[Fortune Favors the Brave](#)

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Community Partners: [Amsterdam Nursing Home](#)

Last week, StoryCorps Door-to-Door Facilitators Carolina Correa and Yazmín Peña went to New York City's Upper West Side, to visit the Amsterdam Nursing Home, a residence for older adults, to record the stories of six of their residents.

Libby Gardner, left, and daughter Eve Remba.

Our first participants of the day were Elizabeth L. Gardner (Libby) and her daughter Eve Remba. Libby was all smiles as she came into the recording room, and Eve began their conversation by congratulating her mother for winning the Congressional Gold Medal earlier this year. You see Libby was a WASP – a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots – a pioneering civilian organization of female pilots that flew Military Aircraft under the orders of the United States Air Force during World War II.

She remembered how at first, her family was against the extents she went to in order to learn how to fly: Libby moved across states, from Wisconsin to Pennsylvania, searching for jobs that would allow her to clock in flying hours. Eventually, she left her job as an Inspection Clerk at the Piper Aircraft Factory, borrowing luggage from a friend in order to travel to Sweetwater, TX, to complete six months of WASP training. Libby was twenty-two years old by the time she was stationed in Harlingen, TX, and sixty-six years later she's still able to easily and comfortably talk about the different aircraft she had the chance to fly, a smile in her voice as she spoke of her favorite plane, the B-26 Marauder.

A picture of Libby Gardner in her 20's while on her B-26 graces the lobby
of the Amsterdam Nursing Home

Towards the end of her interview, when asked why she would go through so much trouble to be able to fly, Libby quickly answered:

"Because of the freedom! Flying… is a physical pleasure."

"Did you know you were a trailblazer?" Eve asked her mother. Libby took a couple of seconds before quietly answering,