

412TW-PA-24197



# HISTORY OF AFFTC – INFORMATION ON PILOT JACKIE COCHRAN

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AIR FORCE FLIGHT TEST CENTER  
EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE,  
CALIFORNIA

1 Jan – 30 Jun 53, Vol I

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## CHAPTER 7

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## SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

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Jacqueline Cochran Sets Record of 652.337 Miles Per Hour

Flying a Canadian-built (Canadair) F-86 Sabrejet powered by an Orenda turbojet engine in place of the General Electric J-47 turbojet generally installed in American-built F-86 aircraft, Jacqueline Cochran set a new speed record of 652.337 miles per hour at Edwards Air Force Base, California on 18 May 1953.

In achieving this new record, Jacqueline Cochran became the first woman to fly through the sonic barrier in the history of aviation. Jacqueline Auriol, the daughter-in-law of a President of France, had previously established the women's jet record at a reported 540 miles per hour. Jacqueline Cochran exceeded the record of the French aviatrix by a wide margin.

She also beat the closed-course record of 628.698 miles per hour set by Colonel Fred J. Ascani, USAF, on 19 August 1951 at the National Air Races in Detroit, Michigan. At this time Colonel Ascani beat the previous record of 605.230 miles per hour set by John Douglas Derry of Great Britain in a British-made DeHavilland Sapphirejet on 12 April 1948.

In the air (flying another F-86) with Jacqueline Cochran during her two sonic dives (at better than 700 miles per hour) and her closed-course runs was Major Charles E. Yeager, USAF, Flight Test Center test pilot, who was the first man to fly faster than sound.

\* The Orenda turbojet engine is manufactured by A. V. Roe Canada Limited, Malton, Canada. The engine is capable of a power output of over 10,000 lbs. thrust at 600 miles per hour. The Orenda engine is used in R.C.A.F. Avro CF-100's, some R.A.F. and NATO aircraft.

\*\* Yeager flew the Bell research aircraft, the XS-1 at a speed better than 760 miles per hour at Edwards Air Force Base on 17 October 1947.

The closed-course at Edwards Air Force Base was a twelve-pylon, 100-kilometer course.

Charles Logsdon, contest division director of the National Aeronautic Association, and Dudley Wright of the Wright Engineering Company judged and timed the speed run which was electrically photographed and timed.

Jacqueline Cochran has been flying airplanes since 1932. She holds many records. On 3 January 1950 she achieved 444 miles per hour over a Federation Aeronautique Internationale supervised 500-kilometer closed-course in a propeller-driven F-51 "Mustang" fighter built by North American Aviation, Incorporated. In four Bendix Transcontinental Air Races against men pilots, she won first place once, second place once, and third place twice.

She is the wife of Floyd Odlum, a business executive associated with the Canadair Company.

After her flight at the Air Force Flight Test Center on 18 May 1952, Jacqueline Cochran said that "making new records for jet planes is extremely gratifying. However, passing through the sonic barrier with its shock waves and other strange effects was the most exciting and interesting experience in my more than twenty years of flying.

"For good measure, I bettered the speed of sound twice in the same day."

In the preparation for her flight at Edwards Air Force Base, Jacqueline Cochran had the full support and help of Flight Test Center personnel.

She stated before the flight that she doubted whether or not she would break the previous record set by Colonel Ascani. She went on to add, "Even if I do, the pilots at Edwards Air Force Base know full well that with the course available and newer, faster aircraft coming along, they can take back the record within a matter of months."

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Jacqueline Cochran's prophecy came true on 2 September 1953 when Brigadier General J. S. Holtner broke her 652.337 miles per hour record and established a new record of 690.118 miles per hour.

Residents Occupy Housing Area "C"

At the end of January 1953, 124 housing units of Area "C" located north of Wherry Housing had been completed and occupied. Construction work was started on this new housing project in April 1952 by Hal B. Hayes Construction Company of Hollywood, California. When completed in June 1953, the new housing area will provide 500 complete units.

The Edwards Housing Corporation announced in January 1953 that shrubs would be planted in Area "C" but tenants would be required to plant and care for their own lawns.

Rent in Area "C" was set at \$64.93 a month plus utilities. Water was included in the monthly rent. All spaces in the new housing area were allocated by the Edwards Housing Office on a "first come, first served" basis.

Construction was completed by 30 June 1953 and at that time there was a surplus of housing. It was expected, however, that by the fall of 1953 with the scheduled increased employment at Edwards Air Force Base, all units of Area "C" would be rented.

2nd Lieutenant Clark V. Britton who had been assigned to Edwards Air Force Base on 2 September 1952, was Chief, Bases Services Branch in charge of housing.

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