

COURSE SYLLABUS

When Giants Ruled the Sky: The Golden Age of Airship Travel

*A four-week Zoom course starting at 9:30 AM on Wednesdays May 3, 10, 17, and 24
with each session lasting 90 minutes*

Few people realize that Zeppelins carried thousands of paying passengers millions of miles without a single fatality *for more than 20 years*—an achievement unmatched by any other form of commercial transportation until the *Hindenburg* crash in 1937. And Germany wasn't the only country vested in the success of commercial airships. During the first third of the 20th century France, England, Italy, Spain, Japan, the Soviet Union, and Argentina were just some of the many countries that built and flew airships. Incredibly, during the 1920s and 30s, the United States Navy spent millions of dollars building Zeppelins that were not only designed to protect Hawaii and California from a surprise attack by Japan in the days before radar, but promoted them as the next form of long-distance transportation competing with luxury ocean liners and transcontinental trains for first class passengers. A survey of this fascinating but little-known period of aviation history will include remarkable photographs, first person accounts, and rare film clips of lighter-than-air flight. The course is based on research for my latest non-fiction book, *When Giants Ruled the Sky* (The History Press, 2022), which was also the basis for the recent Smithsonian documentary, *America's Lost Airship*, in which I appeared as the on-camera expert.

Week 1-A Brief History of Lighter-Than-Air Flight (LTA)

Week 2-LTA Flight Comes to America

Week 3-Birth of the Zeppelin

Week 4-America Leads the Way

PLEASE NOTE: POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS AND TEXT FOR EACH OF MY FOUR SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW