



Missions
for America

*Semper
vigilans!*

*Semper
volans!*

Publication of the Thames River Composite
Squadron
Connecticut Wing
Civil Air Patrol

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Issue 13.33

17 September, 2019

SQUADRON CALENDAR

21 SEP-Maintenance
21 SEPT-Orientation Flights
24 SEP-TRCS Meeting
29 Sep-Scarecrow Festival-Preston
01 OCT-TRCS Staff Meetings
05 OCT-Groton Fall Festival
08 OCT-TRCS Commander's Call and Promotions
12/13 OCT-CTWG TRANEX
15 OCT- TRCS Meeting
22 OCT-TRCS Meetomg
29 OCT-Fruit Sale Ends

FRUIT SALE IS ON!

Fight Scurvey



Uncle Steve Wants You to Sell Fruit

CADET MEETING

17 Sept., 2019

Cadet Burton delivered a safety briefing on hurricane preparedness and precautions.

Cadet Minter's leadership seminar demonstrated the theoretical and practical aspects of ironing your uniform. Mothers take note.

Lt Col Rocketto and Maj Farley distributed the fundraising sales material and showed the cadets how to fill out the forms.

SENIOR MEETING

17 Sept., 2019

Fruit sale materials were distributed.

Lt Richardson called for volunteers to assist at the Groton Fall Festival on October 5th.

LAST LISP OF SEASON

The Squadron flew its last Long Island Sound Patrols last weekend. The early patrol on Saturday was manned by Lt Specace, Lt Col Doucette, and Lt Chebelyon-Dalizu.. The second patrol found

Maj Neilson as mission pilot and Lt Pineau in the observer seat.

On Sunday, Maj Farley, Lt Col Kinch, and Lt Richards flew in the afternoon. The sunset patrol was piloted by Maj Neilson with Capt Johnson as observer and SM Otrin as scanner.



Homeward Bound-Thimble Islands Aft
(Credit: SM Otrin)

It was a quiet week-end.

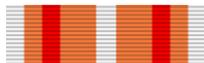


CAP 604 At Rest at GON
(Credit: Maj Noniewicz)

QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

Lt Alex Siedel has qualified as a Mission Scanner

Commendation Award



Lt Jennifer Thornell has been awarded a Commander's Commendation by the CTWG. She was cited for her work in assuring that the members of the International Air Cadet Exchange Program who visited Connecticut this summer has an enjoyable and fruitful visit and a smooth transit.



The *Commander's Commendation Award* is presented to Civil Air Patrol members for "outstanding duty performance where achievements and services are clearly and unmistakably exceptional when compared to similar achievements and service of members of like rank and responsibility.

THE COAST ARTILLERY DEFENSES OF EASTERN LONG ISLAND SOUND

Before Silicon Valley, the Connecticut River Valley and its environs was the technological center of the industrial world. Major arms manufacturers and the industries which constructed warships and later aircraft could be found throughout the region. The Sound provides an easy access to the Connecticut shoreline and the eastern approaches to the New York metropolitan area. Consider the aforementioned strategic value of the industries along the Connecticut shoreline and their vulnerability to attack by an enemy fleet. The British had demonstrated this is during our Revolution.

In 1885, President Grover Cleveland appointed Secretary of War William C. Endicott to head a board charged with investigating the state of our coastal defenses and suggesting remediation of any weaknesses. The Endicott Board's report recommended that an industry be created to produce coastal defense cannons and that permanent fortifications be constructed at 27 different sites along our seaboard. One of these complexes would guard the eastern end of Long Island Sound. Not much was done since the country was at peace but as the Spanish-American War approached construction started.

Fort Mansfield

A convenient way to survey the layout of the coastal defense fortifications is by aircraft. Taking off from Groton-New London Airport and turn east over Fisher's Island Sound. A long peninsula, Napatree Point, which stretches westward out from Watch Hill, Rhode Island is visible.



*Napatree Point
Little Narragansett Bay
is to the left and Block
Island Sound is to the
right.*

*The ruins are
easily
reached by
hiking down
the beach.*



The remains of Fort Mansfield, constructed during the 1898 unpleasantness with Spain is visible at the western end. The fort is named in honor of Major General Joseph K. Mansfield, killed at the Battle of Antietam.

The main armament were two 8-inch disappearing guns and four 5-in guns. Later, the Army discovered that a "dead spot" occurred west of the fort which allowed an enemy vessel to attack and land assault troops with impunity. Mansfield ceased its active defense role in 1917 and its guns were removed for use in the "War to End All Wars." The land was sold and the Hurricane of 1938 destroyed part of the fort.

Fort H. G. Wright

Fisher's Island lies just west of Napatree Point. Both geological features and the others which will be mentioned in this article are vestiges of Wisconsin glaciation between 25,000 and 60,000 years ago. Forts H. G. Wright is located on the western end of the island. The fort centers on Elizabeth Airport names for Elizabeth Nugent, a daughter of a commander of the fort.

Construction started in 1898 and eight gun batteries were installed: 12-inch mortars, 12, 10, and 6-inch disappearing guns and 3-inch pedestal mounted cannons. Additionally, the fort initially had a 15-inch Zalinski dynamite gun which used compressed air to launch an explosive shell. Finally, Fort Wright controlled a submarine mine field, the mines of which could be individually fired from shore. Over time, much of this armament was upgraded or replaced.



12-inch Mortars-Battery Clinton

Surrounding the fort are some of the old buildings and the concrete pits which formed the various gun batteries. They form a rough semi-circle of about 90 degrees and are located just to the north of the runways. They housed guns as large as 12 inch cannons mounted on disappearing mounts. Fire control towers not only could direct coast artillery fire but also oversaw the electrically controlled submarine minefields offshore



*Runway 12 is
just visible on
the upper
right.*

During World War II, Blimp Detachment 1-1 from Naval Air Station, South Weymouth, was based there to support submarine operations out of New London. Most likely, this is why the runways are so wide. As a Boy Scout in the mid-50's we held camporees on the Fisher's and I recall that a blimp mooring mast still stood at that time.



A battery for two 16-inch guns was constructed at Wilderness Point, just east of the main fort. Two concrete burster courses, like giant eyebrows, protect the embrasures. The armament was never installed. Today, the Naval Underwater Warfare Center maintains a facility at Wilderness Point involving submarine electronic detection systems.

Fort Michie

Maintaining a westerly heading from Fisher's, two small island can be seen. The first is Little Gull, site of a lighthouse. The larger island, Great Gull, was the site of Fort Michie, now a bird sanctuary at which the American Museum of Natural History engages in an ongoing study of the Common and Roseate Terns.



Fort Michie is named for 1st Lt. Dennis Michie who fell at San Juan Hill. In 1890, he introduced football to the United States Military Academy and the stadium at West Point bears his name.

The first installation of ordnance consisted of pairs of 12 and 10-inch guns, two pairs of 8-inch, and a pair of 3-inch guns. The 12 and 10 incers employed disappearing mounts and the others were mounted on pedestals. Just after World War I, two 10-inch guns were removed and an amphitheatre-like emplacement was constructed for the new 16-inch

The amphitheater-like gun pit on the eastern end once housed a 16 inch disappearing gun. The gun has a unique mount which allowed a 30° elevation and a 360° traverse!



The 16-inch gun pit, now flooded.

The Fort Michie 16-inch Rifle
(Credit Pierce Rafferty Collection)



Fort Tyler

Heading west, you pass through the former R-5202 restricted area. Grumman used it to test modified A-6 and F-14 aircraft built at the Long Island Calverton plant about 20 miles west. The area was centered on the highly eroded ruins of Fort Tyler on what is sometimes called Gardiner's Point Island. The island was formerly the end of a

peninsula on the north side of Gardiner's Island. A nor'easter, the Great Blizzard of 1888, caused a breach and the island resulted.



Fort Tyler is at the bottom of the picture. Imagine when it was the end of a peninsula which stretched north from Gardiner's Island.

When the Spanish-American War broke out, the public on the East Coast panicked at the prospect that the Spanish Fleet might bombard their cities. Fort Tyler, not part of the Endicott Plan, was erected as a temporary expedient and planned as a site for two 8-inch guns. Records seem to indicate that no guns were ever installed. The land was transferred to the State of New York in the late 1920's and during World War II used as a bombing target. Military ordnance and the forces of nature have reduced the fort and the island to an acre or so of ruin.



Once a bombing target, boaters are warned not to land there.



The fort was probably named for Brig. Gen. Daniel Tyler, who was a commander of the First Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment during the Civil War. Another story claims that it was named for President John Tyler who married Julia Gardiner Tyler.

Fort Terry

General Alfred Terry has a long career in both the Civil War and the Indian Wars. His column were the troops who found the remains of Custer's battalion after the battle which the Sioux called the Battle of the Greasy Grass but better known as the Little Big Horn. He was born in Hartford and is buried in the Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven.

Fort Terry was an Endicott Plan fort started in 1897 on Plum Island, N.Y. which the Federal government had purchased for \$25,000 from Abraham Hewitt, Mayor of New London.

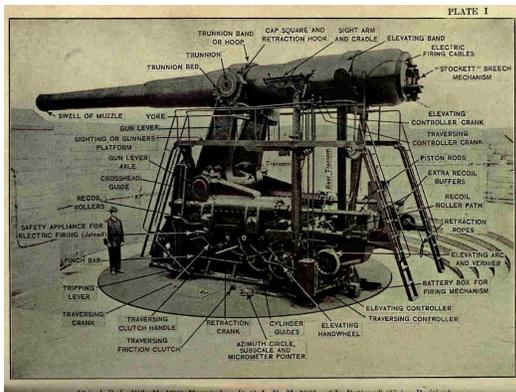


The west end of Plum Island housing the laboratories and the harbor.



The headquarters building and the old grass airport with a helicopter pad.

Much of the early armament consisted of 12 barbette mounted coast defense 12-inch mortars, two 10-inch guns on disappearing mounts, three batteries of paired 6-inch guns also on disappearing mounts and a variety of lesser guns on pedestal mounts. The fort also controlled an underwater minefield. A 36 inch gauge rail-line was used to move shells and powder from the magazines to the batteries.



The Buffington-Crozier Disappearing Gun Mount

Herein lies a story with editorial overtones. Years ago, when The Editor was a member of the Connecticut College faculty, he was cruising the halls of Crozier-Williams, the student social center.

He noticed a plaque which credited the naming of the building to Mrs. Mary Williams Crozier, daughter of Charles August Williams and wife to Brigadier General William Crozier, Chief of Ordnance, U.S. Army from 1901-1908.

Crozier was an inventor who shared credit for improvements to artillery mounts. During his tenure as Chief of Ordnance, the Army adopted the 1903 Springfield Rifle, the .45 caliber Colt Automatic Pistol, and Browning Automatic Rifle.

Mrs. Crozier's original donation of 300,000 was intended to sponsor a building at the U.S. Military Academy but for some reason, the Academy rejected the offer. In that case, he will granted the funds to Connecticut College which after a court case with the U.S government (which Conn College lost) managed to get the money and use it

to build Crozier-Williams Student Center.

In this age of political correctness, one suspects that if the progressive elements at Conn learn that their student center carries the name of a artillery expert and advocate of automatic firearms, they will be much chagrined and demand a name change to a more agreeable personage such as Jeanette Rankin or Allysa Milano.



Fort Terry, 1921 and the eastern gun batteries.



During and after WWI, the guns were shifted, transferred or replaced as required. As with most of these local forts, many of the personnel were supplied by units of the Connecticut National Guard. By World War II, Fort Terry's primary defensive role was assumed by Camp Hero at Montauk Point and turned into aa training and storage area. Only lighter artillery remained as well as anti-aircraft guns and searchlights used for training.

In 1952, the U.S. Army Chemical Corps established a small laboratory to study anti-livestock biological warfare. In 1954, the U.S.

Department of Agriculture took over and it was named the Plum Island Animal Disease Research Center. President Richard Nixon ended the bio-weapons program in 1969 but research continued on livestock diseases, primarily hoof-and-mouth and rinderpest.

Plans are circulating to sell the island or convert it into a public. Access is controlled by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

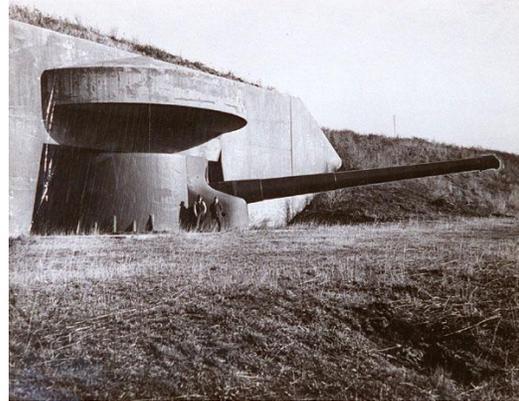
Camp Hero

Camp Hero is located at the eastern end of the south fork of Long Island. At the end of the Spanish American War, a quarantine station was established at Montauk Point and named Camp Wikoff after an infantry colonel who was killed at San Juan Heights. Yellow fever, malaria, and other communicable tropical diseases had infected many of the troops and Wikoff became an intermediary stop where treatments could be made and the men allowed to rest and recover from their arduous service in Cuba.

During WWI, Montauk's strategic location between New York and Boston led to the Army stationing reconnaissance balloons there and the Coast Guard maintained a small base.

In 1942, the U-boat menace and the fear of an invasion led to the creation of a joint base, a U.S. Military Reservation shared by the Army, Navy, and Coast Guard. There was an invasion of sorts. On June 12, 1942, U-202 landed four saboteurs near Amagansett, N.Y. About 11 miles east of Montauk Point. An alert Coastguard beach patroller, John Cullen, sounded the alert and all four saboteurs were eventually hunted down, arrested, tried, and executed or sent to prison.

The Army named it facility after a former commander of the Coast Artillery, Major General Andrew Hero and the entire base was popularly know as Camp Hero. Hero's four 16-in guns made Fort Terry artillery redundant and as previously mentioned, Terry was reduced to a training and storage facility.



One of the two casemated 16-inch rifle in Battery 112

The Navy installed piers, seaplane ramps and hangars, and a torpedo testing facility.

The military used the usual expedients to conceal the facilities, camouflage netting and paint. In addition, they also used false fronts and roofs to make the military buildings look like a small coastal fishing village.



The fire control tower is located in front of Montauk Light.

The war ended and the base was decommissioned and most of the equipment removed. Coastal defense guns became obsolete but a new threat literally arose, the long range bomber and the atomic bomb. In 1948, long range radar replaced the 16-inch gun as the first stage of the national territorial defense system.

The Montauk Point Air Force Station's radar became part of the North American Air Defense System which used the Semi-Automatic Ground

Environment (SAGE) computers and supported the Texas Tower 3 off-shore radar site.

Batteries of BOMARC long range anti-aircraft missiles were installed at Suffolk County AFB annex, now the Francis S. Gabreski Airport and a dozen NIKE line-of-sight missile sites were scattered around Connecticut.



BOMARC-A's at the missile annex, 1 1/2 miles west of the airport.

Ultimately, new strategies, technologies, and methodologies came on scene and in 1981, the 126 ft X 38ft reflector of the last radar unit installed was shut down but its size precluded its removal and boaters found it useful as a landmark so it was not removed.



This AN/FPS-35 Radar and Control Building, Montauk Point Air Station.

Camp Hero is now a New York State Park and part of the old fortifications can be viewed by visitors.

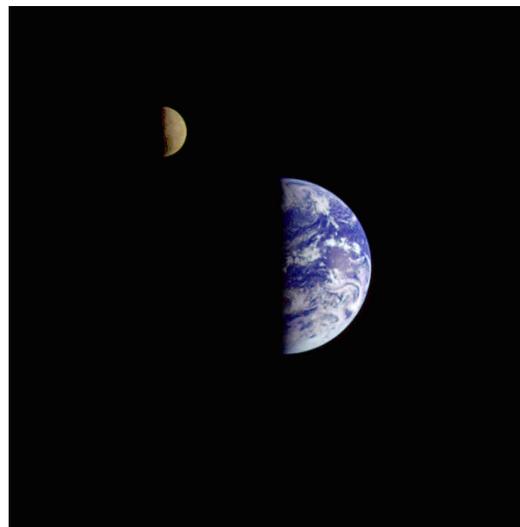
The Coastwatcher would be remiss if it failed to mention the many conspiracy theories about the

Long Island fort system with which the true-believers garnish the internet. Some of these claim that Plum Island (*i.e.*, the U.S. government) is the source of the Montauk Monster, Lyme Disease, and HIV/Aids. The Montauk Project promotes the idea of government development of time travel, teleportation, and mind control.

The Coastwatcher Editor, trained as a skeptic, wonders why such theories arise. Consequently, we are currently working on a feature on conspiracy theories in aviation for example Amelia Earhart's last flight, the Smithsonian conspiracy to support the Wright Brothers as the first to fly a controlled, powered, manned heavier-than-air machine, the strange disappearance of the Hawaii Clipper and many others. But you cannot wait!

AEROSPACE CHRONOLOGY

Sept. 18, 1977 – The “Voyager I” spacecraft took the first photograph image showing the earth and moon together.



The imagery is a combination of three photos taken with the intensity of the moon somewhat increased. (Credit: NASA)

Sept. 19, 1921 – *Sociedad Colombo Alemana de Transportes Aéreos*, The German-Columbian Air Transport Company, SCATDA commenced operations using Junkers F.13 seaplanes between Barranquilla and Giradot.



99 Years of Progress

(Credit: Cortesia)



This was the first regularly scheduled airline service in South America and SCATDA was the world's second airline after *Deutsche Luftschiffahrts-Aktiengesellschaft*, the German Airship Transportation Corporation, Ltd.

Shades of the Monroe Doctrine! Wasn't Latin American our backyard? The United States government was chary of German inroads into the hemisphere and supported the expansion of Pan American Airlines on the east coast of South America. SCATDA was also banned from flights to the United States and operating flights in the Panama Canal Zone.

Soon after, PanAm joined with the Grace Shipping Company and established routes on the South American west coast. After the Nazis took control of Germany, Peter Paul von Bauer, an Austrian and major shareholder in SCADTA was forced by the Columbian and U.S. governments to sell all of his shares to PanAM. After the U.S. entered World War II, SCADTA was dissolved and merged with Columbia's Servicio Aéreo Colombiano (SACO) and Avianca (*Aerovias del Continente Americano S.A.*, or Airways of the American Continent) started service.

Sept. 20, 1951 – First flight of the Grumman F9F-6 Cougar. The Cougar was a swept wing follow-up to the F9F-5 Panther.



Then Ensign Hap Rocketto, *Coastwatcher* Feature Writer, decked out in flight gear for his Cougar ride.

For four years, the Blue Angels flew different marks of the Cougar. Remarkably, a detachment of Cougars were employed by the Marine Corps for forward air control duties in Vietnam.



Sept. 21, 1961 – First flight of the Vertol CH-47 Chinook helicopter.



The military of twenty-five different nations have flown one of the dozen or so variants of this medium-lift helicopter and it is found in civilian livery flying cargo and passengers.



CTANG technicians install rotor blades on the Groton ramp.

Schilling was a WWII ace with 22½ aerial victories flying Republic P-47 Thunderbolt all named “Hairy Joe.” On December 23, 1944, he downed five German aircraft to be one of the 38 USAAF “Ace-in-a-Day pilots.



The 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment and elements of the 126th and 104th Aviation Regiments support Chinook operations at Bradley.



One of the P-47s named “Hairy Joe” after a character in Al Capp;s Lil' Abner comic strip.



The Editor of The Coastwatcher stalks a Chinook over Long Island Sound.

Just in case he might land in enemy territory, Schilling owned a Colt 1911 pistol converted for fully automatic fire. The firearm was developed by Hyman Saul Leban, a San Antonio gunsmith



Sept. 22, 1950 – Col. David Schilling makes the first crossing of the Atlantic in a jet fighter, an F-84E Thunderjet. The journey required three aerial refuelings and was from RAF Manston, England to Limestone AAFB, Maine. Schilling was accompanied for part of the way by wingman Col. William Ritchie.

Sept. 23, 1925 – During the 1920s, the Army and Navy engaged in a series of publicity events in attempts to win the support of Congress and the public. On the day before the Schneider Trophy Race, the Navy flew 23 Curtiss CS-1 reconnaissance and torpedo bombers for an airshow before the start of the race. That night gale force winds caused 17 of the aircraft to go adrift.

Part of the way because on the third refueling, Ritchie damaged the nose probe and was unable to receive fuel off the coast of Labrador. Ritchie made it to land but had to eject but was rescued. Schilling flew alone and landed after 10 hours and 8 minutes of engine time.



KB-29A refueling one of the Thunderjets.



They went ashore of hit seawalls and seven are destroyed and ten damaged. The next day, the *Baltimore Sun* quotes Billy Mitchell who states that the loss is “staggering” and levies blame on mismanagement of the Navy's aviation program.

Rear Admiral William Moffett, Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics, would add grist to Mitchell's milling of the Navy flight program. In August, the Navy attempted the first flight from the mainland to Hawaii. They dispatched two PN-9 flying boats which had been specially constructed for the 2,400 mile passage. One ship suffered a broken oil line and landed after flying only 300 miles. The crew was rescued and the aircraft salvaged.

The second aircraft, under the command of Commander John Rodgers, was beset by adverse winds and ran out of gas about 300 miles short of Hawaii. Rodgers landed but the ensuing search could not locate the aircraft.

Finally, on the 2nd of September, the *U.S.S. Shenandoah*, the first of the Navy's dirigibles left NAS Lakehurst on a publicity tour of the midwest state capitals and state fairs. A day later, she

encountered a line squall over Ohio. In all probability, the ship was forced aloft beyond its pressure height and the gas bags had expanded and ruptured, compromising the integrity of the rigid structure. Fourteen of the forty-three aboard were killed.



(Credit: New London Day)

Rodgers and his crewed rigged a sail and headed west. Nine days after departure, they were found by a R-4, a submarine, and finished the journey at the end of a tow line.

In his uncompromising and perhaps obsessive drive for an independent and unitary air force, Mitchell had made enemies, not only in the Navy but in his own service. Mitchell never missed an opportunity to take the Navy to task or to criticize those whom he considered obstructive. Finally, he went a statement too far.

These incidents are the direct result of the incompetency, criminal negligence and almost treasonable administration of the national defense by the Navy and War Departments...The bodies of my former companions in the air moulder under the soil in America, and Asia, Europe and Africa, many, yes a great many, sent there directly by official stupidity.

Mitchell was charged under the 96th Article of War of Conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline and in a way to bring discredit in a way to bring discredit to the military service.



On December 17, 1925, the 22nd anniversary of the Wright flight at Kitty Hawk, Mitchell was found “guilty of all specifications and of the charge” and suspended from active duty for five years with no pay. Six weeks later, Mitchell resigned from the United States Army.

Sept. 24, 1930 – The birthday of astronaut John W. Young., an active astronaut for 42 years and a naval aviator who retired as a captain.

Young was an ROTC ensign and first served two years aboard a destroyer. He then completed flight training and spent two tours aboard aircraft carriers flying the Grumman F9F Cougar and the Vought F8U Crusader.

He then trained at the Navy Test Pilot School, NAS Patuxent River, Maryland. At Pax River, White evaluated the Vought XF8U Crusader III and MacDonald F-4 Phantom II weapons system/

He is the only person to have crewed four different classes of spacecraft: Gemini, Apollo Command and Service Module, Apollo Lunar Module, and the Space Shuttle.

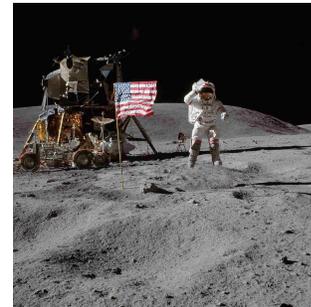
His “firsts” include the first manned Gemini mission, first solo around the moon, and the first Shuttle flight. He flew on six different missions and was Chief of the Astronaut Office for 13 years. Young logged over 15,000 hours of flying time of which 835 were in spacecraft. He also spend 15,000 hours training as prime or back-up crewman for his eleven NASA mission assignments.



Another first for Young. On a Gemini mission with Gus Grissom, he unwrapped and consumed the first orbiting corned beef sandwich. NASA was not amused but if you are a superb pilot, you can get away with almost anything.



Bob Crippen and Young on Columbia's flight deck before the first shuttle mission.



Young executes a salute from a standing vertical jump. (Credit NASA)



