



NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM

AVENGER



FIELD

HANGAR NO 1

WINTER 2023

HANGAR ONE



Let's taco-bout our new exhibits!

By Lisa Taylor, Executive Director, National WASP WWII Museum

The Museum has reached a new milestone in its mission to inspire all generations, both young and old, with the stories of the WASP. On October 19, the Museum celebrated the latest installation of new exhibits in its historic 1928 hangar with a festive evening of Museum tours, spicy tacos, hot music, and a mellow west Texas sunset. Young visitors enjoyed sporting Halloween costumes (why wear them just once?) and painting pumpkins.

The Sweetwater community and friends from surrounding towns and neighboring states gathered to honor the WASP legacy and bring their children and grandchildren - the next generation of aviators, enthusiasts, and historians - to the Museum.

As part of a four-phase expansion plan, new exhibits have been crafted to cultivate our youngest generation's interest while maintaining a style and vision that WASP and their families resonate with. Displays are interactive and family encompassing showcasing the WASP and their achievements in life-size proportions. Four airworthy aircraft anchor the displays: the PT-17 Stearman, the BT-13 Vultee, UC-78 Bobcat, and its newest plane, the AT-6 Texan.

Visitors were delighted as they stepped back in time to a 1943 Sweetwater environment. Sights and sounds from talking WASP trainees brought participants into the reality of living conditions on Avenger Field. The excitement, difficulties and wonder of learning to fly military aircraft were conveyed in active mediums.

The Museum has also created a magnificent WASP simulator flight training experience in the AT-6 Texan, the favorite airplane for most of the WASP. Many students and parents were able to enter the fuselage of our trainer and take on the persona of a WASP. They tested their piloting skills against the challenges of night flying, real-time atmospheric simulation, and live weather in a dynamic and living world. Most suitable for ages 10 +, this Microsoft experience did not disappoint our families.

Museum friends and staff ended the evening as they often do, gathered in small groups, listening to the band and marveling at the impact of the WASP. Many stories in American culture rise and fade into oblivion. But the WASP story endures more than 80 years later. We know it endures because partners have donated over \$5 million thus far for Phases 1 – 3B. We know it endures because school busses keep unloading students onto the Museum's parking lot. We know the WASP legacy will last because visitors keep coming, female pilots keep pushing further into the world of aviation, and WASP families expect the annual Homecoming Celebration tradition to continue.



If you were not able to attend Hops 'n Props, come soon. Admission is free until December 31, 2023.



PHASE 3C: HANGAR 1 WELCOME CENTER EXHIBIT



PHASE 3C: HANGAR 1 EXHIBIT HALL



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GROWTH AT THE WASP MUSEUM

By Lisa Taylor, Executive Director

When I became Executive Director in 2019, I walked into a role of wonderful possibilities. Which ones should be chosen and brought to fruition? I quickly made new exhibits across the Museum campus my top goal. Why? Because WASP history matters, and while the Museum was effectively reaching older generations, we had new opportunities to reach our youngest visitors, too.

Like every age group before them, Generation Z has a different way of communicating. To ensure WASP history would continue, it was time to put some new plays into action if the Museum was going to win Gen Z's attention and affection. Yet, it had to be accomplished in ways that continued to make the WASP and their families proud.

Today, the Museum's 10-year long-game has gone into halftime. It's a milestone moment. A newly built Hangar 1 exhibit gallery, a state-of-the-art archival vault, a beautiful gift shop and all-new exhibits across the Museum campus are drawing the attention of young families and new friends. Page one and pages six – seven, showcase the latest installment of displays. A catering room and a warm, welcoming environment foster special events in both hangars.

It is good and necessary to mark this half-time milestone. While it marks specific events and dates, it is more. Our milestone symbolizes achievement, growth, and endurance. By taking time to celebrate and reflect, we can acknowledge our progress and rekindle our spirits with a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Best of all, a milestone moment fuels our motivation for the future. Read on to learn more about the Museum's imminent plans.

The Future is near

With Phases 1 – 3A complete, we begin fundraising for Phases 3B – C. Phase 3B is an exterior renovation with a granite map of the US, a water feature, and a memorial garden. The map will provide many activities for students to locate states and duty bases and create flight plans.

Phase 3 C involves expanded exhibits in Hangar 1 exhibit gallery. Visitors will explore women's roles as pilots not only in the US but in our allied countries, too. They will contemplate America's attitudes toward women in service through the lens of the military, the government, and the WASP's hometowns. Guests will be regaled as the WASP recount stories of self-reliance, self-sacrifice, and daring missions. Visitors will be faced with difficult questions concerning who was chosen to be a WASP, who wasn't chosen and what did that say about America in 1942? They will grapple with why the US was unwilling to militarize female pilots or hire them professionally after the war. Ultimately, visitors will feel joy knowing the WASP opened the doors for all future generations of women in professional aviation.

As new exhibits are completed, educational programs will continue to expand, inspiring new would-be pilots, aviation support personnel, engineers, and scientists with the enduring stories of the WASP. Please consider supporting our expansion. We have a generous donor who has pledged \$150,000 for 2024. Will you, your family and friends work together to collectively match it? Together, we can preserve the history, promote the legacy, and preserve the airfield of the WASP.

New Admission Prices

While admission has always been free, maintenance of new exhibits requires the Museum to begin charging for tours. Beginning January 1, 2024 admission is as follows:

- \$10 - General admission
- \$8 - Veterans, teachers, and seniors 65+
- \$5 - Students (ages 12 and under)

School tours continue to be **free** for students.



GRANITE MAP BETWEEN HANGARS

April 26-27, 2024

WASP HOMECOMING

National WASP WWII Museum

Brought to you from the official



JOURNEY ABOVE THE STARS

Save the Date

Tickets go on sale January 1, 2024

SCAN ME!



A WASP HOMECOMING CELEBRATION JOIN US IN OUR JOURNEY ABOVE THE STARS

By Lisa Taylor, Executive Director

The Museum invites you to the 2024 Homecoming Celebration and Airshow on April 26 – 27, Journey Above the Stars honoring our WASP and their groundbreaking achievements that ultimately led to women in the Space Force. Former Astronaut, Susan Kilrain will be the keynote speaker at Friday night's *The Rendezvous* as we celebrate America's female pilots.

This weekend will hold many time-honored traditions among new events. The Museum's Homecoming Team is busy creating a meaningful, entertaining weekend for you. Check in for the details or purchase tickets for the weekend on January 1, 2024, on the website's Events page. Make your hotel reservations now because properties fill up quickly. Call hotels directly and tell them you are coming in for Sweetwater's best celebration – most of the hotels will reward you with a discount.

In the meantime, rest assured visitors will hear the roar of airplanes, possibly spy a parachutist or two, hear from some of the U.S.'s top pilots and WASP historians, and enjoy west Texas barbeque.

To keep up to date and learn more about our Homecoming Celebration plans, please visit www.waspmuseum.org/homecoming. If you are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lisa Taylor, our Executive Director, at lisataylor@waspmuseum.org.



Susan Kilrain,
NASA Astronaut, Navy Test Pilot
Photo: Susan Kilrain



Blue Skies and Tailwinds

November 10, 1921 - June 24, 2023

Barbara Catherine Searles Squire was a remarkable woman who lived a life full of adventure and achievement. She was born on November 10, 1921, in Jackson, Michigan, but spent most of her childhood in California. Her fascination with aviation began when her older sister married a young man who owned a flight school. Barbara spent countless hours around planes and occasionally flew with the CAP, developing a deep love for flying.

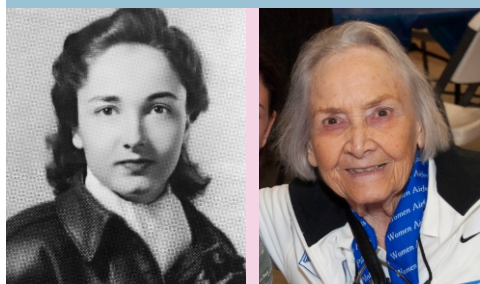
She eventually worked in Burbank, CA, installing communications equipment in B-17s. When Jacqueline Cochran lowered the required flight hours for the WASP program, Barbara saw an opportunity to chase her dreams. She went to Arizona and got the 35 hours needed to meet the program's requirements. To meet the 5' 2" height requirement, Barbara piled her hair on top of her head. She was accepted into the last WASP class 44-W-10 at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, TX on May 26, 1944, and graduated on December 7, 1944, cementing her place in history.

After completing the program, Barbara flew for a private company, ferrying used planes from the East Coast to the West Coast. Barbara was a woman of great courage and determination, and her accomplishments were an inspiration to many. Her love for the outdoors and adventure continued throughout her life as she enjoyed backpacking in the Sierra Mountains, camping, and other outdoor activities with her family.

Barbara's story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the importance of following your dreams. She was a trailblazer for women in aviation and an inspiration to all who knew her. Her legacy lives on through the many lives she touched and the stories of her remarkable life that continue to inspire new generations.



**BARBARA SEARLES SQUIRE
44-W-10**



**ALICE JEAN 'AJ' MAY STARR
43-W-4**

July 17, 1920 - June 28, 2023

In 1920, a fierce and determined woman was born in Norwood, New Jersey. Alice-Jean, fondly known as AJ, was a natural-born pilot who took her first flying lesson at Skyharbor Seaplane Base on the Hackensack River. With her passion for flying, she earned her private pilot's license by 1941, but that was just the beginning of her aviation journey.

Despite less than 100 hours of flight time, AJ was determined to join the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program. When she couldn't qualify, she took charge of her destiny and became a Link Trainer Instructor at the US Naval Air Station, Gordon Field, Atlanta, Georgia. But that wasn't enough for AJ. She had her sights set on something bigger and bolder.

In February 1943, AJ joined the first WASP class (43-W-4) to be trained entirely at Sweetwater. Her training at Avenger was nothing short of extraordinary. AJ was not only the bugler, but she

was also a talented cartoonist who drew hilarious cartoons about "training life." Her artistic skills led her to become the co-art editor of the class book for 43-4. After graduation, she requested an assignment to Romulus, Michigan, where she was part of the 553 AAF Base Unit, 3rd Ferrying Group, Romulus AAF.

AJ's flying skills were put to the test when she ferried various aircraft. AJ's determination and love for flying knew no boundaries. Her love for flying and her determination led her to fly and ferry other aircraft. In September, AJ reported to Orlando, FL, for Officer Training School. Her final flight as a WASP was delivering a P-63 King Cobra to Great Falls, MT. Her passion for flying didn't end there. She remained in the Air Force Reserve as a 1st Lieutenant from 1945 to 1955. In civilian life, AJ continued to soar high. She worked for the Navion Agency for five years, where she ferried aircraft, flew charter and customer service flights, and served as the company secretary. She married Ted Starr in 1951 and remained active with WASP activities and the Ninety-Nines.

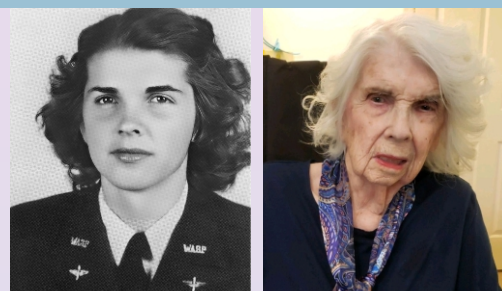
August 30, 1921 - October 11, 2023

Edith Upson Smith was a true hero, a trailblazer who broke barriers and paved the way for generations of women pilots. Despite learning how to drive at the age of 30, she learned how to fly when she was just 18 years old and went on to become one of just over one thousand women who served in the Women Airforce Service Pilots program during World War II.

In her role as a WASP, Smith flew planes from the factory out to the fielded, transported officers across bases, did test-piloting, and even taught some of the men how to fly. Her bravery and dedication to flying were truly exceptional, especially considering that she continued to serve her country after becoming a widow. Her husband had been a bomber pilot and was killed, but Smith went on to achieve great things, driven by her passion for aviation.

Smith's story is a testament to the power of perseverance, dedication, and passion. She overcame adversity and broke through barriers to become a true pioneer in aviation. Thanks to the brave women like her, we now have women fighter pilots, astronauts, commercial airline pilots, and instructors. These women paved the way for women pilots today, and their legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

Edith Upson Smith will always be remembered as a true hero, an inspiration to all who strive to break through barriers and achieve their dreams.



**EDITH 'EDIE' UPSON SMITH
44-W-7**

Source: https://www.ninety-nines.org/NH-Edith_Baugh_Upson_Smith_418.htm

APRIL 26, 2024 - APRIL 25, 2025

A WASP IN THE SPOTLIGHT

EXHIBIT FEATURING



ROSA LEA
FULLWOOD
MEAK
43-W-4



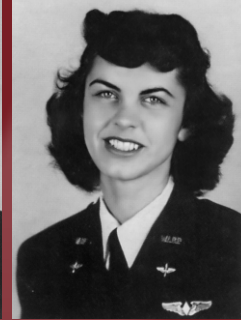
SOLANGE
D'HOOGHE
43-W-5



DORI
MARLAND
MARTIN
43-W-8



MARYLYN
MYERS
PEYTON
44-W-5



BETTY JO
STREFF
REED
44-W-7



SUZETTE
VANDAELL
DOUGLAS
44-W-10

On Saturday, April 27, 2024, at the Homecoming Celebration and Fly-in, the WASP Museum will unveil its new collection featuring six women in the WASP in the Spotlight exhibits for the 2024-2025 year.

The WASP program included 1102 courageous female pilots who flew military aircraft during WWII. The Museum's WASP In The Spotlight exhibit tells the individual stories of WASP before, during, and after the WASP program was deactivated.

The upcoming 2024-2025 honorees are:

Rosa Lea Fullwood Meak 43-W-4

Solange D'Hooghe 43-W-5

Dori Marland Martin 43-W-8

Marylyn Myers Peyton 44-W-5

Betty Jo Streff Reed 44-W-7

Suzette vanDaell Douglas 44-W-10

WASP families in attendance are invited to speak about their mother's spirits, adventures, and accomplishments. It is a wonderful time for sharing.

To experience the current 2023-2024 honorees stories, visit the website page listed below and please come to the Museum to see their exhibits before April 2024.

www.waspmuseum.org/wasp-in-the-spotlight



DONATE ARTIFACTS WITH CONFIDENCE

Many of you have inquired about your WASP becoming a Spotlight honoree. Please know while our aim is to spotlight all the WASP either physically and/or digitally, the archive needs information to tell their stories.

An archive is the lifeblood of any museum. It provides primary sources of information through newspapers clippings, official documents, photographs, and textiles that are needed to tell historically accurate, fascinating, and engaging stories. Families can donate artifacts to the Museum with confidence. The National WASP WWII Museum Archive, the only organization solely dedicated to the WASP, adheres to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Archival Storage Standards in our vault's construction and in the archival materials used for preservation.

Please contact Ann Haub at ann@waspmuseum.org to donate artifacts, request research assistance, or to tour the archive.



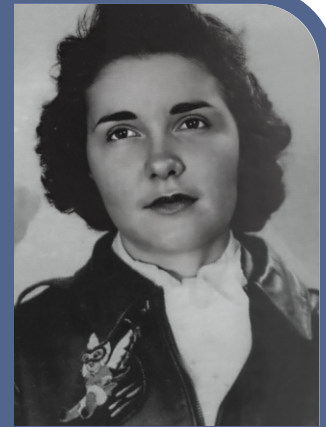
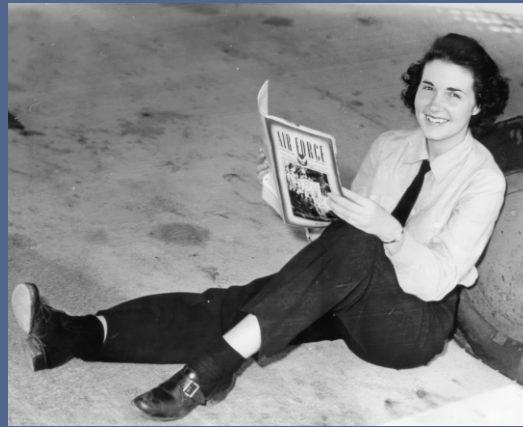
To find out more about upcoming events, please visit www.waspmuseum.org/events.



A LOOK INSIDE AT THE WASP MUSEUM THE NEW EXHIBITS ARE HERE!

We are so grateful for your continued support in helping the Museum preserve the history, promote the legacy, and protect the airfield of the WASP. To see more on the finished and upcoming phases for expansion, please visit our website listed at the bottom of this page or scan the QR code on the last page of this newsletter. Support the progress forward by making a donation on our website or by calling the Museum at 325-235-0099.





REMEMBERING MARIE

By John Marsh

My mother, Marie Barrett Marsh, 43-W-7, was a distinguished member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots. From an early age, I was proud of my mother and knew I would follow in her footsteps to become a pilot. She ignited an undeniable passion in me – a deep love of airplanes and flying.

Like many young women, Marie learned to fly with the Civilian Pilot Training Program while earning her degree at Youngstown College. The US knew it did not have enough trained pilots for war and offering free pilot training could mitigate that problem. Lucky for my mother and so many others, the program mandated that 10% of each class be comprised of women. Marie and a friend were the only two women in a class of 29 students. After the Primary Course, Marie took Secondary CPT, which included aerobatic instruction in an open cockpit biplane, the Waco UPF-7.

Marie's brother, Tom, also took the CPT course and then Marie, Tom, and eight others put in \$100 each, formed a non-profit corporation, and bought one of the used Porterfield airplanes from Hinkle Fly8ing Service at Bernard Airport. It had a 65-horsepower engine, no brakes, and a single magneto. They flew the plane for about \$2/hour until the government requisitioned all available planes for World War II. They sold it for more than they had paid. At the time, no one worried about insurance.

Marie was accepted into class 43-W-7 and trained on Avenger Field in Sweetwater, TX. After earning her wings, she was assigned to the headquarters of the Weather Wing in Asheville, NC. Her duties included being a pilot for the non-flying top brass in the Weather Wing with flights to the Army weather stations all over the US, courier service to the Pentagon, "mercy flights," and flight testing the aircraft at the base after repair. She was checked out in the B-26, A-24, C-45, C-60.

Col. Farnham, the head of Army Airways Communications Systems had as "his" plane a twin-engine Beech C-45, loaded with communication equipment. Marie flew with him on one cross-country flight and he was so pleased with her performance and skills he told her to feel free to take his plane any time.

Life-long friendships were formed during these years and despite the program's disbandment, Mom continued to fly after the war.

Mom married dad in 1944 as the war was ending. They would go on to have eight children, and, although her hands were full (we weren't the best-behaved) she continued flying. I remember flying with her and being able to stand up in the back seat of a four passenger Cessna. Our family enjoyed local sight-seeing trips.

On August 28, 1949, Marie attended a WASP reunion, in Lockhaven, PA where J3 Cubs were built. While at the reunion, Mom and several other WASP delivered Piper J3 Cubs to dealers around the country. Mom delivered a 70hp Piper J3 Cub to St Louis. She said the cars on the highway below were going faster than she was.



I received my private pilot's license when I was in college. The first person I took for a plane ride was my mother. I was so proud to have her fly with me. I had a brother who was also a private pilot and a sister who soloed. I also have a niece and a nephew that are currently airline pilots. I am grateful to my mother for exposing us to aviation. It has been an incredible journey.

My sister, Kathleen Fowler, and I are currently on the Board of Directors at the WASP WWII Museum in Sweetwater, TX. I am proud to be affiliated with the Museum, and to see the progress it has made in recent years.

For the fly girls,

John Marsh

To learn about John Marsh's experiences with WASP Shutsy Reynolds, visit the website at www.waspmuseum.org.



BLUE SKIES AND AIRSHOWS

By Lisa Taylor

The Museum enjoys taking its airplanes to airshows all over the country. From Midland to Rockport and all the way to Oshkosh, our airplanes are putting in the miles to take us to six airshows a year. Once the airplanes land, the best fun begins. Our team enjoys visiting with interesting folks who join us on the tarmac. Our pilots boost enthusiasts up and onto the wings of our BT-13 Vultee (also known as Ms. Betty), the AT-6 Texan and the UC-78 Bobcat all day long. Visitors step back in time to peek inside our 80-year-old planes while the ground crew regales them with stories of the WASP. The days are long and often humidly hot or overly windy. As the WASP have said, we are dog-tired by nightfall with sticky shirts and numb feet. So why does the Museum persevere in this endeavor?

- ★ For the woman who was leaving the Houston airshow and from 20 feet away waved and yelled, “Bye Ms. Betty! I’ll miss you!”
- ★ For the hesitant and somewhat disinterested high school girl who sat in Ms. Betty, broke into a huge warm smile, and said, “I didn’t know the WASP Museum was so much fun!”
- ★ For the ballerina who in full costume found us at Oshkosh to have her senior pictures taken on the wing of our AT-6.
- ★ For the nine-year-old boy who, much to the annoyance of his little brother, was spouting off everything he knew about airplanes and was practically dancing on the wing of Ms. Betty with excitement. When asked what he was going to do when he grew up, he responded, “Yes, ma’am! I’m going to fly for the Navy!”
- ★ When we hosted an Oshkosh panel with Erin Miller, Jan Johnson, Jeannie Leavitt, and Devyn Reiley that featured video clips of the WASP. Watching the panelists powerfully connect with the audience and bring WASP to life was priceless. After the panel, we hugged Devyn goodbye, not realizing that sometimes goodbye is really goodbye.

There is no amount of heat, wind, or concrete under our feet that would keep us at home. These moments are the reason the Museum is here and the best part of our jobs. We will publish next year’s airshows on our website in January. Check it out and maybe we can see you there. For now, enjoy the pictures!



March 17, 1993 - July 30, 2023



Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost and Maj. Gen Jeannie Leavitt, USAF (ret) at her retirement ceremony on September 23, 2023
Photo: Courtesy of the United States Air Force



Maj. Gen Jeannie Leavitt, USAF (ret) at the Captain Marvel Premiere
Photo: Jesse Grant | Credit: Getty Images for Disney

TALLY'S LAST RALLY CELEBRATING MAJ. GEN. JEANNIE "TALLY" LEAVITT

By Jonathan Stefanko, U.S. Transportation Command Public Affairs, USAF and Lisa Taylor

The Museum had the honor of attending Maj. Gen. Jeannie "Tally" Leavitt's retirement ceremony at Scott Air Force Base, IL on September 23. While the ceremony marked the close of Leavitt's career, or as her friends dubbed it, "Tally's Last Rally," the legacy she's crafted and the lives she's influenced will "undoubtedly resonate for generations," said Jacqueline Van Ovost, the U.S. Transportation Command's top general.

Officiating the event, USTRANSCOM Commander Gen. Van Ovost recounted the hurdles and triumphs that defined Leavitt's storied 31-year journey. From becoming the Air Force's first female combat fighter pilot to being the first woman to command the 57th Wing at Nellis Air Force Base, NV, Leavitt's tale is etched with many "firsts." Yet beyond the accolades and achievements, her character has never wavered. "She had every opportunity to take an easy path. To take roads well-traveled, but that's not who she is," Van Ovost explained.

From Leavitt's early aspirations in aerospace engineering to confronting Air Force policies, Leavitt's resolve has known no bounds. She has consistently overcome challenges and pioneered new paths.

When Leavitt graduated top of her class in pilot training, she requested a fighter pilot slot despite the Air Force's ban on women in combat along with a warning that her request could be career-ending. Like a WASP, however, she did not heed the advice. Leavitt put in the hard work and was able to walk through an open door when the ban was lifted. "I didn't want to live with regrets," Leavitt expressed. When asked about her early experiences flying the F-15E Strike Eagle with an all-male crew, Leavitt responded it is hard for people to dislike you when you are kind and perform at the top of your class.

Leavitt's kindness, professionalism and top performance would continue to overcome obstacles throughout her career. However, Van Ovost emphasized that policy change alone is insufficient. Acceptance and recognition are battles unto themselves, and Leavitt has been at the forefront of these transformative times.

To help reshape misguided perceptions, Leavitt would venture to Hollywood, where she would work with Disney on the Captain Marvel movie project. This opportunity would give Leavitt a stage to tell her Air Force story and provide a better representation of what a lifetime of service looks like.

"[Jeannie] had to cope with a constant demand to be in the spotlight, because of her many firsts, something that's not really representative of who Jeannie is," Van Ovost said. "She much prefers to stand back, behind the scenes to guide and mentor. To take care of the people and the mission – [that's] the true purpose behind her continued dedication to service."

The WASP Museum congratulates Maj Gen Jeannie Leavitt and wishes her well as she continues a life of service, kindness, and professionalism in the next chapter of her life.



Maj. Gen. Jeannie Leavitt, USAF (ret) with her fellow pilots

ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT, JEANNIE!



Photo by Erin Miller



INTRODUCING THUNDERMOUSE

Dear Friends and Family of the National WASP WWII Museum,

I am pleased to share the story of Thundermouse with you. Thundermouse is about an adventurous mouse that helps a young boy deal with the separation he faces when his mom is selected for an extraordinary job- flying with the United States Air Force Thunderbirds.

This story would not exist without the inspiration of the WWII Women Air Force Service Pilots. At 12 years old, I yearned to fly fighters after seeing the iconic hit movie, Top Gun. I didn't want to be the female earth-bound instructor, Charlie. I wanted to be Maverick, hurling my body and machine through the air to defend our freedoms! I was sad to learn that in 1986 the Department of Defense had specific laws barring women from fighter cockpits! Not only was I heartbroken, I was ready to give up my dream. That is when my dad introduced me to the story of the WASP who had flown every aircraft in the Air Corps inventory and done all missions, save one... combat. Following the disbanding of the WASP in December 1942, our country would wait until the 70s to see women flying military aircraft again. The laws had changed in the past, and I was determined to be qualified and ready if they ever changed again.

And change they did! Congress repealed the Combat Exclusion for Women in 1993, and suddenly, the fighter cockpits were open to all, and it became possible to combine the love of my country with a burning desire to fly a fighter. The inspiration of the WASP carried me to this pivotal moment. Since then, the blessing of mentorship and friendship of many living WASP motivated me through challenging times in my career.

In 2011, I was honored to be selected as the first mom to fly for the Thunderbirds! Being a mom on the Thunderbirds was difficult because I flew airshows Thursday through Friday from March until November with a toddler at home. One night at bedtime, my son asked if he could accompany me on my trips. I laughed and said, "But there's only one seat in the cockpit; where would you go?" My son asked if he could turn into a mouse and sneak into the jet's cushion and come with me. I told him stories about all the places he'd go and things he would see if he could sneak into the cockpit with me as he drifted off to sleep. Thundermouse was born.

Some WASP did join the Reserves after the December 1944 disbanding, but those women were forced to leave the service when they got pregnant and had children! Women in the military today are fortunate that this heartbreak suffered by the women veterans before us helped usher in changes for women in the military today.

None of the fantastic adventures and accomplishments I am blessed with would be possible without the WASP. I am not the first and will not be the last! Inspiration from these special veterans is the cornerstone of the National WASP WWII Museum. The Museum exists to Preserve the History, Support the Legacy, and Defend the Airfield. We all must keep the service and legacy of the WASP pioneers alive so that other Americans are inspired to dream big and achieve those dreams! This is why your membership, contributions, and support mean so much to facilitate inspiration for future generations of Americans!

Please consider purchasing Thundermouse from the WASP Museum store this holiday season. Children of all ages, veterans, patriots, families, and the mouse in your house will love it! Proceeds will support the WASP museum.

Happy Holidays and Blue Skies!

Caroline "Blaze" Jensen, Lt Col, USAF, Ret
Director, National WASP WWII Board
Author, Keynote Speaker

VISIT
WWW.WASPMUSEUM.ORG
TO PURCHASE YOUR OWN
COPY OF THUNDERMOUSE!

KIN OF WASP VISIT THE MUSEUM

Greetings! All of us at the museum want to thank our WASP families for visiting in the months of September and October. We had 7 separate families representing 6 WASP. We are always thrilled to have you join us on Avenger Field.

SANTA FLIES INTO AVENGER ON A WARBIRD

EVENT BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM

JOIN US FOR A
JOLLY JAMBOREE
 FEATURING SANTA CLAUS!

LOOK TO THE SKIES!
 SANTA WILL ARRIVE IN A VINTAGE WORLD WAR II AIRCRAFT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023 @ 2 - 4 PM
 210 AVENGER FIELD RD. SWEETWATER, TEXAS

Are you ready to see Santa fly in to Avenger Field? Be on the lookout to be the first to sign up for registration starting November 11th. We invite you to bring a giftwrapped house to decorate while you wait to chat with Santa. We will provide the goodies! Popcorn, hot cocoa, and water will be available while you create your masterpieces. Candy, icing, and hot cocoa, oh my!



WASP TALES

THE FIRST INSTRUMENT FLIGHT & THE LINK TO IFR - 1929

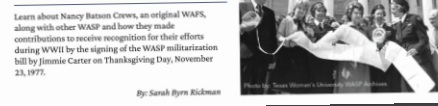
A major stride toward instrument flight arrived with the invention of a flight simulator called the Link Trainer, also known as the "Blue Box" and "Pilot Trainer". The original Link Trainer was developed in 1929 by Edwin Link... (Read more online)

By: Julia Laurio-Rhem

HOW THE WASP WON THEIR MILITARIZATION

Learn about Nancy Bethann Crews, an original WASP, along with other WASP and how they made contributions to receive recognition for their efforts during WWII by the signing of the WASP militarization bill by Jimmie Carter on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 1977.

By: Sarah Lynn Rickman



DO YOU WANT UPDATES ON ALL THINGS WASP?

If you are passionate about the history of the National WASP WWII Museum and want to stay up-to-date with all the latest news and events, then we have got you covered. Our official *Avenger News* exclusive newsletter is the perfect way to keep yourself informed. By subscribing, you will receive marketing emails that will provide you with all the latest information, including exclusive content, featured artifacts, upcoming events, and much more.

As our online audience is important to us, we have launched this newsletter tailored specifically to your interests. At the beginning of each month, you will receive fresh and exciting articles and stories from our featured blog written by historians, authors, legacy pilots, WASP family members, and more. We will also share important updates, and also include information on living WASP birthdays, WASP family visits to the museum, and any other museum-related news.



To subscribe, simply visit www.waspmuseum.org or scan the QR code for quick access to our website.



ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT



Women Airforce Service Pilots Class Books

During the period between 1942 and 1944, a program called Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) was established, which aimed to train female pilots for military service. This program produced a total of eighteen graduating classes, documented in class books. These books served as a comprehensive documentation of the trainees' experiences, including their training sessions, instructors, graduation ceremonies, and moments shared with their fellow trainees. The WASP program and its class books stand as a remarkable example of the contribution of women to the military during World War II.

Read more on our website.

FEATURED MERCHANDISE



Thundermouse by Caroline "Blaze" Jensen

When the USAF Thunderbirds selected Caroline "Blaze" Jensen to fly with the team her son was only three years old. As much as he loved going to airshows, he was sad whenever his mom left home. On the night she was lucky enough to tuck him into bed, Blaze and Finn devised a plan: They asked that Finn could turn into a mouse, slip away to the cabin, and experience all of the adventures flying around with Mom. Thundermouse was born. This project finally became a reality with love and encouragement from her Thunderbird sister and editor, Lisa Rob Simons (daughter of Capt. Jerry Rob).

Purchase now online in our giftshop!



BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Winter Edition Coming in December

It's that time of year again for the bi-annual updates from the National WASP WWII Museum! Make sure you check out this twelve page feature in December. We will be sending out a reminder through e-mail once the newsletter has been launched on the website.

Read more about the latest updates at www.waspmuseum.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec. 16 Jolly Jamboree featuring Santa Claus**
 December 16 @ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
 National WASP WWII Museum
 Avenger Field
 210 Avenger Field Rd, Sweetwater, TX
Registration November 11th - December 13th
- Apr. 26, 2024 Save the Date - WASP Homecoming "The Rendezvous" Dinner & Dance**
 TBA
 National WASP WWII Museum
 Avenger Field
 210 Avenger Field Rd, Sweetwater, TX
Registration starts January 1st.
- Apr. 26-27, 2024 Save the Date WASP Homecoming Fly-In**
 In
 National WASP WWII Museum
 Avenger Field
 210 Avenger Field Rd, Sweetwater, TX



HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

We want to hear your stories! If you have memories to share of the WASP or other pioneering women throughout history who have served our country, please send all submissions to: media@waspmuseum.org

GET INVOLVED

If you would like to donate or become a member to the museum and help us on our mission to preserve the history of the WASP, promote the legacy, and protect the airfield of Avenger Field, please visit: www.waspmuseum.org/donate

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

By Lisa Taylor

Members of the National WASP WWII Museum join for a variety of reasons. It might be because they know a WASP, have ties to World War II, or simply want to support their local museum. Don and Jeannie Spence joined the Museum because of an impulsive visit. In 2010 Don, an Amarillo, TX resident, was traveling and had a delay in Sweetwater. Looking for something to pass the time, he visited the WASP Museum.

Although he had never heard of the WASP, Don went to the Museum and says he was "smitten" with America's first women to fly military aircraft.

"I viewed the planes," Don remembers, "and saw the bay, studied all the exhibits, and placed my hands in the concrete handprints of the WASP. I swear I could feel electricity in those prints. That created a bond that has called me back to the Museum many times since."

Don, a veteran himself, has a deep desire to help the Museum with time and money. He believes the WASP story should be "told and shouted all over the country." The Spences decided to partner with the Museum, "the one place that is 150% dedicated solely to those exceptional flying ladies." Giving money was easy enough, but the Spences also wanted to be boots on the ground. Don says initially, they didn't know how to help, but kept returning to the Museum. Each time they learned more and found ways to help.

The Spences have found ways to "shout the message across the country" by giving WASP presentations to various civic groups and have also become an integral part of the Museum's team. They paint, stain, clean, and repair. The Spences help the Museum so much, they have their own whiteboard with a running honey-do list in the administrative offices.

The Museum is fortunate to have the Spences time and skills, but what it values most is their friendship and camaraderie.

You can save valuable Museum resources by becoming a member or renewing your membership online at www.waspmuseum.org/membership. Choose the auto-renew option to ensure all the proceeds of your dues can be utilized to keep the Museum flying.

We thank you, Don & Jeannie Spence, for supporting the National WASP WWII Museum!

If you're a member of the museum and would like the chance to tell your story, please email media@waspmuseum.org.





NATIONAL
WASP WWII
MUSEUM

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2023

DEC. 16 | Jolly Jamboree featuring Santa Claus

2024

APR. 26 | A WASP in the Spotlight Exhibit Unveiling

APR. 26-27 | WASP Homecoming Celebration

JUL. 22-28 | EAA AirVenture Oshkosh



SCAN ME

WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA TO ACCESS MORE
INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS OR VISIT
OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.WASPMUSEUM.ORG

