



## Rock Creek Airport Re-Opens

By: Jim Greil, Chief, Airports/Airways Bureau

For all of you who always wondered just what happened to that great little landing strip just outside of Clinton, MT, located at the junction of the Rock Creek and Clark Fork Rivers, The Montana Aeronautics Division is proud to announce the reopening of the Rock Creek Airstrip.

The Rock Creek airstrip, also formally known as Elliott field, was built several years ago through a joint venture of the then Montana Aeronautics Commission and several local public and private landowners. The airstrip is located just East of the Rock Creek exit on Interstate 90, about 5 miles East of Clinton Montana. Actually, the airstrip was built just prior to the construction of the interstate, and a few years after construction, the airstrip had to be moved in order to accommodate the interstate construction and the adjoining Rock Creek exit. After many years of lease agreements with various owners of a large portion of privately owned land on which much of the runway was situated, the land was purchased by Mr. Gary Lundberg. Gary tried with the support of the Montana Aeronautics Division to develop an airpark with the runway similar to many others where individuals could purchase lots to accommodate hangar homes and enjoy this unique airstrip, however, much of the effort was denied by the Missoula County commissioners who felt for some reason that the airstrip might be a threat to the local wildlife and nearby residences. This move by the Missoula County commissioners effectively stopped

the airpark plans. As a direct result of this, Gary was forced to re-evaluate his options for the airstrip and look for alternate ideas for his property and in the end, the airstrip was closed to the general public and the Aeronautics Division withdrew from the operation.

A few years later, the idea of reopening the airstrip was brought forth once again by Gary and some other interested pilots within the local community which sought refuge from the hassles associated with flying small general aviation aircraft out of the Missoula airport. Of course, the Montana Aeronautics Division welcomed the chance to see the Rock Creek airport reopened and after a long period of initial logistics, leases, engineering, right of way issues and some other minor problems were sorted out, the big day finally came on July 14, when Mike Rogan and myself met at the airport with representatives from the Missoula Department of Transportation, Gary Lundberg and Bob Brunson in order to "re-open" the airport by surveying, mowing and coning the new runway.

The airstrip is now open once again, although it's total length has been shortened slightly to 3600' due to a still unresolved lease for the farthest East end with the Bureau of Land Management, however, we hope to have a full 4000' runway in the near future. Many thanks are in order to Mr. Gary Lundberg for his renewed interest in seeing the airport open to the flying public. Thanks also to Mr. Bob Brunson of East Missoula. Bob has been a firecracker of support for this project and was the catalyst in bringing all of the parties together to get this accomplished.



See page 7 of the Newsletter for a Directory Page of the Rock Creek Airport.

# Administrator's Column

## **Senator Burns and Congressman Rehberg appointed to FAA committee:**

Montana's Congressman Denny Rehberg and Senator Conrad Burns will both sit on a joint House-Senate conference committee to oversee the reauthorization of important programs related to the FAA that impact Montana transportation and commerce. Both representatives look forward to working together to make sure Montana's interests are protected and the important programs such as EAS and AIP are maintained. Montana is very fortunate and proud to have these gentlemen play such a key role in looking out for Montana aviation interests. †

## **Small airport service losses continue:**

Demand for air travel remains weak, regional jets and low-cost airlines continue to grow and smaller airports show the biggest losses in service according to a recent report issued by DOT Inspector General Kenneth Mead. Even larger airports recorded traffic losses in June 2003, compared with June 2000. Montana continues to enjoy excellent air service and is fairing very well compared to the information contained in this "doom and gloom" report. Through June 2003, Montana carried just 1.9% less passengers compared to June 2002. Fourteen airports report statistics for passengers on and off each month to the Aeronautics Division for compilation. Of these 14 airports, eight airports are proudly reporting increases over 2002 traffic with six airports slightly below last years numbers. Thanks to the airports for providing the facilities to attract and retain the airline companies and to all who support these efforts. †

## **Support for AOPA Airport Watch Program:**

Senior U.S. Senator Fritz Hollings has offered praise and funds for AOPA's Airport Watch program and its toll-free security hotline. Sen. Hollings successfully offered an amendment directing the Department of Homeland Security to continue funding the 1-866-GA-SECURE hotline to report suspicious activities at an airport. Sen. Hollings said, "Airport Watch is a common-sense and effective approach

to securing our nation's general aviation airports. AOPA and TSA have got it right on this one." Airport Watch is modeled after the popular neighborhood watch program and asks general aviation pilots and others on GA airports to watch for and report any possible criminal or terrorist activity. †

## **Airmen Email Address Registry:**

The FAA Airmen Certification Branch has developed a system for on-line services whereby airmen may register an email address and setup an on-line account for communicating with Airmen Records in Oklahoma City. The first feature that this service provides is the ability to change a permanent address on-line. Additional features and functionality are currently being developed. To learn more, visit <http://registry.faa.gov/amsvcs.asp>. †

## **Contract let to demolish Meigs Field:**

A \$1.5 million contract for the final destruction of Meigs Field to tear up the runway and remove electrical infrastructure could see work beginning within 30 days. AOPA will continue to pursue its formal FAA complaint against the city for improperly closing the airport. A Chicago City alderman has called for public hearings to question Mayor Daley's secret midnight destruction of the airfield. Alderman Joe Moore has suggested the city reconsider a plan proposed by AOPA that would have the city buy the airport from the park district using federal funds. Moore is not likely to get the hearings. Many organizations have partnered in the fight and supporters have tried everything from public, legislative, and congressional pressure to lawsuits to get Mayor Daley to see reason. How the mayor closed the airport may have been illegal, but the courts so far have affirmed that he had the legal right to do so. †



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Fax - (406) 444-2519  
P.O. Box 200507  
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<http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/aeronautics/>

Debbie K. Alke, Administrator  
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# Calendar

**July 29-August 4, 2003** - EAA Airventure Oshkosh.

**July 31-August 2, 2003** - Evel Knievel Daze/Fly-In, Butte. For further information phone (406) 494-3771.

**August 7-9, 2003** – Montana Antique Airplane Association annual fly-in, Three Forks Airport. Young Eagle Rides, Flour Bombing, Spot Landing and more! For further information phone Steve or Cindy Kleimer at (406) 586-2307.

**August 8-10, 2003** – 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Splash-In Fly-In. Lower Stillwater Lake 14 miles west of Whitefish, MT on US Hwy. 93 West. For further information go to [www.stillwaterlanding.com](http://www.stillwaterlanding.com).

**August 8-10, 2003** – Northwest Mountain Family Fly-in, McCall, Idaho. For further information phone Frank Lester (208) 334-8780 or John Goostrey (800) 453-0001 ext. 225 or one line at familyflyin.net or [www.faa.gov/fsdo/boi](http://www.faa.gov/fsdo/boi).

**August 10, 2003** – Stagger Wing fly-in pancake breakfast, Seeley Lake Airport, 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. For further information contact Geanette Cebulski at (406) 677-3423 or 3219.

**August 15–17, 2003** – Montana Fun Weekend, Cut Bank International Airport. Event contacts – Car show and car events, Roy Nollkamper (406) 873-2137/5566/450-1078; Airplane fly in and aircraft events, Dennis Lenoir (406) 873-2221; Vendors, booths and general event information, Dave Anderson (406) 873-5616.

**August 23-24, 2003** – Fort Peck Fly-In, for further information phone Lanny Hanson at (406) 228-2433 or (406) 228-4848.

**August 28-30, 2003** – INAC annual conference, Kelowna, BC.

**August 30-September 1, 2003** – Labor Day Weekend – West Yellowstone – “No-Host Aviation Social Event” possible activities may include a pot luck dinner Saturday evening under the largest rain fly or a fly-out breakfast to the Warbird Café in Driggs Sunday morning. For further information contact Geanette Cebulski (406) 677-3423 or 3219.

**August 30-September 1, 2003** – Cleveland National Air Show, Cleveland, OH. For further information phone (216) 781-0747, or [www.clevelandairshow.com](http://www.clevelandairshow.com).

**September 6, 2003** – Northern Skies Aviation Open House and Fly-In. 8:00 am–6:00 pm, Laurel Municipal Airport (6S8). Airplane and helicopter rides and displays, contests for pilots and kids, free workshops by Northern Skies Flight instructors for pilots and non-pilots. For more information contact Northern Skies at (406) 628-2219 or [www.northernskies.com](http://www.northernskies.com).

**September 12-14, 2003** - Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

**October 30-November 1, 2003** – AOPA Expo 2003, Philadelphia, PA. AOPA’s annual Expo is the premier General Aviation convention, offering pilots and aviation enthusiasts an opportunity to see the latest equipment and aircraft, attend more than 80 hours of aviation seminars, and meet and greet fellow pilots. For more information phone (301) 695-2000 or [www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org).

## Mountain Search Pilot Clinic

The Montana Aeronautics Division is inviting thirty registered volunteer search pilots to attend the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Mountain Search Pilot Clinic at Kalispell City Airport on September 12-14, 2003. The clinic will kickoff on Friday, September 12, 2003 at 1900 with a mountain flying ground school at the Westcoast Outlaw Hotel (Remington Room).

A total of two hours dual flight instruction in mountain search flying techniques will be provided on Saturday and Sunday. Instruction in the ground and airborne operation of ELT direction finders and outdoor survival instruction will be provided Saturday and Sunday. Pilots will be scheduled for these sessions while awaiting flight-training schedules. The ground school will continue on Saturday evening at 1900 at the Westcoast Outlaw Hotel (Remington Room). Any interested person is invited to attend the ground school sessions.

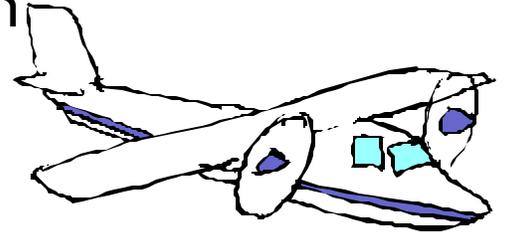
The registration fee to attend the entire clinic is \$50.00; all registered Montana pilots should receive an application, for further information please contact our office.

## Big Sandy Fly-In Breakfast & Toy Show



*The annual North Central Hangar of Montana Pilot's Association Fly-in Breakfast and Toy Show was held at the Big Sandy Airport on July 12th. Many conventional, vintage, classic and experimental aircraft were on display. An aerobatic demonstration, flour bombing and spot landing events were enjoyed by all. Young Eagle Flights for students ages 8-17 and train rides for the younger children was sponsored by Great Falls Experimental Aircraft Association.*

# Schafer Meadows Work Session Another Big Success!



*Pictured are (l-r) Deb Mucklow & Al Koss, USFS; Loren Smith, Prairie Kraft Specialties, Great Falls & Debbie Alke. Loren outdoes himself each year by providing a great meal for the volunteers on Saturday night and this year was no exception, thanks again Loren! Al Koss announced that he will be transferring with USFS to another area; we will miss him and appreciate his assistance throughout the years.*



*Lanny Hanson, Aeronautics Board member from Glasgow; Bob Brown, Secretary of State; and Joe Roberts and Jeff Morrison of Helena took some time out after a busy day to relax in the shade – with the sweltering temperatures we’ve been having shade has become a valuable commodity.*



*A Schweizer 269C Helicopter flew into the work session and behind the controls was Representative Denny Rehberg along with his instructor Kent Potter of Laurel. Pictured are Kent, Denny’s son A.J., Denny and John Giacometto of Stevensville. We certainly appreciate all of the assistance we receive from Representative Rehberg and thank him for his outstanding support.*



*Wade Cebulski of Seeley Lake and Guy Willson of Moore hung new windsocks during the work session. Windsocks are a very important reference for pilots when flying into these backcountry strips.*



*We are always happy to see our international visitor Bram Tilroe of Leduc Alberta Canada show up to lend a helping hand; he and Bill Gallea of Helena take time out for a much needed water break.*



*Volunteers gathered at Schafer to repair fence, pick up rocks, fill gopher holes, replace the windsocks and clear brush on the airfield. The Schafer airstrip is maintained through a cooperative effort between the US Forest Service and the Montana Aeronautics Division. The Division coordinates with the Montana Pilots Association and the US Forest Service to organize this annual volunteer work session.*

*These hardworking fencing volunteers did a first-rate repair job!!*



*The runway maintenance crew had quite a job ahead of them 3,200' to be exact!*



*Chuck Manning, Aeronautics Board Member, Kalispell and Secretary of State Bob Brown are just the kind of volunteers you like to see, always a smile no matter how big the task.*



*After a hard day's work volunteers finally get a chance to kick back and visit with friends old and new. Thank you to all of the people that work so hard to make this backcountry strip a safe place for pilots to enjoy, you couldn't ask for more beautiful surroundings.*



# In Memory of Phyllis Sammons



Phyllis Clara Vogt Sammons passed away on June 20, 2003. She was born on September 5, 1927 to parents Ella and Henry Vogt in St. Paul, MN. She graduated from Macalester College. Phyllis and Herb Sammons met in Glacier Park on June 11, 1948 and were married on June 11, 1949.

Phyllis taught journalism at Cut Bank High School in the 1950s and substituted for many high school classes from 1966-1970. She played organ at her church for many years. Phyllis loved to play most card games, especially bridge. She also enjoyed reading and crocheting. She had her pilot's license and was an active member of the Montana Flying Farmers.

She leaves behind four children, Patty & Bill Clark of Casper, WY; Judy Moats of Bozeman; Gail Sammons of Henderson, NV; and Roger & Lisa Sammons of Cut Bank. Phyllis also had six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Our sympathy goes out to the entire Sammons family.

## Missoula Airshow Entertains All

By: Jim Greil, Chief, Airports/Airways Bureau



Saturday July 12<sup>th</sup>, Missoula's Johnson-Bell International Airport was host to a spectacular airfest featuring all sorts of food, refreshments and fun, not the least of which was highlighted by a performance by the United States Air Force Thunderbirds flight demonstration team in their well equipped and highly maneuverable F-16 fighting falcons.

Highlights of the days activities included static displays of a virtual what's what of modern day and vintage military fighters and trainers and a whole host of various commercial civilian and homebuilt aircraft. One of my high school chums from Missoula was also on hand, after having flown in with his highly advanced, United States Navy Test pilot School FA-18 Hornet, which was used as a static display for the day. Just a few of the other unique static displays included a B-52, C-130, P-3 Orion, F-15 Eagle, F-16 Falcon, F-18 Hornet, an A-10 Worthog, a Saberjet, turbine T-34s, P-51 Mustang, B-17 Flying Fortress, B-24 Liberator and many other military and civilian aircraft, including lots of homebuilts and similar aircraft. The multiple and various flight performances lasted all day and were top notch, including a couple of Extra 300s, and joint A-10 and P-51 maneuver, a fly-by of an F-117 Stealth Fighter, a thrilling husband/wife parachute jump and various other entertaining and thrilling acts, including of course the Air Force Thunderbirds.

Although the festivities were highly entertaining, one pall was put over the airshow in regards to the tragic incident involving the very last flying Heinkel HE-111. The HE-111

was arguably the most famous German bomber of WW-II and was most notably the aircraft remembered for the tremendously effective blitz it unleashed upon Britain and especially London in 1940, flying under the protective wing of the formidable and famous ME-109. The HE-111 was one of the most successful multi-role aircraft of all time and was used with great success by the German military for over a decade. The last one left in flying condition was routinely operated in conjunction with the US commemorative air force and was enroute to Missoula for the airshow when it crashed just outside of Cheyenne Wyoming, killing it's two pilots. The pilots and the magnificent HE-111 will forever be sorely missed.



# AOPA Membership Tops a Record 400,000

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association surpassed 400,000 members, a new record for the world's largest civil aviation organization. That also places AOPA among the top 100 associations of any kind in the nation.

"The significance of 400,000 members is what it really means to general aviation pilots," said AOPA President Phil Boyer. "It means that pilots have an extraordinarily powerful advocate before the regulators and the legislators. They can't ignore 400,000 committed, passionate aviators and voters. And AOPA is their voice."

Today, more than 61 percent of all of the nations pilots – and three-quarters of the general aviation pilots – are AOPA members.

AOPA President Boyer announced the new membership record to AOPA's 210 employees gathered at the association's Frederick, Maryland headquarters and its offices in Washington, D.C., Oklahoma City and Wichita, Kansas. As Boyer unveiled an electronic tote board with a new membership number of 400,516 the announcement was carried live via an intranet to all of AOPA's staff.

The association has enjoyed remarkable growth in the last quarter century even during periods when the total pilot population was declining. In 1977 AOPA had 200,000 members, about 26 percent of the total pilot population. By 1989, membership grew to 300,000, about 43 percent of all pilots.

Even in the uncertainty following the September 11 attacks, AOPA membership grew by more than 25,000.

"I think it demonstrates two things," said Boyer. "General aviation pilots remain optimistic about the future of aviation in this country. A January survey of AOPA members showed that 67 percent were optimistic about GA's future. And pilots believe that AOPA can help ensure that future."

The secret of AOPA's strength on issues is its large membership of individuals – pilots who care about national and community affairs. And AOPA members are voters – more than 93 percent voted in the last presidential election, compared to 51 percent of the general population.

"Politicians and bureaucrats do pay attention to numbers, validating the old adage that there is strength in numbers," said Boyer. "When we go to Congress, FAA, TSA or any of the regulators, 400,000 has a special ring. Speaking with one voice for so many members – particularly members who vote and contribute to political campaigns – gains AOPA access and special credence. No other organization can match that."

Such a large member base also gives AOPA extra buying power when working with AOPA Certified partners. Knowing that they have such a large potential pool of customers in a single place means vendors are willing to cut better deals.

"When AOPA's founders launched the association 64 years ago, they probably could not have foreseen such a large organization," said Boyer. "What they did foresee was a vocal advocate for general aviation, keeping GA fun, safe, and affordable. With 400,000 members backing us up, that's definitely what we've become."

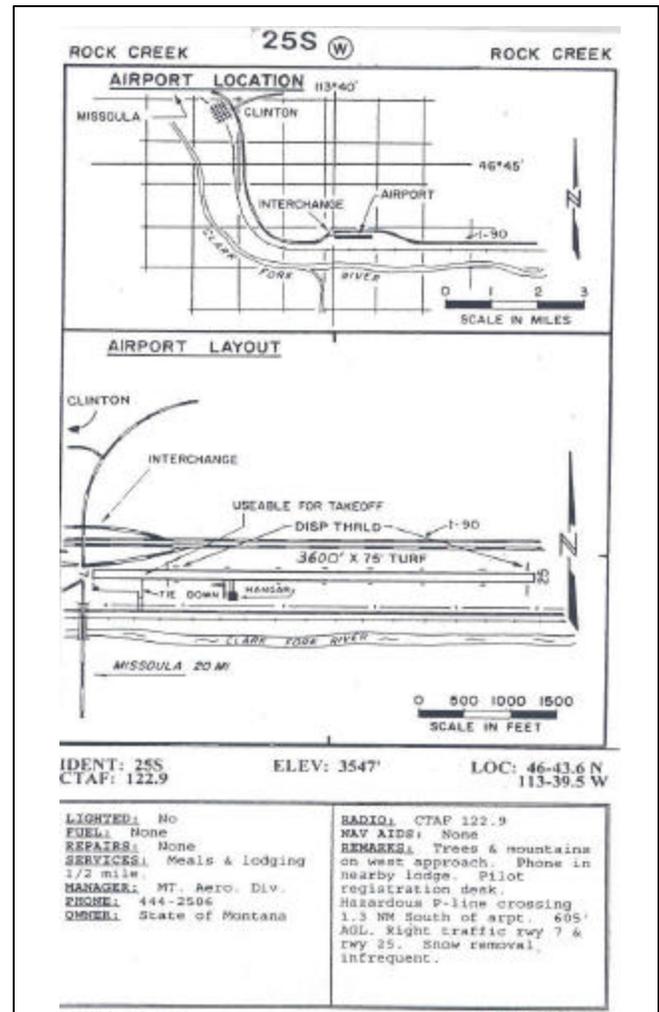
# Monopoly - Century of Flight Edition



The world's most famous board game, MONOPOLY now offers the Century of Flight Aviation Edition. Buy, sell and trade historic aircraft in a quest to "own it all". An absolute "must-have" for the true aviation enthusiast!

Fasten your seatbelts and prepare for departure! This commemorative MONOPOLY game is rich in history and showcases the greatest aircraft built in the last century. Get rich while buying, selling, and trading the most significant aircraft and aircraft parts of the last 100 years.

This completely customized game comes with "Aviation Dollars" and 6 collectible pewter tokens: fighter jet, monoplane, hot air balloon, commercial jet and airship. To order go to [www.boardgames.com](http://www.boardgames.com).





The Montana Aeronautics Division has received several suggestions asking that we provide an electronic copy of our monthly publication, *Montana & The Sky* vs. the hard copy. The Aeronautics Division is asking that you consider receiving your monthly copy of *Montana & the Sky* on

our web site at [www.mdt.state.mt.us/aeronautics/](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/aeronautics/). A reduction in printing costs and the expense of postage will help defray some of the monthly costs involved in producing our newsletter.

For some of us, an electronic copy doesn't work and we are glad to provide you with your familiar hard copy. However, if you can accommodate receiving your copy of *Montana & The Sky* via the Internet we ask that you please phone Patty at (406) 444-2506 or email [pkautz@state.mt.us](mailto:pkautz@state.mt.us) to have your name taken off the mailing list. The newsletter is posted monthly on our web site.

## Baker Airport Offers Fuel!



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*Baker Airport now has self-service Phillips 100LL & Jet A fuel available 24/7. The new system will take most credit cards including MasterCard & Visa. For further information contact Roger Meggers at Baker Air Service (406) 778-3508.*

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