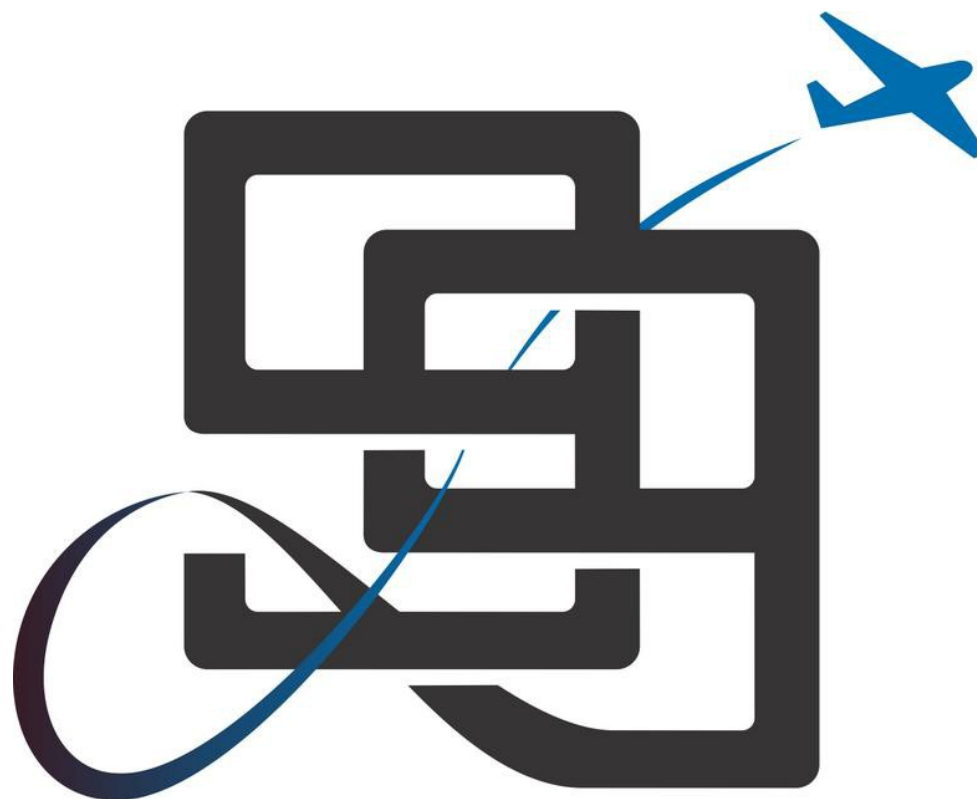


# Women Pilots of Canada



Ninety-Nines

# Eileen Vollick - 1<sup>st</sup> female pilot in Canada



Eileen Vollick, Canada's first licensed woman pilot, was born in Warton, Ontario. First though, the 18-year-old had an obstacle to overcome – her age. After inquiring if a “girl could fly,” Eileen was given permission by the federal government provided she waited till she was 19. Men could then get their pilot's licence at 17.

But before the seemingly fearless teenager earned her wings, she would accomplish another first as the first Canadian “girl” to parachute from a plane into water. Testing her nerve and surely her family's as they watched her stunt from their Beach Boulevard home, Eileen jumped from the wing of a plane into the Hamilton Bay from an altitude of 2,800 feet.

# Eileen Vollick



Eileen's history-making flight would take place on March 13, 1928 when at 19 she flew a ski-equipped Curtiss Jenny from the frozen waters of Burlington Bay, making three three-point landings on the ice and passing her federal test to become the 77th licensed pilot in all of Canada. On that day, Eileen earned her wings with only ten of the male students she had started out with. Because she was barely five-feet tall she would require extra seat cushions to prop her up to see through the aircraft's windscreen.

Eileen has been awarded numerous honours over the years, including the Amelia Earhart medallion in 1975. The most recent award took place in August 2008, when about 250 people gathered to mark her contribution to aviation on the 100th anniversary of her birth in Wiarton. Eileen was feted with the unveiling of a Canada Post stamp and the naming of an airport terminal after her.

# Lorna deBlicquy



Lorna deBlicquy, was born in Blyth, Ont., and decided she wanted to learn to fly at the age of 14. She soloed at 15 in a J-3 Cub at the Atlas Aviation Flying School in Ottawa. Lorna also took up skydiving and at the age of 16 and was the first female in Canada to make a parachute jump! And the youngest!

Flew small single on wheels, skis and floats between Manitoba and the Arctic.

Acquired a glider license, a helicopter license and spent many years instructing and flying commercially in the Arctic on Twin Otters and DC3's. She also flew competitively in air races.

# Lorna deBlicquy



There were many hurdles when she was applying for aviation-related work. She wrote endless letters, going public with her case, in editorials, newspaper interviews, and radio talk shows. In 1977 Transport Canada finally broke with the “male only” tradition and hired her. Lorna became Canada’s first woman Civil Aviation Flight Inspector, commuting to Toronto every week from her home in Ottawa. After two years, she worked freelance in various departments of Transport Canada under contract throughout Eastern Ontario.

Lorna deBlicquy was a trailblazer, one of Canada’s best known women pilots and one of the most experienced. She overcame many barriers and was tireless in her efforts to advance the cause for women in Canadian aviation. After a long and colourful career, Lorna retired from full time flying in October, 1999.

# Lorna deBlicquy

- The following deserve to be mentioned

Her many Aviation related awards include:

1996 – International Women in Aviation Conference – Pioneer Hall of Fame

1995 – Governor General – The Order of Canada

1994 – Lieutenant Governor of Ontario's Award – The Order of Ontario

1993 – FAI-Diplome – P. Tissandier

1993 – Trans-Canada – The McKee Trophy – Canadian Aeronautics/Space Inst.

1993 – The Ninety Nines International – Award of Merit

1991 – National Museum/Science/Technology – Outstanding Contribution

1970 – The Ninety-Nines International – Amelia Earhart Scholarship

# Phyllis Gaul



Newfoundland's first female pilot.

Her earliest recollection of wanting to fly centred around a radio programme about a young pilot called "A Howie Wing". Her prize possession was his picture dressed in appropriate flying attire, looking very handsome standing by his aeroplane.

It was inevitable that Phyllis Penney joined the small local Flying Club "Terra Nova Aviation" and took up flying. Her Student Pilot's Permit was issued from the Dept. of Public Works in St. John's Nfld., under the Air Navigation Act (1929) valid for one year from April 29, 1947. She solo'd in a Piper Cub, call sign VO-ABC on July 15, 1947 and received her Pilot's Licence on August 10, 1947.



# Felicity McKendry



Was in love with planes and aviation at an early age. She was raised on a farm in Eastern Ontario – miles from an Airport. Like many other would be young aviators, she built balsa wood model aircraft and was fascinated watching the Harvards fly aerobatics over the farm.

However, Felicity says that the greatest influence in her love affair with flying, was a promotional program initiated by Quaker Oats in Peterborough, Ontario, in the early 40's. Everyone knows how good oatmeal is and apparently it was also good for budding Canadian pilots. Children would send 2 Quaker Oats box tops and 15 cents in return for a "How to Fly" kit. (Flight Schools, take note!) The kit contained a cardboard mock-up of a very real looking instrument panel with dials that could be manually set on the flight and engine instruments, a control column, throttle and rudder pedals, plus a well-illustrated booklet titled "How to Fly"



# Felicity McKendry

She started flying lessons in December 1950 at the Kingston Flying Club and earned her Private Pilot Licence in September, 1951 in a Fleet Canuck.

In 1952, she represented the Club in the Webster Trophy Competition, placing first, then went on to the finals in Ottawa, coming first in the flying segment and third overall.

She decided that flying was what she really wanted to do and in 1953 resigned from her teaching job and applied herself completely to upgrading her Licence to become one of the first few female instructors in Canada. Felicity was qualified to teach on wheels, skis and floats.

In 1956 Felicity was hired by Bradley Air Services in Carp, Ontario. She was also one of the first woman Chief Flying Instructors in Canada.

Felicity flew enough to keep current when their son and daughter arrived. After they were in school she instructed part-time with Margaret Carson at Ottawa Aero Services for a year before getting her Class I Instructor's Rating and DFTE status at the Rockville Flying Club, where she taught for 12 years.

Competitive air racing was another of Felicity's activities.

Felicity continues to be very active in the 99s and many other charitable fund raising community events.

# Vi Milstead



Vi passed her Private Pilot's Flight Test, #3339 in December, 1939, her Commercial Licence in April, 1940 and earned her Instructor's Rating at Trenton, Ontario in July, 1941. Vi instructed at Barker Field until civilian flying ceased in Canada, due to wartime gas rationing in November, 1942.

She applied to BOAC in Montreal for service in the British Air Transport Auxiliary. At that time she had approximately 1,000 flying hours and easily passed her check out in the Harvard AT-6, going overseas in 1943 to ferry aircraft between manufacturers, maintenance facilities and Armed Forces' units throughout Britain.

# Vi Milstead



She ferried 27 different types of single engine aircraft and 17 different types of advanced twin-engine aircraft, as a First Officer (equivalent to a Captain's rank in the military) Most fondly remembered, the Spitfire and the deHavilland Mosquito.

She returned to civilian instructing in Canada with Leavens Brothers Air Services at Barker Field in 1946. Vi married Arnold Warren in 1947 and they moved north to Sudbury to fly for Nickel Belt Airways. Vi taught flying on floats during the summer and skis during the winter. She flew the Fairchild Husky, interspersed with charter and bush flying in the north, was featured as one of Canada's first female bush pilots and written up in several national aviation publications.

Employment in the aviation industry and recreational flying followed afterwards.

# Marion Orr



Marion learned to fly in 1939. Marion was the youngest of five girls. Fascinated with planes and flying at a very early age, she read everything and anything on aviation. She spent hours on the porch of the house watching for planes. A two-seater swing in the garden became her “flying Machine”.

Marion left home at the age of 15, her education barely completed to Grade 8. She wanted to fly so badly, it became an obsession with her. She earned \$10 a week in a factory, went without food and the necessities of life to scrape together the six dollars an hour to take flying lessons. Her first lesson was on April 22, 1939.

After seven hours and 50 minutes, Marion soloed in a 40 hp Cub (CF-BIT) on June 9, 1939. She received her Private Pilot’s Licence No. 3338 on Jan. 5, 1940 and never looked back.

# Marion Orr

Marion knew then that without a doubt she was “born to fly”. Her life would be in the air or at the airport! By the time Marion got her Commercial Licence No. 2029 in December of 1941 at Barker Field, she had accumulated time in the Fox Moth, Taylorcraft, Fleet Finch, Fleet Fawn, Stinson 105, Stinson Station Wagon, Fairchild 24 and Cub Coupe.

She received her instructor’s rating at Trenton RCAF base on Sept. 25, 1942. On Oct. 2, 1942, Marion was hired to be the manager and chief flight instructor at St. Catherines Flying Club. She was the first woman in Canada to operate a flying club.

British Overseas Airways Ltd, was hiring pilots for the Air Transport Auxiliary to ferry military aircraft for the RAF in England. A lifelong dream was about to come true. Requirement was 250 hours flying time and a valid licence with checkouts on a Harvard AT-6 training in Montreal.

There were five Canadian women who flew operationally in the ATA.

Types flown included: Miles Magister, Hawker Hart, Piston Tudor, Miles Hawk, Oxford, Harvard, Master Martinette, Hurricane, Anson, Proctor, Lysander, Swordfish, Hudson, Spitfire, Seafire, Defiant, Osler, ..

Introduction to a new aircraft usually consisted of the run-down on the cockpit layout and study of the “Blue book”, a compendium of notes all types of aircraft. The pilots worked two weeks straight, with four days off, flying in all kinds of weather and usually taking off regardless, as long as the destination conditions were reasonable.

Marion admits she got lost regularly. All the towns looked alike, railways twisted around like spaghetti, balloon barrages all over the sky, camouflaged airports, dummy air bases and then there was the British weather to contend with: fog, smog, smoke, rain and haze. They had to fly VFR, with no instrument training or radio facilities.

# Marion Orr

After returning to Canada, Marion bought Aero Activities Ltd at Barker Field in 1950 and became the first woman in Canada to own and operating a flying club.

She battled resistance to build an airport - The grand opening of Maple Airport was in 1955, with two grass runways, three instructors and five planes. It was complete with an air show that included three Fleet Canucks flown by 3 women: Marion, Sally Wagner, Helen Hems, all well-known Canadian women pilots.

May 16, 1961, she became the first Canadian women licensed to fly a helicopter.

Marion continued instructing in Ontario until retirement.



# Daphne Paterson



She obtained her Pilot's Licence in 1929, one year later than Eileen Vollick who was Canada's FIRST woman pilot. Daphne was the first woman to be licensed in the Province of New Brunswick.

Daphne joined the Montreal Light Aeroplane Club in 1929 and luckily found an Instructor who encouraged her to attain her Pilot's Licence. A "natural" pilot, she was allowed to go solo after only 7 hours and 10 minutes flying time.

On March 15, 1930, she became the FIRST woman in Canada to qualify for her Commercial Pilot's Licence, Certificate #658. The Department of National Defence, who granted all licences, first rejected her application, solely because she was female!



# Daphne Paterson

Due to the fact that she would be the first woman Commercial Pilot, they panicked and introduced a brand new rule requiring a medical every three months instead of the current six months for a male Commercial Pilot.

Daphne was an active member of flying clubs and a strong supporter of general aviation. In 1931, she won the Canadian Flying Clubs' de Havilland Trophy in Class "A" in the Maritime zone competitions and was a runner-up twice in the Canadian Webster Trophy Trials. She crossed many hurdles in those early days, meeting male resistance at every step of her flying achievements, but she never considered giving up at that time.

Daphne earned a Public Transport Licence, Certificate #130 on August 9, 1938. The highest rating possible in Canada. The three-month medical was once again a requirement for this Licence. She was the only woman to hold a Public Transport Licence in Canada prior to World War II.

She gave up flying when she moved to Trenton with her husband after the war. There was no civil airfield in the area at that time.

In 1978, the First Canadian Chapter of the 99s, honoured her with the presentation of an Amelia Earhart Medallion at a small dinner party in Toronto.

# Maryse Carmichael



A captain with the Canadian Air Force, Maryse had the job of VIP pilot flying the Prime Minister or the Governor General of Canada. In 2000 she became the first female pilot to fly with the Canadian Force's national aerobatic team, the Snowbirds and went on to become the Commander of the Snowbird team. She has been the first Snowbird Team Leader to have her duty extended beyond the standard two year period.

# Rosella Marie Bjornson



©Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada

As a child she dreamed of being a pilot. At 17 she took her first lesson and completed her Private Pilot's License in just two months! In 1973 she was hired as a First Officer with the Canadian airlines Transair. She was the first woman to be hired as a First officer in North America on scheduled jet equipment and the first woman to be hired by a commercial airline in Canada. She was also the first woman to be a member of the Canadian Air Line Pilots Association. During her second pregnancy in 1984 regulations were changed to allow a pilot who is pregnant to fly.

In 1990 she became the first woman to be promoted to Captain with a major Canadian air carrier. Throughout her career, she has made valuable and ongoing contributions to Canadian youth by participating in school career day. In 1990 she was featured in a poster campaign by the Alberta Government, "Dream/Dare/Do", to encourage young people to set goals and strive to achieve them. She is a member of the Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame.

# Deanna Brasseur



Deanna was one of the first three Canadian women in the military to earn her “wings”. Brasseur holds the distinction of being one of the first two female CF-18 fighter pilots in the world. Later, Major Brasseur became Canada’s first female aircraft accident investigator. When Major Brasseur retired in 1994 she had flown about 2,500 hours in jet airplanes.

In 1998, she was made a Member of the Order of Canada. In 2007, she was inducted into the Women in Aviation, International Pioneer Hall of Fame

# Molly Reilly



Born in Lindsay, Ontario February 25, 1922. In 1939. Molly tried to sign up with the Royal Canadian Air Force, but they were not accepting women until 1941 when the Women's' Division was founded. She was one of the first recruits and she worked in the photographic area to get to fly. She learned to fly after the war and in 1959 became a full time charter pilot where she was the first woman in Canada be a captain. She became the first woman to be a corporate pilot in Canada when she was Chief Pilot for Canadian Utilities Company. She is a member of the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame.

# Margaret Rutledge née Fane



As a child she always had her eyes scanning for aeroplanes. She was a female aviation pioneer who earned her pilots license in 1933 and her commercial pilot license in 1935. She organized the women pilots as the Vancouver Seven. At first the group was not allowed to participate in air shows but these determined pioneer women were soon showing audiences their skills. While working as a dispatcher for Bridge River and Caribou Airways she was often required to co-pilot flights making her the only woman commercial pilot in British Columbia. When World War II broke out the women attempted to join the Air Force as pilots or instructors but were only offered positions as cooks! Instead the women used their talents to raise money for training equipment and established their own flying school. In later years Margaret moved into administration at Canadian Pacific Airways where she worked for over 20 years.

Margaret Fane Rutledge was inducted the British Columbia Aviation Hall of Fame.

# Judy Cameron



Judy graduated Selkirk College's aviation program in June 1975, becoming the first woman in Canada to receive a certification in aviation technology. She also obtained commercial and multi-instrument ratings at the same time. Judy worked as a bush pilot for several companies, in order to gain the skills to reach her main goal; flying for the airline. Judy was the first woman pilot hired by Air Canada in 1978 and is currently a 777 Captain flying the Pacific routes to Asia. At the start of her career with Canada's largest airline, Judy had to endure criticism and remarks from fellow pilots and passengers who doubted her capabilities. Her persistence paid off, and she proved that she was capable of performing to the standards set by male pilots.



# Dorothy Rungeling



Once billed as “Canada’s Flying Housewife“, she dared to challenge convention and secured a place in aviation history. From her base at the Welland Airport, she earned her pilot’s licence in 1949, followed by her commercial licence in 1951, instructor’s certification in 1953, her senior commercial pilot’s licence in 1954 and her Airline Transport Licence in 1958. She was the first woman in Canada to hold the ATL. In addition, she became the first Canadian woman to conduct a solo helicopter flight. Her life-long passion has been to promote the safety of flying when private aviation was still in its infancy and to interest women in learning to fly. Now in her 100s, she remains active as a writer, having published two books in the last two years, and is an instructor of computer skills to senior citizens.

# Roberta Bondar



Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology and Agriculture from Guelph University in 1968, a Master of Science Degree in Experimental Pathology from the University of Western Ontario in 1971, a Doctorate in Neurobiology from the the University of Toronto in 1974, a Doctor of Medicine Degree from McMaster University in 1977 and she was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in neurology in 1981.

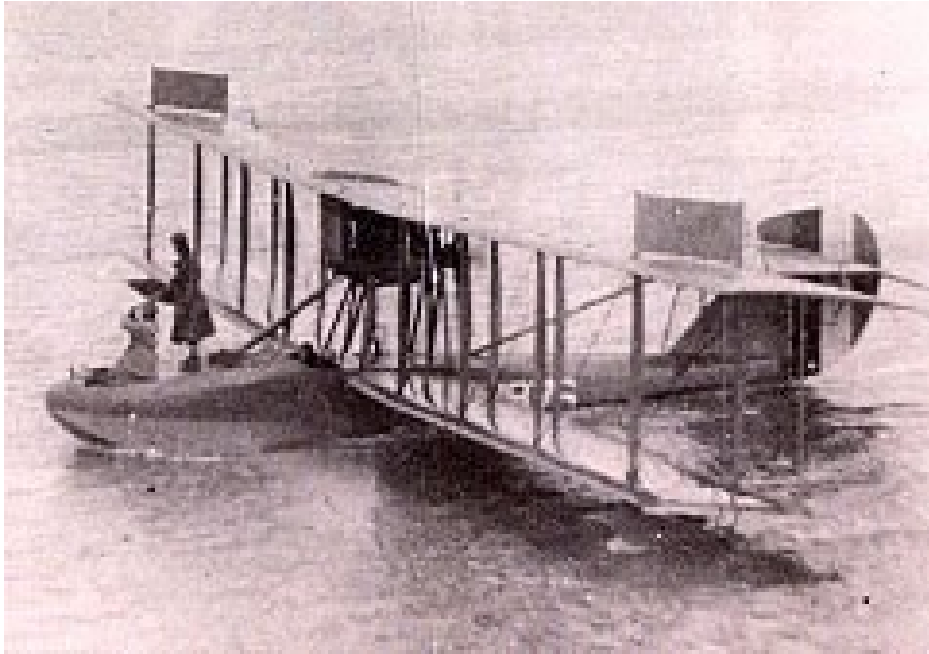
In 1983 Dr. Bondar was chosen as a member of the first Canadian Astronaut Program. In January, 1992 she became the second Canadian and the first Canadian woman astronaut in space with her flight aboard the shuttle Discovery. Following her space flight Dr. Bondar left the space agency to pursue her research and her interest in photography.

# Madge Graham



Poppy, as she was known, was ahead of her time and a die-hard adventurer. In 1919, a women's place, according to Madge, was in the cockpit of an airplane being a navigator for her husband, Stuart Graham, Canada's first bush pilot. On her maiden flight a crew of three, Stuart as pilot, Madge as navigator, and Bill Kahre as mechanic, flew a wooden flying boat, the Curtiss HS-2L flying boat, at tree-top level from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia to Grand'Mère, Quebec. The aircraft had only very basic instruments: a compass, an air and wind speed indicator and a turn and bank indicator. The noise from the engine made conversation impossible so Madge rigged up a miniature clothes-line to send messages between herself and the two cockpits.

# Madge Graham



The 800 mile trip took five days and nine hours to complete with crowds greeting them at every stop. But not everyone was impressed. Admiral Byrd (the first man to fly the Pole) declared, "Flying seaplanes over land is suicide and taking a woman along is criminal."

# There have been so many more....

- This little history lesson wouldn't be complete without mentioning that there are many more wonderful ladies who have contributed to firsts, milestones, support, education and awareness of aviation and especially women in aviation. Each of us should pat ourselves on the back for what we do to contribute, be it big or small, to aviation. We are still only averaging 6% but what an amazing 6% we are!