



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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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

November

17-30 NOV-CT State ES Drill

Long Term Planning

02 DEC-PT/Leadership
03 DEC-Combined WG Staff/Commanders Call
06 DEC-TRCS SAREX for Cadets
06-07 DEC-Training Leaders of Cadets Course
09 DEC-AEX/AEO-BDUs
13 DEC-Orientation Flights (tentative)
16 DEC-Squadron Party
19 DEC-Aerospace Festival-Gales Ferry School
23 DEC-No Meeting
30 DEC-No Meeting

CADET SAREX

A Search and Rescue Exercise will be held on 6 December and participants should report to the Groton Airport Terminal at 0900 for a briefing. Bring your gear and a lunch. Uniform is BDUs. Expect to return in the afternoon.

GALES FERRY AEROSPACE FESTIVAL

Mr. Stuart Sharack, an Aerospace Education Member who teaches at the Juliet Long School and his Aerospace Adventurer's Club is sponsoring an Aerospace Festival at the Gales Ferry School on Friday evening, the 19th of December.

Our Squadron will participate with a table top display, a recruiting station, and some simple hands-on activities for the attendees. A briefing will be conducted at a forthcoming meeting.

Those willing to participate will meet at the Trailer at 1700 to pick up equipment. Notify Capt Rocketto if you wish to attend. Uniform for Cadets is BDUs. Uniform for Officers is either Blues or Flight Suits.

ORIENTATION FLIGHT

The Squadron had tentatively scheduled O Flights for the morning and afternoon of 13 December. This event is contingent upon the availability of an aircraft. If you are interested, notify Capt Rocketto.

CITRUS FRUIT FUND RAISER

We sold a total of 275 cases which should yield a profit of just under \$3000. Thank you to all who participated and shame on those who did not.

A few Cadets and Officers have not turned in their receipts. Please do so at the 2 December meeting.

Anyone who promised a donation in lieu of sales should give their check to Lt Lintelmann. Donations will be acknowledged in a future edition.

We expect delivery within the next two weeks. A notification will be issued by email and we will need volunteers to help with the unloading of the truck.

CADET MEETING MINUTES

25 NOV, 2008

C/2Lt Scannell called the Squadron to attention and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Cadet Oath.

C/MSgt Molinari surveyed the Cadet 24 hour packs in preparation for our Squadron SAREX on 6 December.

C/MSgt Molinari presented an interactive lesson on the effective use of the CAP websites. Using our projection system, he introduced Cadets to the methods for taking on-line tests, entering SQTR data.

Col Kinch briefed the Cadets on proper cold weather clothing.

Capt Rocketto noted that the latest Mars exploration vehicle is reaching the end of its useful life due to the onset of Martian winter. A lesson followed which explored the concept of why winters are colder than summers, phenomenon due to the angle at which solar radiation strikes the surface rather than the distance from the sun. Concepts of work, energy, and power were briefly covered.

Cadets were reminded about the important dates for the SAREX, Orientation Flights, and Aerospace Festival.

ON RESEARCH AND THE BRODIE GEAR

An Editorial Opinion

by

Stephen M. Rocketto

A picture of a Stinson L-5 Sentinel equipped with Brodie Gear appeared in the last edition of *The Coastwatcher* and one of the quiz questions asked the reader to explain the purpose of this very large hook which was mounted just above the cockpit. In doing some more research on this clever invention, some interesting facts turned up and the issue of what constitutes good research arose.

The advent of the computer search engine and an unwarranted trust in the truth in what can be "googled" onto a glowing screen had been combined with the the gullibility and diminished reading abilities of the public. This result is a fallacious

notion that anything which can be "cut and pasted" from the Internet constitutes research. The dangers of this lamentable state of affairs is that plagiarism is epidemic and falsehoods abound.

Sound research demands that the information which is used to form an opinion be vetted by cross-checking the facts and by logical analysis of the context. No source of information is unimpeachable. The judicial system has long recognized the fallibility of eye witnesses and the remedy is cross examination. Intelligence agencies routinely assign probability values to the reports which they receive. They generally are numbers and they indicate a range of values from "pure gold" to "dung."

In the case of the Brodie Gear, some interesting observations were made. To recapitulate, the mechanism is a device which allows an aircraft to both take off and land on a suspended wire about 300 ft in length. The inventor, Capt. James H. Brodie was affiliated with the transportation section of the U.S. Army. He envisioned that his equipment could be used to allow small ships to launch and recover aircraft or could be set up on land in areas where the terrain prevented the construction of a normal runway.

The device was tested late in World War II by mounting it on the Motor Vessel *City of Dalhart*. These tests were conducted in the Gulf of Mexico. A number of U.S.N Landing Ship Tanks or LSTs (sometimes called Large Slow Targets) were equipped. Equipment was dispatched to both the European and Pacific Theaters of War.

However, the equipment was used operationally only in the Pacific. The Marines had limited success at Iwo Jima, launching their Stinsons, designated as OY-1s from LST 776. The Army employed the Brodie Gear during Operation Iceberg, the invasion of Okinawa. They used the Pipers on the very same LST 776.

A number of aircraft were certified to use the equipment. In addition to the L-5, the Piper L-4 Grasshopper was also used operationally. There is some evidence that the rather unique post-war Boeing YL-15 Scout was also fitted for Brodie operations.

If you were to refer back to the original article in *Coastwatcher* 2.43, you would find two factual and one typographic mistakes as well as an questionable

statement. The typo is a misspelling of Brodie as "Brody". The two factual mistakes are references to Brodie as a navy officer and the claim that the equipment was only used operationally at Okinawa. The questionable statement is the reference to Brody's assignment to the O.S.S. I have not been able to substantiate it but it might be true since the Brody Gear was adapted for use in irregular warfare operations.

So what can we learn from all of this. First, articles written with a pressing deadline need careful scrutiny. That is why it is unwise to jump to conclusions from news pieces in the media. Second, sources might be unreliable and must be cross-checked. I found the O.S.S. reference on the Web but could not verify it. Finally, you really must be careful on your cross-checking. There is an insidious infection which is especially prevalent on the Web. If you carefully note the references, you will find that often the wording is the same, indicating that someone just cut and pasted the information from somewhere else, often without attribution. What seems to be a large collection of sources all trace back to a common source.

Web Sources are not the only references which need to be noted with care. A well known informal logical fallacy is that called, *argumentum ad autoritatem*, the argument from authority. One must consider whether the authority is a legitimate authority. A pop rock idol or a social studies teacher commenting on the scientific evidence, pro or con, for global warming, are dubious authorities, especially compared to an expert in climatology, especially an academic with a PhD, in the field. Nonetheless, the academic community is sometimes the source of or the victim of bad scholarship.

One example is the recent case of Michael Bellisles, an Emory University professor who published a book purporting to discredit the belief that firearms were a common tool during the period in which the United States was founded. The book, *Guns in America*, was highly praised by members of the intellectual community and won the Bancroft Prize for History which was offered by Columbia University. Skeptics questioned his conclusions, investigated further, and discovered that the work was based on evidence which was not only "cherry-picked" but in some cases fraudulent. The prize was rescinded, the publisher withdrew the book, and the author lost his job.

Back in the mid '1950s a map was "discovered" which, it was argued, provided historical, not anecdotal, proof that Leif Ericsson reached America before Columbus. Yale University published the map and commentary as *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*. A long-term controversy has erupted, pitting experts against experts arguing over the authenticity of the document. Anyone interested in forensic science ought review some of the publications which discuss scientific researching of the history of a historical document.

In an early issue of *The Coastwatcher*, we noted that we would not supply footnotes due to space limitations but would provide them if asked. This policy remains in force. However, here is a brief summary of the references used to write this continuation of the Brodie article: The books were *Those Legendary Piper Cubs* by Carroll V. Glines and *Aircraft Carriers* by Norman Polmar. Both authors are well regarded authorities in the field of aviation. Our primary Web reference was an article by an Army Liaison Pilot, John C. Kriegsman (an interesting name for a warrior) who flew at Okinawa. This article is on the *U.S. L.S.T. Memorial* site and is titled "LST Brodie-Gear Flight Operations." A second useful reference was the *Aerofiles* article, "A Runway on a Rope."

While compiling data for the "Memories of Decembers Past" feature which appears in this edition, I found a reference to the first solar powered aircraft flight occurring in Great Britain on 19 December, 1974. However, other references showed other dates. A careful perusal of the sources, all reliable, made it evident that the flights occurred under different conditions: catapult launched rather than "rise-off-ground" or unmanned versus manned. This is an example of why a careful reading and a cross-check must be made when doing historical research.

Incidentally, one of the rumors that has gained credence is that the Navy actually named one of these "poor man's carriers" the *U.S.S. Brodie*. In our research, we found a statement published in *Aerofiles* by none other than our Wing I.G., LtCol Carl Stidsen. Col Stidsen researched this question and found the claim without merit.

In summary, be skeptical and critical. Facts do not speak for themselves and the truth can be somewhat

elusive. As Bokonen stated in Kurt Vonnegut's novel, *Cat's Cradle*., "All of the true things which I am about to tell you are shameless lies." That is the cunning way of the confidence man and huckster and you would be well armed if you maintained a stout intellectual guard.

QUIZ OF THE WEEK

Disappointment reigns at our modest publishing house. Not one Cadet entered the last contest.

Here is another chance to rummage through the Fabulous Chest of Treasured Trash for some items of interest which you can keep.

1. Not all planes with hooks on top were Brodie Gear aircraft. Tell me about one of the two aircraft illustrated below.
2. To what does O.S.S in the Brodie article refer. Be specific?
3. What was the "civilian" designation and name of the aircraft which the Army called the L-4 Grasshopper?
4. Brodie was misidentified as a Navy captain. What is the USAF equivalent rank?
5. Trying to beat a deadline and not doing a proper proofread could be called "pulling a Brody" and perhaps, the editor, a Brooklyn boy misspelled "Brodie as Brody due to his youthful environment. We know who James Brodie is. Who was Steve Brody?
6. According to Vonnegut, the natives of which island worship the god Bokonen?
7. Vonnegut was a World War II POW. He wrote a book called *Slaughterhouse Five*. A central theme of the book is an account of his survival of the firebomb raid on which city?
8. What does the "Y" in YL-15 signify?

MEMORIES OF DECEMBERS PAST

This column was instituted in September of 2007 with the intent that it would supply AEOs with ideas for aerospace lessons and provide interesting information for the airplane "buff." We are now about one-quarter way for the second year and endeavor to provide, as far as possible, a second set of events for the same monthly dates. The two year compilation will then provide over 700 references to events in aviation history.

01 DEC, 1934-American Airlines, Eastern Air Lines, TWA, and United Airlines joined in a cooperative venture and inaugurated the first ATC facility at Newark Airport, NJ. Interesting references to flying under this system many be found in Ernest Gann's classic adventure, *Fate is the Hunter*.

02 DEC, 1976-First flight of the Boeing 747 SCA, an ex American Airlines aircraft modified to Space Shuttle Orbiter back to Florida in the event of landings at alternate sites. A second Shuttle Carrier Aircraft, a 747-100SR was acquired later from Japan Airlines. A rough calculation to one significant figure shows that given its loaded range of 1000 nm, an aircraft length of 232 ft, and a full fuel load with a conservative reserve will yield a fuel consumption figure of about one gallon per aircraft length!



*Orbiter and 747
on the NASA
Mate-Demate
Gantry at
Edwards AFB*

03 DEC, 1945-The noted test pilot, Lt. Cmdr Eric "Winkle" Brown, makes the first landing of a pure jet on an aircraft carrier when he guides a de Havilland Sea Vampire onto *H.M.S. Ocean*.



The de Havilland Vampire was Unusual in that it was a Plywood-Aluminum Composite

04 DEC, 1991-Pan American World Airways goes west after 64 years of operation.



The Modest Key West First Office of PAA

05 DEC, 1945-First Flight of the Douglas C-74 Globemaster, progenitor of the Douglas C-124 Globemaster II and the McDonnell-Douglas C-17 Globemaster III.



Note Double-Bubble Canopies on Globemaster I (USAF Photo)



"Old Shaky"-The Globemaster II



Globemaster III

06 DEC, 1975-A Tupolev Tu-144 flying from Moscow to Alma Alta completes the first airmail flight by supersonic transport.

07 DEC, 1941-Japanese aircraft, launched from six aircraft carriers, attacked US military facilities at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands.

08 DEC, 1964-A United Airlines Sud-Est Caravelle makes he first automatic landing in the United States.



Caravelle in LAN-Chile Livery

09 DEC, 1951-First Flight of the Fiat G.80 jet trainer designed by Giuseppe Gabrielli. The G.80 was the first turbojet aircraft produced in Italy and one of a long line of Gabrielli designed aircraft. Garbielli also designed the G-222 which has

since morphed into the Alenia C-27 Spartan now adopted by the USAF and US Army as an intra-theater transport.

10 DEC, Captains and brothers, Ross Smith and Keith Smith accompanied by Sgts W.H. Shiers and J.M. Bennett land their Vickers Vimy bomber in Darwin completing a flight from Great Britain

to Australia and winning a 10,000 pound prize offered by Australian Prime Minister Bill Hughes.



Smith Bros. Vimy on Display in Australia

11 DEC, 1917-Katherine Stinson sets a non-stop distance and endurance record, flying just over 600 miles in nine hours and six minutes from Camp Kearney, San Diego to The Presidio, San Francisco. She flew an OX-2 powered modified Curtiss JN.

12 DEC, 1970-Italy launches a Explorer 42, a satellite designed to investigate celestial x-ray sources. The launch vehicle is the Langley designed Scout and the launch site is the San Marco platform located in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Kenya. This is the first NASA satellite launched by a nation other than the USA.

13 DEC, 1918-A Handley-Page V-1500 four engined bomber departed Great Britain for the first ever flight to India, landing in Karachi on 12 January, 1919. The crew consisted of A.C.S, Maclaren, Robert Halley and N.D.K. McEwan.

14 DEC, 1924-A Martin MO-1 was launched off the forward turret of the U.S.S. Mississippi which was standing off Bremerton, Wa. This was the first successful trial of a gunpowder powered catapult.

15 DEC, 1970-Artem Mikoyan goes west.

16 DEC, 1951-First Flight of the Kaman K-225, the first turbine powered helicopter. Charlie Kaman's Bloomfield, CT company pioneered the concept of intermeshing rotors and servo flaps as an alternative to the tail rotor and rotor head of

more conventional machines. (And let us not forget Ovation guitars and guide dogs for the blind.)



K-225 on Display at NASM Udvar-Hazy Center

17 DEC, 1935-First Flight of the Douglas DST (Douglas Sleeper Transport), known as the DC-3 in its 31 seat version.

18 DEC, 1970- Aerospatiale, Fokker, Hawker-Siddeley, and *Deutsche* Airbus amalgamate to form Airbus Industries.

19 DEC, 1930-Amelia Earhart becomes first woman to pilot an autogiro.

20 Dec., 1928-Pioneer high latitude aviation Carl Eielson and Australian explorer George Wilkins started the first aerial survey in Antarctica in a Lockheed Vega.

21 DEC, 1964-First Flight of the General Dynamics F-111 Aardvark.

22 DEC, 1964-First Flight of the Lockheed SR-71A.



Blackbird Perched!

23 DEC, 1907-Army Signal Corps issues specifications for the first U.S. military aircraft.

24 DEC, 1937-First Flight of the Mario Castoldi designed Macchi C.200 *Saetta* (Lightning).

25 DEC, 1946, Reports from China indicate that 72 people have been killed in four separate commercial transport crashes while trying to land in coastal fog at Shanghai.

26 DEC, 1917-The National Bureau of Standards tests the National Advisory Committee's new altitude chamber designed to run engine experiments at 1/3 atmospheric pressure.

27 DEC, 1942-First Flight of the Kawanishi N1K-1 *Shiden*, a Japanese fighter.



Shiden to the Imperial Japanese Air Force but George to the Allies.

28 DEC, 1967-First Flight of the first production Hawker-Siddeley Harrier.

29 DEC, 1939-First Flight of the Consolidated XB-24 Liberator.



The B-24 was the most produced U.S. aircraft in WW II. This is a B-24J formerly of the Indian Airforce, now at the Pima Air Museum, Tucson.

30 DEC, 1939-First Flight of the prototype Ilyushin IL-2 Shturmovik. Over 38,000 were produced, the largest number of a single type of military aircraft ever produced.

31 DEC, 1926-The first Air Commerce Regulations by the Aeronautics Bureau of the Department of Commerce become effective. They cover aspects of licensing, registration of aircraft, and safety.

NATIONAL CADET SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

If you are interested in any of the NCSA, you must first have an encampment under your belt. If you want to participate in NCSA but don't have an encampment yet, contact Lt Wojtcuk for details about the Rhode Island's encampment (in April - the first encampment in the US each year). The CTWG encampment will be held in July and this will probably be too late to qualify for NCSA.

The applications for NCSA are due between December 1 and January 15 and are completed and sent via the internet. To to the following website for more information.

http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/cadet_programs/activities/national_special_activities/index.cfm

This site will give you a link (with instructions) for the application process. It also lists all the NCSAs for 2009 and links to detailed descriptions of each.

There is an extraordinary range of summer activities offered ranging from foreign travel to flight training. Emergency Services Academies are offered as is opportunities to explore vocational fields such as computers, aircraft power plants and structures, and meteorology.

We recommend that Cadets take a serious look at these offerings and enroll for participation.