

Barbara Jane “BJ”
Erickson London
a
World War II Hero





Barbara J. Erickson

- While a Sophomore at the University of Washington, Barbara signed up for Civilian Pilot Training course.
 - 1 of 4 women, class of 40
 - Immediately became an instructor after graduation and flew both land and sea planes.
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- Invited to join the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) and became the 14th woman to qualify.



Long Beach WAFS and WASPs

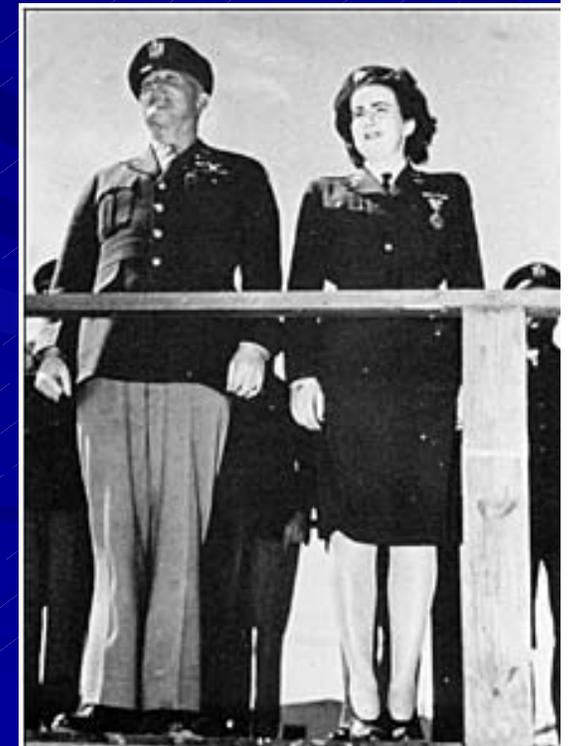
- At age of 23 she became the Commanding officer for 80 women assigned to the Long Beach 6th Ferrying Group and later the WASPs.



“We were badly needed and sometimes flew two and three planes in a day.”

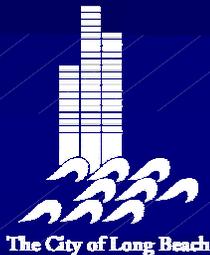
Long Beach WAFS and WASPs

- During July and August, 1943 she flew 8,000 miles in ten days. Including four 2,000 mile trips delivering P-47, P-51 and C-47 aircraft in less than a week.
- For these flights, General 'Hap' Arnold awarded her the Air Medal, the only one awarded to a WASP during World War II.



Long Beach WAFS and WASPs

- Pushed to their limits the WAFS completed 12,000 ferrying operations and over 9,224,000 miles during WWII.
- WASP disbanded in December 1944, it would be 30 years before women would fly again for the US military.



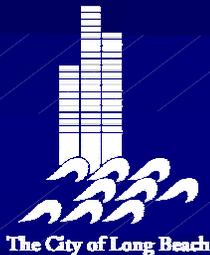
Long Beach WAFS and WASPs

“We did the same thing that any other ferry command guy would have done. In the Ferry Command you had to fly whatever was out there and had to be moved.”



Barbara “BJ” Erickson London

- Married Jack London, Jr. after the war and raised two daughters, each becoming pilots in their own right.
- Barbara London has been recognized as an American hero during WWII and for her groundbreaking role as a woman and an aviator in our armed services.



The City of Long Beach



Barbara London Drive

