

## Department of Historic Resources

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STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER  
"LUCILLE CHAFFIN KENT (1908-1997)"  
TO BE DEDICATED IN LYNCHBURG

*—Marker honors Kent as one of the first women in Virginia to earn an instructor's rating in aeronautics; during World War II she instructed about 2,000 future military pilots and later authored a comprehensive aeronautics manual—*

*—The marker's text is reproduced below—*

RICHMOND – A state historical marker issued by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will be dedicated this week on Veterans Day that honors a pioneering woman in Virginia's aviation history, Lucille Chaffin Kent, a Lynchburg native, who during World War II instructed about 2,000 future military pilots.

The dedication ceremony for the marker begins at 3:30 p.m., this Friday, November 11, in the front lobby of E. C. Glass High School, located at 2111 Memorial Avenue in Lynchburg. The event is open to the public.

Speakers at the ceremony will include Joan Foster, Mayor of Lynchburg; Lt. Col. Leslie Pratt, director of E. C. Glass High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (AFJROTC); Helen A. Ford, a former piano student of Lucille Kent, who also had a long career as a piano teacher in Lynchburg; Tara K. Kent, granddaughter of Lucille Kent; Jane Baber White, who proposed the highway marker; and Jim Hare of the Department of Historic Resources.

Other participants in the ceremony will include Peter Kent, son of Lucille Kent, and other members of the extended Kent family. Musical contributions will be provided by Nia Dyke and the E. C. Glass Marching Band. The E. C. Glass High School AFJROTC will open the ceremony with a presentation of the colors. The marching band and AFJROTC also will lead a procession from the high school to the location of the marker where it will be unveiled.

After earning an instructor's rating in aeronautics, in 1939 Lucille Chaffin Kent "began teaching meteorology, navigation, and civil air regulations at E. C. Glass High School," according to the historical marker.

As a ground school director during World War II in the Civilian Pilot Training Program (later War Training Service), Kent "instructed about 2,000 future military pilots at Lynchburg College, in commandeered facilities at the Miller Home for Girls, and at Preston Glenn Airport," the marker reads.

Kent also qualified as an instructor on "the Link Trainer, a flight simulator," which allowed Kent to instruct "pilots how to navigate using instruments," the marker states. Kent also authored a "comprehensive aeronautics manual," the marker's text concludes.

The "Lucille Chaffin Kent" historical marker was approved for manufacture and installation earlier this year by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, which must authorize all state historical markers. The costs of creating the marker are covered by the marker's sponsors Elizabeth Sumpter and Brian Carlton, along with other individuals in Lynchburg in addition to Lynchburg College and American Legion Post 274 in Madison Heights.

Virginia's historical highway marker program, which began in 1927 with the installation of the first historical markers along U.S. Route 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,400 official state markers, most maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as by local partners in jurisdictions outside of VDOT's authority such as Lynchburg.

**Texts of the marker:**

Lucille Chaffin Kent (1908-1997)

Lucille Kent, born near here, was among the first Virginia women to earn an instructor's rating in aeronautics. In 1939 she began teaching meteorology, navigation, and civil air regulations at E. C. Glass High School. During World War II, she was ground school director for the Civilian Pilot Training Program (later War Training Service) in Lynchburg and instructed about 2,000 future military pilots at Lynchburg College, in commandeered facilities at the Miller Home for Girls, and at Preston Glenn Airport. After qualifying as an instructor on the Link Trainer, a flight simulator, Kent taught pilots how to navigate using instruments. She later wrote a comprehensive aeronautics manual.

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