



Missions for America

Semper vigilans!

Semper volans!

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

<http://ct075.org>

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Issue 14.33

13 Aug, 2020

15 AUG-CTWG Training Exercise-Plainville

19 AUG-National Aviation Day/Orville's Birthday

19 AUG-Cadet Meeting-Aerospace

23 AUG-LISP

25 AUG-Senior Meeting

26 AUG-Cadet Meeting-Leadership

29-30 AUG-LISP

01 SEP-Proposed start date for fruit fundraiser

15 SEP-SUI date 1800 hours

19-20 SEP-LISP

SENIOR MEETING

11 August, 2020

Commander's Call

The Safety Briefing entailed a round-robin discussion of steps which squadron officers take to prepare for a major storm.

The Squadron Goals remain on track with only orientation flights on hold due to quarantine regulations.

The pilots' meeting discussed the ironic situation in which the disinfectants used to clean the aircraft destroyed the carbon monoxide indicator used to detect gas leakage into the cabin. A mitigation plan has been established,

CADET MEETING

13 August, 2020

Lt Drost mentored a character development seminar discussing how to reduce stress

REPORT ON WEEKLY OPERATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS, MISSIONS, PROMOTIONS, ACTIVITIES

Aug. 6, 2020

Storm Damage Assessment Mission

Maj Noniewicz, Lt Pineau and Lt Col Kinch flew a two leg 4.4 hour mission to assess damage caused by Tropical Storm Isaias. They utilized DAART and digital still photography to support the assessment.

The first leg of the mission took them to Waterbury, then westward to the New York border followed by a grid search to the shoreline. The crew landed in Bridgeport to refuel and then

performed a similar mission over southern part of the state from the Connecticut River to Groton.

No serious damage was observed in either sortie.

Promotion

Cadet Maria Ceniglio has earned the Wright Brothers Award and has been promoted to Cadet Staff Sergeant

AEROSPACE CHRONOLOGY FOR THE WEEK

Aug. 12, 1965 – First flight of the Fuji FA-200 *Aero Subaru*. The four seat aircraft was powered by a 160 or 180 HP Lycoming engine and with only two aboard was rated for aerobatics.



The Editor flew this aircraft on July 8, 1969 from Parafield Airport, Adelaide, South Australia.

Aug. 13, 1937– The sole Sikorsky XPBS-1 entered service with the US Navy. During the '20s and '30s, the Navy interest in aviation focused on long range patrol aircraft, scouts for the battle fleet. Its contemporary, tested at the same time was the Consolidated YP3Y-1 which developed into the remarkable PBV Catalina and won the contract.



Sikorsky XPBS-1
NASA Langley Research Center 7/25/1939 Image # EL-2000-00192

The aircraft saw some service with a patrol wing and as a transport. On the last day of June, 1930, it struck as submerged log when landing at NAS Alameda and was wrecked. One of the passengers who suffered minor injuries was Admiral Chester Nimitz, CinC, Pacific Fleet.

Sikorsky, now merged with Vought saw an opportunity to win orders from Pan American to service its Clipper routes and developed the VS-44A. Martin offered its M-130 and later Boeing produced the 314. The VS-44 was faster, could carry more payload and had a longer range than its rivals but the cunning Juan Trippe, President of PanAm awarded his first contract to Martin and then abandoned Martin for Boeing.



Antilles Air Boat's Excambian

On three VS-44As were produced but they has a remarkable record of achievement and outlasted all of their rivals. The last VS-44 commercial flight was in 1969. a sole survivor, Captain Charlie Blair's *Excambian* last flew for Antilles Air Boats and now resides in the New England Air Museum.



Excambian returning to Bridgeport and the beautifully restored aircraft on display in the New England Air Museum

(Credit: Peter. Montini)



Aug. 14, 1979 – Steve Hinton, Sr. sets a new piston-engined airspeed record in a specially-modified P-51 Mustang named the *Red Baron*. Presently, Hinton is president of the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California and his record of achievement in air racing is outstanding. Twice National Champion and winner of six unlimited class air races, he became at age 27, the youngest person ever to hold the unlimited piston speed record.

(Credit: Tim Adams)



Eric Pintard's portrait shows clearly the counter-rotating props and the modified cockpit canopy and tail.

The *Red Baron* was a highly modified North American P-51D Mustang. The major change was the installation of a 3,000 HP Rolls-Royce Griffon 57 engine driving a pair of counter-rotating propellers from an Avro Shackleton. Ironically, the World War II success of the Mustang was based upon a British decision to replace its American built Allison engine with a 1,500 HP Rolls-Royce Merlin. It seems fitting that British equipment would lead to the its success as a post-war racing aircraft.

Shortly after its record run, an oil pump failure forced the propellers into flat pitch and the enormous increase in drag caused the aircraft to crash, severely injuring Hinton.

Aug. 15, 1939 – Formation aircraft are flown in a follow-the-leader style, each pilot maintaining position and distance from every other aircraft with the flight leader determining the maneuvers of the flight. This can lead to disaster. In 1982, the USAF Thunderbirds were flying Northrop T-38

Talons practicing for an air show. They entered a four abreast loop, went over the top and descended at about 400 mph. All four struck the earth together.



In a controversial and unwise decision, Gen. Wilbur Creech, Commander of the Tactical Air Force destroyed the only known video tapes. The Air Force ruled that the cause of the crash was a jammed stabilizer in the lead aircraft.

The Luftwaffe suffered an even more massive formation crash in 1939. Thirteen Junkers 87 Stukas were practicing dive bombing. Captain Walter Sigel led the bombers in a dive into a cloud expecting to break out at a sufficient height for recovery.



But the ceiling was lower than anticipated and an unexpected ground mist had formed. All thirteen crashed killing the 26 crew members. On that particular day the ceiling and unexpected ground mist formed, leaving them no time to pull out of the dive.

Aug. 16, 1969 – Darryl Greenamyre sets a new piston-engine airspeed record in a modified Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat name *Conquest I*.



Greenamyre in the cockpit of his Red Baron, an F-104 which he build out of spare parts and scrap.

Conquest I at the Smithsonian



Conquest I has shortened wings and a small bubble canopy. Engine power was increased using special high octane gasoline and fuel additives. Structural gaps were sealed with putty and a highly finished skin reduced frictional drag.

The speed of 482.46 mph broke the 30 year old record which had been held by Fritz Wendel flying a highly modified Me 109R specially designed to break speed records. Pictures of the prototype 109 and the aircraft modified for speed appear below. The Nazis claimed that the aircraft which broke the record was the prototype for propaganda purposes.



Above: the prototype Me 109



Right: The highly modified Me 109R

Aug. 17, 1940 – Billy Fiske goes West. Fisk was an American aviator and one of only seven U.S. citizens to fight in the Battle of Britain. He was the first American pilot casualty of World War II.



Fisk at 17, gold medal pilot of the US bobsled team.

Fisk at 29, RAF Hurricane pilot. Fisk is 5th from left.



Fisk earned gold medals in the 1928 and 1932 Olympics. In 1940, he left his job as a New York banker and joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve. He flew the Hawker Hurricane with 601 Squadron out of Tangmere but on August 16th was wounded, and burned but managed to land at Tangmere. Unfortunately, his injuries were too severe and died 48 hours later.

Aug. 18-19 1931 – Jim Mollison makes the first solo East-to-West crossing of the Atlantic, flying a de Havilland Puss Moth from Dublin to New Brunswick. Mollison and his wife, Amy Johnson, set a number of distance records in the 1930s.

In 1933, they planned a record setting flight around the world. They departed from Wales bound for New York flying a de Havilland DH.84 Dragon named *Seafarer* but ran short of fuel over Connecticut and crash landed in Bridgeport. They were both injured and the aircraft was torn apart by souvenir hunters.



The site of the crash was Avon Field, a racetrack and the place where the first air show in the United States was held. After the crash, it was renamed Mollison Field. In 1937, Bridgeport purchased the land and established Bridgeport Municipal Airport. Thirty-five years later, it was renamed Igor I. Sikorsky Memorial Airport.