Bessie Coleman was born in 1896 in Texas, the daughter of sharecroppers. Around 1916, her family moved to Chicago. Her family came during the “Great Migration” of African Americans moving from the South to the North. Most who moved north moved from a rural environment to an urban one.

Bessie’s interest in aviation started during World War 1. However, she was rejected entry into flight schools in the United States because she was African-American and a woman.

Two of Chicago’s African American businessmen, Robert Abbott and Jesse Binga, encouraged Bessie and supported her aviation education in France. In 1921, Bessie became the first American woman to earn an international pilot’s license. During the 1920s, Bessie was an expert barnstormer, parachutist and stunt flyer.

Crossword Clues:

ACROSS
1. Bessie became the first American woman to earn her international pilot’s ______.
2. Bessie’s interest in aviation was sparked during ______.
3. Bessie was an expert ______.
4. One reason Bessie was rejected from flight schools was because she was a ______.
5. Another reason Bessie was rejected from flight schools was because she was ______-American

DOWN
A. Around 1916, her family moved from Chicago during the Great ______.
B. Those who moved north moved from a primarily rural, agricultural environment to an ______ one.
C. The birthplace of Bessie Coleman.
Jerrie Cobb

Jerrie Cobb was born in Oklahoma in 1931. She learned to fly a bi-wing plane at the age of twelve. She was a pilot for a one-elephant circus at the age of sixteen. One of her first jobs at ages 18 and 21 was as a typist and file clerk at Miami International Airport. In 1952 at ages 21 to 22 she ferried surplus military bombers and fighters to foreign governments and trained pilots.

In 1959, Jerrie set four world records in maximum speed, distance, and altitude in an Aero Commander twin-engine aircraft. She was also the first woman to pass the NASA astronaut tests. This involved three years (1960-1962) of testing for Project Mercury, the United States Astronaut Program. She was also a consultant to NASA and a campaigner for women in space. In 1962, it was decided that candidates for space flight must have jet test-pilot experience and women were eliminated from space flight.

At age 32, Jerrie changed her aviation focus and began flying the Amazon Jungle of South America. She bought an Aero Commander and to this day provides a jungle airlift service to missionaries, tribes, doctors, teachers, environmentalists, farmers, and others. She flies approximately 4,000 miles along the Amazon River. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and founded The Jerrie Cobb Foundation, Inc. to help natives of the Amazon Jungle.

Crossword Clues:

ACROSS
1. At age 16, Jerrie was pilot for a one-elephant _______.
2. In 1952, she ferried surplus _______ to foreign governments.
3. Jerrie was born in _______ in 1931.
4. For her flying in the Amazon Jungle, Jerrie was nominated for the Nobel _______ Prize.
5. Jerrie was the first woman to pass the NASA _______ tests.
6. From 1960 to 1962, Jerrie was testing for Project _______.

DOWN
A. The Jerrie Cobb Foundation, Inc. helps the native people of the Amazon _______.
B. Jerrie learned to fly a bi-wing plane at the age of _______.
C. At age 32 Jerrie began flying the _______ Jungle of South America.
D. In 1962 women were eliminated from _______ flight.
Jacqueline Cochran

Jacqueline Cochran is one of the most famous women in aviation history. She learned to fly in only three weeks. She later broke an existing altitude record by flying a biplane to 33,000 feet in the air.

Jacqueline became very interested in air racing and participated in several races including the Bendix Cross Country Air Race. She had to convince Mr. Bendix to allow her to fly since the race had been open to men pilots only. She won the race in 1937.

Jacqueline also won speed records for flying. The most famous record she holds for speed was when she became the first woman to break the sound barrier in 1953. She was named “the fastest woman in the world.”

Before learning to fly she had worked for several years in a beauty shop. She later began a company manufacturing beauty products. She named her company Jacqueline Cochran Cosmetics.

When WW2 began, Jacqueline was involved in testing new aviation equipment being developed for the war. She also had the idea the military should include women as pilots during the war. After several meetings with the Chief of the Army Air Force General Hap Arnold, she was able to convince him to use women pilots to fly non-combat missions. She became the director of the new organization which was named the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

When the war was over the WASP had delivered more than 12,600 planes and flown more than 75 different types of airplanes.

Crossword Clues:

ACROSS

1. Jacqueline _______ is one of the most famous women in aviation together.
2. Women pilots were used for _______ missions.
3. Jacqueline Cochran became the first woman to break the _______ barrier.
4. Women Airforce Service Pilots (another name)
5. Cochran flew in the _______ Cross Country Air Race.
6. Jacqueline was named “the _______ woman in the world.”
7. Jacqueline learned to _______ in three weeks.

DOWN

A. General Hap _______ was the Chief of the Army Air Force.
B. Jacqueline Cochran broke an _______ record by flying a biplane to 33,000 feet.
C. She also broke _______ records.
D. Before learning to fly, Jacqueline worked for several years in a _______ shop.
Female Astronauts

In the early 1960’s, thirteen women underwent the same rigorous medical tests as the “Mercury 7” astronauts. They later became known as the “Mercury 13.” Despite their outstanding test results, these women, who included Jerrie Cobb, were not given the opportunity to fly into space.

In 1981, with the start of the Space Shuttle Program, women were given the opportunity to fly into space. In 1983, at the age of 32, Sally Ride became the first American woman in space in the Shuttle. She was also the youngest American astronaut at the time.

Dr. Mae Jemison, a medical doctor prior to becoming an astronaut, had four years of training with NASA to prepare her for space travel.

In 1996, Shannon Lucid, an American astronaut, spent time aboard Mir, the Russian space station. Mir means Peace in Russian.

Ellen Ochoa is a Mission Specialist on the Shuttle. She traveled to the International Space Station and brought supplies and equipment for future international astronauts.

Col. Eileen Collins, a United States Air Force test pilot was the first female Space Shuttle Pilot. In 1999, Col. Collins became the first female Space Shuttle Commander.

Crosswords Clue:

**ACROSS**
1. Jerrie______ underwent astronaut training in the 1960s.
2. Thirteen women later known as the “______ 13.”
3. Sally Ride was the first American _______ to fly into space.
4. Ellen Ochoa traveled to the ________ Space Station and brought supplies and equipment for future international astronauts.
5. Dr. Jemison had four years of training with _______ to prepare her for space travel.

**DOWN**
A. In 1999, she became the first female Space Shuttle _______.
B. Sally _______ was the first American woman to fly into space in the Shuttle.
C. Col. Eileen Collins, a United States Air Force _______ pilot, was the first female Space Shuttle Pilot.
D. Dr. Mae Jemison was a medical _______.
E. Shannon _______ an American Astronaut spent time aboard Mir, the Russian Space Station.
Harriet Quimby was born in Michigan in 1875, and lived on a farm with her family. By the early 1900’s, Harriet moved to San Francisco, California. Here, she developed a love for the stage, longing to be an actress. Instead, her curious quest for news and intelligent writing style funneled her toward a career in journalism. Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly employed her as a photojournalist.

Fascinated by the challenge of flying an airplane, Harriet took flying lessons during 1911, and became the first woman to get a pilot’s license in the United States. In the spring of 1912, while continuing her journalism career, she maneuvered her 50 horsepower monoplane across the English Channel, becoming the first woman to do so. Harriet performed many stunt flights in airshows.

Crossword Clues:

ACROSS
1. The birthplace of Harriet Quimby.
2. Harriet was fascinated by the challenge of flying an _______.
3. She was the first woman pilot to cross this body of ocean water.
4. Harriet performed stunt flights in _______.
5. Harriet flew a 50 horsepower ______.

DOWN
A. Harriet’s first love was to become an _______.
B. In the early 1900’s she moved to this city.
C. Harriet was the first woman to get a pilot’s _______ in the United States.