Nancy Harkness Love, with the support of the U.S. Air Transport Command, organized 25 women pilots into the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron on Sept. 10, 1942. WAFS headquarters were located at New Castle Army Air Base, Delaware; later other ferrying squadron centers were established. Due to the strict qualifications for service in the WAFS, only 40 women wore the WAFS uniform (which they had to pay for) before it was merged into the Women Airforce Service Pilots (wasp).

Women have been involved in aviation from the beginnings of both lighter-than air travel and as airplanes, helicopters and space travel were developed. Women pilots were also called "aviatrices". Women have been flying powered aircraft since 1908; prior to 1970, however, most were restricted to working privately or in support roles in the aviation industry. Aviation also allowed women to "travel alone on unprecedented journeys. Women who have been successful in various aviation fields have served as mentors to younger women, helping them along in their careers.