

AMELIA EARHART MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

PERPETUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Jane Zieber Kelley Memorial Scholarship of the Aeons

Jane Kelley (1935-1978) of the Aloha Chapter was an accomplished aerobatics competitor and judge, with ATP and seaplane rating. This first perpetual scholarship was established in 1979 in Jane's memory from funds donated by her family and members of The Ninety-Nines.

Gerda Ruhnke Memorial Flight Instructor Scholarship

Flight Instructor Certification

In 1959 Gerda Irene Ruhnke (1939-1987) was one of the first women pilots in her native Uruguay. The Washington DC Chapter raised the funds to establish this scholarship in 1988 to memorialize Gerda, her love of flight instruction and flying, and her ability to do so with courage and enthusiasm.

Gerry Mickelsen Memorial Scholarship

Geraldine "Gerry" Williamson Michelsen (1913-1990) learned to fly in 1935, was a WASP during World War II and flew in seven Power Puff Derbies. The Ninety-Nines President from 1953 to 1955, Gerry initiated and oversaw the move of The Ninety-Nines headquarters from New York to Oklahoma City, and began the practice of presenting yearly compilations of the history of The Ninety-Nines to the Smithsonian Institution. Gerry bequeathed the funds to establish this perpetual scholarship.

Alice Hammond Memorial Scholarship

Past President Alice Carstens Hirschman Hammond (1907-1993) learned to fly in a Curtiss Wright Jr. monoplane and went on to become a commercial, instrument, and seaplane pilot. She organized and commanded the first all-woman flying squadron for the Civil Air Patrol during World War II and was a charter member of the FAA's Women's Advisory Committee on Aviation. She was instrumental in founding the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund in 1941, served on the AEMS F Board, and was The Ninety-Nines President from 1951 to 1953. This scholarship was established in 1995 in Alice's memory, with donations from her family and members of The Ninety-Nines.

Lygie Hagan Memorial Scholarship

Lydiellen M. "Lygie" Hagan (1908-1995) learned to fly because her husband twisted her arm. A member of the Intermountain Chapter, she served The Ninety-Nines as Northwest Section Governor, International Secretary and Treasurer, Board Member and AEMS F Trustee. On her death, Lygie bequeathed the proceeds of the sale of her antique car to the AEMS F. This scholarship was established in 1997 with those funds and an additional donation by her husband.

Kay Brick Memorial Scholarship

Past President Katherine A. "Kay" Menges Brick (1910-1995) flew for the Civil Air Patrol early in World War II and then was recruited to the WASPs. Kay was The Ninety-Nines President from 1950 to 1951, and chairman of the Powder Puff Derby for many years. She received national and international accolades for her service to aviation and later became a member of the United Flying Octogenarians. The Coyote County Ninety-Nines donated this scholarship in 1998 to honor Kay's memory.

Betty DeWitt Wittmer Memorial Scholarship

Betty DeWitt Wittmer (1922-2006) learned to fly at age 54 and was still flying her Piper Dakota three decades later. A charter member of the Oregon Pines Ninety-Nines, she represented The Ninety-Nines on the Oregon Aviation Alliance. In 1999 Betty established this perpetual scholarship with a generous donation so that today's women can enter careers not usually open to women of her generation.

Virginia Richardson Memorial Scholarship

Virginia S. "Gini" Richardson (1924-1991) was a charter member of five chapters in the Northwest Section. As owner and operator of several flying businesses, she contributed much to the growth of aviation in the northwestern United

States. The fifth woman to obtain the US airline transport pilot's certificate, Gini was also an avid air racer with over a hundred air racing trophies. She won the Powder Puff Derby three times. This scholarship was established in 2000 with a generous donation from her family.

Darlene Sanders Memorial Scholarship

V. Darlene "Dottie" Sanders (1918-1999) served as first Chairman of the El Cajon Valley Chapter and as Southwest Section Governor. Dottie helped organize and flew in many air races, including 20 Powder Puff Derbies, placing first in 1972. She was inducted into the International Forest of Friendship in 1985. Dottie bequeathed a substantial sum to The Ninety-Nines and the AEMSF. In 2000 this scholarship was established to honor her memory.

Milton and Bonnie Seymour Memorial Scholarship

Bonnie Seymour is a charter member and the first Chairman of the Lake Tahoe Chapter. During Bonnie's tenure as AEMSF Trustee, her husband Milt made investment suggestions that helped the AEMSF Fund grow substantially. Bonnie was also instrumental in the production of a video and handbook about the AEMSF. This scholarship was established with Bonnie's generous donation in 2000 to honor her late husband Milt.

Marion Barnick Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship honors the memory of Marion Barnick (1919-1979). Marion was a charter member of Santa Clara Valley Ninety-Nines, and served as Southwest Section Governor. Marion learned to fly in 1939 and held all ratings through ATP. The Santa Clara Valley Ninety-Nines established this scholarship to honor Marion in 1980, and administered it through 2000, when it was turned over to the AEMSF.

Evelyn Bryan Johnson Memorial Scholarship

Evelyn Bryan Johnson (1909-2012) was a longtime pilot, flight instructor, and Tennessee Chapter Ninety-Nine who received many honors recognizing her flying career of over 56,000 flight hours. Upon establishing this scholarship in 2002, the Tennessee Chapter said, "We have enjoyed and benefited from Evelyn's inspiration and companionship over many years and are so pleased to honor her with a perpetual scholarship to benefit women pilots' career aspirations."

Mary Kelly Memorial Scholarship

In 1985 Mary Kelly (1943-1998) was awarded an Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship to complete her degree in Aviation Education and Aviation Management. As a flight instructor, flight school owner, and airport manager in Oklahoma, Mary Kelly was a wonderful role model and mentor to young women who wanted careers in aviation. Mary founded an all-girls flying camp for 14 to 17 year olds, guided young women pilots on paths towards success, and helped them find financial aid and jobs. The Oklahoma Chapter of The Ninety-Nines donated this perpetual scholarship in 2003 to honor Mary and continue her legacy of mentoring, supporting, and promoting young women in aviation careers.

Minnesota Chapter Scholarship

The Minnesota Chapter of the North Central Section raised money over 10 years to establish this scholarship in 2004. In the years in which the Chapter so designates, this award is given to honor a person of their choice.

Albuquerque-El Paso Ruth Deerman Scholarship – for Fly Now Award

Ruth Deerman (1905-2006) learned to fly in 1944, eventually becoming a flight instructor, helicopter pilot, and winner of the Powder Puff Derby. Ruth served The Ninety-Nines as International President from 1963 to 1965. Because Ruth was always looking out for women student pilots and founded the 66 program, the El Paso and Albuquerque Chapters established this new scholarship in Ruth's honor, to provide for a New Pilot Award each year. The funding from this perpetual scholarship will now be used toward a Fly Now award.

Past Winners Scholarship

Whether they were gainfully employed, retired or furloughed, past AE Scholarship winners were and are grateful to have a tangible way of giving back to The Ninety-Nines and to helping future generations of women pilots. Several have even repaid the entire amount of their original scholarship. This Perpetual scholarship was established in 2004 on behalf of all AE Scholarship winners from 1941 to 2003.

Fay Gillis Wells Memorial Scholarship

Fay Gillis Wells (1908-2002) was one of the women who gathered at Curtiss Field in 1929 for the first meeting of women pilots to organize The Ninety-Nines. Over the next 72 years, Fay continued her dedicated service to aviation and aerospace, becoming one of The Ninety-Nines' most beloved Charter Members and founder of the International Forest of Friendship. This scholarship was established in 2004 in Fay's honor, made possible by generous contributions from her many friends in The Ninety-Nines and the Forest of Friendship.

North Central Section Scholarship

The funds for this scholarship were raised by chapters in the North Central Section through donation of items for silent auctions held at section meetings over many years, and by individual NCS members. The scholarship was completed in 2005 with monies from the section budget and was given to the AEMSF "in memory of the North Central Section members who have flown to new horizons and in honor of the Ninety-Nines members in our special Section."

Achsa Donnels Memorial Scholarship

Being aloft on her first airplane ride in 1923 was "a marvelous feeling, like being an angel" said Achsa Barnwell Peacock Holfelder Donnels in her autobiography. She returned the next day to begin flying lessons. She always regretted missing the first Women's Air Derby (Powder Puff Derby), but eagerly signed up to be a charter member of The Ninety-Nines. Achsa went on to be among the earliest women to earn the ATP in 1931, and with her husband Ross Peacock ran a flight school and an airline. Achsa Donnels (1904-2003) completed her autobiography at 93 and attended The Ninety-Nines meetings up until shortly before her death. Her friends in the Southwest Section raised the money to establish this scholarship in her honor in 2005.

Christine Winzer Memorial Scholarship

Airline Transport Pilot Certification

One of three AE scholarship winners in 1965, Christine Winzer (1922-2005) used her scholarship to earn her airline transport pilot certificate with a multi-engine rating. She became an FAA Aviation Safety Program Manager, known for organizing and speaking at aviation safety and accident prevention seminars throughout Michigan, including a 1981 Super Safety Seminar in Lansing that drew some 2500 people, 200 airplanes and 22 exhibitors. When she passed away in 2005, Chris bequeathed her substantial estate to The Ninety-Nines, with the majority dedicated to a perpetual scholarship for women pilots to earn the ATP.

Ventura County Ninety-Nines Scholarship

The Ventura County Chapter raised funds for its own scholarships for many years. When they added a silent auction at the Camarillo Air Show and expanded their pilot proficiency and safety education programs, a surprising amount of money came in, sufficient to expand their scholarship offerings and to donate to the AEMSF in 2006. They said, "Every chapter has its own special strength to share with others in the organization, and we feel very fortunate to be able to endow a Perpetual Scholarship, because, when able, The Ninety-Nines should reach beyond their chapters to aid women who lack financial support."

Lisa Netsch Memorial Scholarship

Lisa Netsch (1963-1995) was a passionate and trail-blazing pilot. With commercial-instrument and flight instructor certificate, and airframe & power plant mechanic certificates, plus a degree in aeronautical engineering, Lisa was an aerospace engineer for the McDonnell Douglas Corporation, then an aircraft accident investigator for the NTSB. In her spare time she was an aerobatics instructor in Long Beach, California. She found her dream job as an air tanker pilot, flying the DC-4 aircraft that dropped flame retardants on forest fires in southern California. Lisa found freedom, confidence and joy in flying, and as an instructor, she hoped to bring those experience to others. She also believed that aerobatic flying saved lives by teaching pilots to recover from dangerous spins and stalls. The memory of Lisa Netsch is honored by her family with their donation of this scholarship.

Libby Kaiser Memorial Scholarship

Ann Elizabeth “Libby” Kaiser (1928-2005) learned to fly at the University of Illinois’s Institute of Aviation and received her private pilot’s certificate in January 1965. Libby was active in her Ninety-Nines chapter and took additional flying courses at the Institute. She flew a Cessna 172 and in a Beech Debonair until her death in May 2005. This perpetual scholarship was established in 2005 by her three sons and friends to honor the memory of Libby and Bob.

Helma DeFronzo Memorial Scholarship

Helma DeFronzo was born in Norway, raised and educated in Germany, and moved to the United States in 1967. Helma learned to fly in 1981 and became a commercial and instrument rated pilot, flying her own Piper Warrior and developing her aerial photography business. She enjoyed travelling with her husband and visited all seven continents. Upon her death, Helma bequeathed a substantial portion of her estate to our scholarship fund. This perpetual scholarship was established in 2007 to honor her.

Vicki Cruse Memorial Scholarship for Emergency Maneuver Training *Emergency Maneuver Training*

Ventura County Ninety-Nines and national aerobatic champion pilot, Vicki Cruse perished in 2009 while representing the United States in the World Aerobatic Competition in the United Kingdom. To honor her memory and celebrate her accomplishments, her Ninety-Nines chapter, in conjunction with Lightspeed Aviation and the Lee H. Cruse Trust, raised funds for this perpetual scholarship. Vicki was devoted to educating pilots about the safety benefits of emergency maneuver and unusual attitude training. Her devotion to flying and safety inspired those who knew her to preserve her memory with this scholarship.

Thon Griffith Memorial Scholarship

Thon Griffith served as The Ninety-Nines President from 1978 through 1980. She was a classic driving force in the organization and touched the lives of people around her with her demeanor and grace. She and her husband Bob DeLong, were both devoted to The Ninety-Nines. Bob was the “anonymous” donor who helped the organization purchase Louise Thaden’s Travel Air in which Thaden flew in the first All-Women’s Transcontinental Air Race in 1929. A constant support of the Ninety-Nines, Bob established this perpetual scholarship in her memory after her death in 2013.

Catherine (Kitty) Houghton Memorial Scholarship

Kitty Houghton devoted her life to helping people improve their life situation and that of those around them. She served in the Peace Corps, in one of the first groups to go to Nepal, from 1964-1966. Later she served in the US Foreign Commercial Service for 24 years. While stationed in West Africa, Kitty learned to fly. In 1996, living in Ottawa, Canada, she joined The Ninety-Nines. Following her retirement from the Foreign Service in 2007, she settled in California served as Marin Chapter’s membership chair and as liaison with The Ninety-Nines for foreign Ninety-Nines. She had published a documentary about the Nepal Ninety-Nines. Kitty’s family and friends established this perpetual scholarship to carry on her international out-reach with women pilots.

Thelma Cull Memorial Scholarship

When long-time member, Thelma Cull passed away, she made generous provisions in her Estate planning for all the Ninety-Nines’ Trusts. The AEMS Trustees decided to mark her donation to the scholarship fund as a Perpetual Scholarship. After speaking with her family, the emphasis from her donation will be geared toward the Academic Scholarship and the Fly Now Award. Since this is a new Perpetual, specific plans have not been finalized. Our thankfulness to Thelma and the place she holds in our hearts is difficult to measure.