## General Information

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## Description

Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) arrive in Texas to take part in a rigorous training program. This film may seem chauvinistic today, but the WASP program opened up a whole new world of opportunities for women in aviation.

## Keywords


## Citation

MLA

Transcript

Women Air Force Service Pilots Train for War Effort

NARRATOR: This is Texas, cradle of our army’s Air Force. This is an AAF field too, but over headquarters ride the strange, little girl gremlin called “Fifinella.” And out of those buses are stepping girls, girls who give a new angle to an air force story. They’re WASPS: Women’s Air Force Service Pilots.

But even before they get a chance to take the polish off their nails, its out onto a dusty Texas drill field with them. Right away the Air Force wants to get a little muscle on those pretty arms.

This scene provides a pretty fair picture of what the girls look like from all angles. None of them are under 21 or over 35.

Now, chinning yourself is a very wholesome kind of… very wholesome kind of… thank you sir… a very wholesome kind of condition for young ladies about to embark on a serious venture.

It doesn’t make much difference how they get you up; six a.m. on Avenger Field is no more pleasant or exciting than anywhere else. It’s merely the beginning of another non-ladylike day of grime and GI study, which won’t end until long after the Texas sun has set.

Very simply and seriously, the WASPs, girls like Mary Abbott, maybe a little younger, maybe older—are willing to plow into as rugged a six-month stretch as anything handed to women in the whole war effort. Map reading and physics, navigation and code, with strict AAF exams in each too. For men it would be tough. It’s tough for girls too.

To be accepted as a WASP, each girl had to have 35 hours in the air beforehand—enough to know men’s airplane talk when they hear it. But flying here is different Kay, The instrument born of the Link Trainer has instruments and radio devices and controls you never dreamed of. This is the army, Kay

The army judges each girl not by her eagerness, but by her ability to fly. The little blond on the right, with her hair bleached by the sun, you or I might judge by other standards, she doesn’t. Lonnie—her name’s Lenore Horton—is pretty serious about her flying, for the duration anyhow. She and her good friend from New York, named Nancy Church have paired off as a flying buddy team.

Nancy’s riding the controls today and will get credit for the time. Lonnie gets some good practice on the
radio and navigation. Next flight they’ll trade.
There they go! Lonnie and Nancy, the two of them. Two girls of a large and important sorority—all of
them just as determined to be good fliers, just as sincere, maybe just as pretty.
Someday not so far away, in a month or so, this trainer will be a P-47 or a P-38, being ferried from factory
to field, from one field to another, with Lonnie or Nancy or Jean or Peggy or Barbara at the stick.
Graduation day means that they’ve grown up. They’re army fliers. As they know, their experience here
has been no interlude for romantic adventure, but a period of intensive training for a highly important job.
At the moment, there’s a bill in Congress to bring them into the Air Force. It makes no difference, for as
they go up to receive their wings from the top woman pilot of them all, the founder of the WASPS, Ms.
Jacqueline Cochran. Each WASP, like other women in other services, has achieved no little thing. She’s
gone into a man’s world, because the men needed her. Gone through a tough ordeal, as just a girl, and
come out a girl pilot with the U.S. Army Air Force.
No time to waste. Everywhere they’re badly needed for ferrying duty, so that the men trained and training
can go off to fight, while WASPS help get their shift started on the road overseas. There is a reason for the
WASPS.
So long ladies, go to it. Someday you’ll be able to sit down in the evening with your husbands, who will
probably be fliers, and remind them that during the war you did your part.
Keep ‘em flying, Fifinella.