



Major General Jeanne M. Holm

Major General Jeanne M. Holm was born on June 23, 1921, in Portland, Oregon. Holm was an accomplished snow and water skier, student of ancient history, scuba diver and skipper of her own power cruiser. Prior to entering military service, she was a professional silversmith. She enlisted in the Army in July 1942, soon after Congress established the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). She attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, and in January 1943, received a commission as a Third Officer, the WAAC equivalent of Second Lieutenant.

During World War II, Holm was assigned to the Women's Army Corps Training Center at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, where she first commanded a basic training company and then a training regiment. At the end of the war, she commanded the 106th WAC Hospital Company at Newton D. Baker General Hospital, West Virginia. After serving stateside during WWII, she left active duty in 1946 and attended Lewis and Clark College for two years, returning in 1956 for her Bachelor of Arts degree.

In October 1948, during the Berlin Blockade, Holm was recalled to active duty with the Army and went to Camp Lee in Virginia, as a company commander within the Women's Army Corps Training Center. The following year she transferred to the Air Force and was sent to Erding Air Depot, Germany. There she served as Assistant Director of Plans and Operations for the 7200th Air Force Depot Wing and later as a War Plans Officer for the 85th Air Depot Wing, during the Berlin airlift and the early phases of the Korean War.

Holm returned from overseas in 1952 and became the first woman to attend the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama. She was then assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force in Washington, DC, as a personnel plans and programs officer in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel.

Her next assignment was as Chief of Manpower in Allied Air Forces Southern Europe, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters, in Naples, Italy, where she served for four years. She returned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force in 1961 and was assigned as Congressional Staff Officer for the Director of Manpower and Organization.

In November 1965 Holm was appointed Director of Women in the Air Force (WAF), in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel. She was extended twice, making her the longest-serving WAF director. Holm played a significant role in eliminating restriction on women in service. She was responsible for overall staff cognizance of and advice on matters concerning military women in the Air Force. During her tenure, policies affecting women were updated, WAF strength more than doubled, job and assignment opportunities greatly expanded, uniforms modernized, opening ROTC and service academies to women, and changing the policies on the status of women in the armed forces. She was an active proponent for expanding the opportunities for women to serve in the Armed Forces and a catalyst for changing their roles and career opportunities within the Air Force during her service as Director from November 1965 to March 1973.

Holm was promoted to the grade of brigadier general July 16, 1971 the first woman to be appointed in this grade in the Air Force. She was promoted to the grade of Major General effective June 1, 1973 with date of rank July 1, 1970 and was the first woman in the Armed Forces to serve in that grade.

On March 1, 1973 Holm was appointed director of the Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council. In this position, she was responsible for administration of the council and functioning of its boards and served as president of the Air Force Discharge Review Board, Personnel Board, Board of Review, Physical Disability Appeal Board, Decorations Board and the Disability Review Board.

Holm retired from the Air Force in 1975. After retiring, Holm consulted for the Defense Manpower Commission. In March, 1976 Holm was named Special Assistant to President Gerald Ford for the Office of Women's Programs. Holm was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2000.

Her military awards include: the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Women's Army Corps Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory

Medal, Army of Occupation Medal with Berlin Airlift Device, Medal of Humane Action and the National Defense Service Medal.

Holm wrote two books about women in the military, beginning with *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* in 1982. Holm updated the book in 1992–1994, filling in American women's combat and military experiences in the invasions of Grenada, Panama and in the Gulf War. In 1998, Holm published a history of American women serving in World War II, entitled *In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II*, summarizing the experiences of women serving all of the military arms.