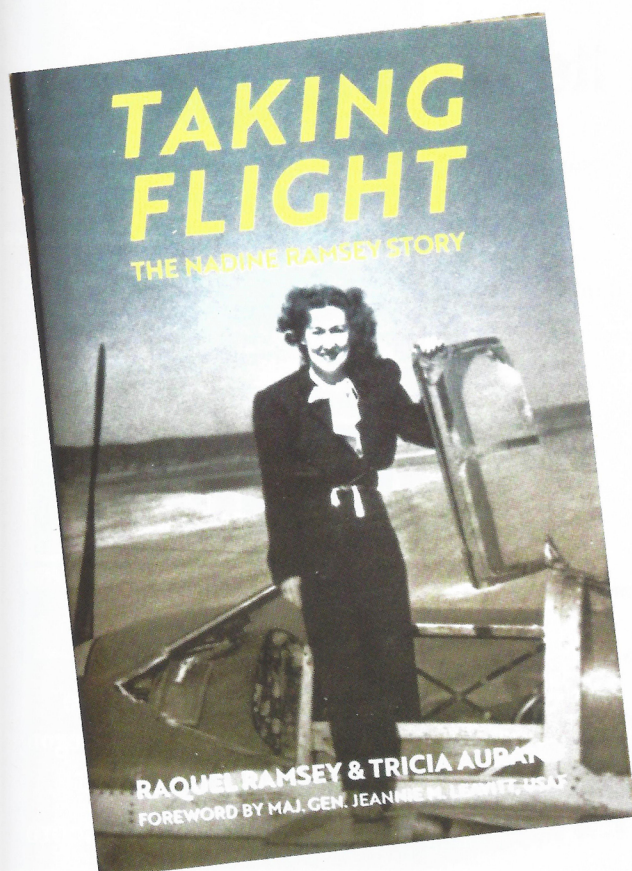




Book Review:



TAKING FLIGHT THE NADINE RAMSEY STORY

Here's an interesting read, while not about horses or the west, it certainly relates to CMSA's "family of friends," who are passionate about family, love of country, and have the courage to embrace a sport that takes both skill and grit! *Taking Flight, The Nadine Ramsey Story*, tells the true tale of a young woman's courage in the cockpits—and on the tarmac—of our nation's World War II military aircraft, and of her lifelong efforts in clearing the runway for today's female aviators, not only as commercial fliers, but as combat pilots as well.

This 320-page, 6-inch x 9-inch hardcover volume, published by the University Press of Kansas, tells of Nadine Ramsey and her inspiring family. Instilled by their mother, a successful entrepreneurial businesswoman with the determination to keep going despite any setbacks, Nadine became the first woman in Kansas to receive a commercial pilot license and the first female pilot of the National Aeronautic Association Wichita chapter. She was also one of the earliest women to fly the

U.S. Air Mail; command a squadron of 30 young women for the Civil Air Patrol; and serve as a federal Civilian Pilot Training Program instructor—all before the age of 30! When the United States entered the Second World War after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Nadine was among the first to answer the call. By war's end she had become one of only 1,102 women to serve in the Women's Airforce Service Pilots, and one of just 303 "WASPs" to ferry military aircraft to bases across the nation for use in the overseas theaters of war. These women were qualified to fly 43 types of aircraft, including bombers and pursuit (fighter) planes, freeing many men for military service.

Like Nadine's "never surrender" and "ready for anything" spirit, her younger brother, Col. Edwin P. Ramsey, was a highly decorated World War II hero. As a young lieutenant he led the last American horse-mounted cavalry charge in history on Bataan! Unknown to his family, he then went on to hide in the steaming, war-torn jungles of the Philippines to command an army of over 40,000 American and Filipino guerilla soldiers. For three long years, brother "Ed," was listed as "Missing in Action!"

Back in the wartime states, Nadine worked tirelessly ferrying aircraft, like the AT-7 and AT-10 twin-engine trainers. However determined to fly pursuit planes, Nadine graduated to the highest possible women's rating, becoming one of only 134 WASP pilots qualified to fly pursuit. This plucky lady ferried such iconic fighters as the P-51 and P-38, two of the fastest aircraft of the war. In fact, she was one of only 26 women certified to fly the complex P-38! After the war, she became the first female to own her own P-38. With the disbanding of her ferrying unit in late 1944, she and other WASPs fought for more than three decades to gain veteran status, finally achieving official recognition in November, 1977. Although unable to fly in later years due to declining health, Nadine championed the cause of advancing women in the field of aeronautics, until her 1997 passing at the age of 85.

Co-authored by Col. Ramsey's widow, Raquel Ramsey, a retired teacher, and screenwriter Tricia Aurand, the book, is vividly enhanced with 89 period photographs. It shares the story of this female aviator *extraordinary*, and of her fellow WASPs who unselfishly served our nation, despite living in an age not conducive to nonconformance to traditional male roles. Priced at \$29.95, copies can be ordered from Amazon.com, or from the University Press of Kansas.

For an autographed copy by Raquel Ramsey, email her at: raquiramsey1946@gmail.com

Phil Spangenberg