

member snapshot

Deanie Parrish says she's one of America's best-kept secrets — she and about 1,000 members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, that is.

Known as the WASP, these World War II pilots were the first women to fly American military aircraft and flew in every Army Air Force state-side command. Few people know it. But Deanie and her daughter, Nancy, hope to change that.

They recently opened a WASP museum in the west Texas town of Sweetwater. A 1929 hangar at Avenger Field, where most of the women trained, serves as the

temporary digs. But mother and daughter are trying to raise \$20 million for a high-tech, permanent building that the museum can call home. They've even set up a Web site, wasp-wwii.org.

"It's a missing chapter in the history of the Air Force," says Parrish, one of about 400 surviving WASP. "It needs to be preserved and made accessible, especially to children — to educate, motivate, and inspire them."

Deanie Parrish

Former World War II
B-26 pilot, USAA
member since 1949

