



***Evelyn Sharp
Aviator, Pilot for Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron
(WAFS) and Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) in World
War II Daughter of Homesteaders
1919-1944
Ord, Nebraska***

Evelyn Sharp was born in Melstone, Montana on October 20, 1919. Her name at birth was Lois Genevieve Crouse, but she became Evelyn Genevieve Sharp just two months later when she was adopted by John and Mary Sharp of nearby Kinsey, Montana. By 1924, the Sharps had moved to Ord, Nebraska and were living on a land claim made under the provisions of the Kinkaid Act of 1904 (an expanded version of the Homestead Act that was valid only in the western two-thirds of Nebraska.)

Evelyn became interested in flying in her early teen years, and she began taking flying lessons around age 14. By the time she was sixteen, she had conducted solo training flights; she received her commercial pilot's license at the age of eighteen. She became a flying instructor herself two years later. Her first assignment as a teacher was in Spearfish, South Dakota, where she taught over 350 men how to fly. She was also one of the nation's first female airmail pilots.

When America was drawn into World War II in late 1941, Evelyn Sharp joined the newly-formed Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS). This group used female pilots to transport aircraft bound for war action from factory sites to shipping points. Her proficiency allowed her to fly everything from training craft to bombers. In July 1943, the WAFS and the Women's Flying Training Detachment were merged to create the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP.)

On April 3, 1944, Evelyn Sharp died when the P-38 aircraft she was piloting crashed in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. She was just 24 years old. She is buried in Ord and is remembered there and throughout the nation as one of the true pioneers of women's aviation in the United States.