



March 27, 2014

"There's no crying in baseball."

Tom Hanks (b. 1956)
as Jimmy Dugan in *A League of Their Own*

1.6 million

The number of female veterans
in the United States in 2012
according to the
[U.S. Census Bureau](#)

Women's History Month Celebrates Women of Character, Courage, Commitment

With the swift stroke of a pen, then-President Harry Truman signed into law the Women's Armed Services Integration Act authorizing women to serve as regular members of the armed services. When the newly formed U.S. Air Force began accepting women on July 8, 1948, Esther McGowan Blake was the first to raise her hand to enlist.

Blake had already served her country in the Army during World War II, after the War Department informed her that one of her two sons had been shot down over Belgium piloting a B-17 Flying Fortress. Her younger son, a B-25 Mitchell bomber pilot would later also be shot down and missing in action. By the end of the war, both sons had survived their actions.

Blake's transfer from the Women's Army Corps into the Women in the Air Force marked her as the first of the first, and she would go on to earn her honors as the first lady of the Air Force.

This year's national theme for Women's History Month, "Celebrating women of character, courage and commitment" shows that, over the past 66 years, women have made huge strides into acceptance as just another Airman.

To demonstrate that message, women Airmen from various units at Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington state formed and conducted an all-female refueling mission to celebrate this year's theme. "I believe it is important to celebrate women's history month to emphasize positive role models and to show there are many opportunities out there for girls and young women," said Maj. Gena Fedoruk, chief of operations for the 92nd Operations Support Squadron.

Across the country, at Seymour Johnson AFB in North Carolina, is an example of how one Airman stood out, not only because of her gender, but for what she represented.

Senior Airman Amber Coley became an instant Air Force standout as one of seven females out of 260 Airmen selected for the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard, and the only female selected for the prestigious color flight. During official ceremonies she was responsible for displaying and safeguarding the Air Force flag, with streamers that go back to the beginning of the Army Aeronautical Division in 1907, and a spirit of character, courage and commitment that is timeless.

"[W]e were the face of women in the Air Force," said Coley. "We were the example for every little girl who saw us at a football game or ceremony. It was a lot of pressure, but it just pushed me to be the best I could be."

► TRENDING...

"Getting this right for people is our number one goal," said [Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#) in announcing placing greater emphasis on training and field operations, and less emphasis on testing, in determining ICBM crew readiness in the aftermath of the discovery of deliberate violations of safety rules, failures of inspections, breakdowns in training, and evidence that the men and women who operate the missiles from underground command posts are suffering burnout at Malmstrom AFB, Montana.

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman Magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association
Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment
Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment
Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

► CURRENT ISSUES

[New tool provides Offutt maintainers with just the right blend](#)

Maintenance professionals in the 55th Wing, the largest wing in Air Combat Command, will realize significant time and monetary savings of “hundreds of thousands of dollars” per repair by using a newly purchased Wolf Blending Scope in the on-base maintenance facility.

[ROA cancels R-Games](#)

Scheduling conflicts have caused the cancellation of the Reserve Officers Association's R-Games competition, originally scheduled for April 26. Registration refunds will be provided.

► FAMILY HEALTH AND SAFETY

[TRICARE.mil named best government and public sector website](#)

Sitecore, a global leader in customer experience management software, recognizes excellence in the delivery of effective, meaningful digital experiences across 23 categories, including two new website features that empower beneficiaries to make decisions and manage benefits online.

[Air Force's secure healthcare messaging, MiCare, now fully implemented](#)

MiCare, the Air Force's secure healthcare-messaging system, is fully functional, and 360,000 Air Force healthcare beneficiaries and 2,300 providers can communicate on a secure network regarding non-urgent healthcare concerns.

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

March 27, 1916 – Pilots with the 1st Aero Squadron aircraft started carrying mail and dispatches for the Mexican Punitive Expedition.

March 28, 1935 - Dr. Robert Goddard launched the first rocket with gyroscopic controls to a height of 4,800 feet and a distance of 13,000 feet. It reached 550 mph.

March 29, 1923 - At Dayton, Ohio, three Fédération Aéronautique Internationale records were established. First, Lt. A. Pearson flew a Verville Sperry R-3 at 167.77 mph more than 500 kilometers. Next, lieutenants Harold R. Harris and Ralph Lockwood flew a DH-4L with a Liberty 400 HP engine at 127.42 mph for the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) record. Third, Lt. Russell L. Maughan flew a Curtiss R-6 at 236.587 mph for a record over a straightaway course.

March 30, 1963 - Strategic Air Command accepted its first Titan II launch facility, which was at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

March 31, 1951 - The 3rd Air Rescue Squadron used the H-19 to retrieve 18 UN personnel from behind enemy lines. This was the first use of this type helicopter in a special operations mission.

April 1, 1942 - Air Corps Proving Ground became Proving Ground Command with its main base at Eglin Field, Fla.

April 2, 1959 - NASA selected Air Force captains L. Gordon Cooper, Jr., Virgil I. “Gus” Grissom, and Donald K. “Deke” Slayton; Navy lt. cmdrs Walter M. Shirra, Jr., and Alan B. Shepard, Jr., and Lt. M. Scott Carpenter; and Marine Lt. Col. John H. Glenn, Jr., as the Project Mercury astronauts.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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