

Sign In or Sign Up

TAL MEMBERSHIP | E-EDITION | CLASSIFIEDS | AUTOMOTIVE | JOBS | REAL ESTATE | RENTALS | ADVERTISE

26° F

Thursday, Nov. 14, 2013

**VIEW THE E-EDITION NOW**  
Turn pages just like reading the newspaper.




Home News Communities Opinion Life Entertainment Sports Multimedia Obituaries Tidewater Pros Classifieds  
Weather Traffic Opinion Nation/World Politics Education TidewaterBiz

**HOT LINKS** | King William Sheriff's Office Needs Help Finding Suspects In Two Home Invasions | Pictures: West Point Crab Carnival

AT&T NEXT™ REQ'S  
**Get the slim design LG G2 with 5.2" full-HD IPS screen.**  
**\$0 DOWN with AT&T NEXT.™**

Req's eligible ins tallment agrmt w/qual. wireless svc & device. Tax due at sale. Restr. apply. Screen images simulated. All other marks used herein are the property of their respective owners.

LG **Rethink Possible™** 

[LEARN MORE](#)

Home > News

# King William's Grey Dunlap served her country with the women of the WASPs

  10  +1  0 [Tweet](#)  4 [Recommend](#)



A small exhibit at the King William Historical Museum displays items from Grey Allison Dunlap's service in the WASPs and her personal artwork. (Frances Hubbard, Tidewater Review / November 9, 2013)

By Frances Hubbard,  
[fhubbard@tidewaterreview.com](mailto:fhubbard@tidewaterreview.com)  
5:30 a.m. EST, November 13, 2013

### Topics

- U.S. Army
- Sweetwater
- U.S. Air Force

[See more topics >>](#)

KING WILLIAM – In 1944, a little over 1,000 women earned the title of military pilot, serving their country on the home front while thousands of men served overseas in World War II.

These women, known as WASP (Women Airforce Service Pilots), made their mark in history, clocking over 60 million miles for the **U.S. Army** Airforces.



Open Monday – Friday from 10 am to 6 pm & Saturday 10 am to 5 pm  
The place to come for all of your Crab Carnival needs  
 Visit us on Facebook

417 6th Street West Point, VA  
804 • THE • DOCK

**Harper's Carpet**

**FREE FLOOR CLEANING SOLUTION FOR STOPPING BY!**  
While Supplies Last

**Floor Coverings:** Carpet, Vinyl, Rugs, Ceramics, Laminate, Hardwood  
**Window Treatments:** Blinds, Shades, Draperies, Valances

[www.harperscarpet.com](http://www.harperscarpet.com)  
535 14th Street West Point, VA  
804-843-4069

Local & National Video

## Ads by Google

**Grow Twitter Followers**

Get More Followers Now. Get Started With Twitter Advertising  
[Twitter.com/Advertising](http://Twitter.com/Advertising)

**Armed Forces Gear**

Shop Licensed Military Merchandise. Great Holiday Gifts Are Here Now!  
[www.ArmedForcesGear.com](http://www.ArmedForcesGear.com)

**USA Military Medals**

Largest Inventory Military Medals. Professional Medal Mounting Service  
[www.usamilitarymedals.com](http://www.usamilitarymedals.com)

Among these brave women was King William resident Grey Allison Dunlap.

Dunlap was 30 years-old when she decided to apply for the WASP program.

"She was such a remarkable person," Ren Dunlap said of his late wife.

In 1943, Grey Dunlap was married to a soldier who was serving in the war and she began working for a civilian organization in Michigan when she became interested in flying.

Ren Dunlap said during the war, flying in the U.S. was restricted, especially on the East Coast.

In Michigan it was easier for Grey to take regular flying lessons, and after earning her license, she became an instructor.

"She was actually flying with a student on the day they bombed Pearl Harbor," Ren Dunlap said. "She had already gotten her instructors license at that time."

Her job with the civilian organization in Michigan didn't last and Grey went to work for another organization in Pennsylvania, where she was born and often stayed with her Aunt.

Grey Dunlap's father, John Allison, had served in the military during **World War I** and had earned a purple heart. Her parents resided in Baltimore at the time.

After returning to Pennsylvania, Grey Dunlap heard about an opportunity for women pilots to serve in the Army Airforces and she applied.

Ren Dunlap said to be eligible, the woman pilot had to have logged at least 200 hours and Grey had logged just over that.

Approximately 25,000 women applied for the WASPs and around 1,200 were accepted in November of 1943, but only 1,074 earned their wings.

The women were trained at a base in **Sweetwater**, Texas, and on May 23, 1944, Grey graduated with class 44 W4.

Ren Dunlap said the WASPs were only allowed to fly within the continental United States and were used to transport military officials and gear, as well as towing moving targets in training exercises. The pilots were also often responsible for flying newly manufactured aircraft from the factories before they were taken into combat.

Thirty-eight WASPs gave their lives serving their country.

The last class of WASPs graduated on December 7, 1944, and the group was disbanded just 13 days later.

"They were let go," Ren Dunlap said. "There were a lot of bitter feelings about how things happened."

Despite disbandment of the WASPs, Grey Dunlap never lost her passion for flying and continued on as an instructor into the 1950s.

After the war, Grey Dunlap had divorced her first husband, one of the many marriages that were a causality of World War II, and she took a job as a flight instructor back in Pennsylvania.

Ren Dunlap was a student at the time. His instructor had been injured in a car crash and Grey was called in to take his place.

"His bad luck was my good fortune for many years," Ren Dunlap said.

The pair did not marry right away, though.

Ren Dunlap had always wanted to serve in the Army as a pilot. He had enlisted in World War II but never flew. He had only served as the cabin crew on an airplane.

"She spurred me to go back in to active duty," he said. "She knew I could make it."

After graduating, Grey, who was 12 years his senior, agreed to marry Ren Dunlap.

The two were married just shy of 55 years and during that time flying was a big part of their lives.

Grey Dunlap flew for the Civil Air Patrol and was appointed as a 2nd Lt. in the **USAF** Active Reserve in 1954 and was promoted to 1st Lt. in 1956. She entered the Retired Reserve in 1961.

Safari Power Saver  
 Click to Start Flash Plug-in



ALIX NEXT™ REQ'S

Get the  
 slim design  
 LG G2 with  
 5.2" full-HD  
 IPS screen.

\$0 DOWN  
 with AT&T NEXT.™

LEARN MORE

Rethink Possible®

Req's eligible installment agmt w/qual. wireless svc & device. Tax due at sale. Restr. apply. Screen images simulated. All other marks used herein are the property of their respective owners.

The two moved to King William County in 1952 after Grey's parents moved here, and Ren Dunlap took a position flying for American Airlines.

Grey still enjoyed piloting herself up until a frightening accident in 1959.

The two had been enjoying time in their glider at the airport near **Fredericksburg**. It was a frequent pastime of theirs but on this day, Ren Dunlap would watch helplessly as his wife and the glider plummeted over 100 feet to the ground.

Grey Dunlap was injured severely and spent two years in the hospital not permitted to walk.

Once released she was able to walk and couldn't wait to get back into the air.

"Her mother told her she could fly with me but she could never get in a glider again," Ren Dunlap said.

Her injuries plagued her as she aged, he said, and eventually she would have to use canes to help her walk.

At the time, the WASPs were considered a civil service and did not receive military benefits or acknowledgement.

In 1977, the GI Improvement Act would finally give the WASPs the credit they deserved for their active military service.

Now, the women are recognized as veterans of World War II. Some have even earned medals for their service and were given high-ranking officer titles.

A WASP memorial monument was also dedicated in their honor in 1972 at the Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

Grey Dunlap died on September 19, 2004, just one month shy of her 91st birthday on October 18.

Grey Dunlap was also a gifted artist and dabbled in a variety of medians from painting to sculpture and pottery.

She had been a student at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in **Philadelphia**.

"She had a passion for both flying and art, but she truly loved the military and loved the military life," Ren Dunlap said. "She had such a natural ability."

"I was lucky to have had her as an instructor when we met," he added. "I got her and the rest is history."

*Grey Dunlap's artwork and artifacts from her time in the WASPs is on display at the King William Historical Museum.*

*Hubbard can be reached by phone at 804-885-0042*

Copyright © 2013, Tidewater Review

[Click here to view and submit comments on this story.](#)



10

0

2

4

« Previous Story



**Kroger to buy Harris Teeter**

More News



**New Kent Supervisors approve Lanexa mini-storage CUP**

Next Story »