



The Lost Pilots: The Spectacular Rise and Scandalous Fall of Aviation's Golden Couple

Corey Mead

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Corey Mead's *The Lost Pilots* is the saga of two star-crossed pilots who soar to the greatest heights of fame, tailspin into scandal and crime, and go the ultimate lengths for a chance at redemption.

During the height of the roaring twenties, Jessie Miller longs for adventure. Fleeing a passionless marriage in the backwaters of Australia, twenty-three-year-old Jessie arrives in London and promptly falls in with the Bright Young Things, those gin-soaked boho-chic intellectuals draped in suits, flapper dresses, and pearls. At a party, Jessie meets Captain William Lancaster, married himself and fresh from the Royal Air Force, with a scheme in his head to become as famous as Charles Lindbergh, who has just crossed the Atlantic. Lancaster will do Lindy one better: fly from London to Melbourne, and in Jessie Miller, he's found the perfect co-pilot.

Within months the two embark on a half-year journey across the globe, hopping from one colonial outpost to the next. But like world records, marriage vows can be broken, and upon their landing in Melbourne Jessie and William are not only international celebrities, but also deeply in love.

Yet the crash of 1929 catches up to even the fastest aviator, and the couple finds themselves in dire straits at their rented house on the outskirts of Miami - the bright glare of the limelight fading quickly. To make ends meet Jessie agrees to write a memoir, and picks the dashing Haden Clarke to be her ghostwriter. It's not long before this toxic mix of bootleg booze and a handsome interloper leads to a shocking crime, a trial that rivets and scandalizes the world, and a reckless act of abandon to win back former glory.

The Lost Pilots is an extraordinary true story, brought to vivid life by Corey Mead. Based on years of research, and full of adventure, forbidden passion, crime, scandal, and tragedy, it is a masterwork of narrative nonfiction that firmly restores one of aviation's leading female pioneers to her rightful place in history.

The Lost Pilots: The Spectacular Rise and Scandalous Fall of Aviation's Golden Couple Details

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From Reader Review The Lost Pilots: The Spectacular Rise and Scandalous Fall of Aviation's Golden Couple for online ebook

Miriam says

Starting in medias res, the story flashes back and traces the history of two 1920s pilots Lancaster and Jesse, who break all types of flying records, then scrape by flying back and forth across North America before and during the depression. As their fortunes fail, their careers flounder. At an ebb, Lancaster accused of murdering their housemate, then stands trial from whence the story began and progresses.

The story is interesting, the flying exciting, the trial is earth-shattering. The reader works hard to dramatize the story.

Look for a different review in AudioFile Magazine <http://www.audiofilemagazine.com>

Rick Andrews says

Thanks to Corey Mead and Goodreads for providing this Giveaway...

I've been on a losing streak lately in terms of my book choices (Such as Artemis by Andy "The Martian" Weir). The Lost Pilots more than makes up for my book reading malaise. What a great book this is. I've always been a fan Of books on the Wright Brothers, Lindbergh, and the other pioneers of aviation, so this is right up my alley. A shame if this gem is not a major best seller. Enjoy it.

wade says

In the 1920's, this is the story of two adventurous pilots, a man from England and a woman from Australia. They are both married to other people when they team up to fly from Europe to Australia in this age of Lindbergh. This book has crashes, sex, romance, and even murder? This story would be hard to believe if it didn't really happen. Luckily for the author. the pair left detailed diaries and they were widely covered by the press. A nice non fiction look at the age of early aviation.

Kelly says

I won this book from a Goodreads giveaway. The title intrigued me and I had never heard of Lancaster or Chubbie....what a story and it's all true! I loved it and so enjoyed the storytelling of these dynamic people and some insight on the beginning of our aviation as you know it today. Corey Mead recounts their tale of Love, hardship, courage and loyalty make for a compelling tale of two very kindred souls. Highly recommend!!

Els says

The cover is *gorgeous*.

The title is intriguing.

It was free.

None of that forgives me for neglecting to read the subtitle or the synopsis.

I am a fool. Skimmed, did not appreciate, abandoned. I love reading about historical aviation... but broken families and scandals rocking worlds ain't my style.

Katie B says

Australian Jessie Miller flees to England in the 1920s looking for adventure and also to escape a loveless marriage. She soon meets the married William Lancaster, a pilot who is looking to top Charles Lindbergh's historic flight. The two devise a plan to set a new aviation record by flying from London to Melbourne as co-pilots. As the pair fall in love during the journey, they will soon realize success and happiness doesn't last forever. In less than a decade after their historic flight, William Lancaster is on trial for the murder of Jessie's biographer and lover, Haden Clarke. This is the true but often forgotten story of one of the biggest scandals in aviation of the 20th century.

This is definitely a case of a real life story that made the headlines at the time but because so much time as passed is not quite as well-known today. The first half of the book focuses more on the background history of the couple and on the aviation feat itself and the success and fame they experienced because of it. The second half of the book shows their fall from fame and goes into great detail about Lancaster's murder trial.

While the two pilots are certainly interesting and intriguing, the book dragged on a bit when Lancaster was away from Jessie and trying to earn money with Latin-American Airways. It's an important piece of the puzzle, but it was my least favorite part of the book. The trial itself was a good example of how some things were handled so differently back then. Given that I knew nothing about the pilots beforehand, I was actually shocked at how their story was wrapped up. Overall a good read and I particularly recommend if you are a fan of aviation and/or true crime.

I won a free copy of this book in a giveaway but was under no obligation to post a review. All views expressed are my honest opinion.

Shomeret says

I won *The Lost Pilots* by Corey Mead from Goodreads giveaways. It was published last month, so I'm about a month late with my review.

The aviation history aspect of this book was fascinating. I enjoyed reading about Jessie Miller's aviation accomplishments. I even liked reading about the discrimination against women that held her back because it gave me a clearer picture of the experience of woman pilots during this period.

I have friends who love true crime. So they are likely to feel that *The Lost Pilots* was enlivened by true crime, rather than marred by it. I will say that the true crime aspect of this book did affect me powerfully. I was very conscious of the fact that these were real people and I cared very much about Jessie Miller. When I became fully aware of the personal consequences of these events for Jessie, I felt sick to my stomach and couldn't continue reading until the following day. It seemed to me that she was more of a victim than the dead man, Haden Clarke, because she had to live with the repercussions for the rest of her life. (view spoiler)

Since I can't imagine writing about the lives of Jesse Miller and William Lancaster without introducing Haden Clarke into the mix, I suppose it was inevitable that this book was destined to include the true crime element, and that I would enjoy reading it less. Yet Corey Mead's writing, organization and research are first rate. So I would recommend *The Lost Pilots* from a historical perspective.

For the blog version of this review see <http://shomeretmasked.blogspot.com/20...>

Renee says

I'd never heard of Lancaster and Chubbie, so every fascinating detail was news to me. Having grown up near to the childhood home of Charles Lindbergh, my education in aviation has decidedly been narrowed upon our local hero. Author Corey Mead nicely organizes the life and times of the two determined and enthusiastic companions/sweethearts whose lives spin out of control in every way. The only thing that I did not like about the story is that (it appears that) Lancaster abandoned his children without much thought. That made me lost sympathy for him. Now I must look online and read more about these two. Great book for anyone who likes historical fiction, history fact, aviation, and the lovelorn.

Stephen says

I won this at goodreads.com!

In the 1920's, Jesse Miller meets William Lancaster in London. They're both pilots and they're both married. This will not stop them from becoming co-pilots.

Planning to top Lindbergh's record, they want to fly non-stop from London to Melbourne, Australia.

It's the true saga of the couple's soar to fame, their plunge into scandal and wrongdoing, and what they'll do for a shot at redemption.

Told in captivating detail, this part of history was all new to me...and I loved it.

Jean says

This was an interesting story, but the telling of it was disappointing. There were some curious omissions of information throughout—how, why did Jessie fall out of love with Bill? other smaller curious gaps—capped by a HUGE one at the end: what did Jessie do between 1933 and 1962? We are given one data point—she marries another pilot ca 1936. But what else? How did she survive? A huge part of the story was how broke they all were (stealing chickens to eat, e.g.)—what did she live on for the next 2 or 3 years after she went to England? Did she find a job? Why couldn't she have done that earlier? What else? Did she have other

romances? Did she continue flying? This isn't a biography of Bill Lancaster—it's the story of him and Jessie, don't drop her like a hot rock once he dies.

For my taste, the narrator of the audio book was also somewhat sub-par.

Karen says

Corey Mead's engaging book illuminates the perilous but thrilling lives of early aviators Jessie Miller and Bill Lancaster. Mead draws on multiple resources—including Jessie's own diary—to detail not only the facts of his story but also his subjects' emotions and conflicts. This is a rich historical saga, offering a true but novelistic tale of adventure, forbidden love, fame, fortune, tragedy, scandal, loyalty, and redemption.

Stephanie says

The story of two early aviators, Jessie Miller and William Lancaster. Both are married yet live apart from their spouses and meet in 1927 in London. After having flown airplanes in World War I, William is attempting to fly a new type of "light" aircraft from England to Australia. Though never having flown before, Jessie quickly comes aboard. With her bubbly personality, Jessie helps find funding and learns to fly in order to be a competent back-up on the flight. During the at times harrowing flight, Jessie and William fall in love but endeavor to hide it as they are both still married and the ensuing scandal would be damaging to their careers and reputations. Moving to the U.S., Jessie and William continue to fly but also find making money increasingly difficult as the world plunges into the Great Depression. Eventually things go awry, an alleged crime occurs and William and Jessie find themselves in a whole different kind of struggle.

Clare says

Lost Pilots is a treasure trove of tales from the unpredictable and downright dangerous world of aviation in the 1920s. Aviation and cross sea plane travel was a huge deal in the twenties and daredevil pilots were constantly trying to outdo each other to see who could take the longest and most dangerous journey. Among them was Bill Lancaster and Jessie Miller. They struck up a firm bond over their love of plane travel and were soon taking on journeys each more daring than the last. Despite Lancaster being married they also had a very off/on romantic attachment which would culminate in the bizarre death of writer Haden Clark, who'd been tasked with writing a book on the couple.

If you have an interest in the roaring twenties, don't be put off by the aviation angle because this book has plenty to offer history lovers. It's a fascinating read and did make me wonder how anyone survived these flights as Lancaster and Miller suffer with engine malfunctions, loss of fuel and would sometimes resort to following the coastline to find their way. They manage to walk away from crash landings due to a mix of skilful piloting and a lot of luck. Surviving letters and diary entries tell much of the story and the book is impeccably researched. Their passion for flying and each other really shines through and though the risks and stress were huge, they would never waiver from their belief that it was all worth it. This book is a real hidden gem and well worth your time. An excellent read on a fascinating subject.

I received a ARC from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for a fair review.

Terry Pearson says

Thanks to Goodreads, I won a copy of this book.

Guilty omission: I wanted to read this because my father was a pilot ~~???~~ and reading anything remotely related to flying comforts me since his passing. That said, I do have a passion for history. This book fed both my needs.

The 1920's : This is the story of Jessie Miller running away from her husband and William Lancaster who is married and wanting to break Charles Lindbergh's historical flight. These two cross paths and develop a plan that will set a new record. During their voyage they fall in love but love doesn't come with a guarantee and it is only a matter of time before Jessie takes a lover, Haden Clarke, her biographer.

The book switches focus to William and his trial for the murder of Haden Clarke and the outcome. My father was born in 1926 so he might have heard about it but I hadn't and I'm glad I had the good sense to enter the giveaway.

Robin says

This was a fascinating look back into the world of early aviation. The love story between Jessie and Bill is intriguing as the time period doesn't really allow for this type of romance. I enjoyed learning more about pilots during the inception of long distance flights. The only thing I would have liked to have seen more about would be their legacy in their families. Overall good read, although it took me awhile to get through.

I received an ARC for an honest review.
