



Billings Pilot Shines!

By: Laurie Puckett, Master CFI

I still remember the first day Patrick Tucker walked in the door of Northern Skies Aviation and asked about learning to fly. I whisked him outside to one of our Cessna 172's and let him look inside and told him all about the awesome things he would get to learn becoming a private pilot. Then he asked me about starting his training because he was only 15 years old. He was going to be 16 in about 3 months, so I got him excited about the thought of soloing on his birthday. I had no idea at that point that he would make the next 3 birthdays after that milestones as well.

After soloing on his 16th birthday, September 18, 2003, Pat had most of his private pilot requirements completed. It only seemed natural then that we would continue and begin instrument training and got the bright idea to do both checkrides on his 17th birthday. Now, Pat has a lot more going on than just flying. He's an active member on Skyview High School's debate team, editor of the Skyview High School newspaper, and the top student in his class. We backed off his flight training during the school year, when he was busy with those activities and picked it up in the spring and summer. Pat studied and drank in every bit of information I gave him and completed both a private pilot and instrument rating certification on September 18, 2004; his 17th birthday.

Well, the commercial certificate was definitely the next step and we had to keep this birthday thing going. So we began on the commercial training, again taking a break during the fall and winter so he could keep up on school activities and picking up again in the spring. Pat isn't your ordinary flight student; he was excelling and progressing so well that I wanted to continue to challenge him. We decided to start working on his flight instructor certification at the same time with the thought of completing that shortly after the commercial. What I found out is that if you give Pat a challenge or a goal, he goes after it and will get it done. I can't tell you how many hours he spent writing lesson plans to prepare for his instructor rating. His dad told me that he was always studying during the summer getting prepared for both of these checkrides. As Pat's 18th birthday rolled around, he was indeed prepared for both the commercial and instructor checkrides. September 18, 2005 Pat was officially a commercial rated airplane pilot and September 19, 2005 he was a Certified Flight Instructor.



There aren't many people out there who could have the focus and determination to complete what Pat has done over the last 2 years, while keeping up with life as a teenager. His future plans include obtaining his Instrument Instructor rating this spring, when high school demands are a little less, as well as teaching a ground school course for Northern Skies. He plans to flight instruct while he's in college to earn money and start building flight experience for a career in aviation. He's still somewhat undecided on which college and major; whatever he chooses, I know he will excel.

An important footnote to this story – Patrick was a recipient of one of the ALOA (A Love of Aviation) Scholarships awarded at the 2005 Aviation Conference – a very worthy young man!



Administrator's Column

New Web Site: The Department of Transportation has updated its website to conform to new state guidelines. Some have expressed difficulty in navigating through the site and finding information specific to aviation. Aeronautics division staff are working with the information technology division in hopes of making the site more user-friendly.

Lockheed Martin assumes Flight Service Stations: October 4 was the date for control of the flight service stations systems to be transferred to Lockheed Martin from the FAA. Under the contract the switch was sold as the only way to modernize flight service and to improve services to pilots. It is expected that the contract will save the taxpayer and FAA more than \$2 million over the next 10 years. Most likely no change will be noticed by pilots using the services as it is basically the same equipment being used by the same people. Service improvements should be noticed within the next 18 months as new procedures and equipment is phased in by Lockheed Martin. A command center was created by the FAA and Lockheed Martin to supervise the transition.

AOPA National Pilot Alert: In only its third national pilot alert in more than a decade, AOPA is asking its members to oppose creating a permanent air defense identification zone (ADIZ) at Washington DC. If made permanent this will set "a dangerous precedent, creating the possibility of IFR-like flight restrictions within the footprint of every Class B airspace," said AOPA President Phil Boyer. The "temporary" ADIZ has been a permanent fixture of the Washington-Baltimore Class B airspace for more than two years. For more information or to file comments opposing the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) refer to the following: <http://www.aopa.org/whatsnew/newsitems/2005/051005adiz.html>

NASAO opposes raid on AIP Trust Fund: The National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) is urging congress to resist all attempts to raid the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, including airline industry calls for new tax breaks. NASAO has written a letter to Senator Conrad Burns, Chair of the aviation subcommittee asking the same. The trust fund was designed by congress to invest in infrastructure maintenance and improvement at all the nation's airports. But, in recent years much of it has been diverted to become the major source of FAA operations and salaries. With almost 80% of FAA operations being paid for by the trust fund, the airline industry now wants additional federal financial relief paid for by a fuel tax "holiday." The airline industry is trying to rollback the 4.3 cent-per-gallon federal fuel tax. Earlier this year, NASAO opposed the administration's attempt to strip \$600 million out of the already authorized \$3.6 billion 2006 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) investment package, which benefits the entire aviation system. "A \$600 million reduction in AIP would result in a 40% reduction in state apportionment and a 50% reduction in federal discretionary investment in all state aviation infrastructure programs," per NASAO President and CEO, Henry Ogradzinski.

Advisory Circulars: At the recent FAA airports district office conference; the FAA's web site that posts the availability of new Advisory Circulars (AC's) was discussed. This web site should be visited often to keep up with all of the new and draft AC's. The web site is: <http://www.faa.gov/arp/150acs.cfm?ARNav=acs>



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Calendar

October 14, 2005 – Aeronautics Board Meeting, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

November 3-5, 2005 – AOPA Expo, Tampa Florida. For further information phone (888) 462-3976 or www.aopa.org/expo/2005/.

January 20-22, 2006 – Surratt Memorial Winter Survival Clinic, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

February 3-4, 2006 – Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

March 2-4, 2006 - Montana Aviation Conference, Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

March 23-25, 2006 – 17th Annual International Women in Aviation Conference. Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. For further information phone (937) 839-4647.



WHY I WANT TO BE A PILOT

When I grow up I want to be a pilot because it's a fun job and easy to do. That's why there are so many pilots flying around these days.

Pilots don't need much school. They just have to learn to read numbers so they can read their instruments.

I guess they should be able to read a road map, too.

Pilots should be brave to they won't get scared if it's foggy and they can't see, or if a wing or motor falls off.

Pilots have to have good eyes to see through the clouds, and they can't be afraid of thunder or lightning because they are much closer to them than we are.

The salary pilots make is another thing I like. They make more money than they know what to do with. This is because most people think that flying a plane is dangerous, except pilots don't because they know how easy it is.

I hope I don't get airsick because I get carsick and if I get airsick, I couldn't be a pilot and then I would have to go to work.

— purported to have been written by a fifth grade student at Jefferson School, Beaufort, SC. It was first published in the South Carolina Aviation News

Don't Let Changing Weather Catch You Off Guard

Fall flying often is a welcome change for pilots — the hot, humid, high-density-altitude conditions that hamper aircraft performance are gone, and the cooler, denser air that promises better climb rates is here to stay for a while. But taking advantage of the change of seasons means dusting off skills that probably haven't been used for a while, like night flying.

AOPA Online has just the resources to get pilots back in the groove of night flying before the days get even shorter and the time changes — get night current, easily spot airports at night, avoid high-speed military jets on lights-out training missions, and more.

The AOPA Air Safety Foundation's night flying safety topic provides quick access to *AOPA Pilot* and *AOPA Flight Training* articles, Sporty's Safety Quizzes, and Safety Hot Spots about that subject, including currency requirements. A subject report compiled by the specialists in AOPA's Pilot Information Center provides links to more than 30 magazine articles.

Remember, the required fuel reserve for flying VFR at night increases from 30 to 45 minutes. Check out the Fuel Management Safety Hot Spot in the AOPA Online Safety Center.

Spotting an airport at night can be much more difficult than during the day, especially if it is located in a densely populated area in which the airport lights blend in with the city. Two Sporty's Safety Quizzes focus on VFR and IFR airport lighting.

Pilots also will need to make sure their aircraft is properly illuminated — inside and out. Be extra vigilant while flying at night near military operations areas (MOAs). The military's lights-out training program allows its pilots to fly using night-vision goggles with all exterior lighting turned off. Take the AOPA Air Safety Foundation's Mission: Possible course to learn more.

The AOPA Online Safety Center also houses interactive courses produced by the AOPA Air Safety Foundation, including two instrument flying courses, IFR Adventure: Rules to Live By and Single-Pilot IFR. For VFR or instrument-rated pilots, a new course, Weather Wise: Ceiling and Visibility, uses in-flight video clips to show what MVFR, VFR, and IFR conditions really look like to the pilot and points out the signs of changing weather conditions.

To access the AOPA website go to www.aopa.org.

Mountain Search Pilot Clinic

On September 16,17 and 18, Montana Aeronautics Division conducted the 27th Annual Search Pilot Clinic based out of the Kalispell City airport. The purpose of the clinic is to train volunteer pilots to safely and efficiently conduct a search in mountainous terrain for a downed aircraft. Not only do the 30 volunteer pilots fly in the backcountry they also receive advanced Emergency Locator ground and field training and survival tactics from the Emergency Response International (ERI).

The mountain flight instructors for this year's clinic were Wendy Beye, Rick Burger, Mike Campbell, Art Dykstra, Sparky Imeson and Jeanne MacPherson. Each of the 30 pilots attending receives at least two hours of flight instruction, one hour each from a different instructor. The dual flight instruction covers, mountain flying basic premises, coordination maneuvers, canyon flying, contour search, finding and investigation of a crash, canyon turns and over the top and down search techniques.

Skip Stoffel, the president and founder of ERI instructs survival courses in nine countries around the world and Paul Green is a former Air Force survival instructor that holds a Doctorate in outdoor leadership and teaches high-risk outdoor skill courses at the University level, these two instructors bring excellence to both the evening ground schools and the field sessions in backcountry survival at this clinic.

Around the clock, as an integral part of search and rescue, the Search And Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking (SARSAT) System is at work detecting and locating emergency locator beacon transmitters (ELT). To lead and instruct this year's SARSAT/ ELT training both in ground school and field tracking were Peter Graf, Ray Sanders and Hugh Wilkins.

Flathead County, Sheriff Jim Dupont opened the Friday evening program with an overview of the search of the Cessna 206 that crashed on September 20, 2004 near Essex, Montana. The cooperation and efforts to work together in search and rescue among different agencies was evident in the presentation given by Sheriff Dupont.

If you are interested in participating in the Mountain Search Pilot Clinic in the future and have any questions, please feel free to contact Jeanne MacPherson at (406) 444-2506. Thank you to all of the 2005 MSPC participants.



Training at the Mountain Search Pilot clinic is very intense with Survival Instruction, Emergency Locator Transmitter training and Flight Instruction (pictured clockwise); Skip Stoffel, Emergency Response International conducts survival skills in an outdoor setting; Hugh Wilkins, ELT Instructor shows Carmine Mowbray of Polson how to use the direction finding equipment and pilots Robert Tobey, Price Williams, Jestin Nedens and Max Murphy received flight instruction from Sparky Imeson, flight instructor extraordinaire.

Aviation Curriculum



Six rural schools; Amsterdam, Springhill, Pass Creek, Malmborg, La Motte and Cottonwood are bringing aviation into their schools curriculum. On September 27 the schools brought 54 students to the Three Forks Airport to experience navigation & survival; airframe and powerplant introduction; pre-flight; view static displays and participate in the Young Eagles program. Pictured is Shirley Bird of Montana Aeronautics who organized the Young Eagle flights and prepared certificates for the students.



Bob Green participated as an airshow pilot conducting a pass over the Three Forks Airport and also shared his knowledge of agriculture spraying with the students.



Harold Dramstad of Helena gave a preflight to all of the students before they partook in their Young Eagle Flight.



Bud Hall flew his Bird Dog in the airshow and after several flight passes he was on hand to talk about his airplane and fuel the student's minds with the "Dream of Flight"! A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers that helped make this day such a success.



The History of the 1st Special Service Force Air Detachment

By: Ray Cart

Although much has been written about the 1st Special Service Force, the Canadian-American special-operations unit that served during World War II, little coverage has been given to the training and activities of the 1st SSF Air Detachment.

My association with the Air Detachment began on September 15, 1942, when War Department Special Orders #250 assigned Second Lieutenants Jean Daly, Eben S. Lapworth, Orville B. Verdery and Richard R. Cart to the 1st Special Service Force, headquartered at Fort William Henry Harrison, near Helena, Montana. At the time, the four of us were assigned to the 56th Fighter Group, headquartered at Bendix, N.J., and were flying P-47s. Once we received the orders, we set out across country in Jean Daly's car and arrived in Helena seven or eight days later.

After arriving in Helena, we met four other pilots who were assigned to the 1st SSF: Lieutenants Hubbard, Montgomery, Champion and Jarrett. We were evidently their replacements, because the next day, they were gone. When we reported to Fort Harrison, we were told to go to the municipal airport and report to the Air Detachment. Commanded by Captain James W. Bennett, the Air Detachment had three other pilots: Lieutenants Charles Raus, Brandon Rimmer and Ernest Kelly. First Lieutenant Richard V. Brattain was also assigned to the Air Detachment but he was not a pilot.

The Air Detachment also contained approximately 20 enlisted personnel: Technical Sergeant Robert A. Broadbelt, Staff Sergeant Robert A. Broadbelt, Staff Sergeant William H. Beck, Staff Sergeant Francis L. Daly, Staff Sergeant Leslie P. Rogers, Sergeant Jack D. Cassini, Sergeant Norman W. Champagne, Sergeant Richard L. Culver, Corporal Neno L. Paolini, Private Harold L. Finkelstein, Technical Sergeant Anthony G. Burich, Staff Sergeant Howard R. Martin, Staff Sergeant Robert W. Smith, Staff Sergeant Vernon W. Webb, Sergeant Rex E. Fogleman, Sergeant Wallace A. Cook, Sergeant Russell E. Waid Jr., and Private Fred R. Gray Jr. There were two other sergeants, one whose last name was Harris, and one whose first name was Jake.

The Air Detachment's equipment consisted of two C-47s (used for parachute jumps and for hauling equipment); two Cessna C-78s (small twin-engine five-passenger planes used for transporting personnel and light equipment); two Stinson L-9Bs (small two-seater planes with dual controls, used for reconnaissance and for transporting personnel); one L-74 (a powerful, highly stable, high-winged monoplane that flew very slowly and landed very slowly – used for reconnaissance and for flying in and out of short runways).

Colonel Frederick, the 1st SSF's commanding officer, was a precise but fair man. He promoted every one of us in Helena.

The Air Detachment's duties consisted of flying the planes during jump training; performing reconnaissance work for the 1st SSF; transporting personnel and equipment; and generally making ourselves useful in every way possible. Our organization was loose-knit. We were required to do certain things on schedule, but when nothing was scheduled, we were permitted to fly as often

as we wished, in order to maintain our proficiency. We lived to fly, and we kept the planes ready at all times.

Once we received a call from the governor of Montana. There had been a mine accident in his state, and several miners were trapped inside the mine. The governor had called in rescue teams from other places and needed to get them to the scene as rapidly as possible. He asked us to pick up the rescue teams at the airport in Billings and fly them to Butte. We were in the air almost immediately. The teams were waiting for us at the Billings airport, and we flew them to Butte, where emergency vehicles were waiting to take them to the scene. We learned later that all of the miners died in the accident, but we had done our best.

Although we supported the 1st SSF, we had little contact with the troops, and we never knew who was in the group. When the troops were scheduled to jump, we flew from the airport to Fort Harrison to pick them up, or they arrived at the airport in trucks. They usually loaded immediately into the cargo bay; we took off, flew to the drop zone, and out they went. When we were off duty, the troops were generally on training missions, so even our off-duty contact with them was limited.

At first, the 1st SSF intended that the pilots would receive the same training as the troops, and that the pilots would accompany the troops to their intended destinations. Our training was supposed to have included parachute training. But the plan was later changed, and the idea of extra training for the pilots was dropped. We did, however, receive training in hand-to-hand combat from Pat O'Neil, a civilian judo expert who was hired to train the 1st SSF. Pat was the best in his field and was a nice guy. Pat and I became close friends and when he married a girl from Helena, he asked me to be his best man.

All went well with our training until December 21, 1942. That afternoon, Orville Verdery and a Lieutenant Mansfield took off in a Stinson L-9B. They did not return that day, and the next morning they were reported missing. We began a search from the air early that morning, and at about 11:30 a.m., Eben Lapworth and I located the plane and landed nearby to investigate. The plane had crashed into the side of a mountain just outside Fort Harrison. It had been demolished in the crash, and both men were evidently killed instantly. There were no witnesses to the crash, and I do not know what kind of mission the two soldiers were on, but they certainly gave everything that day. There were no other deaths during our training.

Early in January 1943, the 1st SSF traveled east to Camp Bradford, near Norfolk, VA, for training with the Navy in marine landings. The Air Detachment went to Langley Field, VA, and waited for the rest of the force to complete its training. The 1st SSF went to Fort Ethan Allen, VT, near Burlington, VT for mountain training in the Green Mountains and in the White Mountains. The Air Detachment's duties there were the same as in Helena, and we were based at the municipal airport in Burlington, too. Our planes were the same, except we no longer had the two Stinson L-9Bs.

continued page 7

Special Service Force continued...

While we were in Vermont, we received orders to equip the Air Detachment for operations overseas. I was in charge of requisitioning, and I acquired a large gasoline tanker truck, a tractor and trailer, and 10 crates of aircraft mechanic's tools for maintaining our aircraft in a war zone. The tools were sealed in large wooden crates for overseas shipment. All our efforts proved to be for nothing. When the 1st SSF left for Europe, the Air Detachment and all its equipment were left behind. Of the Air Detachment's pilots and ground crew, only Lieutenant Rimmer accompanied the 1st SSF when it left Burlington. Rimmer remained with the 1st SSF as late as the Italian campaign, but he was not with it when it disbanded December 5, 1944.

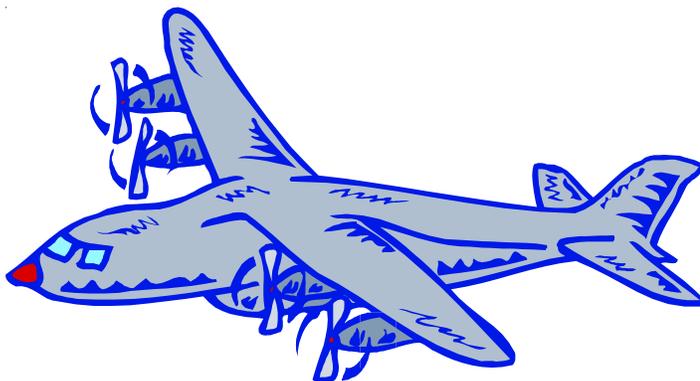
After the 1st SSF left Burlington, it was my job to return all of the equipment to the air depot at Grenier Field, N.H. The sergeant there said that the equipment was expendable and that he did not want it back. The equipment was already in the depot yard, so I left. I don't know what happened to the equipment, but I know I returned it, and my conscience is clear.

The Air Detachment remained at Fort Ethan Allen for two months with no duties. In July 1943 the Air Detachment of the 1st SSF was officially disbanded, and its members were reassigned to various units in the Army Air Corps.

The members of the Air Detachment were highly trained, and they were excellent soldiers. I am sure that wherever they went, they were a credit to their assignment. I would love to know how they fared.

This, then, describes the Air Detachment of the 1st SSF. We did what was asked of us, and when we were released, we accepted our lot with no questions asked. As far as I know, I am the only member of the Air Detachment to have participated in 1st SSF functions. We respected the 1st SSF then and now, and I feel honored to have been affiliated with such a great and proud outfit.

Ray Cart is president of the 1st Special Service Force Association. He entered the Army Air Corps in September 1941. He received his primary, basic and advanced pilot training and was assigned to Mitchel Field, N.Y. and Bendix Field, N.J., prior to his service with the 1st Special Service Force. Following the disbanding of the 1st SSF Air Detachment, he was assigned to the Air Technical Service command. Discharged from the Army Air Corps in 1946, he worked in sales until his retirement in 1982. A native of Iota, LA, he is a 1941 graduate of Louisiana State University. He lives in Crowley, LA.



Hail to the Mechanics

Through the history of world aviation many names have come to the fore. Great deeds of the past in our memory will last, as they're joined by more and more.

When man first started his labor in his quest to conquer the sky, he was designer, mechanic and pilot and he built a machine that would fly.

But somehow the order got twisted, and then in the public's eye the only man that could be seen was the man who knew how to fly.

The pilot was everyone's hero; he was brave, he was bold, he was grand, as he stood by his battered old biplane with his goggles and helmet in hand.

To be sure, these pilots all earned it, to fly you have to have guts. And they blazed their names in the hall of fame on wings with baling wire struts.

But for each of these flying heroes there were thousands of little renown, and these were the men who worked on the planes but kept their feet on the ground.

We all know the name of Lindbergh and we've read of his flight to fame. But think, if you can, of his maintenance man. Can you remember his name?

And think of our wartime heroes, Gabreski, Jabara and Scott. Can you tell me the name of their crew chiefs? A thousand-to-one you cannot.

Now pilots are highly trained people, and wings are not easily won. But without the work of the maintenance man our pilots would march with a gun.

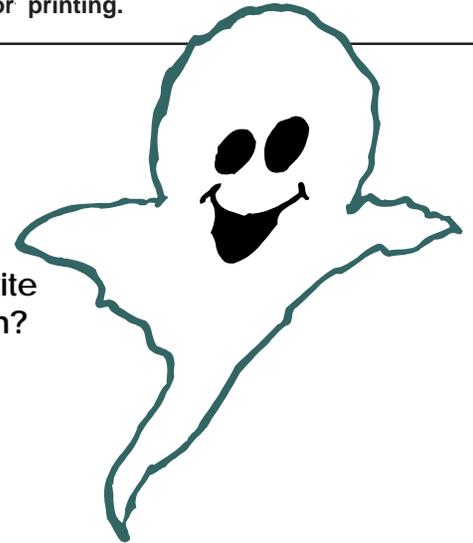
So when you see mighty jet aircraft, as they mark their way through the air; the grease-stained man with the wrench in his hand is the man who put them there.

-Author unknown

The 2006 Montana Aviation Conference will be held March 2-4 in Helena at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel. Stay tuned to hear more about the exciting events the conference committee has planned! Rooms have been blocked at the Colonial Hotel please phone 1-800-RED-LION or (406) 443-2100 to make reservations and reference MT Aviation Conference. For questions or additional information please phone (406) 444-2506 or email pkautz@mt.gov.

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What is a ghost's favorite mode of transportation?
A scareplane...



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