

Flyers celebrate the Centennial of women pilots

By Lesley Page

On March 8, 1910, Raymonde De Laroche (1886 – 1919), an experienced French balloonist, was the first woman to

earn a pilot license worldwide. To celebrate the centennial, women pilots around the world introduced other women to the joys of flying.

On March 6, 7 and 8, 2010, I celebrated by taking 13 women for flights, including six teenagers.

Five years ago, I never dreamed that someday I would be a pilot. Then, in the spring of 2005, my husband Jeff, a private pilot, bought an airplane and took me for my first flight in a small plane. That flight changed my life!

I decided that life is too short to be a passenger and I signed up for flight lessons. I'm now a private pilot and a member of several flying clubs and associations, including COPA Flight 70 at Oshawa, COPA Flight 44 at Buttonville and the 99's.

One of our favourite things to do with our airplane is to introduce others to aviation, especially young people, participating in the 'Young Ea-

gles' and 'COPA for Kids' events at our local flying clubs.

When I noticed the 'Centennial of Women Licensed Pilots' event, I registered immediately. I posted on Facebook an invitation to my female friends and right away my friend Michele McTeague

responded with several passengers, including some young people! Together, Michele and I recruited 13 passengers for the event!

It was a gorgeous weekend in Oshawa! The five flights ranged from half hour to one hour each.

The route varied, too. One flight was over the city of Toronto, and the others were either to the north or to the east of Oshawa.

Whenever there was a youngster on the flight, I put them in the right seat and had them fly the plane. They loved it!

What a great way to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of Licensed Women Pilots!

For more information, see the website <http://centennialofwomenpilots.com>.



**COPA
FLIGHT 70**

Oshawa, Ont.