



Missions for America

*Semper vigilans!*

*Semper volans!*

Publication of the Thames River Composite Squadron  
Connecticut Wing  
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07 November, 2018

**SQUADRON CALENDAR**

- 09 NOV-Veterans Day Ceremony-Groton Elks
- 10 NOV-Cadet Ball
- 11 NOV-Veterans Day Ceremony-Niantic
- 13 NOV-TRCS Meeting
- 20 NOV-TRCS Meeting
- 27 NOV-TRCS Meeting
- 01 DEC-02 DEC-Corporate Learning Course
- 04 DEC-TRCS Meeting
- 08-09 DEC-Training Leaders of Cadets Course
- 11 DEC-TRCS Meeting
- 18 DEC-TRCS Holiday Party
- 25 DEC & 01 JAN-No Meetings

**CADET MEETING**

*07 November, 2018*

The meeting opened with PT testing and an interactive session about the national ensign.

Lt Col Rocketto spoke about about the history, conduct, and aftermath of the First World War. Rocketto used slides to indicate the interlocking relationships of the participants, the horrors of trench warfare on the Western Front, new weaponry, the campaigns in Africa, the Mideast, and the Pacific, and the pernicious treaties which set the stage for World War II.

The presentation ended with a reading of Arthur Guiterman's poem, Pershing at the Front. Cadets played the roles of the sergeant, captain, aide and Rocketto promoted himself to General of the Armies, "Blackjack Pershing.

**SENIOR MEETING**

*07 November, 2018*

Fruit Committee members worked to record sales and prepare the order. The total sold is approximately equal to that sold last year.

Members worked on individual projects.

**TRAINING EXERCISES**

The first four days of the wing-wide training exercise was plagued by unflyable weather. Crews remained on the alert and are prepared to fly on Wednesday, the 7th of November.

**TRCS ASSISTS ASHFORD SCHOOL IN NASA CONTEST**

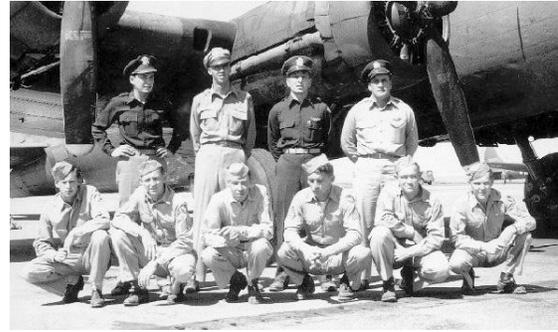
SM Tom Ceniglio and Lt Col Rocketto traveled to Ashford School where they teamed with educators and Pratt & Whitney engineers to evaluate student entries in a contest sponsored by NASA.



*The Evaluators at Work*

Elementary and middle school students constructed experiments which if selected will be flown to the International Space Station. The experiments used very simple equipment to study the behavior of chemical and biological materials in a microgravity environment.

The teachers involved are CAP Aerospace Education Members Kate Craven, Carly Imhoff, and Dory Moore.



The crew of Thru Hel'en Hiwater.

**OUTFIELD FLY**

*by Hap Rocketto  
first published in Air & Space Magazine  
August/September 1993*

The 1943 World Series had all the hallmarks of a classic. In a rematch of the previous year's antagonists, the St. Louis Cardinals would attempt to repeat their resounding win over the New York Yankees. The 1942 Cardinals had not been given much of a chance against the New York powerhouse, but with the batting of rookie Stan Musial and the pitching of Johnny Beazley they defeated a team that had won six league championships in seven years.

But the nation's war effort was gobbling up manpower at a prodigious rate. No one knew who might be playing ball in 1944, or if there would even be a 1944 season. It looked as if this might be the last great series for the duration of the war, which is why the first game drew over 68,000 fans to Yankee Stadium.

As the teams took batting practice and the pitchers warmed up, four Army Air Forces B-17 bombers were droning toward New York City on their way to combat bases in England. At the navigator's station of *Thru Helen Hiwater* [42-39785], sat my uncle, Second Lieutenant Harold Rocketto of Brooklyn. Second Lieutenant Jack Watson was the pilot; the other bombers were piloted by Second Lieutenants Robert Sheets, Elmer Young, and Joseph Wheeler.

*(Back L-R) 2nd Lt. Jack W. Watson (P), 2Lt John C. Doty, Jr. (CP), 2nd Lt. Harold Rocketto (N), 2nd Lt. Vance Colvin (B)((Front L-R) Sgt Roman Kosinski (TG), Sgt Fred H. Booth (BTG), Sgt William H. Fussner (RWG), Sgt Harry Romaniec (RO), Sgt Eugene R. Stewart (LWG), Sgt Samuel J. Rowland (E)*

*Five of the were killed in action and four became prisoners of war.*



*B-17G Thru Hel'en and Hiwater (#42-39785)  
303 Bomb Group, 358th Bomb Squadron, Eighth Air Force*

As Rocketto, a Brooklyn Dodgers fan, scanned the landscape trying to pick out boyhood haunts in the Bensonhurst section, the idle chatter on the intercom turned to the World Series. No one is sure what sparked the next move. Perhaps it was Rocketto's desire to seek revenge against the Yankees for their 1941 victory over the Dodgers. Then again, perhaps it was just the high spirits of young men facing a dangerous future. Whatever

the reason, the fans at Yankee Stadium were about to be treated to an impromptu demonstration of the nation's bomber force.

As the aircraft crossed the Hudson River, the pilots headed for the Bronx and put the formation into a shallow dive. Picking up speed, the bombers thundered over Yankee Stadium in a low pass from home plate to center field. After they climbed out the B-17s wheeled about and circled the field while Watson returned for an encore. He cleared the upper-deck flagpoles by a mere 25 feet, prompting the Associated Press to later report that "an Army bomber roared over Yankee Stadium so low that Slat's Marion could have fielded it." Watson then rejoined the formation and headed east.



*The previous scene on this newsreel shows the B-17 pitched up and climbing to clear the grandstand.*

"We knew we were heading for a combat zone and dropping in on the World Series seemed like a good idea at the time," Wheeler told a reporter months later. "The announcers must have thought it was part of the show because after we went over the first time we could hear them on the plane radio talking about the big Air Force review. We figured they were enjoying it so we turned around and came over a second time. We thought nothing about it until later when we found we had caused a sensation."

New York mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, a World War I Army pilot, was watching as the bombers swooped overhead. La Guardia initially appreciated the panache of the young men, but

admiration quickly gave way to his greater duty as mayor. Outraged, he burned up the phone lines to the Army Air Forces brass. "That pilot should be properly disciplined, endangering the lives of the citizenry of New York in that manner," he fumed.

When they landed at Presque Isle Airfield in Maine, Watson and the three other pilots were confined to quarters while court martial proceedings were undertaken. They were released a few days later when the Army realized it was foolish to keep four badly needed aircraft and crews out of combat because of a youthful indiscretion. "Besides," a general told Watson, "you and your crew will probably be killed anyway."

Five days after the buzzing brouhaha the four aircraft continued their journey to England, each pilot's military record heavier by a letter of reprimand and his wallet lighter by a \$75 fine - no small sum to a second lieutenant back then.

Because of wartime news restrictions so tight that sports announcers were forbidden to comment on the weather lest the enemy pick up valuable intelligence, the buzzing incident went almost entirely unreported. The names of the crews were unknown to all but the authorities until three months later.

January 11, 1944, was one of the costliest days of air combat in history. Some 60 U.S. bombers were destroyed and more than 600 airmen were killed, wounded, or reported missing. On that terrible day, Watson, flying with the 303rd Bomb Group, single-handedly returned his badly shot-up and burning bomber to England. In a radio interview he brought up the stadium incident by voicing hope that the mayor of New York was not still sore at him. After hearing the interview, LaGuardia sent Watson a message: "All is forgiven. Congratulations. I hope you never run out of altitude. Happy landings. We'll be seeing you soon."

"Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and it can't be too soon for me." Watson replied, then added, "We'd sort of like to go back together some day and drop in on the Rose Bowl game."

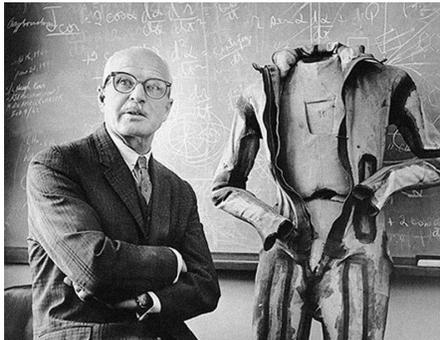
## AEROSPACE HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

Nov. 7, 1954 – Two Soviet MiG-15s shoot down a U.S. RB-29 Surveillance aircraft off the coast of Hokkaidō, Japan. Ten of the eleven crew survive the bailout but the navigator, 2nd Lt Sigfredo Angulo, becomes tangled in his parachute risers and drowns.



*The RB-29 readying for the mission.*

Nov. 8, 1942 – Anti-G suits are used for the first time in combat. Pilots of 807 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm don them and fly their Supermarine Seafires against the Vichy French during the invasion of North Africa.



*Wilbur R. Franks, University of Toronto, the inventor.*

*A Seafire of 807 Squadron after a less than perfect landing.*



Nov. 9, 1932 – A Dornier Wal commanded by Wolfgang von Granau completes a 111 day journey marking the first circumnavigation of the globe by a seaplane.

In July 1932, Wolfgang von Gronau and a crew of three embarked on an around-the-world demonstration flight. The flight departed List auf Sylt, Germany and flew west touching down in 18 countries before landing on Lake Constance, a distance of 27,000 miles.



*U.S. Army photograph taken as the Dornier approached Manila.*

Nov. 10, 1907 – The configuration for the modern airplane is introduced by Louis Bleriot when he unveils his Model VII. It is a monoplane incorporating an enclosed fuselage and a tractor engine.



Nov. 11, 1935 – New Zealander Jean Batten becomes the first woman to solo the South Atlantic flying from Senegal in Africa to Brazil in a Percival Gull. The flight takes 13 ½ hours.



*The aircraft is now on display at the Jean Batten International Terminal, Auckland, New Zealand.*

The reclusive and glamorous Batten was known as the “Garbo of the Skies” and set a number of distance records in the 1930s. She was a three time winner of the Harmon Trophy, received honors from both Brazil, France, and the British Empire, and honored by the Maori as *Hine-o-te-Rangi* ("Daughter of the Skies").



Nov. 12, 1980 – Delta orders 60 Boeing 757s, at that time, the largest single order for a specific airliner type.



*CTWG's own John deAndrade flies the 757 and 767 for Delta*

*Off to Frankfurt*



Nov. 13, 1906 - Alberto Santos-Dumont flies his Model 14-bis a distance of 722 feet at the Château de Bagatelle in France. This is the first officially observed aircraft flight in Europe.

