



Missions for
America
Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!

The Coastwatcher

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Composite Squadron
Connecticut Wing
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CALENDAR

- 08 April-Squadron Leadership School, 0800-1700, Minuteman Squadron, East Haven
- 18 March-Wing Training Exercise-Hartford
- 19 March-TRCS Water Survival Course
- 15 April-High Power Rifle Clinic, 0900-1300, Bell City Rifle Club
- 20 May-CTWG Conference
- 17 June-CTWG Commander's Cup Rocket Contest
- 15-20 August-CTWG Encampment

CADET MEETING

07 March, 2017

The evening consisted of rocket building, mentoring, and testing.

SENIOR MEETING

07 March, 2017

*submitted by
Carl Ben Eielson*

Monthly Staff Meeting

The Squadron staff reported on their current activities and the progress which has been made towards meeting the Squadron goals. Progress has been satisfactory and work will be continued to meet or exceed all requirements.

Maj Neilson reported the details of the weekend's table-top exercise in preparation for the Air Force evaluation in April. He noted that the activity was one of the best learning exercises which he has experienced as a CAP member.

CTWG Table Top Training Exercise

18 March, 2017

The Wing held a table top training exercise to prepare for the USAF Operational Evaluation this year. Evaluation Staff members gathered at the Royal Charter Squadron and engaged in a number of scenarios designed to test the Wing skills running search and rescue operations.

Three members of Thames River participated in the training: Maj Keith Nelson, Operations, Maj Paul Noniewicz, Air Operations Branch Director, and Lt Col Stephen Rocketto, Public Information Officer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

08 April

Squadron Leadership School (SLS) is designed to (1) enhance a senior member's performance at the squadron level and (2) to increase understanding of the basic function of a squadron and how to improve squadron operations.

Contact: christina.paulsen@snet.net

15 April

The Connecticut Rifle and Revolver Association Junior Division will sponsor a high power rifle training clinic at the Bell City Rifle Club in Southington. Students will receive instruction in the operation of the AR-15 rifle and will fire the rifle at 200 yards.

The event will run from 0900 to 1300. There is no charge. This is not a CAP sponsored event but cadets are invited to participate. The entry fee is \$10. Contact: srocketto@aquilasys.com

20 May

The annual CTWG conference will be held at Bradley International Airport and will feature seminars, expositions, and cadet activities. Details are forthcoming from Wing.

17 June

The 12th annual CTWG Commander's Cup Rocket Contest will be held at the CATO launch site, 0800-1300 in Durham Connecticut. Participation by cadets will fulfill many of the requirements for building and launching rockets for the CAP Rocketry Badge. Entry is free for both squadrons and individual cadets.

The Rules of Engagement, scoring criteria, and hints on how to build successful rockets have been sent to all squadron aerospace officers and commanders.



TRCS-Commander's Cup Champions-2008

FLYNN TO FLY



Five years ago, C/1st Lt Brendan Flynn, the TRCS Cadet Commander earned his private pilot certificate. Flynn is now a 1st Class Cadet at the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, will graduate in the spring and has received orders to attend flight school.



Above: C/Capt Flynn and Lt Col John deAndrade, CFI prepare for a lesson.

Below: Flynn tries a Beech T-6A trainer on for size at the 2011 Coast Guard Aviation Day at Groton.



Initial training is conducted at Whiting Field, Naval Air Station Pensacola. Initial screening and ground training are followed by 27 weeks at primary flight school. The candidates are then split up and either go to helicopter or fixed wing school.

Brendan is the second military academy graduate from TRCS to be chosen for a military flight

school. Capt. Erik Nelson, USAF graduated from the Air Force Academy in 2010 and now is an aircraft commander of a B-52 and stationed at Minot Air Force Base in South Dakota.



Capt Erik "Swift" Nelson, USAF aboard his BUFF. (Photo credit: Maj Roy Bourque)



CURRENT EVENTS

Air Force Trainer Woes

As the USAF prepares to determine the new trainer to replace the T-38, it finds itself in a financial crunch. The multi-engine trainer, the Raytheon Beech T-1A Jayhawk has reached the end of its economic lift meaning that its replacement cost will be less than the costs to keep it flying.



The Jayhawk is a militarized version of the Mitsubishi MU-300 Diamond. Beech bought the production rights and renamed it the Beech 400.

The Jayhawk has been flying since 1992 and the maintenance problems ground 20% of the fleet seriously restricting its role to train new multi-engine pilots and combat systems officers. In order to meet demands, Jayhawks are ferried between training bases.

The costs to either keep the Jayhawk flying or purchase a replacement aircraft is a no-win situation for the cash-strapped Air Force.

AEROSPACE HISTORY

On one day in the same action, an Air Force pilot and a Green Beret ground pounder both earned the Medal of Honor. Remarkably, two of four Air Force officers were associated with each other in a similar event which occurred in WWII.

The Attack on the A Shau Special Forces Camp 9 March, 1966

On the 9th of March, 1966, some 2,000 North Vietnam regulars attacked a Special Forces Camp in the A Shau Valley. The camp was defended by some 20 green Berets and 210 members of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG), a paramilitary organization primarily composed of Vietnamese ethnic minorities. Air support was provided by the Air Commandos flying Skyraiders, affectionately known as the Spad, and the AC-47 Spooky gunship.

The Douglas Skyraider was one of a series of excellent designs from the drawing board of Ed Heinemann. Conceived in World War II, the Navy specified a carrier based, long range, dive bomber. The final product exceeded all expectations and was introduced in 1946. She was equipped with armor protection, 20 mm cannons, and fifteen hard points to carry bombs, rockets, or auxiliary fuel tanks. The Skyraider was the Korean and Vietnam War's A-10 Warthog.

On 10 March, the second day of the attack, the defense was crumbling. Major Bernard Fisher was one of six Spad pilots flying close air support. Raised in Utah, Bernard F. Fisher had a brief stint in the Navy at the end of World War II and then attended college. During that time, he joined the Utah National Guard and was commissioned in 1951. For the next 14 years, he served in the Air Defense Command and then volunteered for duty in Vietnam.



Fisher and Myers



*Fisher Earns the Medal of Honor
10 March, 1966*

Attempting to relieve the U.S. and Vietnam defenders, the Air Force flew over 200 sorties in the two days. A Spad flown by fellow pilot Maj D.W. “Jump” Myers took hits and Myers was forced to crash land on the camp's severely damaged airstrip. Rescue helicopters were a half hour distant so Fisher, flying a two seat A-1E, decided to land to pick up Myers. He landed on the contested airstrip, avoided the debris, taking enemy fire, picked up Myers and flew out. Afterwards he commented that “When a man is down, you don't leave him there.” For this act of heroism, “above and beyond the call of duty,” Fischer was awarded the Medal of Honor.

*That Day at that Place a Second Medal of Honor
is Earned*

The Green Berets and CIDG irregulars who defended the camp suffered casualties on the order of 60 percent. One of the camp defenders was Sergeant First Class Bennie G. Adkins. Although wounded, Adkins manned a mortar pit, dragged two wounded comrades to safety, ventured outside the wire to rescue another soldier and retrieve air dropped supplies, and finally lead a group which evaded capture for two days until rescued by helicopters.

Forty years later, Sergeant First Class Bennie G. Adkins was awarded the Medal of Honor for “acts of gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.”



*A Similar Feat in World War Two and the
Remarkable Coincidence*

Two officers serving with the 1st Air Commando when Fisher earned The Medal were Myers squadron commander, Richard Willsie, and Richard Andrews, a pilot who flew top cover when Fisher landed.

Twenty-three years earlier, on 04 August, 1944, in World War II, Willsie was flying a Lockheed P-38 Lightning and strafing an airfield near the Ploesti Oil complex in Rumania. His plane was heavily damaged by ground fire and he was forced to belly land in a plowed field.

A fellow pilot, Flight Officer Andrews made a wheels down landing in the same field and left his airplane to assist Willsie! They returned to Andrews plane and climbed aboard The P-38 has only one seat so Willsie was sitting on Andrew's lap. On take-off, Andrews could not get the control wheel back far enough so he cranked in full nose-up trim and just cleared the trees at the end of the field. Andrews was awarded the Silver Star.



Andrew and Willsie Demonstrating "Sardine Class" seating in a P-38. (Credit: P-38 Association)

Twenty five years later, after Bernie Fisher's Medal winning feat in rescuing Jump Myers, members of the P-38 Association campaigned to have Andrew's Silver Star upgraded to the Medal of Honor. After Andrews died in 2007, his family requested that they discontinue the effort and the request was honored.

The Fate of Fisher's Aircraft

Fisher's A-1E was repaired and continued to serve in Vietnam for a short time but was transferred to Hurlburt Field Florida in 1967 and then flown to Dayton, Ohio where it now resides in the National Museum of the United States Air Force. In December of 2012. the museum discovered that the Spad still contained 200 gallons of gasoline in its fuel tanks! The section of the museum was temporarily closed and the tanks were emptied and purged. The Skyraider, 52-132649, is now on display in the Southeast Asia Gallery.



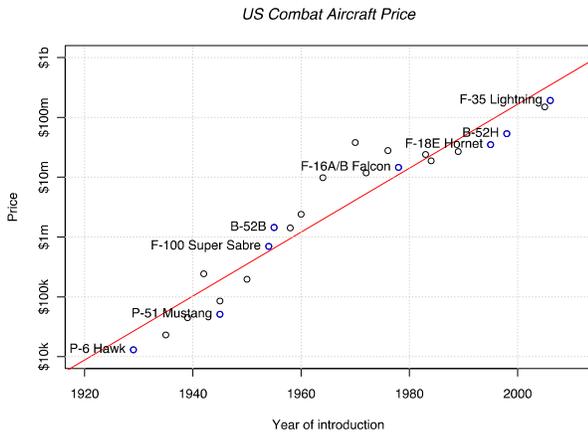
649 at the Air Force Museum

THE FUTURE OF AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT

In 1984, Norman Augustine, past president of Lockheed-Martin and a former Secretary of the Army published a set of tongue in cheek laws befitting the operation of industry and government. Three of these laws are directly applicable to aviation and are printed below.

Law Number XIV: After the year 2015, there will be no airplane crashes. There will be no takeoffs either, because electronics will occupy 100 percent of every airplane's weight.

Law Number XVI: In the year 2054, the entire defense budget will purchase just one aircraft. This aircraft will have to be shared by the Air Force and Navy 3-1/2 days each per week except for leap year, when it will be made available to the Marines for the extra day.



The defense budgets grow linearly but the unit cost of a new military aircraft grows exponentially.

Law XVI is sometimes known as “Coolidge’s Conjecture.” After reading a request from the War Department for the purchase of a squadron of new aircraft, President Calvin Coolidge said “Why don’t we just buy one airplane and let the pilots take turns flying it.”

Law Number XLIV: Aircraft flight in the 21st century will always be in a westerly direction, preferably supersonic, crossing time zones to provide the additional hours needed to fix the broken electronics.

AEROSPACE CHRONOLOGY

Memories of March’s Past

12 MAR, 1946-The Army Air Force School at Maxwell Air Base, is renamed Air University.



Muir Fairchild Library, Maxwell AFB

13 MAR, 1961-First flight of the Hawker Siddeley P.1127 Kestrel, forerunner of the Harrier.



P.1127 At the Fleet Air Arm Museum

14 MAR, 1927-Pan American Airlines organized.



The glory that was PanAm-Boeing 747 Clipper Derby on departure.

15 MAR, 1951-Boeing test pilots, flying a KC-97A and a B-47A perform the first aerial refueling by the boom method.



(Photo Credit: USAF)

16 MAR, 1926 – Inventor Robert Goddard launches the world’s first liquid-fueled rocket in Auburn, Mass.



*The rocket flew for 2.5 seconds, climbed to 41 feet and landed 184 feet away. A small step for a rocketeer. A large step for rocketry.
(Photo Credit: NASA)*

17 MAR, 1924-Four Army Douglas World Cruisers, named Seattle, Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans depart Clover Field, Santa Monica for Seattle on the start of the first round the world flight.



Chicago on Display at NASM, The Mall, D.C.



US Army Air Service World Flight Insignia

18 MAR, 1965-Cosmonaut Alexi Leonev, flying in *Voskhod 2*, performs the first extra vehicular activity in space.



*Leonev also commanded the Soviet half of the Apollo-Soyuz mission.
(Photo credit:NASA)*

19 MAR, 1952-First flight of the North American F-86F Sabre.



Organized in 1949, the Skyblazers were the USAF-Europe precision demonstration team.

*In the next edition, Part II of the Obscure Cessna article featuring some unfamiliar high wing single engine Cessna using their their classic design.
features and Cessna's attempt to produce a four engine executive transport.*