

# FLY PAPER

BY THE  
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF THE NINETY-NINES:  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN PILOTS ®



*Photo by: Benedikta Unter Ecker*

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: INAIA JIMENEZ



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## ABOUT THE LA 99S

Written by Kate Scott

Based at the Santa Monica Airport, the Los Angeles 99s Chapter has members at all levels of flying experience. We welcome all potential members to our monthly chapter meetings on the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Barker Hangar conference room. There is a Social at 6:30 p.m., Educational Tech Talk at 7:00 p.m., followed by our chapter business meeting at 8:00 p.m. For information about upcoming events, visit our online calendar.

<https://la99s.org/calendar/>



Amelia Earhart, the first 99s elected president.

“

**There's more to life than being a passenger.**

## OUR MISSION

The NINETY-NINES: INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN PILOTS® promotes advancement of aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support while honoring our unique history and sharing our passion for flight.

Established in 1929 by 99 women pilots, the members of The Ninety-Nines, Inc.®, International Organization of Women Pilots®, are represented in all areas of aviation today. As Amelia said, "fly for the fun of it!"



Photo by Nora Feddal

## LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF THE NINETY NINES

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## FLY LADY OF THE MONTH: EVE LOPEZ

Written by Inaia Jimenez

Los Angeles native Eve Lopez is a talented and passionate attorney who is well-respected in her field. Lopez practices family law. She sits on the board of the Board of Trustees for the LA County Bar and sits as a Presidential Appointee on the Board of the Mexican American Bar Association but but feels most at home in the sky. Lopez has been flying since March 2016.

Eve says that what she loves most about flying is: "Everything. The raw connection to the ground, to the sky and everything in between. Its a feeling of serenity not attained elsewhere. Sounds like an oxymoron, but flying grounds me."

Eve has her Sport Pilot Certificate and is close to completing her Private Pilot certificate. She recently completed a cross country flight to Las Vegas in preparation to complete her private pilot checkride.

When asked what her favorite flight she has made is, she says it was either flying over Malibu when she saw a blue whale, or when she ferried a small plane from South Carolina to Santa Monica (which took 6 days!).

Eve is also mom to an awesome some 16-yr-old daughter who Eve describes as "the world's kindest soul".



Above: In the cockpit and ready to go



Left: Eve with her daughter and canine companions.

Eve often represents children in family court and she also participates in events where kids are introduced and exposed to airplanes and aviation. Whether in the courtroom or at the airport, Eve is clearly devoted to children.

Eve first started flying in a class designed for people who frequently sit next to loved ones in the cockpit, but don't fly themselves. She was dating a pilot at the time. "I ended up landing the plane better than him." she recalls. "I dumped the boyfriend and I was like 'I'm going to do this by myself' and I just fell in love with it."

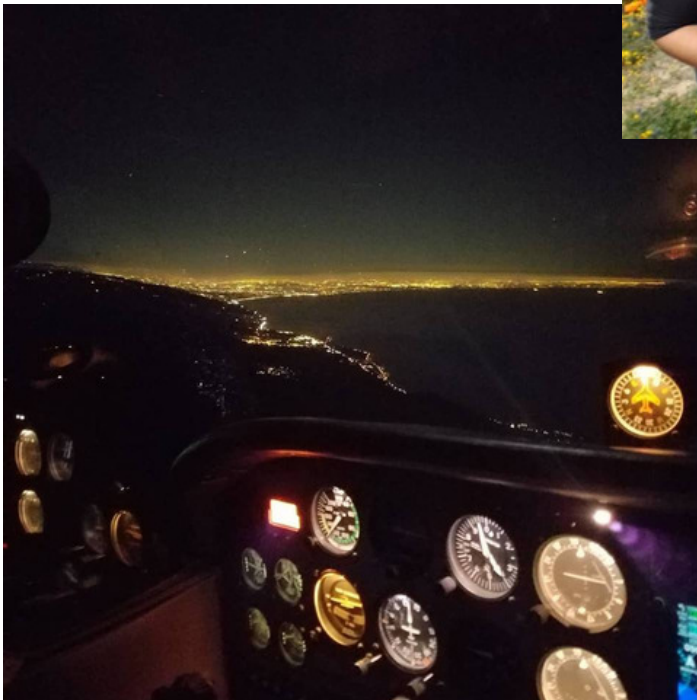
Eve is from a very traditional Mexican family where "girls don't fly airplanes".

"Sometimes when people tell you, 'that's not something you should be doing,' you get a little more passionate about whatever that is."

We are super happy that Eve has taken to flying with such dedication and zeal. We are constantly inspired by this fly lawyer who says she is:

"Born to fly. Forced to work."

Eve's Instagram shot of a night flight's view from the cockpit.



Eve with a few LA 99s before joining the Antelope Valley 99s Poppy Poker Run during the California Superbloom.

Eve's Favorite Quote:



**Better to be on the ground, wishing you were up in the air than to be in the air wishing you were on the ground.-**

## FLY TECH SPEAK: HALDIS TOPPEL

Written by Inaia Jimenez

Our May Tech Talk was given by Commercial Pilot, CFI and member of the original chapter of the LA 99s, Haldis Toppel.

Originally from Munich, Germany, Haldis left Europe to go to college in San Francisco and later settled in Pacific Palisades.

She became a flight attendant for Continental Airlines before she started learning to fly airplanes herself.



LA 99s Member Haldis Toppel presenting a tech talk at the Barker Hangar.

Toppel, who flew in the Powder Puff Derby in August of 1972, shared with us the story of how she flew to Europe in a Turbo Charged Twin Comanche with her student just for the heck of it!

At one point during the trip she even climbed to 25,000 feet when one of her engines started sputtering, and she had to use all her experience and skill to safely land the plane in Quebec in order to fix the problem and continue this daring flight, which took her through places like Greenland, where she says that, looking from the cockpit as they were descending to land, the icebergs looked like white sailboats dotting the icy waters below.

Upon her arrival in Germany, Haldis landed in an airport near Munich, at which point she got a call from her mom, letting Haldis know that she needed to take off and land in Munich, as the proud mom had alerted the press and there was a group of fans and reporters awaiting Haldis' landing in Munich.

Haldis is a daring inspiration for pilots breaking barriers around the globe.

## RETRO FLY: ELSIE MACKAY



Mackay, better known as actress Poppy Wyndham achieved great fame on the silver screen. Her dream, however, was to fly.

Topical Press Agency/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Elsie Mackay was the daughter of a British Earl. She was reportedly disinherited by her family after eloping with actor Dennis Wyndham to be married in May of 1917. She appeared on the stage and screen as Poppy Wyndham from 1919 through 1921. While Mackay starred in eight films, she died trying to accomplish her true dream: becoming the first woman to cross the Atlantic by air in March 1928.

In 1923 Elsie took up flying, gaining her pilot's licence at the De Havilland Flying School, bought a plane, and expressed a determination to be the first woman to fly the Atlantic.

Mackay flew under a male pseudonym and planned her entire flight in secrecy, said researcher and author Laurie Notaro. This included "bringing an airplane over from the United States because no one would sell her one in England."

## RETRO FLY: ELSIE MACKAY (CONTINUED)

She was regarded as a contemporary role model amongst women, with dark looks, graceful manner, and a habitually well-dressed and bejewelled appearance. She was noted for driving her Rolls-Royce at great speed and was a familiar sight in her Avro biplane in the skies over South Ayrshire and Wigtownshire. She even participated in an "outside loop", the most dangerous of all stunts in air, with Capt. E. C. D. Herne as her pilot. During this maneuver, her safety-strap broke but she clung to bracing wires while her body swung outside the plane like a stone twirled on the end of a piece of string.

She was one of the first women in Britain to gain her Royal Aero Club pilot's licence and was later elected to the advisory committee of pilots to the British Empire Air League.

To achieve her transatlantic ambition Mackay bought a Stinson Detrouiter, having been impressed by the aircraft during Ruth Elder's failed 1927 transatlantic attempt (despite an oil leak causing the failure 300 miles over the Atlantic. It was shipped from the US to Britain and delivered to the Brooklands motor racing track, which at the time was also used as an airfield. She named it Endeavour. It was a monoplane with gold tipped wings and a black fuselage, powered by a nine-cylinder, 300 horsepower Wright Whirlwind J-6-9 engine, with a cruising speed of 84 miles per hour.

In early March 1928 the Daily Express discovered that Captain Hinchliffe and Mackay were preparing for a transatlantic attempt by carrying out test flights at RAF Cranwell and were staying at the George Hotel in Leadenham near Grantham.

The story was silenced by Mackay's threat of legal action as she intended to depart in secret while her father was in Egypt, having promised her family she would not make the attempt.



## RETRO FLY: ELSIE MACKAY (CONTINUED)

At 8:35 am on 13 March 1928 Endeavour took off from RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire, with minimal fuss as Hinchliffe had told only two friends he was going and Elsie registered under the pseudonym of 'Gordon Sinclair'. Approximately five hours later, at 1.30 pm the chief lighthouse keeper at Mizen Head on the south west coast of Cork, Ireland saw the monoplane over the village of Crookhaven, on the great circle course for Newfoundland. A French steameboat later reported seeing them still on course, but nothing else is known.

A crowd of 5,000 is said to have waited for them at Mitchel Field, Long Island. In December 1928, eight months later, a single piece of identifiable undercarriage (a wheel with a serial number on it) washed ashore in north west Ireland.

Today, Elsie Mackay is commemorated by a stained glass window in the chancel of Glenapp Church (where her father owned the Glenapp estate). Rhododendrons, now somewhat overgrown, spell out "Elsie" on the opposite side of the glen.

A street is named after her in Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador. Her financial legacy was the Elsie Mackay Fund, a £500,000 trust bequeathed by her father that was left to the British nation on 12 December 1928, for 50 years and used to help pay off the national debt.



## FLY FACTS ABOUT SANTA MONICA AIRPORT



1924 - Douglas Aircraft (and Santa Monica Airport) was catapulted to super-star status when its World Cruiser biplanes became the first aircraft to successfully circumnavigate the earth.

Landing at Santa Monica Airport (Clover Field) on September 23, 1924, over 200,000 people were there to greet them. For more info click the link below.

## FLYING HIGH

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND MILESTONES OF OUR CHAPTER MEMBERS

Janie Thomas: Commercial Pilot Certificate

Benedikta Unter Ecker - Ground Instructor, Advanced, Instrument.

Alicia Maher - Sport Pilot Certificate

Eve Lopez - Private Pilot Knowledge Test

Way to go Ladies!!!