restaurant in your uniform they didn't want you to pay for anything. It's like o, no, no. It's not how it works. So we've had overwhelming support from the city and the state, which has made our life a lot easier because we've been able to focus on the things we needed to do not other things.

S. Lawler: How do you spend your leisure time?

F. Auclair: I play a lot of tennis. I play golf. I read a lot. I just bought a house on the lake so I spent a lot of time this summer swimming and it's true what they say about buy the house and the relatives will come.

[End Track 6, Begin Track 7]

F. Auclair: It's been a year since I've been there [] wasn't over, which was ok. We had some great times. What did I do, spend time with family. Because of the nature of the job, I get a lot of invitations to speak a lot. That's how I met [], she was speaking, we crossed paths. So I do that and belong to a couple of [civic] organizations, keeps you in touch with what's going on out there, some sort of healthy balance.

S. Lawler: Yeah, really. Actually, what about your leisure time back when you worked at the hospital, how did you spend that?

F. Auclair: Well, for awhile I partied. We had some terrific parties. We had a group just like any place else just like college just with jobs. So there was a group of us that we used to go skiing a lot. We'd go up to New Hampshire and we'd come back up to Maine. A lot of times my roommate and I, I had three roommates, we shared this apartment, two bedroom apartment. On top of us, we had four of our very best friends, males so the eight of us were always doing stuff

A lot of times we'd come back, we'd come up here because my aunt and uncle, my father's youngest sister, there's quite an age difference. She's not all that much older than I am. We'd drive up. It's like a two and a half hour drive from Boston to Lewiston and we'd go up there Friday nights and party and play cards and fool around. Then we'd drive back the next day and go to work or whatever.

My brother was four years, well still is four years younger than I am. When I was in Boston, he was in high school so I would try and come back quite a bit to go skiing and spend time with him. I was so close to home. It was strange because I quit college in November and was in Boston for three and a half, four years. I was in school for a total of about seven months and then went right back to Boston for another two or three years.

It's fun because all my high school friends they used to come back on weekends off or they would come down. I mean all my friends from high school and college. It was just another thing but when I got to Boston after I was there for about six months then I started taking courses again at the University. Doctors and nurses because they would allow us to take courses during the day because we had such weird hours so. A lot of the

colleges in Boston at that time did not offer evening courses. You had to fit into the curriculum that they had. [Suffix] was real close, all I had to do was cross the bridge and go back so I took three or four courses over there. Between that and partying and dating, going home more or less took up most of your time. We were working on the average probably sixty or seventy hours a week, which were long days.

S. Lawler: Do you recall one of your funniest and worst moments in the service?

F. Auclair: Yes. I mean there were a lot of funny ones. Probably when I was in the [Air Guard] by then but when I went to become an officer, I went to officer training that was segregated. They divided us up, there were probably about eighty of us and they divided us up into twenty person teams and we each had [a dormitory]. I had been told a lot of people hadn't so those of us that had were taken care of versus those who hadn't.

[End Track 7, Begin Track 8]

F. Auclair: all the stupid things that you have to do in the military; you have to fold your underwear a certain way and everything had to be neat and clean and your room had to be clean. They would come and inspect and if it wasn't, they would throw it outside. you would spend three or four hours that you really needed to study and do things having to fix your room back up again. Well, they did offer us a degree of privacy in officer school which they didn't in the other one. This little, I don't know what you would call it, like a little door inside your closet, you had like this closet wardrobe type thing that you could put anything that you wanted in there and you could lock it and nobody would get into it and then you had two or three draws and then your uniform would hang there.

One night we were goofing off, we partied and we were doing laundry. The next morning we had to get up, the sons coming, the Commandant general was coming down

the hill and he never cracked a smile. Everybody [] and he was always chewing []. No matter how well you thought you [cleaned up, he would always find something]. So he's coming down and my roommate and I had gotten up late and we were like oh god here he comes, oh shit stuff all over the place. We're typical girls, I mean we had our underwear hanging all over the place. We'd come in late and just fall into bed. Well, we had been doing laundry with the guy next door so we had all of this underwear, there's and ours together and we didn't know what to do with it. There's no time to fold it, there's no time to do anything so my roommate said give it to me, I'll throw it in my locker. So we're shoving all these jockey shorts and t-shirts and all the bras and the panties in there and she got distracted and she forgot to lock it and the rule was what's locked is untouchable but if it's unlocked it's fair game.

So here we are standing there at attention. There were two bunkbeds, we were standing there and the commandant comes in, he looked like he had been [chopped out] of a marine book. He had this real straight face and crew cut. He's standing there and hes looking right at me and says, "the room looks a little messy cadet, what were you doing last night?"

"Studying, Sir."

"Really?"

"Yes, Sir" and we were both older. My roommate was maybe like 30. She was either 31 or 32. She had been teaching for nine years ok so she was like 31. He gets to her and she was real tiny and he turns around and he says, "a little messy here."

"Yes, Sir" and he looks around the room, he turns around and says open the wardrobe. Well, she did and when she did he saw that her locker was unlocked and they always

knew if it was unlocked, they always knew we had shit in there. He starts pulling out and he's hanging it off of her shoulders. She's got jockey shorts hanging off this shoulder and a bra hanging off her because we had what they called boards, they went like this. They had these two stupid things in there and he's hanging off all these clothes one by one he's picking them up. They were clean thank god, hanging them all. The more he would hang, the more I would laugh, the angrier he got and then she got the giggles. She is standing there wiggling and giggling and all this underwear is hanging off her. He was trying to keep a straight face and the person that was with him, his aid or whatever got to laughing so bad that he went in the hallway and you could here him in the hallway howling. I mean howling and the more we all laughed, the angrier he got. I thought he was going to have a big one right there. We all were thirty. He was probably about forty-five or fifty but he looked sixty and he acted ninety. So, he wrote us up and we had all these demerits. Oh all right and it was just one of those circumstantial things. Then we got our

[End Track 8, Begin Track 9]

F. Auclair: [] not supposed to do laundry with boys. Ok. Then we had this other guy that came in, it was an old building and he said don't be messing with the fire hoses because some of the other students were fooling around and hey lets play with the fire hose. Don't play with the fire hose. We all went uh humm, ok. Well, we didn't touch the fire hose. We went off to class that day, we came back and it broke. So we were up on the second floor, well when it broke it flooded that whole floor and it went down into the restrooms downstairs. We had male and female restrooms. It flooded out the female restroom to the point that the ceiling tiles were falling in. So he came back, who's been screwing around with the fire hose, somebody did. So we only had one bathroom for

everybody, just one bathroom that had two or three urinals, three toilets and four showers.

They would keep us busy. We would have to go running everyday so two or three showers a day we were accustomed to and they had this big [say off]. We were laughing because they were having a fit [girls and guys sharing a bathroom]. You know you're going to have babies coming out of the windows, all this good stuff but we did have some funny times. The underwear thing was probably one of the funniest.

When I look back on it now it's sort of weird but we used to have gurney races when I was in Boston because Chelsey was a really old hospital and it had underground tunnels to get to the rooms because of the weather situation. So if you wanted to get to the main hospital, there was this underground tunnel that you could take. It was wide. It was huge. I mean you could drive a four by four or something up through there. Well, we would have to go up there to get our patient's who had surgery and bring them down here to our other building. Well, they were still drugged so they were out of it. So they didn't understand because this was all downhill. We used to make sure nobody was coming and get on the gurney and let the break go. We had one person sitting on the front doing this to prevent us from hitting the wall.

Then we had what they called autoclaves, gas autoclaves that they used to sterile instruments. You would wash the instruments and wrap them in this cloth and put them in this gas and it would heat up and kill all the germs. Well, we had this brand new nurse. She was probably 22 or 23 years old and she was really into the holidays and a bunch of us worked. She cooked a turkey and she shoved the turkey in the autoclave. So the old charge nurse who was the captain and she was typical. She never cracked a smile. She

walks in and we're all scattered at this point. There's about twenty five of us scattered and she's like, "I smell turkey."

"No, no, you don't smell it. It's coming down from the dining hall."

She said, "the dining hall is not even in this building. I smell turkey."

Well, Denise had cooked a twenty-six pound turkey in this thing with all the fixings and we're trying to hide this because she's coming down the hall way so we threw it in a bassinet and we carted it up and we rolled it right by her. We took it down to the nursery at the same time she's talking to this other nurse, I know there's a turkey around here, nobodies cooking turkey down here. Like oh no, no we're not cooking. Ok.

One of the other funny things that used to happen is the guys in the nursery, they had such big hands and these newborns were really small. We would handle them and we would have to bathe them every morning. At one point we had like twenty-six or twenty-seven babies and babies are like [], type thing. I'm going down and thinking how quiet the nursery is and I go down, the guys were really funny because if the girls came around the guys got really macho but if you would sneak up to the nursery sometimes and watch them because the nursery was full of rocking chairs. You'd go down and you'd have guys...

[End Track 9, Begin Track 10]

F. Auclair: with the babies but they didn't want you to see that of course. But this guy had decided that in order to keep the pacifiers in there mouths that he could put a little piece of tape on them. So he took this hypoallergenic tape and tapped all the pacifiers into the baby's mouth and they're all laying. No, no, no you can't be tapping babies. They had this system. They would come in and it would take us like an hour or

two to wash all these babies and the guys, two or three of them would come in and say no you do it on an assembly line basis. You know they would set up, they would have these huge sinks, their hands were so big and the babies were so small. They would get them all undressed and they had liquid soap. They'd squirt them with the soap, they'd run them under the faucet; ok, run them under the faucet, squirt them with the soap and they were really gentle with them. You know and they would sit there and soap them up and run them under to rinse with water and I can still see these guys with all the little babies and the babies never said a word. They would just sit there like in awe of what's going on, great big buff guys you know. Here take this one you know, you see these little butts being passed along but they were really great. The minute we came in, "we're not changing diapers." We had fun times.

S. Lawler: Before we move on, I think we'll flip the tape because I think it's about to end. I don't want to end in the middle of your conversation.

F. Auclair: Looking at a lot of these guys were younger than I was or they were the same age. They would come back and they didn't have their legs or lost their eyesight or they lost their legs and their arms. It was really hard sometimes to try to stay up especially when they were coming back and the protests were still going on, so there was nothing for them to go back to. They'd be yelled at or [] didn't look good or whatever, so it was hard for them because along with the physical disability that they had incurred, they also had tremendous emotional things that they had to go through here. Not only did they go through some emotional things during any war and do things that you wouldn't normally have to do.

At the time, it was uncomfortably for me but now as I look back on it, I wouldn't want to have to do that again especially knowing what I know now. You don't know what to say to them. There's nothing you can say. They're depressed. They're twenty years old and they know that they're never going to walk again or they're never going to be able to have children, whose going to want me now? Nobody cares about me, my friends don't care because the friends were protesting and there was this big division with the guys that have a uniform on. He's got to be number one stupid or he doesn't understand where I'm coming from so there was a right, wrong division. And the protestors weren't necessarily protesting, in their heart of hearts they were not protesting the military, they were protesting the government. However they took it out on the military without really understanding that they were.

You still have Vietnam Era vets that are very bitter. I think there were interviews on PPN last week that talked about Vietnam vets who said no ones ever thanked me for what I did. So that was hard. I don't think I'd want to do that again and it hit home because they were my age. It's different when you're growing up and you say ok we've had a war and somebody's gone out and they've gotten hurt. You know, up until that point they were always older, they were always adults and I was always the high school kid or the college kid. You'd have to look at them and see them every day, see them not doing anything in the lobby. They just shut down. They wouldn't talk. They wouldn't try to rehab. They wouldn't do anything.

I think for as many as we tried to involve in our activities because we were young, it was a delicate balance because sometimes we'd wheel them out to the softball game.

They'd either get involved or they'd get more bitter. Well, you can run. You can hit a ball.

[End Track 10, Begin Track 11]

F. Auclair: You can do this. I'll never do that again. How do you deal with that when they're 19 or 20 year old, [no ones prepared for that]. I wouldn't really want to have to do that again.

S. Lawler: What was it like coming home?

F. Auclair: Like I said, I really wasn't home all that long. I came home and everybody was oh ok, a little lost as to what I was going to do. When I finally did come home from active duty, I went right back to school. In fact I got out a month early so I could start my Spring semester. School started in January and I wasn't supposed to get out until February. They let me out early so I could enroll in school. To tell you the truth most of the kids in the class [] my student teaching. At the time, USM was in Gorham but a lot of the students were non-traditional students so most of us worked.

At that time, I was working at Maine Medical Center and taking courses at night, running around like a 24, 25 year old. We talked about that the other day, ladies night, we'd always go out and party until the bars closed [], otherwise you were []. We worked and we went to school. Now if I stay up until ten o'clock, I feel like I chopped wood all day. So there wasn't a real big transition for me; not like, the guys I think as a whole had a much harder transition than the women in the military did at that time because unless you told someone most people would not assume that you had

been in the military. It's not something they would assume. Now they knew all the guys had been. They had either been drafted or they were draft dodgers. It's one of the two.

S. Lawler: Have you been in the military consecutively since you entered boot camp?

F. Auclair: I took two years off.

S. Lawler: Two years.

F. Auclair: Yes. I was on active duty in 1972 to 1976 as a corpsman. I got out in January and I finished my last semester in teaching and I took my masters course and I was not affiliated with the military. I got out completely. Then I came back, it wasn't until [76'] I came back to the military in 1978. I joined the guard down in South Portland and that was a reserve type thing where we did one weekend a month, two weeks a year. I was still going to school. I had a teaching job. Then a full time job opened up here and I put in for that; number one [], number two they don't know me there [] to be honest with you but I got the job. So I took about two to two and a half years to do [teaching].

S. Lawler: How was that?

F. Auclair: It was fun because you know I was just starting my teaching career so I was pretty heavily involved in that. I kept myself busy but the recruiters from the guard kept calling and of course their big thing is, you know if you join and stay with us, you can get your twenty year retirement. You don't have to go away and do that. There are certain benefits that you can get and you know, take a look at what you're doing. I never thought I would [join the military]. At that time they were calling it administrative work because I had taken college ed classes, I could type because most people they had...

[End Track 11, End CD 1]

^{CD 2357A}
[Begin CD 2, Track 1]

F. Auclair: and it worked out well because I was teaching so I would have summers off so when it got real busy down there and they needed help, I was always available. I worked more than the two weeks.

S. Lawler: So you've been in the National Guard for about twenty years now?

F. Auclair: Yes, 20-, wow 23 years in the National Guard, yes.

S. Lawler: And you were originally in the Navy?

F. Auclair: Right.

S. Lawler: Anything in between from the Navy to the National Guard?

F. Auclair: No.

S. Lawler: We're going to kind of change topics here.

F. Auclair: Ok.

S. Lawler: In the military, can you describe the rules and regulations for the women? Did they differ from the men?

F. Auclair: The rules and regulations, well no. Now but they did. When I first went in in the early 70s and 60s, I forget when, probably late 70s some of the different rules that they had were if women became pregnant throughout; there were a lot of jobs that were not open to women, a lot, hundreds of jobs were not open to women. Now, it's the other way around; there are very few, it depends on the military branch. As far as things that would hinder what you wanted to do and then there was a time, a very short time that if you were a single mom, you could not come in the military and that's all gone away and a lot of the jobs have opened up.

Now the biggest difference between men and women is the PT test, which is a good thing. They give us different times. I mean I liked to believe when I was younger that men and women were the same. I think on a lot of things they [can do] the same things but they got there differently. Right now, I'm trying to think of any differences. I think the only difference is the women have a little bit longer time to run. They just go with whatever the normal standards are in society. [*unable to make out the rest*]

S. Lawler: If you didn't want to be treated like a man, how was that? What treatment did you get that you didn't want?

F. Auclair: Well, maybe treated is the wrong word. I didn't want to be evaluated like a man as far as like physical fitness and things of that nature. I wasn't going to sit around and pump iron and do all of these things just in order to prove that I could run as fast as a man; that wasn't important. I used to look at, my philosophy was if you want this done, there's always more than one way.

A lot of the women I think, depending on whether they worked on heavy equipment, they were told you don't have the physical strength to lift that tool box. Why not? Oh by the way, that's your tool box Mr. so and so. Every person has their own tool box that they put in there the tools that they want. But it was like, if you can't press this than you can't; I can remember when, I think this was when I first joined, they used to do a lot of communication stuff. They would put towers and lights and all that good stuff. Well, in order to go into certain jobs, if you couldn't press or you couldn't lift

[End Track 1, Begin Track 2]

F. Auclair: 75 pounds, you couldn't do the job and women can do that if they learned how to do it, it's like anything else. But back then, most girls, they were playing half

court basketball because that's all the high school's would allow them to do. So a lot of them couldn't do that and that to me was discriminatory. Honestly, tell me when do you have to lift 75 pounds? When do you have to jerk up 75 pounds day to day? Most of the time when you look around and you see something heavy, you get a buddy and you go help. Why can't women do that? When you got them away from a one on one, that's true. They would still have some of those things. There are things that you can learn to do with the right training. Sort of like the firefighters and having to lift [] pounds. It sounds like a lot and it is until you learn the techniques to do it, a lot of people can do it, including females. Just to have barriers in place in order to [segregate] and not sitting down to take an approach [].

S. Lawler: You talked about when you were at Bain Bridge and actually I wanted to ask you is Bain B-A-I-N?

F. Auclair: Yes.

S. Lawler: Ok, you said it was all women about 250 but then you went to the corpsman training, it was integrated. So what was the relationship like between men and women at that point because you went from segregated to integrated?

F. Auclair: Think of it like this way, think of it because it was very much the same because we were all young. We were all in our twenties. We thought it was great because we were with the guys all day long. And they brought things and we brought things because everybody brings something to whatever you are doing and they would teach us things and we would teach them things. At the same time we could be with them and that was important too for them as well as for us.

We never had any, it was sort of like mommy and daddy watching and saying oh god if you put them together, they'll goof off, they're not going to behave and they're not going to focus. We have so much to teach them in such a small amount of time. Most of the military schools are pretty condensed. There was all this And we just formed friendships. I mean some of them, my best friend met her husband in that class. So all the fear that they had, it used to aggravate us because they would treat us like we couldn't think. You get to this point in life, you get sick of mom and dad or whomever. It was like overbearing. We couldn't control ourselves. We were hormones out of control; if they got us within two streets of each other, everything from there would be an orgy and when it didn't happen it was almost like they were... oh, maybe we need to give them a little credit for something.

S. Lawler: So in general in the military, not so much now but back when it used to be more of an issue- gender, the men didn't treat women any differently when they came in. How did they treat you coming into it?

F. Auclair: You always had the die hard. You can find them today in any walk of society. You're always going to have the strutter or guy that has been overdosed with sperm or whatever who thinks that he's just it and you run into them. But sometimes you can run into them with women also and it's not necessarily a gender thing, it's a personal thing. Whatever you talk about, they've done it and they've done it better and so you run into those. And maybe because of where I was in the military

[End Track 2, Begin Track 3]

F. Auclair: you don't find that like you would like in the infantry. I think if you talk to any of the women marines, they had a whole different experience than I did. I don't want

to say that I've never had any problems with men because I have but I think that's life. It would have happened some place else if it didn't happen here. It happens in the corporate world. It happens in the teaching community, I mean it happens sometimes. It's never been a real big issue. I've never encountered many fortunately but some women have.

S. Lawler: How do you feel society views women in the military, again there being a difference from now and then?

F. Auclair: I think it's changed a lot and that was very evident to me with my fathers reaction to my coming in the military. I think one of the reasons he didn't want me to come in was number one I was his daughter. He wanted me home; my mom had died at that point. He's got this ten year old here, who's going to help me, that type of thing so a little bit of selfishness on his part but it was a generational thing. It was certainly during the 40s and 50s and into the early 60s, women just didn't go in. It was sort of like, they had that whole thing [] those that can do and those that can't teach. There were all kinds of prejudicial statements being made, most of them with no basis. It was just [] rising to the top.

I never, most of my friends, I think the thing that really was a turning point was when I was down in South Portland, [] I had a large circle of friends there I socialized with and partied with, you know, the whole nine yards and I had to go to school for this; like fifteen of them, guys and gals showed up at the Portland National Airport to wave good-bye to me you know, and none of them had anything to do with the military, none of them, not a one. At the time, now that you ask, I look back on it and see, I think they were ok with it. They certainly didn't have to come. Some of them took time off of work to wave good-bye to me.

For a long time, there was like no reaction, probably because I was just real busy and had my head in the sand over here, not so much head in the sand but it's like any organization at different levels, you get different intensities at the part of your life when you have to really focus on really learning what you're supposed to be doing and learning your job. There was a period of about ten years I was heavily involved in going to school and learning the legalities of what I needed to do day to day. Now I've gotten above that a little bit so there's a little bit more visibility for me personally. I think curiosity is usually the biggest thing.

It's funny because I've had to [take] a lot because I've never been married. I was engaged twice, I never really got married. So I have friends, like I went to my thirtieth high school reunion several years ago that stayed home; went to college, got married to the same guy that she went to high school with and they had the 1.2 kids. The kids are in high school or college now and those are the women that come and talk to me a lot, god, you had such a great life, you got to travel and do this and do that. That's been good I say but at a cost that you've got children and you're looking forward to grandchildren. I said I'm not going to have that. No matter what you do in your life, there's a trade off. Was it a conscious trade off on my part? No. I mean I didn't decide on this day in my life that I wasn't going to get married, not to say that I won't but

[End Track 3, Begin Track 4]

F. Auclair: it hasn't happened yet but I've been happy with my life and some days I get up and think, it will be nice just to stay home and watch the kids [around here] that type thing because you look, I think in any situation, you look at things and the grass always seems greener on the other side of the fence until you get there and find out it's

the same grass. Sometimes I change in what I've had to do, something that was glimmering for for a period of time but overall I've been able to do what I've wanted to do, which has been great. It's been good for me personally I don't want to do the same thing over and over and over again, that's just my personality.

I like to do different things than after I learn how to do them and do them for three or four years, I can move on. It's easier now but in my generation, people, they became teachers or nurses or doctors or lawyers and that's what they did for the next 35 years. There was no such thing as a 401K so you stayed with your job for a real long time, that's all you did. I wasn't bound by that because of the military. I've held different jobs and have done different things and it's been good. I had that as a [] for some of my friends who went into education like I did. They're looking at retirement now and they've been teaching for 45 years, [] kids that I taught. There's a goodness in that and there's good to take out of that. My life has just been a little bit different but I don't have any regrets.

It's funny because my brother would never join the military. He's four years younger than I am. For awhile he was just like I probably should join the military. Well, what for? I said you got to do the things that you wanted to do. Yeah, ok. So I've got to do the things I wanted to do and the Guard has been real good because I've been able to stay home. That's one of the hidden secrets; a lot of people think if they join the military, you're going away. [] when I really wanted to I couldn't get away from home.

I mean the pay's really good. It's afforded me a good life so I can't complain. I've been able to travel both with the job and without the job. There's some people that I hope I never see again.

S. Lawler: Well, do you think that the military should open all its jobs to women?

F. Auclair: Some people are going to argue with me I guess and maybe it's because I'm not cognizant of every single thing but I think there are very few jobs out there that should be denied because of gender especially in our changing cultures now.

We've gotten away from those culture amours of females should, "the shoulds." We've gotten away from that and for me that's a great thing. I've always been an advocate of people having to be judged by their own abilities and their own initiatives. If they want to do something, than do it. Don't put on any other restrictions, if it becomes a matter and in the military sometimes it does. I seem to have a good [testament] on that. Some things may take a little bit longer for women. When you talk about the military, you get there at some point in time, so that's changed a little bit too. You have to get to a point of saying, especially in the leadership position

[End Track 4, Begin Track 5]

F. Auclair: and [Kim] are going to kill each other [], would Sarah rise to that and say ok, [] because this is what I have [] would she do that. Women can, they don't want to just like most []. You don't have to be Rambo's. There aren't that many Rambo's in the military. A lot of people seem to think that. The military is easy to make generalizations; people in the military really like war. They are the people who hate war the most because they're the ones that have to go out there and put their life on the line. Nobody likes to go to war, nobody wants to go to

Afghanistan. You're going to get a few that get all hyped up and they get energetic about it and I think a lot of people confuse that with, when you train real hard to do something for a lot of these people, especially in the special forces their training is horrendous both psychologically and physically and it's really, really hard.

When you do that and when the situation comes to you where you can utilize those skills, it's almost like a horse in a horse race. The minute they open those gates, they go plunging out. I'm not even sure it's a cognitive [decision], ok I can do this because I've been trained and this is how I'm supposed to do this and I know what I'm supposed to do, give me the opportunity to do it, what I've trained to do and what you want me to do.

I think it's like anything else, most people in the military, most of them are quite patriotic, which used to be a really bad thing; if you were patriotic, you would not talk about it. Socially it was unacceptable. This whole county went through a period of questioning the government and I don't deny there needed to be questions and there always will be and there are different ways to do that. I think we've grown to a position now that we can keep check on the government without being negative or harmful to organizations within the government.

I have a hard time with generalizations. I have a hard time with people that say oh the government and oh this, or the teaching community, oh those doctors or oh those lawyers they don't care about anything. I personally have a real hard time with that. When I hear generalizations, it just [] me out. They're not looking at the person. They're devaluing the value of that person totally, so that bothers me.

S. Lawler: Do you feel that your thoughts or ideas on being in the military would be different if you had gone off to war because your experience seems so incredible but when I think of going off to the military, I do not want to fight in the war so if I could do what you've done and only that than I would like to do it but if I had to do that, but you can't do that. You have to be willing to do both.

F. Auclair: You have to be willing to do both. I would venture to say that the thing with the military, you spend a lifetime getting ready for that war. Sometimes you have the opportunity to utilize those skills and other times you utilize them here or whatever and the face of war has changed so much over the generations. I'm sure you realize that. I mean, we laugh every once in awhile and say, you know could you imagine what it was like 25 years ago when you have to say ok ... line them all up in this row, the other row is over there and they stood there and they looked at each other and then they said ready and everybody brought their guns up, aim; everybody aimed at a person over there and then they fired.

[End Track 5, Begin Track 6]

F. Auclair: To me that's nuts. I could never do that. It wasn't until the Indians started to hide behind trees and rocks, you know and culturally it changed that this was a valiant thing to do because before that they thought that was the cowardly way out. If you got in the way of the bullet or if anything got in the way of the bullet, you were just a []. I think with Vietnam, which was probably the last real in your face type thing, there were some mistakes made there as there are in any war. There is no war that is mistake proof for sure. I wouldn't want to be in that situation.

Things have changed, even, we talk about Desert Storm, the technology is changing so quickly that going to war now, you talk about destruction, it has become a little bit more refined now with the technology that we have. We can blow up this office and not blow up that office; that's a good thing. We don't have as much residual casualty. You think about World War II and all the bombs and even in World War I, trench wars. We'll never have that again, not in a conventional war. That will be different but you don't have that where you know the country here and it's so funny when we sit here and we read, you see it on CNN where you see the Afghans and when we finally brought people in Afghanistan. [We brought them in on donkeys] We saw those news clips because that's the only way you can get through those mountains. Ok, so we're sitting there and here is Donald Rumsfeld and he's showing these forces going in there, our forces on horses with donkeys, pack donkeys with them and we're going huh? It's like we don't do that anymore.

War time and it's become very impersonal now. I mean when you're a mile or forty or fifty thousand feet in the air and you're that fighter pilot and you let that bomb go, you never see a face. You don't even see [the form]. You know what I'm saying. It's like anything else, once you start taking the humanity out of it, it's a delicate balance to make sure that it doesn't become immoral. It doesn't become [blatant].

Now today, I was thinking the other day now we talk about any sort of civilian casualties in war []. In World War II the civilian casualty we didn't even talk about. We were bombing London for 39 days and nobody was talking about Mrs. Maquilacutty and the kids. They were talking about the damage done and how they were slowing this down.

Our social and cultural morals have changed. We've become much more interested in the person, Sarah and the person Kim rather than before it was different. There were Germans and Japs and there were no good Japs and there were no good Germans. In there eyes, there were no good Jewish people. It was very generalized, so everybody has to die or everybody has to suffer because of the class that they belonged to or the culture they belonged to. When they went to war, everybody went to war. It's not that way as much.

This war is a little bit different because the standard of living is so low over there. There are no []. How are you going to get through the Afghan mountains? You're not going to walk. There are no jeeps and you can't fly through them. It's dangerous but it has become very much more sophisticated in the sense that you can pinpoint the battles. You can contain a little bit of it. Where as before it was blatant; you drop a thousand pound bomb and it just takes everything out for a crater. Now you don't have to do that anymore, which is a good thing if you have to go to war. There will always be

[End Track 6, Begin Track 7]

F. Auclair: male or female. I think anytime you get threatened and you can see it in animal behavior. You can even see it with parents when you start messing around with some mothers kid; that's the worst you can get, I mean really if you think about it and even in nature, I mean you're going to find the protector of the family has always been the male type thing. So I think everybody keeps saying it would be great if we had peace. I don't think there will ever be a point where [there is no more conflict].

S. Lawler: Well, looking back at your experience, would you do this again if you were given the chance?

F. Auclair: Yes. I would do a few things differently. I would have finished college and become an officer sooner.

S. Lawler: I've heard that exact statement. Now why is that?

F. Auclair: Because the opportunities are great [] but if I had done that differently, I probably wouldn't have become the person that I am today. I think it was good for me to be enlisted for awhile. It was good for me to get back out and teach for awhile, be a normal person, whatever normal is. I've become more normal now. I don't think I would have been, I think I would have stayed in the guards, I would have done the guard thing and not been on active duty because in the long run, the guard is the better choice for a person because it allows you to have a life in the sense you can have a family and stay home with them and get your kids in a normal, I've taught [military families], they're in a place for maybe two years. These kids bounce around all the time, you know every other school year, they're in a different school; new friends, they're always in that mode of finding new friends. It's hard. Some kids [] miss out on a lot.

I didn't want to stay in my hometown. I wanted to have a little bit of space so I've been able to do that. As you get older that goes away. []. I spent a year in Denver and Denver was beautiful. I loved skiing and I loved [the town]. It was great but you know how far it is to the ocean from that point.

S. Lawler: Well, if you had a daughter, would you encourage her to go into the military?

F. Auclair: Yes, only because I don't believe people are cognizant of the opportunities I guess. It's a great opportunity. I have a friend whose daughter, she graduated from here

and went to Colby, smart cookie, can't take that away from her. She's in medical school. They [Navy] is paying for her entire medical school. For that four years of medical school, she had to agree to stay four years after that. So she's getting full tuition to medical school

[End Track 7, Begin Track 8]

F. Auclair: she'll get out of the military, if she gets out, she get out at maybe 28, 29, debt free. She will have no college loans. It's a great opportunity [] and for us that works out great. So for them they can start in an airline job starting at 150-200,000. There are not too many places you could do that and the tuition; when we go to school, we don't have to pay it back. You don't have to pay tuition. You don't have to pay room and board. We get paid to go to school but yet you still have that []. I got my masters, I didn't pay for my masters. I was in the military school at the same time, [] public affairs at Maine; so for that it was very good.

There are a lot of opportunities there, especially for higher education and you get in some responsibilities. For some folks, it's good and you'll hear that over I'm sure. You go away to college; college is so great and wonderful and everybody should experience that but then after college there is going to be that day when you graduate and you have the first day on the job and you have to get your own apartment and you'll have to start all of that type thing. For a lot of people, that's the first time they become totally responsible for themselves and have to make decisions that are going to alter their lifestyle or where they're going to be held accountable for their decisions.

Some people can make it through life, 23, 24 years old and never have to worry about being accountable for anything, really except for paying Dr. so and so but the

military will force that onto people a lot younger and for them [] they need to be held accountable. The military is designed to []. Some people can, they'll back out but ultimately when you look in the mirror you know I didn't make it because []. So you if get the opportunity [] but understand that's your choice, not my choice. For some people, my nephew [] believe me. It would be good for him I think. It helps you with your life skills and not everybody does. Not everybody should be in the military because it's not what they should do. For those who do, make that decision. It can be positive or it can be negative.

S. Lawler: Well, we are almost out of time. I really want to thank you for the interview. You've given us so much information.

[End Track 8, End Interview]



Biography

National Guard Bureau

General Officer Management Office, Arlington, VA

BRIGADIER GENERAL FRANCES M. AUCLAIR

Assistant Adjutant General - Air, Maine Air National Guard



Brigadier General Frances M. Auclair is the Assistant Adjutant General - Air, Maine and also serves as Commander, Maine Air National Guard. General Auclair is the principal advisor to the Governor and The Adjutant General on matters pertaining to the Maine Air National Guard. She is responsible for the command, control and operations of plans and programs affecting more than 1,100 Maine Air National Guard personnel located in Augusta, Bangor, and South Portland. Her broad range of responsibilities includes ensuring combat readiness and mission capability of a tanker wing and two geographically separated mission support units. She assumed this position October 2, 2008.

General Auclair enlisted in the United States Navy in 1972 as a Hospital Corpsman. She joined the Maine Air National Guard as an Administrative Clerk in December 1979 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant after completing Officer Training School in 1981. General Auclair has served in various operations and command positions and in 2000 was selected as the Vice Commander, 101st Air Refueling Wing. General Auclair was the first non-rated Vice Wing Commander in the Air National Guard.

EDUCATION:

1977 University of Southern Maine, Bachelor of Science, Education, Portland, Maine
1993 Troy State University, Masters, Human Resource Management, Montgomery, Alabama
1998 Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. December 1981 - November 1983, Administrative Officer, 243rd Engineering and Installation Squadron, South Portland, Maine
2. November 1983 - December 1985, Logistics Officer, 101st Air Refueling Wing, Bangor, Maine
3. December 1985 - March 1988, Supply Officer, 101st Resource Management Squadron, Bangor, Maine
4. March 1988 - August 1989, Commander, 101st Communications Flight, Bangor, Maine
5. August 1989 - April 1992, Chief, Consolidated Base Personnel Office, Bangor, Maine
6. April 1992 - June 1993, Director of Personnel, 101st Support Group, Bangor, Maine
7. June 1993 - July 1995, Support Personnel Management Officer, Headquarters, Maine Air National Guard, Augusta, Maine
8. July 1995 - June 2000, Commander, 101st Support Group, Bangor, Maine
9. June 2000 - April 2006, Vice Commander, 101st Air Refueling Wing, Bangor, Maine
10. April 2006 - October 2008, Chief of Staff, Maine Air National Guard, Augusta, Maine
11. October 2008 - Present, Assistant Adjutant General - Air, Maine, National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, Augusta, Maine

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Meritorious Service Medal (with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Air Force Commendation Medal (with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Air Force Achievement Medal
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster)
Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation
Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal
National Defense Service Medal (with 2 Bronze Service Stars)
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
Armed Forces Service Medal
Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon (with 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Armed Forces Reserve Medal (with Silver Hourglass)

Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon
Air Force Training Ribbon (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS:

Bangor Area Chamber of Commerce
Rotary International
National Guard Association of the United States
National Guard Association of Maine
Unit #41, Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services, National

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION:

Second Lieutenant 19 December 1981
First Lieutenant 19 December 1983
Captain 4 January 1986
Major 26 April 1990
Lieutenant Colonel 2 May 1994
Colonel 30 July 1999
Brigadier General 3 June 2006

(Current as of March 2011)

The date of publication indicated on this biography reflects the most recent update. It does not necessarily reflect the date of printing.

[Back](#)