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JANE STRAUGHAN

Jane S. Straughan

Jane S. Straughan, 93, of Fenwick Island and Silver Spring, MD, died Monday March 12, 2007, at Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Berlin, MD.

Born in Washington, DC she was the daughter of the late Charles W. and Minnie Wineheimer Sincell. Jane became a pioneer in women's aviation. She learned to fly at Queen's Chapel Airport in Hyattsville, MD and obtained her commercial pilot's license in 1938. She was the only woman to work in the aviation department at ERCO demonstrating airplanes to potential buyers. Jane was also a member of the elite "Ninety-Nines," an organization of female pilots, founded in 1929, whose first president was Amelia Earhart. During WWII Jane joined the Women's Air Force Service Pilots. Of the 25,000 who applied, only 1800 were chosen, 1073 became certified and Jane was in the first class of 23 women to be trained to fly military aircraft. She was assigned to the New Castle (DE) Army Air Base, specializing in ferrying military aircraft around the country, thus freeing male pilots for combat and other war related efforts. The WASPs was deactivated in 1945 and no woman would fly a US military aircraft again until 1977. From 1945-1948 Jane served on the Civil Aeronautics Board in Washington, DC as an Aircraft Accident Analyst. Later she went to work for the Social Security Administration as a Field Representative, retiring in 1981 after more than 20 years of service. After retiring, Jane enjoyed life at Leisure World in Silver Spring, MD and spent her summers in Fenwick Island, DE. She remained involved with the WASPs and fellow pilots. She was a Captain in the Air Force Reserve. Jane attended the Interfaith Chapel in Leisure World and St. Matthews By-The-Sea in Fenwick Island.

She is survived by 2 sons, John W. "Jack" Straughan and wife Kathy of Olney, MD; Charles W. "Bill" Straughan and wife Mary Lou of Selbyville, DE. She is also survived by 3 grandchildren, Jason K. Straughan, Erin L. Straughan, Paige A. Straughan, and 1 great-grandson, Jackson P. Straughan. Jane was preceded in death by her husband Alfred W. "Al" Straughan in 1981 and her grandson Scott R. Straughan in 2003.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 24, 2007, at 1 PM at St. Matthews By-The-Sea United Methodist Church, 1000 Coastal Highway, Fenwick Island, DE.

Interment, with full military honors, will be on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 1 PM at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Field of Firsts Foundation, 1985 Cpl. Frank Scott Drive, College Park, MD 20740 or St. Matthews By-The-Sea United Methodist Church, 1000 Coastal Hwy., Fenwick Island, DE 19944.

Arrangements by

HASTINGS F.H.,
Selbyville, DE.

Letters of condolence may be sent to the family by visiting www.delmarvaobits.com
302-436-8421

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