

Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

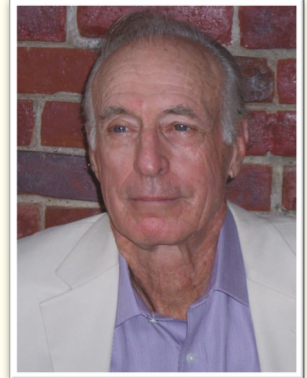
Aeronautics Division

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Ralph Wetterhahn to Speak at Montana Aviation Conference

Photo Courtesy of Ralph Wetterhahn



Aviation archaeologist Ralph Wetterhahn will be one of three keynote speakers during the upcoming 2024 Montana Aviation Conference in Butte. Ralph has become a real-life "Indiana Jones", traveling the world from Cambodia to the Russian Far East, Guadalcanal, and the Philippines in search of aircraft wrecks, our nation's missing-in-action, and the amazing stories these discoveries reveal.

Ralph is widely read in Smithsonian Air & Space, Military Officer Magazine, Popular Science, Leatherneck, and Veterans Magazine, and others. He is also the author of four books: "The Last Battle" (won the prestigious Colby Award), "The Last Flight of Bomber-31", "Shadow makers", and "The Early Air War in the Pacific".

Ralph's documentary efforts have appeared on NOVA, Discovery, and National Geographic Channels, including "The Last Flight of Bomber-31", "Missing in Mig Alley", and as the lead detective in "Dogfight Over Guadalcanal". He has appeared in the Military Channel series "Air Aces", featured in the segment on triple ace General Robin Olds.

A graduate of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) class of 1963, Ralph served three tours during the Vietnam War flying fighters in both the United States Air Force and Navy. He is credited with downing a MiG-21 during the now-famous "Bolo Mission." He flew 180 combat missions in the F-4 Phantom and A-7 Corsair, made 144 carrier landings, and later logged 1,000 hours in the F-15 Eagle.

Be sure to register for the conference, this is one you won't want to miss!

Montana Aviation Conference Registration Open

The Aviation Organization of Montana (AOM) is pleased to announce the Montana Aviation Conference will be held in Butte February 29 to March 2, 2024. The conference brings Montana's aviation organizations and the flying public together for three days of speakers, seminars, workshops, awards ceremonies, business meetings, comradery, and social events. It is an opportunity for those from the aviation community to connect, learn, and exchange ideas and information. Around 500 participants are expected this year.

If you are interested in saving money on your registration fees, check out the "take off to landing" package on the registration website and register by February 1, 2024!

Lodging is available at a special rate by calling the Copper King Hotel in Butte at 406-533-6960. Mention the [Montana Aviation Conference](#) for discounted room rates.

Reservations must be made before January 1, 2024, to get the event rate of \$109 + tax for single room, \$109 + tax for double room, or \$169 + tax for family suite.

For more information, contact the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Aeronautics Division at 406-444-2506 or email mdtad@mt.gov.



Speaker, vendor, attendee, and guest conference registration is open and may be completed by scanning the QR code:

Montana Woman Earns Champion Title!

In the summer of 2023, Britt became the 2023 US Advanced National Champion! Later, she placed 7th out of 58 pilots, making her the highest scoring American pilot. The US team placed 3rd in the world as a team.

Britt Lincoln is an accomplished competition aerobatic pilot. She began her aerobatic training and competition in 2019. She has competed in 20 aerobatic competitions and has won 14. In her first Advanced category contest, Britt placed 4th out of 24 pilots at the US National Aerobatic Championships to earn a spot on the US Advanced Aerobatic Team. She and her seven teammates, collectively the top eight pilots in the US, competed at the 2023 World Advanced Aerobatic Championships (WAAC) representing the United States of America. Britt is the only female on the US team and the first female in 15 years to compete for the United States at the WAAC.

Britt holds a 500-foot Statement of Aerobatic Competency card and made her airshow debut last summer.

Britt was born and raised on a ranch in Northern Montana. Her first flight was with her grandfather, Roger Lincoln (an FAA Wright Brothers Award recipient) when he took her up in their Cessna 180; she was only three weeks old. Eventually, her grandfather taught her to fly in their Piper Super Cub on the family's grass strip. She is a 4th generation pilot, but the first female pilot in her family. Britt's great grandfather and grandfather were both crop dusters.



Photo Courtesy of Britt Lincoln

Britt holds degrees in both Accounting and German; she spent the first fifteen years of her career in the finance world. Although she learned to fly from her grandfather at a young age in the, it wasn't until November of 2017 that she obtained her private pilot certificate. Brit obtained five ratings within a year of earning her private pilot certificate and since that time she has since "retired" from her career in finance to pursue the world of aviation.

Britt has flown approximately 40 different types of aircraft in her relatively short pilot career. Aside from flying one of the most extreme aerobatic competition aircraft in the world, she has also flown experimentals, turboprops, and light jets. She currently holds Commercial, Multi-Engine Instrument, and Commercial Sea Plane ratings, as well as her tailwheel endorsement.

Britt serves on the Board of Directors of the International Aerobatic Club and remains a strong advocate of aviation in Montana.

Congratulations Britt, and thank you for your powerful representation of Montana!



Photos Courtesy of Britt Lincoln



Yellowstone Airport Builds New Terminal

Yellowstone Airport is in the process of constructing a new terminal building. The project planning phase began in late 2014, and will be completed in early 2025 after nearly two years of construction efforts. The building will be approximately 32,000 square feet and will meet needs that the existing terminal currently does not.

The old terminal was originally constructed in 1965. It has exceeded its planned useful life and the structure is too expensive to continue to maintain.

The new terminal is funded by 94.5% federal funds and will meet the needs of today's travelers. The increased capacity will also allow the airport to service two regional jets simultaneously.

The new terminal building will have two boarding gate hold rooms, restrooms on both sides of security, and an indoor baggage claim. These amenities currently do not exist in the original building. Due to the efficiency of modern design and construction new terminal will use less energy, despite being larger than the old terminal.

Yellowstone Airport is the last primary airport in Montana to build a new terminal, or dramatically expand an existing terminal building in recent years. It will remain the smallest primary airport terminal in the state.

Although the old terminal is slated for demolition, the original terminal sign will be relocated to the new building. Some repurposed original stonework from the old terminal will be included in the new building's accent walls. The old airport beacon will be replaced and it will be relocated to the inside of the new passenger waiting areas.



Photo Courtesy of MDT Aeronautics Staff



Photo Courtesy of
MDT Aeronautics Staff

Aircraft Mechanic Inspector Refresher Seminar to be Held in Butte

Online registration for the Aircraft Mechanic Inspection Authorization Renewal (IA) Seminar is now available! The seminar will once again be offered in conjunction with the Montana Aviation Conference, March 1st and 2nd, 2024 in Butte. Online registration closes February 23, 2024. Early registration is \$110. Walk-ins for the seminar will be accepted at the door at full price of \$130 on a first come first served basis while space is available. The IA seminar registration includes the IA seminar and access to the conference.

Seating is limited, so be sure to register early!

For additional details regarding Montana Aviation Conference cost and registration, please see page 1. A list of speakers is available on the registration website. When registering, please indicate the sessions you plan to attend. Eight hours are required to meet 14 CFR § 65.93 but you are invited to attend as many sessions as you would like.

You do not need to be a mechanic to attend this seminar and learn!

For more information, please contact Derrick Olheiser at 406-444-9592 or email at dolheiser@mt.gov.



To register, scan the QR code :

For more information regarding Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspection Authorization Renewal requirements and forms, scan the QR code.



Sperry Appointed to Aeronautics Board

Grayson Sperry of Bozeman was appointed to the Aeronautics board in October 2023 as the representative for the Chamber of Commerce.

He replaced Tim Sheehy, who stepped down from the board earlier this year.

Grayson owns Rideline Aviation and Aerotronics in Bozeman and Billings. The businesses focus on airplane management, flight instruction, and avionics installations.



From the staff of
MDT Aeronautics

Tim, Matt, Karen, Stephen,
Derrick, Page, Madeleine,
Barb, Jeff, Adam and Bron.

2024 Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic

There will be a Flight Instructor Refresher Course (FIRC) happening in Helena on February 2nd and 3rd, 2024. The MDT Aeronautics Division is organizing Aviation Seminars to provide the two-day course approved by the FAA. The seminar will take place from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. You do not have to be a flight instructor to attend.

Additional information about pilot registration is at:
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/regpilot.aspx>



To sign up, visit:
<https://aviationseminars.com/mt-firc/>
or scan the QR code.



Calendar of Events

January 5-7, 2024— Winter Survival Clinic. Sugar Loaf Lodge, Anaconda. See above for more details.

January 17-18, 2024— Aeronautics Board Meeting - Loan and Grant Awards. MDT Headquarters, Helena.

February 2-3, 2024— Flight Instructor Refresher Course (FIRC). Double Tree Hotel, Helena. See above for more details.

February 29 - March 2, 2024 — Montana's 39th Annual Aviation Conference . Copper King Hotel, Butte.

March 2-3, 2024 — Aircraft Mechanic Inspector Refresher Seminar. Copper King Hotel, Butte. See above for more details.

March 1, 2024 - Montana Aircraft and Pilot Registration renewal due date.

MDT Aeronautics Division

PO Box 200507

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reading
*Montana and
the Sky.*
Fly Safe!**

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FAA Weather Camera Locations



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