



Missions for  
America  
*Semper vigilans!*  
*Semper volans!*

## The Coastwatcher

Publication of the Thames River Composite  
Squadron  
Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol  
300 Tower Rd., Groton, CT  
<http://ct075.org>

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27 February, 2018

01 MAR-Amateur Radio Course  
10-11 MAR-Squadron Leadership Course  
17 MAR-Geophysics Lecture-HFD MIT Club  
17-18 MAR-ICS 300 & 400 Courses-Camp  
Hartell  
24 or 25 MAR-First Air Course-New Haven  
24-25-SLS Course  
17 APR-CTWG TRAEX  
6-8 APR-NER Cadet Competition  
21 APR-commander's Cup Rocket Contest  
(tentative)  
28-29 APR-Corporate Leadership Course

**CADET MEETING**  
*27 February, 2018*

Cadet Martin and Lt Col Rocketto led a wide

ranging discussion about the creation of planets, the conic sections which describe orbits, and the discovery of new planets, past and present.

C/CMSgt Ramsey and C/Lt Col Hollingsworth divided the cadet squadron into three groups. Each group was provided with a New York sectional chart and a plotter. Each team was assigned a CAP aircraft and given the latitude and longitude of two different airports from which their aircraft would depart and land. The problem was complicated by the need to transform the geographic coordinates from decimal degree notation to degree/minute notation. The task was to plot the courses of each aircraft.



*Nav Teams at  
Work*



### **SENIOR MEETING**

*27 February, 2018*

*submitted by Capt Edward Miller*

Lt Schmidt briefed the officers on the details about Wing communications which had been discussed at the last Wing pilots' meeting. The repeater locations were identified and the technique for switching between the two state-wide channels was explained.

A video detailing the operation of the TDFM radios was shown. The use of the key pad to switch channels was emphasized.

Majs Farley and Noniewicz led a discussion about the "lessons learned" during the last Wing TRANEX.

## MISSIONS, TRAINING, ACTIVITIES

### *Training Exercise 24 February, 2018*

Around a dozen squadron members worked on air and ground missions during the TRANEX.

Maj Noniewicz ran air operations out of Brainard Mission Base assisted by Capt Jim Whitesell and Lt David Pineau. They utilized four aircraft and eight aircrews and logged eight hours of mission time. Tasks included prosecution of an emergency locator beacon in the Glastonbury area and infrastructure photography along the Connecticut and Thames River.

Maj Farley led the Groton air crew, Lt Col Kinch was observer, and Lt Spreccace handled scanner and camera duties. They photographed all Connecticut River bridges from the Sound to the Putnam Bridge at Hartford. The Yankee nuclear storage site was a second objective. The final portion of the flight looked at Thames River infrastructure from the Mohegan Sun Casino south.

Maj Bourque was Ground Team Leader for two sorties dispatched from Hartford Mission Base. They were charged with acquiring photos of the I-84 Bridge and the Barber Pond Dam.

Lt Schmidt led the Cadet training session in Groton. The practiced reading aviation weather reports and forecasts, determining position by longitude and latitude.



*Cadet Race Manning the Radio  
(Photo Credit: SM Thornell)*

C/MSgt Munzner and C/Amn Martin instructed Cadets Irvine and Burton and Lt Heard on the tasks required to qualify as a Mission Radio Operator.



*Radio Room Activity  
(Photo Credit: SM Thornell)*

### *National Department of Defense Communications Exercise 23 February, 2018*

Lt Schmidt, SM Jennifer Thornell, and Cadet Rhys Thornell took part in a nationwide mission testing the ability of diverse organizations to network a viable high frequency and very high frequency radio net.

## HISTORY

### *Historic and Replica Watering Holes of the U.S. Military*

#### *Part Two*

The last edition of *The Coastwatcher* featured Tun Tavern and Benny Havens, noted eating and drinking establishments associated with the Marine Corps and the Army. This edition will take a look at the clubs associated with naval aviation and the Air Force.

#### *The Happy Bottom Riding Club*

Florence Barnes, better known as Pancho, had aviation in her blood. Her grandfather was Thaddeus S. C. Lowe, the man who created the Army of the Potomac's balloon corps during the Civil War. When she was ten years old, he took her to her first airshow. A bequest following the

death of her wealthy parents smoothed her way into aviation.

Pancho soloed in six hours and soon was barnstorming and racing. In 1923, flying the Travel Air Type R Mystery Ship, she won the Women's Air Derby, breaking the previous record held by Amelia Earhart. Moving to Hollywood, she worked as a stunt pilot in a number of movies and was instrumental in starting the Associated Motion Picture Pilots union.

But in 1929, the Great Depression wiped out her investments and savings so with her remaining capital, she purchased 180 acres of land in the Mojave Desert adjacent to Rogers Dry Lake and the U.S. Army airbase, Muroc. Her intent was to farm but another opportunity arose.

In the post-war WWII boom, Muroc Army Air Base became the primary test site for new aircraft. Pancho started the Ranch Oro Verde Fly-Inn Dude Ranch better known as the Happy Bottom Riding Club. According to one story, Jimmy Doolittle was the source of the name. After a long horseback ride, Doolittle was asked by Pancho if he liked the animal. Doolittle responded, "Oh yes, it gave me a happy bottom."



*Doolittle was a close friend of Pancho's and gave the eulogy at her funeral.*

The amenities included a swimming pool, rodeo rink, stables, an airstrip and a hotel, restaurant and bar. The personnel from the base, isolated in the Mojave, flocked to the Club to enjoy the food, drink, activities, and companionship. Pilots from the urban areas of Southern California flew in to enjoy the relaxing atmosphere.



*Layout of the Ranch*

*(All Pictures Courtesy of Edwards AFB Archives)*



*The hostesses display a picture of a P-80 Shooting Star.*

*Pancho was an accomplished composer. Pilots gather round the piano to sing. Yeager is on Pancho's left.*



The "Artist Formerly Known as Prince" sang..."life is just a party and parties weren't meant to last." The hammer of the Air Force fell on The Ranch. In 1952, the proximity of air traffic in and out of Pancho's airstrip and the increased intensity of operations at Muroc, now called Edwards Air Force Base, became a concern of officialdom. The Club's location also conflicted with a planned runway expansion. Government pressure was brought to bear. The Club was declared off-limits destroying a significant part of Pancho's business. The Government then initiated a suit to appropriate the land under eminent domain. Rumors spread about unsavory activities at the Club. Pancho counter-sued. And then, in 1953, the Club burned down. Pancho was out and the Air Force was in.



*The Ruins of Rancho Oro Verde. The white area is the swimming pool that had a sloped entry so the Pancho could ride her horse into the water.*

The spirit of the Club lives on in the films, *The Right Stuff* and *The Legend of Pancho Barnes and the Happy Bottom Riding Club*. From time to time, celebrants gather at the site to celebrate the panache of days gone-by when the “fastest men in the world” would gather together to sing, swap lies, and enjoy the company.



*Yeager had a cameo role as the bartender in The Right Stuff.*

### *Cubi Point Officers' Club*

The National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida features a combination of restaurant and museum exhibit, the Cubi Bar Café. In 1992, the NAS Cubi Point Officers' Club in the Philippines was closed. The base had been established during the Korean War and entailed one of the largest earth moving operations in history, roughly equivalent to that which created the Panama Canal.

Cubi Point became the primary supply and repair station for U.S. carrier forces in the Western Pacific. The closing of the base occurred when the Philippine government requested the removal of all U.S. military facilities from their nation. The Officers' Club has been a majoring gathering spot for navy personnel and the thousands of commemorative plaques placed there by service units passing through were packed up and

transferred to the museum in Pensacola.

The Cubi Point Officers' Club was a three level establishment. The bar and dining area was on the first floor. The second floor houses another dining area, a dance floor, and a stage for entertainers. Rambunctious behavior was the norm but the “high point” of the Club was an annex, located in the basement.

The annex was known as the Cat Room and one could obtain a “Cubi Dog” and a San Miguel beer for fifteen cents. The concrete floor and cinder block walls allowed the naval aviators to play some rough games but the most famous employed the “Cat Room Cat.”

The “Cat Room Cat” was a device which simulated a landing, in aviator lexicon, a “trap,” on an aircraft carrier. The mock-up of a cockpit, equipped with a shoulder harness and a control stick sat on a set of rails which terminated in a shallow pool of water just outside the club. The track also had an arresting wire.

In operation, the rider was propelled down the track by a burst of compressed gas. Acceleration was about equal to that of a WWII hydraulic catapult. At some point, he pulled back on the stick which dropped the tail hook. If successful, he captured the arresting wire. If unsuccessful, he continued outside for a dunking in the pool. A successful trap was free. An unsuccessful trap cost the wet rider five dollars.



1969 - Cubi Point Officer's Club grand opening of "The Tailhook Room". Lt Jack Musitano, F-8 pilot from VF-51's Screaming Eagles rides Red Horse one, misses the arresting wire, and suffers the consequences. Note the VF-51 insignia on the side.

Well, you can still get a Cubi Dog in Pensacola. The menu describes it as a “plump all-beef wiener, smothered with our freshly made chili, topped with grated cheddar cheese, chopped

onions, diced tomatoes and sour cream” for \$7.50. Down it with a carbonated beverage. Not the kind of chow one might want to consume before a flight in moderate turbulence.



But while there take a little time to wander around and inspect some of the memorabilia: plaques, uniforms, photos, and aviation tchotchkes. It will be worth your while.

### *Trader Jon's*

#### *Pensacola, Florida*

Sometime in the late '60s, the Editor, returning from South America, flew into Pensacola to visit with Hap, his brother, who was enrolled in the Navy Flight Officer Program. One evening, we decided to study the history of naval aviation and there was no better spot to start our research than at Trader Jon's, 511 South Palafox St. The bar was a treasure trove of naval aviation memorabilia.

On the first day of 1953, Martin Weissman, a Brooklyn native, opened a club which would become a haven for the brown shoes stationed at or passing through Pensacola. One of Weissman's eccentricities, of which there were many, was that there were no fixed prices for drinks, the cost depended upon his frame of mind or the phase of the moon or some other unfathomable circumstance.

Weissman, as was his wont, might also trade drinks for articles connected with naval aviation and this custom was the source of his sobriquet and a vast collection of plaques, photographs, insignia, and aircraft parts. Legend has it that a crew chief needing a part to repair an aircraft could visit Trader Jon's and make a deal,

swapping a surplus item for the one needed.



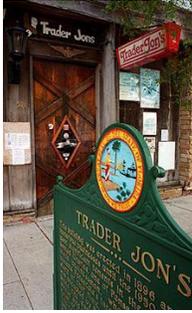
*The Trader and part of his collection.*

*(Credit: Pensacola News Journal)*



Weissman was somewhat of a raconteur and amused customers with an endless series of sea stories about his collection. A favorite item was the VMFP-3 Rhino, made infamous during Tailhook '91. An annex, next to the bar, the Blue Angel Museum, was a point of pride for Weissman. The collection encompassed the entire history of the Blue Angels from 1946 onwards.

Trader Jon suffered a stroke in in 1997 and the bar was closed. A number of attempts to purchase the memorabilia failed and the bar operated under different owners. A fire and Hurricane Ivan damaged the premises. The collection of memorabilia was purchased by a law firm and donated to the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation. The T.T. Wentworth Museum in Pensacola holds 13,000 items from the collection and has run Trader Jon exhibits. In 1992, the State of Florida designated the Trader Jon's Building an historic site.



*A door sign and historic plaque now stand at the site.*

*L'envoi*

The editor, in his spirit driven search for aviation trivia has noted some other items pertinent to the subjects of this article.

In 2007, he attended CAP's national meeting in San Diego. While strolling along the waterfront, he saw the Kansas City Barbecue and his mental annunciator panel lit-up. Sure enough, it turned out to be the "sleazy bar" featured in the film *Top Gun*, well worth a visit.



Connecticut has contributed to aviation song and story. Not as notorious as Bridgeport's claims about the purported flights of Gustave Weisskopf is a product of Hartford's Heublin, Inc. branded Jeremiah Weed. Jeremiah Weed comes in two marks, a 90 proof blended whiskey distilled in Kentucky and a 100 proof liqueur concocted in the Nutmeg State.



The drink is a favorite among the fighter pilot community. Two F-16 pilots, *Dos Gringos* are known for their rendition of the song "Jeremiah Weed" in which the taste is likened to "lysol and alcohol, with a touch of gasoline."

Connecticut's connection with the subjects of this article cannot be denied. The state seal displays three wine vines and its motto advocating transplanting the vines. The Corsair is the state airplane and the robin is the state bird. The Flying Yankees are Connecticut's Air National Guard outfit. The Husky stadium carries the name of Fred Rentschler, a founder of Pratt & Whitney. Howard Hughes got his first flight off the Thames River.

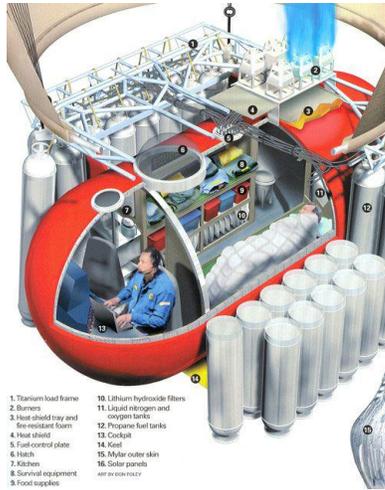
So in accord with these precedents, The Coastwatcher proposes that the august members of the Connecticut State Legislature replace the state song, "Yankee Doodle Dandy" with "Jeremiah Weed."

"Yankee Doodle Dandy" was an insulting song sung by the British. The general reference is to an effeminate fop who put on airs. But Jeremiah Weed references the Type A risk-takers, arrogant quick-thinking swaggering hombres with an attitude. Here is a worthy project for our CAP Legislative Squadron.

**AEROSPACE CHRONOLOGY**

MAR 1, 1999 –The hot-air balloon Breitling Orbiter 3, piloted by Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones, begins the first non-stop, round-the-world

balloon flight. They will complete the flight on March 19, setting a new distance record for any type of aircraft, 40,804 km (25,360 miles) in a total time of 19 days, 21 hours and 47 min.



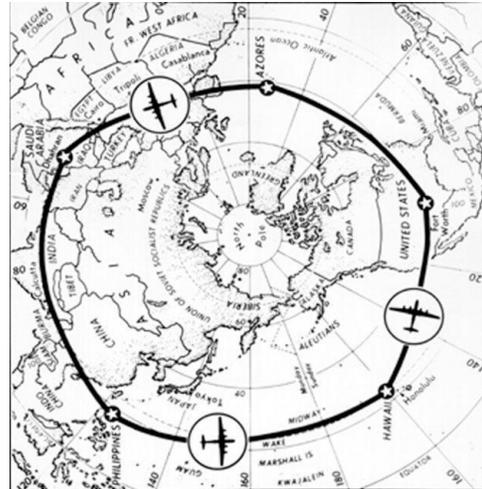
*Gondola of the Breitling Orbiter 3*



1. Titanium load frame
2. Burners
3. Heat shield tray and Reinforced foam
4. Heat shield
5. Fuel control plate
6. Hatch
7. Kitchen
8. Survival equipment
9. Food supplies
10. Lithium hydroxide filters
11. Liquid nitrogen and oxygen tanks
12. Propane fuel tanks
13. Cockpit
14. Seat
15. Mylar outer skin
16. Solar panels



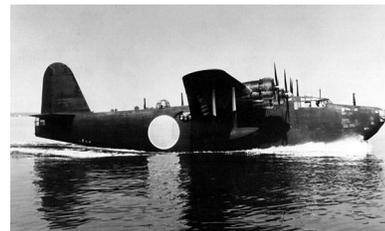
*Lucky Lady taking fuel from a KB-29M. The method is the grappled-line looped-hose system developed by legendary aviator Sir Alan Cobham. (Photo/Map Credit: NM of the USAF)*



MAR 4, 1942 – Operation K, an overnight flight, marks little known the second Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The Imperial Japanese Navy uses a submarine to refuel two Kawanishi H8K flying boats at French Frigate Shoals.

MAR 2, 1940 – Britain and France renege on their promise to send 100 combat aircraft to Finland which had been invaded by the Soviet Union. As George Kennan once said...”nations do not have allies, they have interests.”

MAR 3, 2005 – The Lucky Lady II, a B-50A completes the first nonstop round-the-world flight in 94hr 1min. The flight, starting and ending at Carswell AFB, Texas, covers 23,425 miles and requires four refuelings



*The H8K was an outstanding aircraft, known to the Allies as the Emily. The aircraft above is a captured Emily being tested at the USN Test Center at Patuxent River, Maryland.*

*The fuselage of Lucky Lady II is stored in Chino, California.*



The raid was ambitious, arguably the longest bombing missions flown in WWII. Two aircraft left Wake in the Marshall Islands and flew 1,900 miles to French Frigate Shoals, the largest atoll in the northwest Hawaiian Island chain. There, they were refueled by a submarine and flew on to

Oahu, 550 miles more.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the damage caused by the December 7th attack and to bomb key facilities so as to disrupt repair and salvage operations.

Heavy cloud cover prevents accurate bombing. One salvo of bombs lands near President Theodore Roosevelt High School in Honolulu causing slight damage.

One aircraft returned to Wajte. The second aircraft, hull damaged during the take-off from French Frigate Shoals returned to Jaluit Atoll in the Marshall's, 2, 400 miles away, a total distance of 4,850 miles.

MAR 5, 2005 – Steve Fossett, flies the Virgin Atlantic Global Flyer and takes 67hr 2min to complete the first non-stop solo circumnavigation of the earth taking off and landing at Salina, Kansas.



The 114 foot wing span is about equal to the span of a Boeing 737. (Photo Credit: Alan Rade)



MAY 6, 1990 – The Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird makes its last flight for the USAF, Palmdale, California to Washington-Dulles landing after 1hr 4min 20 sec of flight time, an average speed of 2,124 mph. The aircraft is now in the National Air and Space Museum.



Pilot Lt Col Ed Yielding and Reconnaissance Systems Officer Lt Col Joseph Vida



### Miller, Juutilainen, and the Brewster Buffalo

Squadron member Ed Miller specializes in building aircraft models which carry the livery of famous pilots. The Brewster Buffalo carries the marks of Finnish ace, Eino Ilmari "Illu" Ilmari Juutilainen. Here is a picture of his model of his aircraft and the actual aircraft.

