

## Transcript of *What'sHerName* Episode 31: [THE FLY GIRL Ruth Nichols](#)

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[music]

Olivia Meikle: Happy new year, Katie!

Katie Nelson: Happy new year!

OM: I've had a very lovely break.

KN: Me too. It's been very relaxing.

OM: Today, I'm going to tell you about an amazing woman. She was the very first woman to attempt a transatlantic flight.

KN: Oh!

OM: She was the only woman to hold simultaneous world records for speed, altitude, and distance.

KN: Cool.

OM: She was the first woman to pilot a commercial passenger airline.

KN: Wow!

OM: She beat Charles Lindbergh's world record time for a cross-country flight...

KN: Really?

OM: ...flying across the country in thirteen hours and twenty-one minutes.

KN: Wow. So, why isn't she as famous as Amelia Earhart? Why haven't I heard of this woman?

OM: That's exactly what I said! And that's what we're here to find out today. Her name is [Ruth Rowland Nichols](#) and her story is sad and inspiring, and fascinating and depressing.

[laughter]

KN: Sounds like perfect What'sHerName fodder.

OM: Classic What'sHerName!

KN: Yeah.

[music]

OM: I'm Olivia Meikle.

KN: And I'm Katie Nelson.

OM: And this is What'sHerName.

KN: Fascinating women you've never heard of.

[music]

OM: So, of course, one of the problems that we've talked about a lot is: in women's history you have one slot for any given category.

KN: Right, yeah.

OM: We get "female aviator," and that is taken by [Amelia Earhart](#). We might get [Bessie Coleman](#), if we want "white female aviator/black female aviator." But those are the only two we ever talk about. And that's ridiculous.

So, to learn more about Ruth Rowland Nichols, I talked to Keith O'Brien.

Keith O'Brien: I'm Keith O'Brien, and I'm a long time journalist, and the author of *Fly Girls*.

OM: A *New York Times* number one bestseller last year.

KN: Huh! Cool!

OM: It's a really incredible book to meet all these women, all these incredible female aviators that I've never heard of. But he's also just a brilliant writer! You get a fully-fleshed-out story, and you feel like you really know these people and you understand all the context for what's going on in a way that is really unusual for sort of a "pop history."

KN: Cool.

Keith O'Brien: It's stunning to go back and see how the press, almost exclusively a male press, wrote about these women. It made for great copy, great headlines, when women made daring flights or attempted to race in the National Air Races at the time. But these reporters would go out of their way to sneak little, belittling comments into their stories. When a man made a daring flight or when a man won an air race -- both of which were extremely dangerous, almost to the point of being reckless -- he was an aviator, you know, with a capital "A." Almost like a gladiator in the sky. When a woman would make these daring kind of flights, the press would call them "Lady Birds," "Mistresses of the Sky." I mean, it's... it's ridiculous.

OM: "The sweethearts of the air." It's so sweet.

KN: Yeah. So cute and sweet of them.

OM: When they're breaking men's records, and flying world-record speeds, and putting their lives on the line.

KN: Cute little ladies getting in an airplane. [laughs]

OM: Yeah.

Keith O'Brien: And Amelia herself would later say, and I'm paraphrasing here, "Would it kill them just to call us pilots?" In order to understand the story of Ruth Nichols, we first have to understand the story of Amelia Earhart. We tend to have forgotten everything about how she lived. Amelia Earhart didn't begin as a famous aviator who flew solo across the ocean. She began

as a social worker in Boston in the spring of 1928 who had a pilot's license, but now living in Boston as a social worker, wasn't doing much flying at all. And it is here in Boston where she gets, possibly, one of the most lucky breaks anybody could have gotten at this time. She's plucked from obscurity to ride as a passenger on a plane flown by men across the ocean. Amelia herself will do no flying. Her job is to sit behind the two men flying the plane, and take notes for a book she will write for [George Putnam](#) of [Putnam publishing](#), if and when this plane successfully makes it across the ocean.

O: So Amelia Earhart's rise to fame is... she called herself a sack of potatoes, she was a passenger on a flight.

K: And just “BEd” a woman.

O: She's freezing, sitting there in the back of the plane doing nothing. But when they landed she's famous!

Keith O'Brien: When it lands off the coast of Wales in June of 1928, Amelia Earhart has become the first woman to fly across the ocean. What's frustrating about this entire story is that in spring of 1928, Ruth Nichols was already an established East Coast pilot. What's especially frustrating to Ruth Nichols is that, Ruth Nichols lives just two miles from George Putnam, in Rye, New York. He very likely knew her family.

He could have certainly gotten her on the phone. But the plane that had been acquired to make this flight this seaplane was sitting in Boston Harbor. And so, instead of looking around in New York, they looked around in Boston. This is really the first of many things that doesn't break in Ruth Nichols favor. But, to Ruth's credit, she's not bitter, or if she is bitter, she does a great job of hiding it.

When Amelia returns to America in the summer of 1928, it's Ruth Nichols who's there to reach out to her, and welcome her back home. They go to lunch in Rye, New York. They are now two female aviators, standing shoulder to shoulder, but it's really just the beginning of what would be a very complicated friendship, and at times, rivalry between the two women.

So, Ruth is born in the early twentieth century on the upper east side of New York. She's the daughter of Erickson and Edith Nichols. Erickson Nichols, her father, descended from wealth in Staten Island and will, over the course of the next couple of decades, amass a little bit of a fortune, as a Wall Street trader. Ruth Nichols understands the expectations that her parents have for her. She is to grow up, marry, marry well, and marry young. When she does, all of the newspapers are gonna cover it in the society pages and it will be a big deal.

In the spring of 1919 as a graduation present, her father buys her a short airplane ride in Atlantic City. That kind of thing might sound crazy to us today, but this is post-World War One. The pilots have come home, there is a glut of pilots, a glut of planes. How do these pilots make money? Well, they start by barnstorming, going across the country, carnivals, air rides, airshows, air rodeos, as they were called.

Ruth goes to Atlantic City essentially for one of these. She takes a short ride in an open cockpit [JN4](#). It was a primitive biplane that was better known as Jenny. She's very afraid to make this flight. She doesn't like riding on elevators, she doesn't like roller coasters, she doesn't like heights. But, she doesn't want to reveal these fears to her father, so she smiles for the photograph and she climbs into the open cockpit with the pilot.

And she was scared to death, especially when the pilot revealed that he didn't just plan to just fly her around in the sky. He was going to do some flips, and do some acrobatics, and show off to his young teenaged passenger. And a surprising thing happens. By the time she reaches the ground, she would say that she felt as if, in flying, her soul was freed from her earthly body.

And it's really in that moment that everything changes for Ruth Nichols.

KN: Well, of course that reminds me of-

OM: Sophie Blanchard.

KN: Yeah. The same thing!

OM: Yeah, that the people who you least expect to enjoy this, absolutely love it.

KN: This is making me feel like maybe I need to become a pilot. Maybe I'm missing out on something up there.

OM: And I was gonna say, maybe I would like it, but I know that I don't.

KN: But you've never flown, you've never been a pilot. You've only been a passenger.

OM: I have, unfortunately.

KN: What do you mean?

OM: [laughter] When I was in college, one of your friends set me up with her brother on a blind date.

KN: Yeah, yeah. I remember that.

OM: And he was a pilot. And we went up in the air.

KN: He let you take over?

OM: He forced me to take over. He just took his hands off, and forced me to pull the plane up and fly. And I was not a fan of that experience, and we did not go on another date. [laughs]

KN: [laughs]

OM: So I've flown a plane and I didn't like it. So apparently, I am unlike these women.

KN: Apparently you're earthbound.

OM: Yeah. I'm just cowardly all the way through. [laughter] But, such was not the case for Ruth Rowland Ncholas. She immediately fell in love. This was where she wanted to be all the time. But she's supposed to get married and be a society lady.

KN: Right.

OM: She refuses! And she goes off to [Wellesley](#), the women's college, against her father's will, but her parents really, really do not approve of this choice, and during her sophomore year they just absolutely insist that she give this up. And so, she takes some time off and goes to Miami and stays in the family's home in Miami.

KN: Oh right, as you do.

OM: As you do. [laughter] I assume that this is time meant to be spent finding a husband.

KN: Oh, okay.

OM: Instead, she finds a flight instructor...

KN: Yes!

OM: ...and secretly takes pilot lessons.

KN: Wow.

OM: And by the time she graduates from Wellesley in nineteen twenty four, she graduates with her diploma... and a pilot's license.

KN: Hah! I love that. She's a regular [Phryne Fisher](#)!

OM: Ah yes, I think she is.

KN: And this is right at the beginning of that era, the [roaring twenties](#) when the youth are rejecting the values of the older generations.

OM: Exactly!

KN: This seems like a classic -- her parents want her to do 'what's done' and this new post-war generation says, "No, we are going to do the opposite of what you told us to do." Tell me she wore flapper dresses.

OM: I'm sure she did. I mean, she was a debutante.

KN: Did she have short hair?

OM: She did!

KN: That short bob?

OM: Yep. That short bob with the flip out. So the **very** fashionable...

KN: Wow! Cool.

OM: I just love picturing the moment when her parents find out that rather than doing the "society rounds" off in Miami, she's been secretly learning to fly.

KN: [laughs] Thoroughly modern.

OM: So, although you might expect that her parents are furious about this, pretty quickly they seem to come around.

Keith O'Brien: They weren't initially huge fans. This wasn't the life they had imagined for Ruth. But something interesting happens. While Ruth's father didn't imagine it going this way for her, he either tacitly approves of it by turning the other way, or actively encourages it as time goes on. And that to me is pretty interesting. Ericson Nichols by all accounts was not the kind of man that you disobeyed, whether you were a son or a daughter. So, in my opinion, he probably could have stopped Ruth, or he could have tried. And I don't think he did that. So while he didn't approve of what his daughter was doing. He did, at least, allow her to go down this path.

OM: As she's beginning to enter air races and do these really daring flights she's getting a lot of newspaper coverage.

KN: And that's what they're after anyway, right?

OM: Yeah, and maybe if her wedding can't be in the newspaper...

KN: Her derring-do!

OM: ...this is the next best thing.

KN: Yeah!

O: Exactly. And her father was very close friends with [Teddy Roosevelt](#). He had been in the [Rough Riders](#).

KN: Oh, wow.

OM: So I have to assume that he understands the appeal of adventure and danger and-

KN: An action-oriented life.

OM: Yeah. Even if he maybe didn't approve of it for a daughter, at some core level he has to understand.

KN: This is the 1920s, he has to get on board.

OM: Yeah. And he does! The papers call her the “Flying Debutante”. A Socialite. She's always referred to as a socialite, but as Keith O’Brien points out that really doesn't ring true. She didn't have a lot of money. At the beginning when she starts out, yes, she is a debutante, she’s a socialite. But her father is in Wall Street... this is the twenties...

KN: So [we know what's going to happen](#).

OM: Yes. So, after the crash, when she really starts to come into her career, her parents might be emotionally supportive, but they cannot be financially supportive.

[music]

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KN: It's designed for kids, but honestly, I think it's fun for adults. I have had many moments of awe based on these subscription boxes for children. [laughs]

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[music]

Keith O’Brien: People would write her over the years and ask for money, or ask her to sponsor them, or ask her to invest in something, and she would write back and say, and I’m paraphrasing here, “I don't have as much money as you think I do, sorry I can't really help.” When she sets her

mind to making daring flights, she can't buy herself a plane. She has to get one just like anybody else does, by hoping someone will let her borrow it or hoping a manufacturer will give her one.

OM: Now Amelia Earhart is in a very different situation because she is marrying George Putnam, the man who arranged for the original... sent her across the ocean, and one of the richest men in New York. So she has all the funding she needs, and she has a marketing machine behind her.

Keith O'Brien: For the National Women's Air Race in 1929, Amelia Earhart has her own plane. Ruth has to beg, borrow, and steal to get one. You know, she's writing letters, sending telegrams throughout the summer of 1929, begging manufacturers to let her borrow a plane. She finally gets one, borrows one for this race. It's not a very good one -- it does not go that well for Ruth.

So we talked about 1928 and this missed opportunity, when Amelia goes across the ocean and Ruth does not. In 1929 one year later, Ruth Nichols will compete in the first National Women's Air Race, an Air Derby, as they called it, a transcontinental race from Santa Monica, California to Cleveland, Ohio. These kinds of races were very common at the time, men had been participating in them for a couple of years. 1929 is the first time women are allowed to compete, and they'd had to fight to get there. In 1929 they begin lobbying air race officials, saying that they want in. Ruth Nichols, Amelia Earhart, their friend and colleague [Louise Thaden](#), are really leading the charge. And the male race organizers are intrigued.

They do know there's advertising value in having women race, but they want the women to race on their terms. They want each woman to fly accompanied by a man, and they don't want them flying over the Rocky Mountains. So they can't leave from California. They suggest that they leave from Nebraska or Minnesota, and fly on to Cleveland from there. Amelia Earhart, Louise Thaden, Ruth Nichols, they will have none of that.

Those three women in particular at the time, were three of the four most famous female aviators in this country and they vowed to boycott the air race if these absurd, clearly demeaning rules stay in place. Air race organizers know that's not going to look good for them, so they strike a compromise. Each woman can fly alone and they'll let them fly from California, but they will force them to stop in fifteen different cities along the way, essentially puddle jumping across the continent.

The women agree to this because they know this is the ultimatum offer.

OM: They all have to take the same route.

KN: Okay.

OM: Which kind of defeats a lot of the purpose of a race.

KN: Right. Take out all of the strategy.

OM: Exactly. But what the race organizers didn't realize is that by forcing everyone to stop at the same airfields, you guarantee a media presence in those places.

KN: Oh! Yes. You've created an event.

OM: Yes. And the newspapers are completely full of this race for nine days.

KN: Oh, Cool!

OM: And instantly all of these women aviators are famous.

KN: That's awesome!

OM: Everyone's been following this race in a way that they really didn't for the shorter and less-predictable men's races.

KN: I love that when something you think is gonna be a bad thing turns out to be a good thing.

OM: These women become media darlings (and that's probably the phrase that they would've used too).

Keith O'Brien: In November 1930, she finally gets the break she needs. In Cincinnati, Ohio there was a radio broadcasting magnet by the name of Powel Crosley. Powel Crosley buys a Lockheed and modifies it and Ruth Nichols has an opportunity to meet him in the fall of 1930. She basically sells Powel Crosley on the idea of letting her have, use, borrow his Lockheed. And Powel Crosley agrees! He could imagine his name next to hers in the newspapers as she made daring flights.

In quick succession now, now that Ruth Nichols finally has an opportunity, she is making fast and daring flights back and forth across the country, setting transcontinental speed records, setting altitude records, setting speed records over short distances. All in quick succession in late 1930/early 1931.

Voiceover in “old newreel” style voice: “A double-record-breaking flight across the country, ends as the plane taxis to a stop at Roosevelt field. It’s December 10, 1930 and who steps out of the plane? But one of America's leading women flyers, Ruth Nichols of Cincinnati! Ruth’s mom is plenty proud of the daughter who just established coast-to-coast records both ways and defeated Lindy's record time for a Los Angeles to New York flight, completing the trip in just thirteen hours, twenty one minutes. What a gal! What a plane! What a record!”

OM: And this is the moment when she decides she's ready to start raising funds and trying to become the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. She's already broken a few of Lindbergh's records at this point. So, why not set her sights on his biggest one?

Keith O’Brien: Here's what we've forgotten: Ruth Nichols has eclipsed Amelia Earhart. Undoubtedly. Just, objectively speaking, in the spring of 1931, Ruth Nichols is the most accomplished female aviator in this country. She has a list of records to her name, and now she is going to shock the world by flying solo across the Atlantic in this Lockheed that she's borrowed from Powel Crosley.

OM: Many prominent men refuse to sponsor her, and one well-known man she approached about helping her manage the entire venture turns her down, even though he's already helped several aviators raise funds and prepare for big flights, saying that he doesn't want her blood on his hands. And she's livid. She knows that he would help her if she was a man. And she finally splutters out, what is my favorite insult of all time: “You're... you're... mid-victorian!”

KN: [laughter]

OM: And it works! And he decides to help her.

Keith O’Brien: She knows that this flight is going to make her famous and finally prove her worth as an aviator, her ability as an aviator. She's got this plane that's ready. She's got book deals lined up and deals to sell footage of her flight to Hollywood. And she sets off in June 1931 to fly across the Atlantic.

You know, anyone who's ever flown to Europe knows you don't fly straight out to sea from New York or Boston, you follow the curvature of the earth.

It's the shortest route, it’s at times called the great circle route. And so she flies, essentially, up the coast of North America and she's going to stop to refuel and spend the night in New Brunswick, Canada. Then jump from there to Newfoundland, spend another night, then go from Newfoundland across to Europe. Ruth takes off in Brooklyn. Military planes escort her up the Connecticut River Valley. And as she reaches New Brunswick, she realizes there's a problem.

*Excerpt from Fly Girls Audiobook:* “Instead of an expansive field, wide and open. It was more like a small bowl. A veritable trap, she thought, dropped into a valley in the middle of the hilly, Canadian woods. With the sun in her eyes, photographers waiting on the ground, and darkness coming soon, Nichols decided to land. She came in fast at eighty miles an hour. Half blinded by the sun, Nichols missed her mark, touching down, not at the start of the runway, but in the middle. Realizing now that she wouldn't have enough time to stop the plane, Nichols hit the throttle trying to take off again. And for a moment, it looked like she would succeed. With the Akita's engine shrieking and its tires squealing, Nichols lifted the plane off the runway just before the landing strip came to an end. She was in the air again but still so low that the plane's propeller skimmed the ground. There was not enough time. There was not enough space. The Akita was heading for a rocky ledge and Nichols braced herself for the inevitable.”

KN: Ahhh!

OM: Huge crash.

KN: No!

OM: Totally destroys her airplane. She is one hundred percent convinced that this airplane is going to explode, because that's usually what happens.

KN: Yeah.

OM: So she's scrambling to get out of the plane as fast as she can. It doesn't explode, and she manages to get out.

KN: Okay.

OM: Here's all of the media. She's just crashed before she even started.

KN: Oh, jeez.

OM: And with a spirit that I absolutely love, she climbs out of the plane, stands in front of the media and yells, “Wire for another plane!”

[laughter]

There's no other plane. No one's gonna give her a plane.

Keith O'Brien: Even if there was, Ruth is seriously injured. She's broken vertebrae in her back. She's very lucky not to be dead or paralyzed. It will take her months to recover.

KN: But in her case, she didn't have a good choice, you know?

OM: Right!

KN: I mean, it was either land in the dark somewhere else...

OM: Right.

KN: ...or land now and crash.

OM: And you have twelve seconds as you come over to decide.

KN: Man.

OM: These airplanes are still mostly made out of wood.

KN: What?!

OM: These are wood and linen airplanes!

KN: Really?

OM: I was stunned at how dangerous these planes are.

KN: Wow. I was picturing a big metal... thing.

OM: They're experimenting with metal planes at this point, but they're all really still far too heavy to be able to fly well, and Ruth's plane, The Akita, is still a single-engine wood-fuselage plane.

Keith O'Brien: She will recover, and she will find investors to help her rebuild this Lockheed, and she'll take to the sky just a few months later in the fall of 1931 wearing a steel corset, a steel brace around her back. That's how badly she wants to keep flying. But the window of

opportunity has closed and Amelia Earhart will fly solo across the ocean about twelve months after Ruth made her attempt.

KN: Did she land at that landing strip in Newfoundland or..?

OM: She did not! She had one of the world's most famous male aviators fly her plane for her up to New Brunswick and Newfoundland. And she started the flight out of the airport in Newfoundland without having to do the flight.

KN: What! Are you serious?

OM: I'm not throwing shade at Amelia Earhart.

KN: Right.

OM: But it's so heartbreakingly unfair.

KN: Yeah. [noise of despair]

Keith O'Brien: Of course, she deserves a lot of credit for that flight. It's extremely dangerous to fly across the ocean solo in a single engine airplane. Almost absurdly dangerous. But Amelia had advantages that Ruth Nichols didn't.

It had to sting Ruth Nichols to know she had come so close to achieving her dreams, and that she had fallen short. In my opinion, Ruth Nichols really never gets over it. She would suffer for the rest of her life from aches and pains from that crash. And yet, within two and a half months, she's back in a plane and still planning to try to sell investors on an around-the-world flight. They were incredibly brave.

You know, and that's what bothers me about the reductive way we handle the history of women in aviation. In the time that Amelia Earhart flew, there were dozens of prominent female pilots racing planes, flying across the country. Trying to set records. Each of them was brave. Each of them was bold.

OM: But in 1938, [the war starts](#). The air races stop. All of these "frivolous" flying activities have to be directed to the war effort. She starts an organization in 1940 called [Relief Wings](#). Relief Wings is entirely female pilots. Anything that the air force might have been doing, they can now do.

KN: Cool.

OM: And this is officially the civilian arm of the Air Force. And so, by the end of the war, she has earned her Lieutenant Colonel ranking in the Civil Air Patrol.

KN: Wow! That's awesome.

Keith O'Brien: Ruth Nichols struggled after the time of the air races ended. The golden age of flying, as it's known and certainly the peak of the air races from, like 1928 to 1938. A lot of female aviators, in particular, struggled with entrenched discrimination and sexism. As accomplished and experienced a pilot as Ruth Nichols was, she could not get hired at any airline at all. At times the airlines just told her, point blank, "We can't hire you, you're a woman." And so, she ends up taking work, you know, working in essentially the PR office of a hospital in White Plains.

OM: She's the world record holder in **everything**, and no one will hire her. She can't even get a job as a flight instructor, and she's miserable. She is utterly miserable.

Keith O'Brien: And based on her diaries, she is struggling with both physical and emotional pain. Her friend and longtime rival Amelia Earhart of course, is gone. She is in constant contact with another one of their friends and fellow flyers from this time, it's [Louise Thaden](#). And Louise does what she can to help her friend, at one point writes Ruth Nichols a letter and essentially says, and I'm paraphrasing here, "Remember how strong you are. Remember that you wanted to fly around the world, wear that as an armor against whatever you're fighting now."

It's not enough.

In 1960, family cannot reach Ruth Nichols at her apartment in New York City, and they find her dead in her apartment. She overdosed on the painkillers she was taking at the time. It's a sad end, of course, to a great and promising life. It was heartbreaking for me, to know how close Ruth came to achieving her dreams, how she watched it all slip away. I think that's something that a lot of people understand, And Ruth had it writ large.

She was **almost** the first woman to fly solo across the ocean. Imagine the implications of that! Were it not for bad luck, a poor landing, would we know the name Amelia Earhart today?

OM: So Ruth Nichols was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in New York.

KN: Okay.

OM: That's also where [Adelaide Herrman](#) is buried from one of our previous episodes. And where basically, everyone famous from New York in the twenties or the thirties is buried. Like many prominent cemeteries, they have a map with all of the famous people.

KN: Yeah.

OM: Just like in our episode on [Claudia Jones](#). And you can go and see all the famous people's graves.

Keith O'Brien: Many of these women were cremated, it seemed to fit them. You know, they wanted to be cremated and scattered from a plane in the sky. And so, they are in the wind, really.

But Ruth was buried. It's a beautiful, sprawling cemetery. Massive! So I took a train up there on the morning that my book came out, and I went and I checked in at the office. Because you have to check in, when you go to the cemetery, and I explained that I was here to visit the grave of Ruth Nichols. They got out a map to help me find it.

On this map there are little icons for all the famous and important people that are buried there. Ruth Nichols does not have an icon. She is not on the map. And so using the map, and the staffer, and also an app that I downloaded onto my phone, we triangulated where she was, and off I went walking about a mile through the cemetery. And finally I did find her grave.

Woodlawn Cemetery is filled with massive mausoleums. Some of them are even styled like Egyptian Crypts. And Ruth Nichols' wasn't like that at all. It's just a simple tombstone like, one day, you or I might be buried under. It has her name, it has the date of birth, and her date of death. And then at the bottom sort of obscured in the ivy, there were three words. It said, "Beloved by all."

And it... and it just stopped me. Because she **was** beloved by all. **All** of these early female aviators were beloved by all. And I do hope... I do hope they will be again. Because they risked everything, sacrificed so much. It's easy to... to think about all these things that Ruth Nichols came so close to achieving and to find her story heartbreaking. I don't think that's the takeaway.

She was a brave, bold woman who defied her family's expectations and defied the expectations of the time to live the life that she wanted.

I think that's an inspiring story. I find it to be an inspiring story, myself.

OM: Thanks to Keith O'Brien, as well as to Taryn Roeder, and to Cassandra McNeil, and Highbridge Audio for generously allowing us to use clips from the *Fly Girls* audiobook. And thanks to our voiceover actor Matthew Meikle.

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You can also follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) where we post lots of photos each week.

If you'd like to learn more about Ruth Nichols and see amazing photos of pioneering women pilots in the early days of aviation, as well as links to Keith O'Brien's wonderful book and audiobook, check out our website at [whatshernamepodcast.com](http://whatshernamepodcast.com).

Music for this episode was provided by Daniel Henderson and his Big Band, Amanda Setlik Wilson, the Melody Weavers, Jeremy Davis, Maria Jeffers and the students of the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, Jeff Cuno, and the New Hot Five. Our theme song was composed and performed by Daniel Foster Smith.

What'sHerName is produced by Olivia Meikle and Katie Nelson. And this episode was edited by Olivia Meikle.