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MARY FEIK, NOTED AVIATION ENGINEER, DIES

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By Dan Namowitz

Mary S. Feik, a noted aviation engineer, pilot, aircraft restorer, and inductee of aviation halls of fame, died June 10 at her home in Annapolis, Maryland. She was 92.



Aviation pioneer Mary Feik died June 10 at the age of 92. Photo courtesy of the Maryland Governor Press Office.

Feik, who was born March 9, 1924, in Cleveland, Ohio, was known as the first woman

aviation engineer and an expert on military aircraft during World War II who wrote training manuals for numerous aircraft.

Feik flew more than 6,000 hours “in fighter, attack, bomber, cargo and training aircraft,” according to her **profile** on the website of the Paul E. Garber First Flight Shrine, into which she was inducted in 2014. She was also qualified as a B-29 flight engineer, it said.

Feik was a member of the restoration team at the National Air and Space Museum’s Paul E. Garber Restoration Facility, and taught the restoration of antique and classic aircraft.

Feik held a colonel’s rank in the Civil Air Patrol, in which more than 10,000 cadets have received a personally signed “**Mary Feik Achievement Award**,” the profile said. Feik regarded the award that was created in her name in 2003 as her “ultimate honor,” she told the Civil Air Patrol.

She also was a 1994 inductee of the **Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame**. The organization noted that Feik had overhauled her first auto engine at age 13, and turned her attention to aircraft engines at 18, going on to instruct Army Air Corps aviation mechanics. She was an inspiration to WAI members, said the organization’s president, Dr. Peggy Chabrian.

“Mary, WAI #53, was a maintenance instructor for the US Army Air Corps, and later became the first woman engineer in R&D for the USAF Air Technical Service Command. She was a renowned ambassador for the Civil Air Patrol, the first woman to receive the FAA Taylor Master Mechanic Award, and recipient of the Katharine Wright Trophy,” Chabrian said in a statement.

“I’ve known Mary for over 35 years and was always impressed with her love of aviation and her level of expertise on the aircraft she helped restore. Her work and involvement with youth through the Civil Air Patrol and her work in aviation education touched the lives of many,” she added.

Funeral arrangement will be under the direction of the **John M. Taylor Funeral Home** of Annapolis.



Dan Namowitz

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Dan Namowitz is an aviation writer and flight instructor.

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