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# Abingdon Company offers female flight watches

By Benét J. Wilson

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Pilot Chelsea Welch realized an interesting problem back when she was in flight training in 2006: There were no aviation watches on the market specifically for women.

“My flight instructor had a really cool watch and I wanted a women’s version of it, but nothing was available,” said Welch. “At a Christmas dinner with female pilots later that year, we discussed fantasy gifts, and I mentioned a female flight watch. Others at the table agreed, so I decided to design an aviator watch that was fashionable and versatile.”

Welch spent the next 11 months designing two models—the Jackie and the Amelia—and the Abingdon Company was launched on Nov. 3, 2007. The Elise model was released in 2010, and Welch released a limited edition black version of the Amelia.

Welch said she did not have a marketing budget when the company started. “I started calling publications like *AOPA Pilot*, *General Aviation News*, and *Flying* to tell them about the product, and several of them wrote about it and the word spread,” she said. “We are still to this day the only women’s pilots watch.”

Events like the recent Women in Aviation International convention is where Welch said she gets inspiration for her watch designs. “We ask women for their ideas. The truth is that women have actually designed these watches. I haven’t done any design,” she said.

The Amelia is a dual time zone watch with a date window; a croco leather strap; night vision super luminous hands; an EB6 with slide rule ring, time, distance, and fuel consumption calculators; and a currency converter. The Jackie is an upgraded version of the Amelia that features a mother of pearl face, 64 Swarovski crystals, a rotating bezel, and a chronograph.

Prices for the watches range from \$300 to \$459. Welch recently released a line of leather Heavenly Bands, which allow women to make their watches more unique. The bands come in a palette of pastels.