

*Missions for America
Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!*



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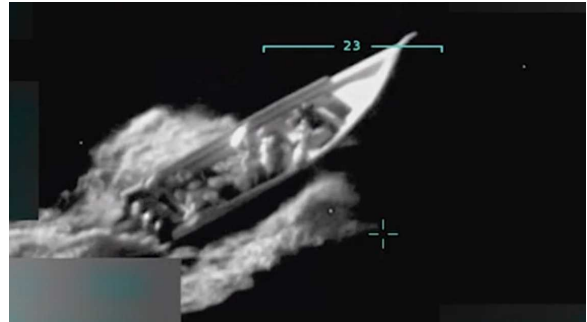
CURRENT EVENTS

Attacks on Narcotics Smugglers

United States forces in the Caribbean Sea have destroyed a second high speed launch carrying three men and a cargo of drugs. The boat was probably headed for a rendezvous with another craft of an island such as Tobago or Martinique. The boats do not have the range to reach the United States.

Both boats were from Venezuela and destroyed in international waters using Hellfire missiles fired

from drones. Eleven men were killed in the first attack and three in the second.



Note the three very large outboard motors, probably worth 2000-3000 dollars each. A simple fishing boat? (Credit: US DOW)

New Aircraft enters USAF Inventory

The aircraft is the OA-1K Skyraider II militarized by L3Harris Technologies in Waco, Texas which adds armor and weapon systems. They are operated by the U.S. Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) in the light attack mission.



It was designed as by Air Tractor as the AT-802U Sky Warden whose original mission was agricultural. The military version is powered by a Pratt & Whitney turboprop and equipped with 10 hard-points for carry missiles.



(Credit: Daniel VA)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Captain Daniel L. Mode, CHC, USN



Thames River Composite Squadron's favorite sky pilot is Father Dan Mode who is not only an ordained Roman Catholic priest but also holds an FAA pilot certificate. He also has earned an undergraduate degree in philosophy and a master's degree in history and theology his master's thesis was the life and heroics of Navy Chaplain Father Vincent Capodanno was eventually transformed into a popular biography, known as *The GruntPadre*. Father Mode has submitted Father Capodanno to the Church for beatification as a Saint,

Father Capodanno's Medal of Honor's citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Chaplain of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Reinforced), FMF, in connection with operations against

enemy forces in Quang Tin Province, Republic of Vietnam, on 4 September 1967. In response to reports that the 2d Platoon of M Company was in danger of being overrun by a massed enemy assaulting force, Lieutenant Capodanno left the relative safety of the Company Command Post and ran through an open area raked with fire, directly to the beleaguered platoon. Disregarding the intense enemy small-arms, automatic-weapons, and mortar fire, he moved about the battlefield administering last rites to the dying and giving medical aid to the wounded. When an exploding mortar round inflicted painful multiple wounds to his arms and legs, and severed a portion of his right hand, he steadfastly refused all medical aid. Instead, he directed the corpsmen to help their wounded comrades and, with calm vigor, continued to move about the battlefield as he provided encouragement by voice and example to the valiant Marines. Upon encountering a wounded corpsman in the direct line of fire of an enemy machine gunner positioned approximately fifteen yards away, Lieutenant Capodanno rushed forward in a daring attempt to aid and assist the mortally wounded corpsman. At that instant, only inches from his goal, he was struck down by a burst of machine gun fire. By his heroic conduct on the battlefield, and his inspiring example, Lieutenant Capodanno upheld the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life in the cause of freedom.

While a member of Thames River Composite Squadron in 2012 he was serving as the Chaplain at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. His primary duties included ministering to the Navy, Marine Corps and possibly the U.S. Public Health Service. He has uniforms for each service.

He also serves at parishes near his duty station. In 1942, May 1992 for service in the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia. His subsequent pastoral assignments included: Associate Pastor of a 12,000 member parish in Fairfax Station (1992-1996), Vice-Principal of Bishop O'Connell High School in Arlington (1996-2001), and Pastor of Queen of Apostle's Parish in Alexandria (2001-2005).

For nine years, he served in the Navy Reserve This included assignments at Bethesda Naval Hospital (1998-1999) and at the Office of the Chief of Navy Chaplains (2000-2003). In January 2004, his assignment was direct support to Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. From May 2005 to March 2007, he was mobilized for service in Operation Enduring Freedom, attached to the Commander, Joint Task Force 76 in Bagram, Afghanistan. As a supervisory chaplain there, he coordinated the ministry of seventeen US and coalition chaplains in providing pastoral care to more than 30,000 soldiers in over 50 forward operating bases.

He became an officer in the active Navy in 2007 and was assigned to USS Harry S Truman (CVN 75). He completed a seven-month deployment to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and maritime security operations. From June 2009 to June 2012, Capt Mode was assigned to the United States Coast Guard Academy, to serve the staff and the brigade of cadets. From July 2012 to October 2014, he was assigned as the Command Chaplain of the USS George Washington (CVN 73) Strike Group in Japan completing two six month deployments in the Seventh Fleet. From November 2014 to May 2016, he was the Command Chaplain of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. In June 2016, he assumed the duties as the Division Director of Plans and Operations for the Chaplain Corps and completed a seven-month fellowship at the Religious Freedom Institute in Washington, D.C. From June of 2019 to March of 2022, he served as the 7th Fleet Chaplain in Yokosuka, Japan. He served as the 12th Chaplain of the Coast Guard till May 2024. Assigned as the Acting Region Chaplain, Naval District Washington till March

2025. Selected and currently serving as the inaugural Force Chaplain for Naval Sea Systems Command.

While at Thames River Composite Squadron Father Mode served as an air crew member. He was the epitome of chivalry, providing a constant example of compassion and comradeship and serving as a model of an officer and a gentleman.



Father Mode in Groton preparing to fly a Boeing PY-17 Stearman

A1C Matthew Fago

Former Cadet Commander Matthew Fago is now serving as a C-130 load master with the 103rd Airlift out of Bradley is serving his first overseas deployment in Poland.



The night Matthew was awarded his Curry. He has come a long way.

Feature Article

Heavy Fighters (Part Two)

The first installment of Heavy Fighters reviewed the Douglas P-70, Northrop P-61 Black Widow, Messerschmitt Bf 110 Zerstörer, Petlyakov Pe-3 and Kawasaki Ki-45 Toryu.

The selection has been limited to aircraft which served in World War II. So aircraft such as North American's F-82 Twin Mustang and de Havilland's D.H.103 Hornet are not included.

This essay will look at three German aircraft, the Junkers Ju 88, Dornier 335 Pfeil and Heinkel 219 Uhu

Research by the Coastwatcher has identified around 40 models of what can be called heavy fighters of seven different nations but had to select the most pertinent of those of special interest. The Lockheed P-38 Lightning was excluded since it is familiar and prototypes were skipped over since they never had any direct impact on World War Two. Interesting aircraft such as the Bell YFM-1 Airacuda, French Potez 630, Polish PZL.38 and Italian IMAM RO.57/50 fall into those categories.

Junkers Ju 88

As with many of the heavy fighters, the Ju-88 was conceived as a *Schnellbomber*, a very fast bomber which would rely on its speed to avoid interception. The British de Havilland Mosquito followed a parallel path, Like the Mosquito, it found a role as a night interceptor and heavy fighter.



Model by Rafi Ben-Sharer clearly shows the Schräge Musik installation

The first of the heavy fighter versions was the Ju88 C series which incorporated nose armament consisting of a 20mm cannon and three 30 caliber machine guns. The Ju 88C-6 was the first of the night fighter conversions and equipped with a version of the Lichtenstein radar.



Captured JU 88 G-1 flown in British livery.

(Credit: Royal Air Force)

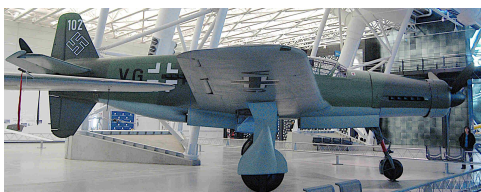
Some of the night fighters were equipped with the upward firing Schräge *Musik* machine guns.

Over time, the aircraft was improved and the last model was the Ju 88R. More powerful engines were installed and the higher frequency radar required a simpler antenna configuration and provided better resolution.

The Ju 88 production line turned out over 15,000 aircraft which served not only as heavy fighter but as a medium bomber, dive bomber, torpedo bomber. And like the Mosquito, the Ju 88 was one of the most versatile aircraft of World War II.

Dornier 335 Pfeil (Arrow)

The proposal issued by the *Reichsluftfahrtministerium*, the Nazi organization charged with the development and production of all aircraft, military and civilian, for Germany issued a proposal for a *Schnellbomber* and intruder. Claude Dornier answered the call with the Do 335, the prototype of which first flew in late summer of 1943. It was the faster prop fighter in World War Two.



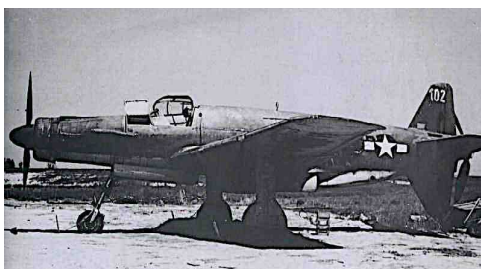
Do 335 A-2, the sole survivor at the National Air and Space Museum.

Dornier had been a proponent of tandem engines which minimized frontal surface area and reduced drag and many of his designs, the record setting Do J Wal and Do X incorporated this feature.

As Germany felt the full force of bombardment by RAF Bomber Command and the 8th and 15th Air Forces, the primary mission of the *Pfeil* became one of a bomber destroyer. But only 37 were produced. Production difficulties and vacillations by the leadership and the destruction of the designated factory forced a change to a new location.

This factory, at Oberpfaffenhofen was captured in April and that was the end of any chance of *Pfeil* production. The Nazis made an unconditional surrender less than a month later and two captured *Pfeils* were shipped to the United States for evaluation.

One was tested at Freeman Field, Indiana which has been used as site for CAP's Emergency Services Academy's mission pilot training. Only one survived, it is the second preproduction Do 335 A-02. It is now on display at the National Space Museum in Virginia.



Pfeil in United States livery

Heinkel He 219 Uhu (Eagle Owl)

The Uhu was a night fighter and shared an honor

with the Northrop P-61 Black Widow, the only other aircraft in World War II purposely built as a night fighter.



However its entry into the Luftwaffe inventory was delayed by a three way ego clash among Ernst Heinkel, Generalfeldmarschall Erhard Milch, in charge of aircraft production and General der Flieger Josef Kammhuber, commander of the Luftwaffe night fighters who supported the Uhu. But Milch preferred the Dornier Do 335. Heinkel's part in the squabble probably was seated in the manufacturing process. As Pogo once noted "We have met the enemy and he is us." And so an excellent night interceptor, perhaps the only German aircraft which could successfully engage the deHavilland Mosquito had its effectiveness diminished. Only 268 were produced.

The Uhu was fitted out with Lichtenstein VHF band radar, ejection seats, a pressurized cockpit, tricycle landing gear and some remote controlled defensive armament. Four 20 mm cannons, two wing mounted and two in a ventral fairing and *Schräge Musik* cannons composed the offensive weaponry.



The restored Uhu at the National Air and Space Museum. (Credit NASM)

In the end, the delays in production and bomb damage to its plants meant that it had no significant effect on the air war.