



National Aviation Hall of Fame ENSHRINEES



National Aviation Hall of Fame Honors Airline Pioneer *Emily Howell Warner*

By John Perkinson, Staff Writer

“Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. From the flight deck, this is your captain speaking. It is because of Emily Howell Warner that it’s possible to hear those words spoken by a woman today.”

F/O Donna Miller (American) selected these words to sum up Capt. Emily Warner’s many accomplishments when introducing her as the latest inductee to the National Aviation Hall of Fame during an enshrinement ceremony in October.

In the audience sat a few of the many airline pilots Warner has inspired in the last four decades, including Capt. Jean Harper (United, Ret.) and F/O Jolanda Witvliet (United), who have both written articles about Warner’s achievements. Other pilots also traveled to Dayton, Ohio, for the celebration, including F/O Kerri Ballard (Alaska), Capt. Suzanne Skeeters (Delta), F/O Jackie Fleming (United), and Capt. Becky Howell (Southwest).

Miller went on to talk about Warner’s passion for flying, her determination to

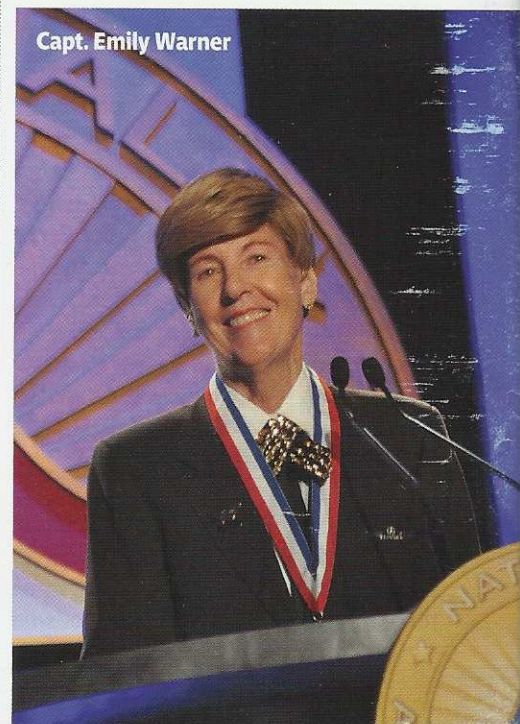
realize her dreams, and the tremendous influence she’s had on others pursuing careers in the airline industry. She concluded by noting that the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., has Warner’s uniform on display. “Emily, if they hang your laundry at the Smithsonian, you have arrived.”

CLASS OF 2014

One of six inductees this year, Warner graciously accepted this latest accolade, saying, “I’d like to thank the National Aviation Hall of Fame for this prestigious honor. It is truly the highlight of my aviation career.” Warner acknowledged the many individuals who helped make her journey possible, including the WASPs (Women Airforce Service Pilots), “who flew in World War II and showed me that it could be done. Thank you, ladies, for your inspiration.”

Choosing a singular highlight in Warner’s illustrious career is no simple task. A pioneer in the airline industry, the Colorado native was hired by Frontier

Airlines in 1973, making Warner the first female pilot to fly for a scheduled, jet-equipped U.S. airline. News reporters packed her first flight on Feb. 6, 1973, from Denver, Colo., to Las Vegas, Nev., to catch a glimpse of the female second officer. Three years later, she became the first



Photos: John Perkinson

woman to serve as a U.S. airline captain.

Neither of these accomplishments came easily. Warner confronted her share of skeptics, but she did so with composure, persistence, and solid flying skills.

During her airline career, Warner served as a pilot for Frontier, Continental, and UPS. She flew Convair 580s, de Havilland Twin Otters, Douglas DC-8s, and Boeing 737s and 727s. Retiring from UPS in 1990, she became an FAA safety inspector and later the B-737 aircrew program manager for United Airlines. Other Warner firsts include captaining the first all-female Continental Airlines cockpit crew and becoming the first ALPA female pilot member, joining the Association in 1974.

LEADING THE WAY

Warner is the 15th woman and the 225th individual to be inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame. Ron Kaplan, the museum's executive director, described her as "a trailblazer," adding, "She's someone who has led the way."

Kaplan explained that the organization's Board of Nominations selected Warner from a pool of hundreds of worthy candidates because of her accomplishments but also because of her positive influence on aviation. Just the day before the enshrinement ceremony, Warner participated in a Wings of Women Conference in Dayton, Ohio, meeting with a large group of high school girls to talk about her experiences and encourage them to consider airline

piloting careers.

A member of the International Society of Women Airline Pilots as well as the Ninety-Nines, which provides scholarship money to women pursuing flying interests, Warner routinely supports women-in-aviation events to share her insights.

This kind of mentoring can be crucial. When Warner first flew for Frontier, she took very seriously some advice Capt. Ed O'Neil, the airline's vice president of Flight Operations, shared with her. Given Warner's distinction as the airline's first female pilot, O'Neil recommended that when Emily made airline-related choices, she should consider whether her decisions were 1) good for her, 2) good for Frontier Airlines, and 3) good for female pilots.

Warner lived by those words and, along the way, amassed more than 21,000 hours in the cockpit and numerous accolades. In 1973, she received the Amelia Earhart Award. Two years later, she headlined the United Nations International Women's Year kickoff dinner. Warner has been inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame, the Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame, and the National Women's Hall of Fame. In 1994, the Colorado Senate passed Resolution 94-29, recognizing Warner for her achievements in aviation history. These are just some of her tributes.



CUE THE VIDEO

During the enshrinement ceremony, a video of Warner's life recounted the events that would lead to her career in the sky. The narrator revealed that Warner worked at the May Company, a department store chain, while attending high school. "Airline stewardesses shopping at the May Company between flights caught Emily's attention. A fellow employee, knowing of her interest, suggested she take the airlines for an upcoming trip.

"On the return flight, the crew of the Frontier DC-3 obliged when Emily asked to see the cockpit. With one look at the dazzling array of dials and switches, and seeing the pilots' view through the windshield, Emily's world was changed." And thankfully, so was ours. Warner broke the airline pilot gender barrier once and for all.



Attending the ceremony, from left, are Capt. Suzanne Skeeters (Delta), Capt. Becky Howell (Southwest), and F/O Donna Miller (American), who presented the award to Capt. Emily Warner (UPS, Ret.)

Continuing Emily's Legacy

By F/O Jolanda Witvliet (United)

Emily Howell Warner's first flight as a Frontier pilot was a watershed moment for women in aviation. She has been an inspiration to me and to thousands of other women who chose to pursue careers as airline pilots. Yet according to the FAA, women made up only 6.7 percent of all pilots and flight instructors in the United States last year. The International Society of Women Airline Pilots reports that approximately 4,000 of the 130,000 airline pilots from around the world are women. With more than 40 years of flying under our belts since Frontier hired Capt. Warner, why do we continue to represent such a small number?

Those of us who fly as cockpit crews

know that it is an enjoyable and rewarding experience, but it comes with its own set of challenges and commitments. The expense of learning to fly can be difficult to manage. The job requires continuous training and time away from home. However, these are considerations men must also make. In our traditional view of "home," flying for an airline can be a difficult lifestyle when trying to raise a family.

However, the biggest obstacle in this evolution is a mindset. Despite the incredible inroads we've made in joining the profession and the support and acknowledgments we've garnered from our male cockpit colleagues, the general public just doesn't think of women as airline pilots. Many female students do not realize that flying is even a career option

available to them.

Emily's recent induction into the National Aviation Hall of Fame should serve as a reminder that we have a responsibility to more actively promote the idea of women in aviation. We all need to make greater efforts to reach out to schools and national organizations, like the Girl Scouts, to make young women realize that this is a serious career choice. In contrast, look at the progress women have made as doctors and lawyers. We need to make better use of the news media to communicate this idea.

As pilots, we know that gender is not a factor. Come on ladies, your cockpit is ready. The flight deck awaits you.