



PASS IN REVIEW

"Shedding Light On Idaho's Military History"

1st Quarter

April 1998

WORLD WAR II WOMEN AVIATORS (WASPS) AT GOWEN FIELD...

First Four Women's Air Service Pilots come to Gowen Field in June '44.

The Women's Air Service Pilots were temporarily housed in the Red Cross Recreation Building, while awaiting their quarters to be completed. Their new home was a structure which previously housed the 15th Bombardment Operational Training Wing.

The women were transferred from Dodge City, Kansas where they had received the final 2 1/2 months of transitional flight training. They had received primary, basic, and advanced aviation cadet training prior to this at the Sweetwater, Texas training facility.



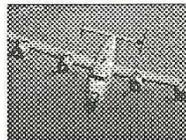
An additional nine women arrived at Gowen Field on June 24th to complete the group of thirteen. The women's training was identical to training given the male B-26 pilots who were stationed at Dodge City, and evidently was very difficult, as only thirteen graduated from a class of twenty.



WASP was technically a civilian organization, but the women were supervised by the army during their stay at Gowen Field. The women aviators were assigned to

fly Howard Aircraft PT-23's, towing large targets behind them, which gave the regular Army crews the air-to-air machine gunnery practice, vital to success in combat. They also flew intercept missions, disrupting bombing formations and simulating distractions that would be commonplace in combat bombing runs.

Of the thirteen WASP members at Gowen Field, only two accidents were ever reported. One female pilot flying an PT-23, clipped the tail of a B-24 with her wing in midair, causing only minor damage.



The second accident, unfortunately, happened to the same crew. After the WASP's had landed, the co-pilot, apparently very unnerved by the close call, received a severe cut to her arm while waving her hand in front of a moving propeller. *(Continued on page 3)*

QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING - 28 APRIL 1998

In keeping with its goal of involving and informing its membership, the IMHS Board of Directors has scheduled Tuesday, **April 28, at 7:00 PM**, as the quarterly meeting designed for the membership.

We will have a brief business meeting and update of Society and Museum activities. We are making arrangements with the BSU History Department for a guest speaker

IMHS members are cordially invited to attend; no reservations are needed. Come as you are, and ask the Board your toughest questions. Make some suggestions on how we can do better, socialize with old friends and make some new friends! Refreshments will be served. **'See you all on the 28th!**

- The Board

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It appears, with the warmer weather, that we are on a collision course with spring -- and, things around the Museum are busier than ever.

Thank you to all the volunteers and donors; **your support has brought us to where we are today.** The reference library and museum are growing rapidly and through coordination with local educators,



the military history outreach program is growing by quantum leaps. *Keep up the great*

work!

The fund raising raffle is going well but we need to make tickets available to persons and organizations around the state. Let us know how many tickets you need to sell to those organizations to which you belong. Give your friends a chance to win a historical rifle, pistol, or saber.

One program we are getting started is the "Individual Biography" project. This is a program to collect the individual military history (and pictures, if available) of persons who served in or from Idaho. The individual file you submit does not have to be large. Bring or mail the information and pictures to:

**Idaho Military Historical Society,
c/o Individual Military History File
4040 W. Guard Street,
Boise, ID 83705-5004.**

Our goal is to gather as much information on individual Idaho soldiers as possible. Your help in gathering this history is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to seeing and working with our friends at the *Idaho Military History Museum.* We are currently setting up programs for the summer and need all the volunteer assistance we can get. If you are interested in working as a volunteer, your help will be greatly appreciated. Thanks, see you on **April 28th!**

- Joe Teenhower

IMHS ANNOUNCES EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAM

In order to be useful, productive American citizens of the future, Idaho's youth need an understanding of our military history. This is the imposing challenge of the Idaho Military Historical Society's (IMHS) Educational Outreach program.

To meet this need, the IMHS has opened its doors to many student groups. This includes students and their instructors from home study groups as well as public schools throughout Treasure Valley.



They have visited the museum to study our military literature and artifacts of the military history of Idaho.

The lecturers at the IMHS Museum gathered instructors and students around the displays and discussed soldiers, their uniforms, and the gear they used.

As time passes, fewer youths are in contact with family members who

served in the military. If our youth are not taught of the military history and sacrifices made by Idahoans in the service, they will not have an appreciation of the freedom they enjoy today.

It is always a pleasure to talk to students and to make the Museum available for studying and understanding Idaho's rich Military history. *To make arrangements for tours, contact the Museum at (208) 422-6128.*

Another important educational activity IMHS is participating in is the Idaho National History Day program. This program allows students throughout the State to participate in a contest showing what they have learned through creative and original performance, media presentation, papers, and three dimensional exhibits.



The Idaho Military Historical Society helps with the judging and presents special awards for excellence in presentations relating to military history subjects.

We are currently looking for volunteers to work with and chair the Educational Outreach program. Please contact the Society if you or someone you know is interested in doing this. Call us at 422-6128.

RAFFLE UPDATE

We are into our sixth week of raffle ticket sales; so far we have collected *over \$1000!* Tickets are-- **\$3 each; 2 for \$5; or 5 for \$10** & are available from any Board Member.

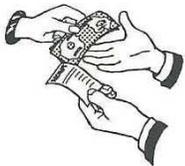
First Prize: Model 1861 US Percussion Rifle-Musket.

Second Prize: Model 1851 Colt Navy .36 Caliber Revolver.

Third Prize: Model 1861 US Cavalry Saber.

Fourth Prize: Miniature Copy of Model 1861 US Cavalry Saber.

Now is the time to test your salesmanship abilities. Contact Bob or Cynthia and they will get you a batch of tickets to sell to your friends, co-workers, neighbors, who ever you think may be interested.



The more tickets we sell, the more we will be able to do in and for

the museum and our educational programs.

The drawing will be held July 28, 1998; you do not need to be present to win; we will contact the winners by phone.

IN MEMORIAL

A special thank you to Yvonne Ferrell, Director, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, for her \$25 contribution to the IMHS in memory of our late friend and ardent supporter, *Victor Scovel*.

We recently lost another supporter as well, *James Catterson*. Jim was often seen at the museum helping out with what ever project needed a helping hand. He also served as a docent upon many occasions.

Both Jim and Victor will be greatly missed. To their families, we extend our deepest sympathies.

NEW MEMBERS

Special Welcome to:

- ★Cheryl Bloom
- ★Herb Berlier
- ★Doug Doehle
- ★Bonnie McMeekan
- ★Russell Trebby

UPCOMING EVENTS

On June 6th & 7th, the *Second Annual Aerofair* will take place and the *IMHS has been invited to participate!* We will have a booth and museum display and need volunteers to help 'man' the booth.

We also want to have some 'living history' individuals in military uniforms so for all of you frustrated



thespians, here's your chance! We will be promoting the Society, the Museum, and our outreach program If you can help out, please contact Bob at the Museum, (208) 422-6128.

MOST WANTED

We are looking for **HBT fatigue uniforms** from the 1950's and '60's. These will be used by



members (at the Aerofair) who will accompany one of the Army Gamma Goat vehicles recently acquired from the U.S. Forest Service.

If you have a set, or know someone who does, (and would be willing to donate them), please let us know. Call us at (208) 422-6128.

WASP's (Continued)

Although the women's conduct and performance was rated excellent by the officers at Gowen Field, the WASP's, as well as the men, believed they could have been more productive had they been military personnel.

The women were given limited resources by the military as well as lulls in training missions which seems to have brought some hard feelings among the female pilots towards the Army. They were, however, given free access to all the facilities on the base, including receiving their meals in the Officer's Mess Hall, and having access to the Officer's Club.



The *Women's Air Service Pilots* was formed on August 5, 1943, when the *Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron* merged with the *Women's Flying Training Detachment*. WASP's were stationed at Gowen Field from June 8, 1944, to December 1944.

In all, 1,070 women served as WASP's during WWII, thirty-eight of which were killed in plane crashes during this time. The women who served their country as WASP's at Gowen Field and elsewhere, did not receive veterans status until 1977.

Matthew Evans
BSU History Department Intern, 1997

The Editors of Pass In Review reserve the right to edit guest articles for length and structure. The greatest care is taken to retain the author's meaning and style.



Fairchild PT-19, Similar To AT-23 Flown by WASP's at Gowen Field

**Idaho Military Historical Society
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