



**FÉDÉRATION AÉRONAUTIQUE
INTERNATIONALE
Ballooning Commission**

Hall of Fame

**MRS. MADELEINE SOPHIE (ARMANT) BLANCHARD
INDUCTED 1995**



MARIE MADELEINE SOPHIE (ARMANT) BLANCHARD

France

Inducted 1995

Professional Aeronaut

25 March 1778 – 6 July 1819

Madame Blanchard, widow of Jean-Pierre François Blanchard, became a professional balloonist after her husband's incapacitation. She is believed to be the first woman to adopt ballooning as a career. She was appointed "Aeronaut of the Official Festivals" for Napoleon. After his fall and the restoration of the French monarchy, Madame Blanchard flew for King Louis XVIII as "Official Aeronaut of the Restoration."

Image: Library of Congress LC-USZ62-12723

(1778-1819)

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Sophie Blanchard, born March 24, 1778 Three Canons town of Yves and died in Paris July 6, 1819, Minister of Empire, widow of famed balloonist Jean-Pierre Blanchard, was the first woman professional aeronaut, with 67 ascents happy, and the first woman to die in an air crash when the balloon, where she launched fireworks, caught fire in the air in Paris over Tivoli gardens.

Biography :

Sophie Blanchard was born Marie Madeleine Sophie Armant March 24, 1778, in Trois-Canons, common Yves near La Rochelle.

In 1804, at the age of 26, she married the pioneer of ballooning Jean-Pierre Blanchard, who was also the first professional balloonist in the world, and made her first balloon ascent. The couple is forced into bankruptcy, Sophie Blanchard decided to become the first female professional aérostièrre, hoping that such an event will attract enough people to solve their financial problems.

It is not the first woman balloonist, the Marquis de Montalembert who took his wife the Marchioness de Montalembert, the Countess de Montalembert, the Countess of Podenas and miss Lagarde as passengers for a trip to tethered balloon above Paris on 20 May 1784. It is not the first woman to make a flight in a gas balloon, this privilege being returned to Élisabeth Thible June 4, 1784. She is the first woman to fly through her own balloon, and the first to embrace the balloonist career.

In 1809, her husband had a heart attack in flight and falls from his balloon. He died of his injuries. Sophie Blanchard continues free flight presentations, specializing in night flights. She conducts experiments with parachutes, dropping dolls from her balloon and plays from time to time to dump baskets loaded with fireworks clinging to small parachutes. She uses a gas balloon filled with hydrogen, which, besides the fact that it allows her to carry significantly more weight, eliminates the need to maintain a heat source like for hot air balloons.

She became a favorite of Napoleon Bonaparte, who appointed her as minister in 1804, succeeding André-Jacques Garnerin. She would have considered plans to lead an invasion of Europe in balloons.

June 24, 1810, she made an ascent on the Champ de Mars in Paris at the request of Napoleon Bonaparte, to accompany the Imperial Guard in the celebration of his marriage to Marie Louise of Austria. She made a new one for the "Feast of the Emperor" in Milan, on 15 August 1811. At the birth of Napoleon's son, she is flying over Paris and spreads announcement birth city.

She also attracts the favor of Louis XVIII during the Restoration, which gives her the title of "official aérostièrre of the Restoration."

Famous throughout Europe, she gives many performances in Italy. In 1811, she traveled from Rome to Naples by making a mid-term stop, and a climb over 3600 meters. The same year, she is forced to make a climb to avoid a storm near Vincennes, which caused her to lose consciousness and realize a flight of more than 14 hours 30. She crosses the Alps in a balloon, with a bleeding nose because of the altitude, and nearly drowned in 1817 after failing to land on a flooded field.

6 July 1819, she flew over Tivoli Gardens to launch a firework from her balloon. A slight collision with the trees when flying moves accidentally rockets without her knowledge, and in

the fire development, some of them put fire to the balloon filled with hydrogen. The balloon begins to descend slowly but hit the roof of a house in the Rue de Provence, reversing the pod and ejects Sophie Blanchard, crashing into the street. Despite the care, she died ten minutes later, having broken neck.

Dostoyevsky, in *The Player* (1867) refers to this tragedy, "[roulette] there was a moment of waiting, a similar emotion, perhaps, to that felt by Blanchard, when at her Paris was precipitated her balloon on the ground. "

Source Wikipedia





Her Grave at the cemetery of Pere Lachaise in Paris is representing a balloon burning.