

Robert Kumler, proud brother of WASP Marjorie Kumler,  
Sent these scans of an article, written by Marjorie, that appeared in the  
March 1944 issue of Ladies Home Journal.

It is worth reading—and it is well worth remembering!

When we are able, we will scan the article to size.

Meantime, enjoy—

And Thank you, Robert!

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**MARJORIE KUMLER:** "After filling out the details of my pre-WASP life on a thousand and one Government forms," says the author of *They've Done it Again!*, "the chance to review it 'lightly' is a relief. Instead of concentrating on dates of 'entry and re-entry,' I can remember the wonderful times I traveled abroad, both in college and later; I can say that I did commercial photography and worked as research associate in Pacific relations without bothering to remember whether it was 1-2-39 or 2-2-40. Somewhere along the line I took up flying, and after we got into the war, grabbed a chance to work as a Link-trainer instructor, thinking it would be a great help if the Army ever trained women pilots. They finally did, I'm flying for them, and I guess if I stick with it long enough and really learn how, I'll get along okay. This flying is quite a business."

THEY'VE DONE IT AGAIN!  
IF YOU ASK ME  
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DIVORC  
TEEN-AGE ROUNDUP  
HOW AMERICA LIVES  
MEET THE MICKLOS  
MEET THE QUANDTS  
HABITS WILL GET YOU IF YOU DON

## GENERAL FEATURES

HI STRANGER! (The Sub-Deb)  
OUR READERS WRITE US  
FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE JOURNA  
JOURNAL ABOUT TOWN  
ASK ANY WOMAN  
DIARY OF DOMESTICITY  
REFERENCE LIBRARY  
HOW TO LIVE WITHOUT YOUR HU

THIS IS AN UNFAIR  
THIS IS A RATION-CHEATER  
THE SICK CHILD

## FASHIONS AND BEAUTY

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME  
READY FOR ANYTHING  
OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL BONNE  
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE  
BABY BUSINESS

## INTERIOR DECORATION

TO FIFTY MILLION GARDENERS  
SPRING PAINTING FOR AN OLD

## FOOD AND HOMEMAKING

HOT OFF THE GRIDDLE  
LINE A DAY  
BULLETIN BOARD  
PIONEER STUFF  
KEEPING IN SHAPE

They've  
done it  
Again!





*"Takes a hot pilot to handle that baby," said an Air Forces colonel watching a factory-size Fortress sit down to a ladylike landing. The window opened. The "hot pilot" was—a WASP! ★ BY MARJORIE KUMLER*

**I** YOU remember how it was. If you couldn't get anything else out of an Army man, you could always get from him an emphatic statement against women in aviation. The G. I. line of chatter usually included some straight dope direct from Washington that men were going to win the war in the air singlehanded. By and by these determined characters convinced me to the extent that I gave away a twenty-five-dollar pair of goggles and resigned myself to fighting the war in walking shoes.

Ten minutes later the lobby came down the hall with a telegram, and I took one look at it and sent for an ice bag. The telegram said that the Army Air Forces was going to train a number of women pilots for the air-ferry service. I had been selected for this training, and was ordered to report to the commanding officer, 319th Army Air Forces Flight Training Detachment, Municipal Airport, Houston, Texas.

Houston's busiest hotel is the Rice. It has more men in uniform per square inch in the lobby than any other hotel in the city. The majority are cadets—there are about 5000 at Ellington Field, eighteen miles away—and there are naval officers, Army men, marines and coast guards. When I walked into the Rice I saw these uniformed men, together with Wacs, civilian-defense personnel and Red Cross volunteers, Knights of Columbus and AWWS women selling War Stamps—all thrown together in the lobby like jackstraws.

The telegram had said I was to report to the C. O. I turned out that the C. O. had not yet arrived, and I reported instead to a civil-service clerk in a room at the Rice.

By the time I got there two or three dozen other selectees had already arrived. Somebody thrust a civil-service form into my hand to be filled out in quadruplicate, and I sat down with a number of others around a small coffee table and went to work.

**T**HERE was a flurry at the door when Jacqueline Cochran came in, followed by the flight contractors. She was neat and tailored, even to her lapel ornament, which was a small silver propeller, a large rose to diamond in the center. After a minute or two, Cochran leaned on a chair and said she'd like to tell us some things about the program.

"You girls are the first women to be selected for training by the Army Air Forces," she said. "You are all experienced pilots. There isn't a girl in this room who has less than two hundred and fifty hours, and most of you have much more. If things don't run smoothly at first, just remember that you will have the honor and distinction of being the first women to be trained by the Army Air Forces. You are very badly needed, and I hope that you will all be out of here in two and a half to three months at the most."

Miss Cochran introduced the man who was to take our fingerprints, and the business of processing us went on. It wasn't until late in the afternoon that we were finished,

and Capt. Paul C. Garrett, our C. O., came in to administer our oath of office.

As I left the room it occurred to me that the Flight Training Command now knew all about me except for one thing. There was little or nothing in all those forms I had filled out to show what kind of pilot I was. Somewhat later I realized that the Army takes the attitude that no one is a pilot until he has been trained by the Army Air Forces. And that, as it happens, is probably true.

The oath of office made me a Civilian Student Pilot, Unclassified, KC-1 (subject to Retirement Act), 45-W-1, 319th Army Air Forces Flight Training Detachment, Houston. In addition, I was issued a flying unit (summer type) a regulation wool sweater and an A-2 jacket.

A sky-blue bus was waiting at the Rice to take the newly inducted first class of women pilot trainees to the airport. Dressed in tailored suits, print dresses or slacks and sweaters, we filled the bus until it bulged. The twelve miles to the airport ran off slower than the last horse in a maiden race at Pimlico.

I don't know what we expected at this new training center, but what we got were three frame structures, arranged in a U around a grassy plot. The two forming the legs of the U were for school, and the other was the office of the contractors—flying ground which enshrined the airport's only pencil sharpener.

Classroom A was on our left. It was there we assembled to hear from our commanding officer, Captain Garrett. If he was glad to see us, he concealed it as though it were a military secret.

"A lot of you girls," he opened up, "have come down here with a lot of time, and you may think that you are pretty hot pilots. But let me tell you that just because you may have three hundred or five hundred hours—you may have a thousand hours—it doesn't mean that you can fly. Maybe you haven't got anything but a collection of bad habits. So if you think you're hot pilots, I'd advise you to forget it. You're here to learn to fly the way the Army flies."

"You will meet with your instructors this afternoon, and they will talk over with you whatever questions you have. The best way to get along here is to be where you're supposed to be and do what you're supposed to do. And just because a thing isn't specifically forbidden, it doesn't mean it's all right to go ahead and do it. There's no specific regulation about putting an elephant in the baggage compartment. But it wouldn't be very smart to try it."

"There are three things for which you can be washed out in this course. The first is that you can't fly. The second is that you can't do the ground-school work. The third is that your attitude isn't good."

"Okay, that's all I have," he said.

It wasn't long until we were all darting around like guppies. A number of us walked up to the Administration Building for some lunch, and the questions that filled the gap between ordering and receiving a cheese sandwich

were: "What did you do before you came into this? . . . What do you think it is going to be like?"

I frankly didn't know. About thirty women, ranging in age from twenty-one to thirty-five, were about to start the Army Air Forces routine. Only a week before we had been nurses, flight instructors, radio announcers, reporters, secretaries, designers, photographers, debutantes, wives and mothers. Overnight we had become unclassified student pilots, or flying guinea pigs in an experiment to see whether women could take it.

We began talking it by waiting. Our program wasn't set up yet, and so we spent most of the day waiting to be told what to do.

**I** WALKED back to see what the room which had been assigned to us in Barracks A looked like. It was about the area of two elevators, and if I had been an elevator inspector I would have said it was filled to capacity. But perhaps thirty women are capacity anywhere.

When I walked in, a brown-eyed girl with a mannish haircut spoke to me: "I remember you. You took your physical at Mitchell Field the same day that I did. My name's Lencie."

"Of course," I said. "What a day that was!"

"What do you think of this?"

"I think that it would be very nice if they would let us look at an airplane," I told her. "I haven't seen one in a year."

Helen Harris was standing next to me. "I'm glad to hear somebody say that," she said. "I haven't flown since the war began, and I don't know whether I can get an airplane up and down again." She was five feet tall, with black hair and blue eyes puckered with concern. "Honestly, I don't," she said.

"That's nonsense. You won't have any trouble." That came from Louise Brown. Lou was the type of girl who catches your attention right away. She was loose-jointed and prominently featured, and if you remember those trick haircuts that were popular a couple of years ago—the ones that promised to make your hair permanently curly, which eliminated the necessity of brushing—well, she had one of those. "They aren't going to wash anybody out. They want to make a success of this thing, and anybody with two hundred hours isn't going to have any trouble. Unuh-uh." She shook her head vigorously. "Well, I don't know about that." Tall and mid-sweeping Jane Allen looked a little worried. "I left awfully stupid this morning. Did you understand what Captain Garrett meant about—"

"I didn't understand anything," Harris said flatly.

A few days later I had my first flight. Sidney, who was my instructor, came up and said, "Okay. Get your chute and let's go, going."

I slithered through the airplane-assembly room in the hangar to the subdept supply. (Continued on Page 147)