

WAI Members and Friends #HonortheWASP who Have Flown West

More than one hundred WASP gravesites are decorated during Memorial Day weekend visits



May 28, 2019 – The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) were remembered and honored for their service this past Memorial Day weekend when gravesites were visited and decorated by Women in Aviation International (WAI) members and friends. Graves from Connecticut to California were decorated and photos and videos were posted and shared on social media tagged #HonorTheWASP. A contingent of WAI members and friends decorated a multitude of WASP graves at Arlington National Cemetery.

“What was reinforced this weekend was that each WASP holds an intriguing life story,” says WAI President Peggy Chabrian. “From WASP Eleanor Feeley Lawry who was the first woman to earn a pilot’s license at Danbury [Connecticut] Airport and the 100th woman to earn a pilot’s license in Connecticut to Utah WASP Frances Green Kari who post-war became a wingwalker with Sammy Mason airshows and later a police officer, the WASP lived fascinating and pioneering lives, and today and always, we thank them for their service.”

There was some sadness in the visits as well. One woman, having visited a rural cemetery wrote, “I found her gravesite to be a little sad. It’s a tiny place, not well maintained. And though they had flags on the veterans’ graves, she did not get one (until I put my mini-flag there).” Those sad moments, though, were balanced by another visit where the gravestone of Texas WASP Lillian Moore Conner’s husband which faces hers was engraved with this message: “Ah Lillian, How We Used to Dance!”

The couple who visited WASP Mary Elizabeth Trebing’s grave in Boulder, Colorado, reported that she died, aged 23, in a forced landing during a ferry flight, and added, “She rests now with her mom and dad in a very peaceful place, under the trees.” One WAI member summed up the #HonorTheWASP experience by saying, “It was a privilege to participate.”

To view these memorable photos and videos from the 2019 Memorial Day Weekend search #WomeninAviation #HonorTheWASP on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. To access the nationwide database of WASP final resting places visit <http://bit.ly/2019WAIHonorTheWASP>.

About the WASP: The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) were inducted into WAI’s International Pioneer Hall of Fame in 1993. The WASP was formed in August of 1943 as an adjunct to the Army Air Forces’ war effort. The organization was made up of two civilian-flying groups: the Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron and the Women’s Flying Training Detachment. Under the guidance of Jacqueline Cochran, the WASP became involved in all aspects of military flying operations, with the exception of combat and overseas ferrying. More than 1,000 WASP pilots flew over 70 million miles and delivered 12,650 airplanes across the country during their time of operation. The WASP program was suspended in December 1944.

###

Women in Aviation International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing networking, mentoring and scholarship opportunities for women and men who are striving for challenging and fulfilling careers in the aviation and aerospace industries. For more information, contact WAI at 3647 State Route 503 South, West Alexandria, OH 45381, Phone (937) 839-4647; Fax (937) 839-4645 or through www.wai.org.

Contact: Molly Martin, Outreach Director, 850-508-8769, mmartin@wai.org