

CUT BANK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

WWII Airmen's Memorial Museum



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Cut Bank International Airport

Cut Bank International Airport is located three miles southwest of Cut Bank, Montana in Glacier County. With Glacier National Park, Flathead National Forest, Lewis and Clark National Forest and the inspirational Bob Marshall Wilderness within an hour drive, the Cut Bank area offers some of the best outdoor recreation opportunities in some of the most pristine and picturesque surroundings anywhere in the world. If you are flying to any of these areas, Cut Bank International Airport is here to fill your every need.

Enthusiasts have a choice of horseback riding, world class fishing, white water rafting, big game hunting, hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, cross country skiing and much more. Over half of Glacier County is part of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation which makes the area culturally diverse and rich in history.

The 1,730 acre airport's two runways are Runway 5/23 and 13/31. Runway 5/23 measures 5,300 feet long by 75 feet wide, and Runway 13/31 measures 5,300 feet long by 75 feet wide. Projected improvements to be

complete in 2011 include lengthening Runway 13/31 to 6,500 feet.

The airport, with 23 based aircraft, experiences approximately 5,800 aircraft operations annually. Total economic impacts to the area are supporting 9.5 jobs with \$267,300 in wages and \$797,700 in economic activity.

Fuel services are available 24/7 with 100LL and Jet A fuels (with priss) ready at competitive pricing. All conventional credit cards are welcome plus government cards are accepted. All airport services are available on a full-time/callout basis.

Other services offered are free courtesy vehicles, outdoor camping spaces available (no hookups), pilot lounge, wireless internet access and two sleeping rooms. U.S. Customs service for aircraft returning into the United States is available on a two-hour callout notice. Aircraft entering Canada are required to check with Canadian Customs Services for arrangements. Ramp tie-downs and hangar space is usually available.

Also located at the airport is Iron Horse Aviation LLC, which provides diverse services to private aircraft, with two certified aircraft mechanics on call.

The administration building was constructed in 1948 and is part of the National Historic Registry District. It's worth taking time for a visit to see this beautiful post-war building which is much the same as it was over 50 years ago when it served as a hub for Western Airline's DC-3 passenger aircraft.



Municipal Airport and Army Air Corps Base



Cut Bank already had several pilots when civil aviation began to appear in Montana in the 1920's. Several of them had gained first hand experience during WW I. With the discovery of oil in the area, industry was booming and local dentist Dr. C.H. Minette recognized the need for a facility to serve private and commercial aviation. In 1930 this site was selected and the land was leased as a private airfield. Soon afterwards the property was purchased from Blackfeet Tribal landowners by the City of Cut Bank and Glacier County and Western Airlines made its inaugural flight to the new field in 1941, landing the venerable Douglas DC-3 on a grass strip.

Soon, after the Declaration of War in December of 1941, the airfield was offered to the United States as a training base. Cut Bank joined Glasgow and Lewistown all of which were satellite bases of the Great Falls Army Air Base or East Field. Construction began early in 1942 and troops began training here in November of the same year.

Two runways accommodated the B-17 Flying Fortresses on which the young men trained as a crew for the first time. Squadrons learned navigation, bombing techniques and other aspects of a B-17 crew before joining the forces on the European Front.

The base had a relatively short lifetime: construction authorized by the 2nd Air Force on July 6th, 1942; base activated November 11th, 1942; first B-17's arrived November 30th, 1942. The last crew to train here was the 401st Bomb Group (H), 613th Bomb Squadron. With their departure in October of 1943, the base was soon placed on inactive status for the remainder of the war. In 1948, much of the base property and buildings were transferred to Cut Bank and Glacier County. Many of the base buildings and remaining equipment were salvaged as surplus and by the mid 1950's only a small percentage of the structures still existed.

Throughout the war, Western Airlines continued domestic service to the area using a separate building just north of the main base. Western Airlines discontinued commercial flights to the airport in the late 1960's.



The Museum

In 2007 the Cut Bank Municipal (International) Airport and Army Air Base was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The entire 1,750 acres and all the structures located in that area has been listed as a "Historic District" which includes everything from runways and buildings to the sewage disposal system installed when the base was built and is still in use today.

In this sense, the entire area is our "museum" and we are very fortunate to have several major structures that have survived the last 65 years. Unfortunately, many of the buildings, the water tower and the original control tower were destroyed decades ago.

Of course, the jewel of the remaining buildings is the 120' x 160' main hangar. Built during the Fall and Winter of 1942-43, the concrete and wood building still stands proud and will be renovated in July of 2009. The 20,000 square foot room echoes history with signatures of some of the builders still on the wall near the center cat-walk, up 65 feet from the concrete floor. One of the south window frames still boasts a bullet hole from a stray .50 cal machine gun. Several other original buildings are currently undergoing restoration or repair efforts.



The WWII Airmen's Memorial Museum is a 501(c) (3) not for profit organization. The small collection includes many communications-related items, mostly relating to the base and the B-17 aircraft that were stationed there. We have accumulated an extensive informational history of the base and the crews that served in the European Theatre of operations from 1942 to 1945.

You can also see the once top-secret Norden Bombsight used on the B-17's, practice bombs used to train the crews and other interesting memorabilia.

Personal walking tours of the grounds are available and groups are always welcome with advance notice encouraged.

For additional information on the museum and the airport, or to arrange a tour, please call 406-873-8683.



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