



Mission for America

Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!

The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite Squadron
GON
Connecticut Wing
Civil Air Patrol

S. Rocketto, Editor

website: <http://cap-ct075.com/default.aspx>

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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

April

01 TUE PT/rocket building
08 TUE BDU/Squadron Commander's Call
12 SAT SAREX
15 TUE Blues
21 MON USCGA Lecture
22 TUE BDU
26 SAT Wing Conference
29 TUE Blues-Parent's Night

Long Term Planning

12 April-SAREX
19-CSRRA High Power Rifle Clinic
28 APR-5 May-USAF Graded Training Event
30 APR-Parent's Night
10 May-SAT-ACUT
14 JUN-SAT Wing Rocket Competition
4-13 JUL Encampment
19 JUL SAREX
20-24 JUL AIAA Power Plant Conference
25 JUL-03 AUG NER Cadet Academy

CADET MEETING MINUTES 25 MARCH, 2008

C/MSgt Molinari led the Cadet Squadron in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Cadet Oath.

Capt Rocketto detailed plans for the upcoming Wing Conference.

Cadets Abi Wojtcuk, Jonathan Scannell, Andrew Molinari, and Jesse Brohinsky are considering entering the speech contest.

Responsibilities for the Squadron model display, U.S. Manned Rockets, were parceled out: Cadet East-*Bell X-1*. Cadet Roe-North American *X-15* Cadet Mills-*Space Shuttle* Cadet A. Wojtcuk-*Redstone* Cadet Montgomery-*Mercury* Cadet Scannell-*Gemini* Cadet M. Molinari-*Saturn 1B* Cadet Brohinsky-*Saturn V* Cadet L. Wojtcuk-Rocket Contest *Gemini*/one page paper

Cadets Manning, Plourde, Wallace, and Barberan all built and successfully launched Fizzy Flyers and Junk Rockets and will be issued Alphas.

Lt Wojtcuk will lead a team of Cadets in assembling the display board which will back our model presentations.

Capt Rocketto assumed responsibility for leading Cadets in the construction of a "safety" display.

Captain Bourque issued "bearskin" coats.

The Squadron was dismissed at 2030.



Fizzy Flyers displayed by Cadets Manning, Wallace, Plourde, and Barberan



Painting the Bell X-1 and North American X-15

BASEBALL AND AVIATION

Last week, we ran an aircraft identification contest which featured the Martin 4-0-4 and the Convair 240/340/440 series. I had some vague recollection that the Brooklyn Dodgers had once owned the Martin airliner. While stumbling around doing research, I found out that the first airplane owned by a major league ball club was the Brooklyn Dodger's CV-440 Metropolitan purchased on Jan. 4, 1957. They started with with a leased or rented Twin Beech and then moved up to a DC-3 before they purchased the Convair for \$775,000. The aircraft was purchased direct from Convair through the good offices of Capt Eddie Rickenbacker who was the President of Eastern Airlines, a Convair user. The paint on the Dodger Convair preserved the Eastern eagle on the tail but replaced the logo on the nose with a baseball motif. Eventually they moved up to the four engined DC-6B, then a turbo-prop Electra II, and finally, in the '60s, a 720B. I also ran across a reference to a DC-7. Many of the planes which the "Bums" owned carried the name "Kay-O" after the wife of the owner, Walter O'Malley. In time, charters replaced team owned aircraft.

The romantic in me noted their first owned aircraft had been the Metropolitan for after the Bums moved to LA and taken the Giants west with them, The City of New York gained a team called the Mets and it is a nice to think that the Martin aircraft's name presaged that new team at the metropolis on the Hudson.

Born a Brooklyn boy, when the Dodgers moved I lost my faith in baseball and no longer even believed in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. So easy is a child's faith crushed when he realizes that the home town team is really a corporation and he might as well root for General Mills or Amtrak. Walter O'Malley, the owner of the club is oft portrayed as the villain in the story and many a fan cursed him for his cupidity. The story goes that a Dodger fan was once asked what would he do if he was locked in a room with Hitler, Stalin, and O'Malley and had a pistol with

only two rounds. His response was that he would shoot O'Malley twice. Anyway, I digress.

My brother, Hap, remained a steadfast fan and, now residing in Westerly, RI, has transferred his allegiance to the Red Sox. Anyway, during my recent confused period, as I tried to sort out whether the Dodgers really owned a Martin 4-0-4 or not, I called upon him to assist me with some research on the matter since he maintains an adequate baseball reference library.

What emerged was some interesting factoids about baseball and aviation. Since the 2008 season opened this week, it seems appropriate to mention a few of them.

We all remember the recent Cory Lidle crash in Manhattan but there have been a number of other moments when aviation and baseball converged.

Two other well-known ball players who fell victim to aircraft crashes were Yankee Thurman Munson and Pirate Roberto Clemente. Munson died while practicing landing his Cessna Citation. Clemente was killed serving as supercargo on a DC-7 carrying relief supplies to Nicaragua after an earthquake.

The first big leaguer to die in a plane crash was Marv Goodman who played between 1916 and 1925. He was a WWI flight instructor and died at age 34 in the crash of a military plane in 1925

Len Koenecke, a Brooklyn Dodger outfielder, was known for bizarre behavior. Ordered off a flight in Detroit due to intoxication, he chartered a small aircraft with two pilots. While in flight, he seized the controls. In the ensuing struggle, the crew subdued him by bashing him in the head with a fire extinguisher. When the landed in Toronto, they found out that the safety device could also extinguish life. Koenecke was dead.

Not all of the stories are of gloom and doom. . It seems that in 1908 a player named Gabby Street had caught a ball dropped from the Washington

Monument. The legendary player and coach Wilbert Robinson claimed that he could do better so aviatrix Ruth Law was recruited to drop a ball to Robinson from an airplane at a height that was higher than the Washington Monument. The story gets a little murky at this point. Legend has it that Casey Stengel was in the plane with Law. According to Law, in the excitement, she forgot to bring the baseball from her hotel room so she took a grapefruit from a groundskeepers lunch and dropped that from the plane. Knocked to the ground by the impact, Robinson was splattered with grapefruit juice and assorted fragments of the fruit, all of which resembled blood and soft body parts leading him to believe that his end had come.

The only man to see the fireball of "Fat Man" when it exploded over Hiroshima was the tail gunner of the Enola Gay, one Sgt. George Caron. He was adorned with a Brooklyn Dodger ball cap.

In 1970, a wrecked Bell P-39Q was discovered in New Guinea. According to my brother's source, the plane was named Brooklyn Bum 2nd.

On 5 October, 1943, my Uncle, Harold J. Rocketto, was navigator of a B-17 that was part of the four plane formation which flew into Yankee Stadium during the opening game of the World Series. The officers or all four crews were arrested but released with large fines and set off to Europe. I have pictures of a B-17 clearing the outfield wall of the "House that Ruth built" and a video tape of the nose of my Uncle's aircraft, Hel'en Hiwater which clearly shows a small Yankee Stadium among the mission marks. If you wish some of the details about this incident, a short version may be found at the 303rd Bomb Group website:

<http://www.303rdbg.com/358watson.html>

or read the full story, originally published in The Smithsonian's *Air and Space Magazine*, by going to:

<http://www.303rdbg.com/outfieldfly.html>.

The Cincinnati Reds were the first team to travel by air when, in 1934, part of the team flew to Chicago to play the Cubs.

The first team to fly on a regular basis was the Yankees when they chartered a United Airlines DC-4 which carried the name "Yankee Mainliner." "Mainliner" was a United trademark.

And of course, let us not forget Red Sox great Capt. Ted Williams, USMC, who flew Corsairs and Panthers in World War II and Korea.

Then there are the Seattle Pilots but that is pushing a point. And if you are now getting cranky from pursuing this melange of trivia, you have only yourself to blame for you should never have let yourself begin.

MEMORIES OF APRILS PAST

01 APR, 1918-The Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service were amalgamated into the Royal Air Force.

02 APR, 1959-NASA names the seven Project Mercury astronauts.

03 APR, 1981-Commercial aviation pioneer and Pan American Airways founder goes west.

04 APR, 1947-International Civil Aviation Organization founded.



Former Swiss Hunter at RCAF Memorial Museum, RCB Trenton, Ontario

05 APR, 1968-Flt. Lt. Alan Richard Pollock flies his Hawker Hunter through London's Tower Bridge.

06 APR, 1927-The Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce issues Pilot's License #1 to William P. McCracken.

07 APR, 1919-The first horse was transported by air from Los Angeles to Santa Ana, CA.

08 APR, 1984-China orbits its first geosynchronous satellite, DFH-2, *Dong Gong Hong*.

09 APR, 1953-First flight of Convair XF2Y-1, SeaDart, jet powered hydroski seaplane fighter.



Convair
SeaDart at
San Diego



Arado 243 at the
Udvar-Hazy
Annex, NASM

10 APR, 1945-Last *Luftwaffe* sortie over Great Britain flown by a jet powered Arado 234 reconnaissance aircraft.

11 APR, 1971-Michael Collins is appointed director of National Air and Space Museum.

12 APR, 1911, Peerless pilot Pierre Prier in a Bleriot monoplane flies 250 mi in 4 hours to complete the first nonstop flight from Paris to London.

13 APR, 1912-Argentine *Teniente* Luis C. Cadelana makes the first crossing of the Andes in a Morane Sulnier aircraft.

14 APR, 1981-STs-1, Columbia, with John Young and Robert Crippen at the controls, lands at Edwards completing the first orbital mission of the "space shuttle."

15 APR, 1952-First flight of Boeing YB-52 Stratofortress.

16 APR, 1912-Harriet Quimby, first licensed US woman pilot solos across the English Channel.

17 APR, 1941-A float equipped VS-300A piloted by Igor Sikorsky makes the first water landing by a helicopter.

18 APR, 1942-Jimmy Doolittle leads first air strike against the Japanese home islands.

19 APR, 1919-Leslie Leroy Irvin makes first successful free parachute jump from an airplane over McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio.

20 APR, 1925-Robert Esnault Pelterie fails in a French court to collect royalties for his invention of the "joy stick."

21 APR, 1951-First flight of Chase XC-123A, the first US jet transport.

22 APR, 1934-William Thaw II, first American commander of the *Lafayette Escadrille* goes west.

23 APR, 1960-Harold Pitcairn, designer of the Mailwing and autogiro pioneer goes west.

24 APR, 1967-Cosmonaut Col Vladimir Komarov goes west when the parachute shroud lines of his reentering *Soyuz I* space vehicle become entangled.

25 APR, 1940-*U.S.S Wasp* is commissioned. The *Wasp* is the only aircraft carrier in World War II to launch the aircraft of an ally when it ferries some 50 or so British Spitfires into the Mediterranean and launches them to reinforce Malta's air defenses.

QUIZ OF THE WEEK

26 APR, 1948-George Welch piloting a North American XP-86 Sabrejet breaks Mach One in a shallow dive over Muroc. This is the first recorded time a production type jet fighter exceeded the sound barrier.

27 APR, 1913-Robert G. Fowler completes the first non-stop flight from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean by crossing the Isthmus of Panama.

28 APR, 1926-First flight of the Ryan NYP.

29 APR, 1959-First flight of the Dornier DO-28.



DO-28 at Paramaribo, Surinam



Article 121 on the deck of the Intrepid

30 APR, 1962-First official flight of Lockheed A-12.

WING CONFERENCE

The annual Wing Conference will on Saturday, April 26th. It is time to send in your entry forms and fee. If you get them in early, you get a lower price. Squadron members have the choice of attending the day session only or also signing up for the evening banquet. If you have any questions, contact Lt Wojtcuk at the next meeting..

This week's quiz will require some extra research so a special book award will be made to the winner and any reader is eligible. Any Cadets who enter will also receive Cadet-of-the Cycle credit. Questions are based on information in this edition but the answers may not be explicitly stated. Here are the questions. Email your answers to Capt Rocketto before Friday, the 4th of April. The quality of your answers count so be neat, complete, and coherent.

1. Name the seven original Mercury astronauts.
2. What position did Thurman Munson play when he was with the Yankees?
3. What was the name of the Brooklyn Dodgers home ball field?
4. Who was the Mayor of New York when the B-17s flat hatted Yankee Stadium?
5. To what Bomb Squadron was Hel'en Hiwater assigned?
6. The headquarters of the ICAO is located in what city?
7. What does *Dong Gong Hong* mean in English?
8. Michael Collins "carried the fire." What was his special achievement in the space program?
9. What is the meaning of "STS" when used to designate shuttle missions?
10. The original B-52 had a different cockpit arrangement than production models. What was different?
11. What does one have to do to join The Caterpillar Club?
12. The Chase 123 appeared in two other manifestations other than as a jet transport. What were they?
13. George Welch achieved fame by getting airborne when Pearl Harbor was attacked and shooting down Japanese aircraft but why was he called "Wheaties" Welch?
14. When Robert Fowler flew from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in what direction did he travel?
15. What does "NYP" stand for in the name of Lindbergh;s Ryan?