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## Abingdon Co.'s Elegant Approach to Aviation Watches

By [Casandra Armour](#)

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**The Abingdon Co.**'s distinctive brand name reflects precisely the sophistication, style, and efficiency of their chic line of **timepieces** for savvy **female pilots and travelers**. "Its origins, though, are not as glamorous perhaps as what the name evokes," its founder explains. "I was born in England, and I believe the story goes that **Abingdon** was the name of the pub my parents worked at when I was conceived. C'est la vie!" But it's that sort of humble playfulness and lasting legacy, along with its founders' relentless hard work, that are sure to establish **Abingdon Co.** as a classic brand.

**Abingdon** is the middle name of **Chelsea “Abingdon” Welch**. But when I tell you she’s a fly girl, I don’t mean on the dance floor.

She was once a curious Burbank, California teen with an appetite for life, but uncertainty about where she going, when aviation came to her by chance, “I tell people it was free food!” she laughs. “I was in high school and they had these career lunches on Wednesday. You’d go in, listen to someone talk about what they did for a living, get food, listen, and then leave. I was the only girl there that day, and lo and behold, in walked two **pilots**.”

The **pilots** explained that an **aviator** doesn’t necessarily have to be a military pilot, but can also provide relief aid, fly personal jets, work with news crews, display banners in the sky over the beach, and more. “I can get paid to travel,” young **Abingdon** realized, and thought, “That’s amazing!”

“I was the only one who stayed to ask questions, and I was late to my next class.”

“Usually at that age, you want to be something different every day. I didn’t. I saved my money from that day on. I saved my pennies through college. I joined the Peace Corps. After college, I walked to Santa Monica Airport to get started. I got my **pilot’s** license in 34 days.” She trained hard and found success as a test **pilot**.

“When I was flight training, I saw that my flight instructors that had all those really cool **watches**.” **Pilot’s watches** gauge fuel consumption, mind time zones, calculate distance, and more. But for a **female pilot**, the proportion of the important instrument is all wrong. “At 5’6” and 110 lbs., they look like grandfather clocks on my wrist!” she realized. At that time, no one was accommodating the growing female population in the field.

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Over Christmas dinner in 2006, **Abingdon** and a group of friends were discussing their hopes for holiday gifts. She lamented again that she’d love a **pilot’s watch** but no one was making them to fit a smaller stature. The gift she was given then was that she and her friends recognized a need to be filled, and decided that they would be the ones to make an efficient but delicate **pilot’s watch**, tailored for a lady. “We set the goal for November the following year. We launched the **Jackie** and the **Amelia** models on my birthday, November 3. It’s taken me by surprise ever since. I never thought I’d enter **aviation** and end up in **fashion**.”



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She also ended up on television, appearing on the **Discovery Channel** documentary series ***Flying Wild Alaska***. The show goes behind-the-scenes at the Tweto family's airline, Era Alaska. **Abingdon** had previously become acquainted with their daughter **Ariel Tweto** in at an air show in L.A. "She [Ariel] hadn't flown in a long time but really ended up enjoying the way I taught her, and she told the producers about me." Abingdon flew up North in secret at the producers' request, and **Ariel** was delighted at the surprise of being trained by her friend. "She acclimated me to Alaska and I taught her how to fly," she remembers fondly. "It's obviously quite a cold place, but the people are so warm, they just care."

**Abingdon** flies every day and says, “If I don’t fly, I get the twitch, it’s my therapy.” But she laughs when people ask what she does, “I really don't know how to answer! My full time job is **Abingdon Co.** That is what I do seven days a week. But I fly every week too, definitely. It's what I do.” It’s that dedication to flight that lead to innovations on the ground, making **Abingdon** a pioneer of immense style and substance. Where will her passions take her next?

“The company will continue to promote **women** in industries that they are minorities in, like **aviation**, engineering, even sports like racing, boating, etc. I want to bring more products in as well: products that **women**, historically, purchase the male version of because there is not a **female** version. You'll see new products-- that are not **watches** -- coming out soon!”

Learn more about **Abingdon Co.** watches at [www.TheAbingdonCo.com](http://www.TheAbingdonCo.com) or [join them on Facebook.](#) \_

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