

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dorothy McIntyre

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	McIntyre, Dorothy Layne, 1917-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 18, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:39:39).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Airplane pilot Dorothy McIntyre (1917 - 2015 ) was one of the first African American female licensed pilots. During World War II she taught aircraft mechanics at the War Production Training School in Baltimore, Maryland. McIntyre was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 18, 2004, in Cleveland, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_086
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Pioneering aviator and retired educator Dorothy Layne McIntyre, was born in Le Roy, New York in 1917. She completed her elementary and secondary school education in Leroy, enrolled in West Virginia State College, and was accepted into the Civilian Pilot Training Program. She received a pilot's license from the Civil Aeronautics Authority in 1940, becoming one of the first black licensed pilots among American women.

During World War II, McIntyre taught aircraft mechanics at the War Production Training School No. 453 in Baltimore, Maryland while simultaneously working as a secretary for the Baltimore Urban League. She applied for admission to WASP, a program staffed by women pilots who ferried bombers during the war, but was denied because of her race. After moving to Cleveland, Ohio, she was employed as a bookkeeper for businessman Alonzo Wright and taught for a time in the Cleveland Public Schools.

McIntyre was the subject of the dance production, *Take-Off From a Forced Landing*, created by her daughter, award-winning choreographer, Dianne McIntyre. She was a member of the Tuskegee Airman's Alumni Association and was profiled in *Distinguished African Americans in Aviation and Space Science*.

McIntyre was married to Francis Benjamin McIntyre for more than fifty years.

McIntyre was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 18, 2004.

McIntyre passed away on August 30, 2015.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dorothy McIntyre was conducted by Regennia Williams on June 18, 2004, in Cleveland, Ohio, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Airplane pilot Dorothy McIntyre (1917 - 2015 ) was one of the first African American female licensed pilots. During World War II she taught aircraft mechanics at the War Production Training School in Baltimore, Maryland.

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## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

McIntyre, Dorothy Layne, 1917-

Williams, Regennia (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

McIntyre, Dorothy Layne, 1917---Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Airplane Pilot

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, June 18, 2004. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:15 ?

Dorothy McIntyre was born January 27, 1917 in Le Roy, New York. Her mother, Lena Hart Layne, and her father, Clyde Layne, were both born and raised in Culpeper, Virginia and migrated to Le Roy where her father became head of a 500 acre farm. McIntyre's paternal great-great-grandmother, Mariah, was taken from a Guinea and enslaved in Virginia. McIntyre's mother was a teacher, but died from tuberculosis when McIntyre was five years old. Following her mother's funeral, McIntyre and her sister remained in Virginia with their grandparents and attended a segregated school. Upon returning to Le Roy, she attended integrated schools: Le Roy Elementary School and Le Roy High

School where she ran and played tennis. She recalls seeing the Native Americans in the Tonawanda Reservation on her way to Niagara Falls as a child and her life on the farm where she swam in the pond, went horseback riding and hunted. She talks about the history of the Great Migration and her paternal uncle who was a jockey.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:48  
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Dorothy McIntyre wrote the best paper in her class at Le Roy Elementary School in Le Roy, New York, but the principal denied her the \$50 prize because of her race. In 1936, McIntyre graduated from Le Roy High School and moved to Institute, West Virginia to study business administration at West Virginia State College. After realizing she already knew the information taught in her bookkeeping class, she was made lab instructor and her tuition was waived. There, McIntyre also attended Civilian Pilot Training Program and got her license in 1940, making her the first African American female pilot trained in the U.S. Despite this, she was turned away from government service due to her race and spent World War II flying planes for pleasure. McIntyre graduated from college in 1941, and moved to Baltimore, Maryland in 1942 to live with her sister after her husband went to war. There she worked for the Greater Baltimore Urban League and at night taught aircraft mechanics at War Production Training School No. 453.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:14  
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Dorothy McIntyre worked as an accountant for African American millionaire Alonzo Wright in Cleveland, Ohio where she met her husband. The two married before he left to serve in World War II. During the war, McIntyre worked for the Greater Baltimore, Maryland Urban League and taught aircraft mechanics at War Production Training School No. 453 until 1945. Upon her husband's return, the couple settled in the Glenville community of Cleveland, and had two daughters, Donna McIntyre Whyte and HistoryMaker Dianne McIntyre. McIntyre's husband was a postal worker. She worked as an accountant and a social worker, before completing night school, offered through Kent State University at Fenn College in Cleveland, to become a teacher. She taught until 1979. She talks about her teaching and aviation awards, her husband's family background in Cleveland and Jamaica and her medical history. She recalls two dangerous flying events, one when she was suspended upside down and another when she almost hit the hangar during takeoff.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:19  
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Dorothy McIntyre convinced her husband to quit his dangerous job at Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company's factory in Cleveland, Ohio and become a postal worker for the steady income and benefits. Though she was raised Baptist, McIntyre converted to Episcopalian at her husband's request when she had children. She is a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, who she trained with but did not serve in World War II with them. She talks about their significance in American history and the lack of recognition they received for serving their country. McIntyre describes the Piper J-3 Cub airplane she used to fly and remembers her maternal grandmother encouraging her to get an education, like her great-uncle George M. Lightfoot who was a Latin professor at Howard University in Washington, D.C. McIntyre compares the treatment of African Americans in the 1940s to 2004 and is not optimistic about the future of race relations in the U.S. She recalls instances of racial discrimination in stores

during her lifetime.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_005, TRT: 0:31:15  
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Dorothy McIntyre recalls being forced to try on shoes in the storage room of I. Miller shoe store in Washington, D.C. as a young woman. McIntyre tried many shoes on, left a mess on the floor and never bought any shoes. She remembers her students, some which came from tumultuous homes, but liked her and wanted to help her when they found out about her hip replacement. McIntyre gives advice to young African American students and expresses concern for African American children today, such as those her granddaughter taught at John F. Kennedy High School in Cleveland, Ohio, who drop out of high school because they do not see a future for themselves and are not encouraged to stay in school. McIntyre encourages everyone to take every opportunity presented to them, and vaguely remembers meeting Cleveland Judge Jean Murrell Capers. McIntyre concludes by narrating her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Dorothy McIntyre, Section A2004\_086\_001\_006, TRT: 0:07:48  
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Dorothy McIntyre narrates her photographs and her award from the International Women's Air & Space Museum in Cleveland, Ohio.