

Nancy-Bird Walton was born to fly!

As we come together today to celebrate Nancy's life we also celebrate her aviation achievements which have inspired generations of female aviators.

As a female pioneer of aviation Nancy showed it was possible to follow your passion in a male dominated industry.

Nancy believed that anyone who wanted to, should have the chance to fly.

Nancy was a spirited and charming woman with a spot-on memory who never forgot anyone she met. And once you met Nancy, you never forgot her either.

Founding the Australian Women Pilots' Association in 1950 Nancy's motto was "Join AWPA (Australian Women Pilots' Association) and have friends in every state." AWPA continues with this motto with members from all over Australia here today. Many of our members are wearing Pink and Pearls which was a favourite combination of Nancy's. AWPA also concentrates on education, safety and scholarships to encourage more females into aviation all of which was passionately supported by Nancy.

Nancy referred to female aviators as "women of achievement" and her pride in each female aviator was apparent as she encouraged and applauded every single achievement no matter how small or large. Nancy loved to quote the number of female captains and co-pilots employed by the major Australian Airlines and the Defence forces.

Nancy's passion was for all things aviation – Engineering, Air Traffic Control and Flight Attendants to name a just a few.

When Nancy spoke everyone listened - her words brought alive years of memories and experiences and she fought hard for recognition of aviation in Australia.

Nancy constantly made herself available to school children working on assignments on "famous or pioneer Australians". She attended numerous air shows, and ventured into many arenas to lend her wholehearted

support to several worthy causes to ensure aviation is preserved, remembered and encouraged at the grass roots.

Nancy campaigned to prevent the privatisation of airports as without them there is no where to learn to fly. A favourite saying of Nancy's was – “The most important road in any town is the airport runway”

Nancy taught us all to believe in ourselves, and to meet life’s challenges. Nancy's great sense of humour and sense of honour assisted her to defend the right of anyone to fly when it was warranted. As a mentor of women in aviation, Nancy was always most humble and used her celebrity opportunities to encourage new pilots at every opportunity.

Nancy's enthusiasm for life was contagious -
May blue skies and tail winds help her flying spirit soar!

(Nancy championed many battles for general aviation. – to name a few - Evans Head airstrip, Old Bar airstrip, Bourke Airport, Brisbane Airport, Sydney Airport, Bankstown Airport and as Patron of the Australian Women Pilots Association, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Year of the Outback, Bathurst Aero Club and Qantas Flight Attendants.)

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