



Mission for America

Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!

The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite Squadron
GON

Connecticut Wing
Civil Air Patrol

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

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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

May

27 May-TUE-BDU/Ground Team Training
30 May-1 June-FRI-SUN-Ground Team Training

Long Term Planning

JUN-Wing Rocket Competition (Date TBA)
15 JUN-Bradley Open Cockpit Day
28-29 JUN-Quonset Air Show
4-13 JUL-Wing Encampment
19 JUL-Bradley ANG Space and Aviation Day
21-23 JUL-AIAA AE Conference-Hartford
21-30 JUL-NER Encampment-Otis ANGB
19 JUL-SAREX
20-24 JUL-AIAA A/S Education Conference
10-17 AUG-MAWG Encampment-Ft. Devens
6-7 SEP-Westover ARB Great NE Air Show
27-28 SEP-Squadron Leadership School
16-18 OCT-Nat'l Conference on A/S Education
17-18 OCT-NER Conference-Newport
18-19 OCT-Corporate Learning Course
22-23 NOV-Unit Commanders Course
6-7 DEC-Training Leaders of Cadets Course

CADET MEETING MINUTES

20 May, 2008

The Cadet Command Staff mustered the Cadet Squadron and led the formation in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Cadet Oath.

C/CMSgt Scannell delivered a speech on the subject of Leadership.

Lt Wojtcuk, TRCS Character Development Instructor, presented the Cadets with the opportunity to discuss the dual concepts of intelligence and character within the framework of CAP's core values of Integrity, Excellence, Volunteer Service, and Respect.

Lt Wojtcuk reviewed the ES116 test requirements and encouraged those who have not taken the test to do so immediately so that we can reach our Squadron goal of establishing a ground team.

Capt Rocketto noted that on 20 May, 1951, James Jabara, flying an F-86, downed his fifth and sixth MiG, becoming the first USAF jet ace. On 21 May, 1932, Amelia Earhart flew a Lockheed Vega from Nova Scotia to Ireland, becoming the first woman to solo the Atlantic Ocean.

Capt Rocketto also pointed out that scientific studies of Jupiter's moon Europa, indicate the possibility of a liquid water ocean under the frozen surface. Stress cracks in the surface, 500 km in length, indicate that a shift in the mass distribution of the satellite may have realigned the axial tilt by as much as 80 degrees. The cause of this shift has been interpreted as a realignment of the rotational axes of the satellite to a dynamically more stable position.

Cadets continued work on rockets for the rockets for the Rocketry Competition.

CADET PROMOTIONS

Cadet/ABs George Barberan and Andrew Molinari completed all requirements for the Curry were promoted to C/Amn.



C/Amn Barberan salutes Col Kinch



C/Amn Molinari is congratulated by Col Kinch



Col Kinch briefs Scott Farley



Cadet Barberan explains the flap to Capt Noniewicz

CADETS-OF-THE-CYCLE

C/CMSgt Jonathan Scannell and C/Amn George Barberan tied for Cadet of the Cycle honors for the period of January through April. Each were awarded a compass in token of their achievements.



C/CMSgt Scannell and C/Amn Barberan receive C-of-the-Cycle compasses from Col Kinch.

The Cadet of the Cycle Award is earned by accumulating points for attendance, participation in activities, special achievements, and promotions. During each trimester, a Cadet will be named. No Cadet may win the award more than once each year. At the end of the year, a Cadet will be chosen for Cadet of the Year honors.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING FLIGHTS

Orientation training flights were held on Saturday, the 17th. Captain Noniewicz and Major Neilsen flew 04E throughout most of the day. Cadets Wallace, Abi Wojtcuk, Barberan, and Lexie Wojtuck each took an O Flight. Lt Lintelmann engaged in Form 5 practice and Lts Manning and Farley underwent Scanner and Observer training.

CADET AND SENIOR GROUND TEAM TRAINING

The Danielson Squadron is sponsoring a weekend ground training program running from Friday afternoon, May 30 to Sunday June 1.

Cadets must have reached the Curry level in order to participate and have passed the ES 116 test.

We will be camping out. Cadets should bring a 72 hour pack. Any Cadet or Senior lacking equipment should contact Capt Rocketto.

Cadets and Seniors should go to the Squadron Website at <http://cap-ct075.com/default.aspx> for instructions and easy access to the ES116 test.

SENIOR TRAINING

Col Kinch and Major Neilson conducted operations training this week. Matthew Madore, Chris Manner, and Tom MacAvoy pursued a Scanner qualification. Scott Farley engaged in Observer training.

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS) TRAINING

Emergency Services personnel must, at a minimum, complete IS-100 and IS-700 on-line exams by 31 December in order to remain on mission status. In order to take the NIMS on-line course and test, you should go to the following website: <http://training.fema.gov/>. Click on the green box at the top, "FEMA Independent Study." Then click on the "NIMS Courses" in the red box. This will bring up a listing of the offerings.

TRCS LISP SCHEDULE

Sat May 24 Noniewicz-Kinch-Farley
Sun May 25 Neilson-Rocketto-Lintlemann
Mon May 26 Wisehart-Lintlemann-Rocketto
Sat May 31 Neilson-Kinch-Eberhardt(T)
Sun Jun 1 Noniewicz-Miller-Rocketto
Sat Jun 7 Wisehart-Lintlemann-Rocketto
Sun Jun 8 deAndrade-Rocketto-Miller
Sat Aug 23 Neilson-Miller-Farley
Sun Aug 24 deAndrade-Farley(T)-Kinch

HISTORY OF LONG ISLAND SOUND PART II-SOCIAL

by
Stephen M. Rocketto

In the last edition of The Coastwatcher, Part I of the History of Long Island Sound treated the geologically moderated topology of the Long Island Sound Patrol area. This article will discuss some the social history of the region.

The Sound has long provided a rich environment for cultures. Native Americans flourished and enjoyed the bounty of sea, land, and air with a mixed hunting, gathering, and agricultural economy. These tribes were members of the Algonquian language group and their heritage lives on in the many Indian names. Connecticut itself means "long river," a reference to the major river of New England which roughly bisects the State. The Nehantic, Hammonasset, Poquonnuc, Mohegan, and Pequots in Anglicized form are just a few of the many Indian derived place names in the patrol area.

The earliest European explorers were generally interested in the fabled "Northwest Passage," the short route to the riches of the East Indies.

Adriaen Block, a Dutch navigator, was the first European to explore the precincts of Long Island Sound, entered the Housatonic River, reached the head of navigation in the Connecticut near present day Hartford, and explored Block Island.

Connecticut later served as a haven for religious non-conformists who emigrated from the more orthodox colony of Massachusetts.

During the Revolutionary War, The State served as the "breadbasket" of the Continental Army and provided a large fleet of privateers which preyed on British shipping. Stonington was bombarded by a British naval squadron and New London was attacked and burned by a force led by Benedict Arnold, a Norwich native. Long Island, Plum Island, and Fisher's Island were raided and provisions seized by the British.

The rivers provided both water power and transport and our harbors provided access to the world's oceans. Whaling brought wealth and venture capital to the state. A clever and hardworking population provided the brain power and factory hands and the fortuitous location of Connecticut in respect to population centers led to the development of what became known as the "American System of Manufacture," mass production made possible by the invention and utilization of precision metal working machinery.. Clever artisans such as Eli Whitney and Samuel Colt, to name two, made Connecticut an industrial giant. Connecticut was a leader in the production of firearms, textiles, machine tools, precision measuring instruments and clocks. The Connecticut River Valley was the "Silicon Valley" of the nineteenth century and the development of the tool making industry contributed to the rise of the United States as a world power.

But what of this might be observed from the height of our Cessna as we fly along on a Long Island Sound patrol?

Immediately west of Groton-New London Airport is the Thames River. As one departs, the large green structures of the General Dynamics

shipyards are visible on the Groton shore. Just south may be seen the stacks of Pfizer's and the Hess Oil Terminal docks and tanks.

The impact of the military is clearly visible. 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.

Heading south over Fisher's Island Sound, if one looks east, one can make out a long peninsula which stretches out from Watch Hill, Rhode Island towards the west. You might catch a glimpse of the remains of Fort Mansfield, originally constructed during the Spanish-American War, it remained active until World War I. The Hurricane of 1938 destroyed all of the houses on the mile long beach and part of the fort. Ruins may be visible from overhead.

Once you turn westward, Fisher's Island appears to starboard. The island has a small year round population but supports a large summer colony and the extraordinary houses visible from the air testify to their wealth.

The western end of the island was once Fort H.G. Wright and much of the original and subsequent

improvements are still visible. About two thirds of the way down the south coast of the island, a prominent bluff called Wilderness Point is visible. Set into the face of this bluff are two emplacements for 16 inch naval rifles. The two concrete burster courses, like giant eyebrows, are immediately above the openings to the embrasures. This battery was constructed in World War II but the armament was never installed. The main part of the fort is found as you reach the end of the island and surrounds Elizabeth Airport. One story says it was named for the mule which grazed there. More likely, it was named for Elizabeth Nugent, daughter of the Commander of Fort Wright. During World War II, a blimp detachment 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.

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. As you leave the island, you pass Race Rock Light which guards the shallows through which much of the tidal flow of The Sound passes. "The Race" was the spillway for Lake Connecticut during the glacial period.

Once past Race Rock Light, the patrol heads towards Gardiners Bay which is enclosed by the North and South Forks of Long Island. Valiant Rock shoals are visible and is named after *HMS Valiant* which grounded there during the War of 1812

The aircraft then passes through the former R-5202 restricted area centered on the highly eroded

ruins of Fort Tyler. The fort was built in 1898 on a sand spit which protruded north from Gardiner's Island but has since eroded away. During WW II it was used as a bombing target and after the war, Grumman used it to test aircraft from the Calverton plant where they modified the F-111s A-6s, and F-14s.

Two small islands are seen to starboard. 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. The amphitheater-like gun pit on the eastern end once housed a 16 inch disappearing gun.

Gardiner's Island, the large island seen to port, is probably the last U.S. feudal grant still in the hands of the descendants of the original grantees. Lion Gardiner purchased the island from the Montauk Indians in 1639 and Charles I issued a patent granting him perpetual rights to the land. Originally called the Isle of Wight, this was the first English settlement in New York. This island's manor house, windmill, and turf airstrip are clearly visible. Captain Kidd once left part of his loot in the care of a Gardiner and supposedly buried more and to this day, treasure hunters will land on the island in search of this reputed trove of precious metals and jewels.

During the 1970's and 1980's, when I worked for Yankee Airways out of Waterford Airport (7B8), we serviced the island flying the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Goelet, in from Flushing Airport or mainland Connecticut. We also carried in provisions and tankered fuel. Some of our pilots were allowed to hunt the abundant deer. During that period, an old Boy Scout buddy, Paul Spitzer, was working on his Ph.D in ornithology at Cornell and I flew him out to Gardiner's so he could check on the progress of his project to repopulate Long Island Sound with ospreys.

North of Gardiner's and just east of Orient Point is Plum Island, an animal disease research

laboratory run by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The laboratories are visible on the western end of the island. The remains of Fort Terry's casemates are visible on the western end. The largest pit visible, Battery Stoneham, housed four 12 inch mortars. A small field just south of the laboratory was once the site of a grass airport. Interestingly, the island also once had a small steam locomotive used to transport munitions from the magazines to the batteries. The island is now under the control of the Department of Homeland Security and access is severely limited.

The large island directly ahead is Shelter Island and is home to a private grass airstrip, Westmoreland, and the course of the patrol will now head you to Greenport, a major whaling port during the first half of the 19th century and a center for shipbuilding.

The eastern end of Long Island was once noted for its potato and duck farms. Development has since taken over and vacation homes, retirement communities and suburbia are replacing the extensive farmlands. Two interesting airports may be visible to the south. Mattituck is the home of Teledyne Mattituck, a premier rebuilder of general aviation engines. Calverton and its 10,000 foot runways, previously mentioned, was originally a navy plant operated by Grumman Aircraft and sometimes referred to as Peconic River. At the present time, it is private and prior permission is required to land. It is also in danger of destruction and proposed projects are a NASCAR track and a "ski mountain!"

Another critical point of interest on this leg is the off-shore oil unloading facility and tank farm just past Mattituck.



Details of the off-shore oil facility

Continuing on westward, when you are south of New Haven, the patrol turns north and heads to Connecticut at a point between Bridgeport and New Haven. Sikorsky, located on the banks of the Housatonic River at Lordship Point used to house the main plant which manufactured the Vought F4U Corsair. The plant then became, as I recall, a facility manufacturing tank engines for Avco-Lycoming. It is home to the Stratford Eagles. Sikorsky once maintained a plant just to the west at which they constructed their famous flying boats during the 1930's and their first helicopters. The short helicopter runways are still visible. Tweed is located on the west side of New Haven Harbor and hosts the Connecticut Minuteman Squadron of CAP. In the past, the series of coastal airports: Bridgeport, New Haven, Groton, Westerly and Charlestown NAF, I sometimes confused novice pilots.

Turning east, Falkner Island is only one of several wildlife refuges in the area. The Connecticut salt water marshes extend all of the way to Rhode Island and are rich in variety of flora and fauna. The abandoned Griswold Airport in Madison passes by. Stories abound about the eccentric manager, Sherm Griswold. During its heyday, a seaplane air taxi service operated out of Griswold.

The sand bars at the mouth of the Connecticut River bear witness to its silt carrying abilities. The longest river in New England, it drops almost a half mile from its source in Connecticut Lake No. 4, 410 miles north, and delivers about three quarters of the freshwater input to Long Island Sound. The Fenwick section of Old Saybrook sits on the western bank. It is famed as the home of Katherine Hepburn. During the late 1930's, Howard Hughes conducted a torrid romance with Hepburn and would fly into Fenwick in a Sikorsky S-43 amphibian.

The next big bay is at Niantic, dominated on the eastern shore by the Millstone Nuclear Power Station. The power plant is located on the site of the old Millstone Quarry, a source of architectural

granite. At one time, Hank Gardiner maintained a landing strip there at which he based a Bellanca with its unique, for general aviation, triple tail.

On crossing the Thames River, you pass the white strand of Ocean Beach and the white spire of the New London Light, the oldest one in Connecticut. To the southeast, the red brick superstructure of Ledge Light, mounted on a stained, white base guards the mouth of New London Harbor. New London was a major whaling and shipbuilding port. Today, it is home to the premier submarine builder, The Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics Corporation, a U.S. Navy Submarine Base, The U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and a center for ferryboat service to Orient Point, Block Island, and Fisher's Island.

Just south of the airport, two small islands are visible in Fisher's Island Sound, North and South Dumpling. South Dumpling is a nesting site for gulls and terns. North Dumpling, also known as "The Kingdom of North Dumpling." Overseen by the lighthouse, the island is owned by inventor Dean Kamen, known best for the Segway and as founder of the First Robotics competition. The island sports a replica of Stonehenge and if Kamen is in residence, his Robertson helicopter may be visible.

The patrol ends with a landing at Groton-New London Airport, a former civilian field named after Governor Jonathan Trumbull, it was improved by the Army just prior to and during World War II. was a base for P-40s and P-47s. It is now home to the The Wing's Thames River Composite Squadron.

The region covered by the Long Island Sound Patrol is rich in both geological and social history and these two articles might serve as an introduction to the vast and wonderful details which await you if you take part in Connecticut Wing's Long Island Sound Patrol