

Missions for America

*Semper vigilans!*  
*Semper volans!*



## The Coastwatcher

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

<http://capct075.web.officelive.com/default.aspx>

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### SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

#### June

- 01 JUN-Cadets-PYT and Testing  
-Seniors-General CAP Training-TBD
- 08 JUN-Cadets-Character Development/Ldrshp.  
Seniors-Commander's Call
- 15 JUN-Cadets-Rocketry Program-Testing  
-Seniors-Emergency Services Training
- 22 JUN-Color Guard-Team Building
- 29 JUN-Squadron Picnic

#### For Future Planning

- TBA-JUN Joint Danielson-TRCS Activity
- 11 JUL-WAA Pancake Breakfast, 0900-1300
- 18-26 JUN NESA Camp Atterbury, Indiana
- 31 JUL-7 AUG CTWG Encampment
- 21 AUG-Commander's Cup Rocketry (tentative)
- 09 OCT CTWG Olde Rhinebeck Trip (tentative)
- 22-24 OCT CTWG Conference

### PARENTS MEETING

*25 May, 2010*

Lt Wojtcuk and Maj Bourque held a well attended briefing for parents. The meeting covered pertinent topics concerning our Cadet program.

### CADET MEETING MINUTES

*25 May, 2010*

The Cadet cadre led the Cadet Squadron in opening ceremonies, inspection, and drill.

A review of the second part of *Aerospace Dimensions*, Module Four, Rockets was presented by LtCol Kinch and Capt Noniewicz. Maj Rocketto presented a set of demonstrations illustrating Newton's Three Laws of Motion.

C/CMSgt Flynn presented a speech in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Mitchell Award. The speech explored the reasons as to why the United States needs a strong aerospace program to satisfy national security requirements.

### GROUND TEAM TRAINING

*22 May, 2010*

Maj Bourque ran a ground training session at the Squadron Trailer and Bluff Point over the weekend. Cadets Flynn and Barberan were signed off on five items.

### SENIOR MEETING

*25 May, 2010*

Maj Nielson briefed the Squadron on the procedures for ditching aircraft and water survival.

## **SAREX**

Lt Farley and LtCol Doucette flew a SAREX 31 May, 1862-Thaddeus S.C. Lowe, balloon pioneer and grandfather of aviatrix Pancho Barnes, assists Union troops at the Battle of Fair Oaks by warning them of an approaching Confederate force.

## **CURRENT EVENTS**

NASA announced that it has officially ended the Mars Phoenix Lander Mission. Attempts to contact the Lander have failed and the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has transmitted imagery that reveal that during the winter, the Lander suffered severe ice damage to its solar panels. The Phoenix Lander lasted two months more than originally planned and provided a rich source of new information about the Martian soil chemistry.

### *Aviation History*

26 May, 1942-First Flight of the Northrop P-61



29 May, 1934-Hamilton Standard was awarded the Collier Trophy for the development of the controllable pitch propeller.



## **PANCAKE BREAKFAST** **WESTERLY AIRPORT ASSOCIATION**

*11 JULY, 2010*

The Westerly Airport Association will sponsor a pancake breakfast at Dooney's Aviation, 63 Tom Harvey Rd, Westerly Airport to benefit their scholarship fund. Cost is \$6/adult and \$4/child under 12.

The *carte du jour* will include blueberry, strawberry, or plain pancakes (with real maple syrup flown in from Vermont!) bacon, sausage, coffee, juice

Tickets are available at Dooney Aviation, from WAA members or at the hangar door! See [www.wstaa.net](http://www.wstaa.net) for directions.

More information: [amelia.noseheart@cox.net](mailto:amelia.noseheart@cox.net) (include "pancake" in the subject line)

## **FAVORITE FLYING MOVIES**

### *L'Envoi*

This fourth part of the "Favorite Flying Movies" series will cover tie up some loose ends and cover a few of the unusual and interesting facts which were discovered during the writing of the main parts of the article.

First, readers referred to two movies with tangential relationships to the main theme or subjects discussed in the main theme. The first was *Stalag 17* (1953), a story about US Army Air Force gunners, radio men, and flight engineers, all

captured by the Germans after being shot down. The theme music is "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again", the tune which is played in the background as the B-52 crew in *Dr. Strangelove* fights their way to the target. In "Strangelove," the tune has a double irony. It is not only derived from an anti-war song but also refers to men returning in glory from wars. The crew of the B-52 will not be returning home. In fact, they will not have a home in which to return. A video clip may be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INPNyNivNWA&feature=related>

The clip from *Dr. Strangelove*, in which the crew methodically runs through the checklist to open the jammed bomb bay doors may be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgHSDa2Jwqc&feature=related>

Hap Rocketto reminded us that *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* is enriched by the presence of the two helicopter rescue enlisted crewman. The pilot, Mike Forney, is an enlisted man. The services once had many enlisted men pilots although they were generally restricted in their duties. Perhaps the most famous of the Navy pilots was Floyd Bennett, famed for his polar flights with Richard Byrd. During World War Two, Army sergeants flew liaison aircraft and gliders and the Navy used petty officers, mostly in transport aircraft. Today, many Army aviators are Warrant Officers, the US Marines employ sergeants as navigators, and the Navy is returning Chief Warrant Officers to flight status for helicopter missions.

The scene in which Forney and Nestor Gamidge, attempt to save Lt. Brubaker may be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nPdVJQaci0>

Music has been mentioned as one one of the artistic elements which enriched the cinema.

Sometimes it is for the background effect as in the previously mentioned *Dr. Strangelove*. But sometimes, it reveals something about the state of mind of the protagonists, evident in the mess scene in *The Dawn Patrol*. Carefully listen to the lyrics of "Stand to Your Glasses Steady" which is shown at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_HdXdVvXc8w&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_HdXdVvXc8w&feature=related)

As an aside, the National Air and Space Museum on the Mall in Washington has been running a film on the flying movies of World War I that show this scene from *The Dawn Patrol* but they make a mistake in the libretto of the song which is displayed as subtitles. The phrase about the world is the cynical "world of lies," not the innocuous "world of life" as displayed on the screen.

The sound track of *The Right Stuff* includes suitable music. Yeager's flight in the NF-104 in which he pronounces that "I think I see an airplane over here with my name on it," is one orchestral theme fitted perfectly to the scenes, heralding the launch of a flight of high adventure and the triumph of a remarkable survival. The scene may be seen and heard at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlsWD1-fmIk&feature=related>

The other *The Right Stuff* scene mentioned in *The Coastwatcher* feature involved "The Demon" which lurks at Mach One and Yeager's horseback ride during which he and his steed encounter the "X-1." For this scene, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQKb3drC1pI&feature=related>

The character of Jack Ridley is a sketch of the real Col Jack Ridley, a test pilot and aeronautical engineer who studied under the aerodynamicist Theodore von Karman at the California Institute

of Technology. When Yeager and Bob Hoover were selected as the Air Force X-1 pilots, Ridley was assigned as Project Engineer. Ridley made major improvements to the control system of the X-1 and served as a technical mentor to Yeager who had little formal engineering education. Ridley "went West" when an aircraft in which he was a passenger crashed in Japan. This was some five years or so before Yeager's encounter with the NF-104 so the film's writers took some liberty with history for dramatic effect.

The only movie nominated which had no music sound track was the silent film, *Wings*. In fact, it had no sound track at all except for piano music added by a live player in the theatre. Gary Cooper's first big role, as the doomed Cadet White, is found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDz3XIZIdOA>

Flying in the movies is generally done by a group of pilots in the Motion Picture Pilots Association, a successor to the Association of Motion Picture Stunt Pilots. Perhaps the most famous of these was Paul Mantz, one of the earliest of the Hollywood pilots. He also served as an advisor to Amelia Earhart in her around the world attempted flight. He is most well known for the famous B-17 belly landing scene in *Twelve O'Clock High*. Not only did he receive, what was at that time a huge remuneration, but also was promised the remains of the B-17. According to Col Stidsen, the aircraft was severely damaged when it struck a pole supporting one of the tents. Unbeknownst to Mantz, one of the wooden poles had been replaced with a steel pole and not only sliced into the wing but shattered into a hail storm of shrapnel-like pieces. The scene is available at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gi2NwU38NzA&feature=related>

Another hairy Mantz flying scene, reported by Tom Morehouse of the New England Air Museum,

occurred while making in *Island in the Sky*. It involves a near miss between C-47s when one pops out of a cloud during a search mission. Mantz vowed never to attempt a scene like that again.

At the end of World War Two, Mantz purchased almost 500 aircraft from government surplus, thereby acquiring one of the largest air forces in the world. He sold off the gasoline still stored in the tanks which covered most of the cost of the purchase. He then joined with Frank Tallman to form Tallmantz, a company dedicated to supplying support to the movie industry. They provided the aircraft and crews for a plethora of Hollywood aviation productions. Unfortunately, Mantz was killed when the jury-rigged aircraft made from C-82 parts had a structural failure during the final filming of *The Flight of the Phoenix*.

Some of the pictures not mentioned here in which Tallmantz provided the flying are *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* with the famous flight through a Coca-Cola sign, *Charlie Varrick* featuring a crop dusting Stearman, *Murphy's War* with a Grumman Duck, *Ace Eli and Rodger of the Skies*, and the TV series *Baa, Baa Black Sheep*.

The actor who appeared most often in the movies mentioned was Jimmy Stewart, a real aviator, and combat veteran. He was often paired with June Allyson who almost made a career of playing his or some other man's faithful and harried wife. In one film related to aviation, *The Glen Miller Story* (1954), she plays the wife of Maj Glenn Miller, who served as an Army Air Force Special Services Officer and leader of the Air Force Band in World War Two. Miller, one of the most popular band leaders in the United States, was a 38 year old volunteer who left his successful music career to serve in the war. He was lost when a Norduyn Norsemen in which he was traveling to France disappeared over the English Channel.

Movies are more than just character, music, and

spectacle. Aristotle points out that there are three other elements of drama: action, ideas, and language and it is the job of the writer to provide these. Ernest Gann, the dean of American aviation writers, also wrote screen plays.

Gann was an early airline pilot and flew with the Air Transport Command in World War Two. His aviation masterpiece, *Fate is the Hunter*, ought to be read by every pilot. An incident related in "Fate" provided the story line for *Island in the Sky*. Aside from "Island" and *The High and the Mighty*, he wrote or screen-played a number of other films. These include *Fate is the Hunter*, which disappointed him, *The Aviator*, *The Last Flight of Noah's Ark*, and *Blaze of Noon*.

*Stalag 17* was written by Eighth Air Force combat veterans Donald Bevan and Edmund Trzcinski, both POWs held in Stalag XVII-B. Trzcinski also appears in a cameo in the film as a prisoner. Another Eighth Air Force duo, Sy Bartlett and Bernie Lay, used their experiences to write *Twelve O'Clock High*.

But a cinema production needs direction also and one of the leading directors of aviation films is World War One flier, William Wellman. Wellman earns the laurel for several quality productions, *Wings*, *Island in the Sky*, and *The High and the Mighty*, as well as a host of other aviation films which include *Central Airport*, *Men with Wings*, and *This Man's Navy*, *Lafayette Escadrille*, *Gallant Journey*, *Thunderbirds*, *Young Eagles*, and *Legion of the Condemned*.

Hap Rocketto also pointed out some unusual casting in three of the movies. Edmund Trzcinski, one of the writers of *Stalag 17* also appears in a cameo in the film as a prisoner. In *Apollo XIII*, the Navy Captain who welcomes the astronauts aboard the *USS Iwo Jima* is Jim Lovell, the Commander of the Apollo XIII mission. And none other than Chuck Yeager appears as the bartender

of The Happy Bottom Riding Club in *The Right Stuff*.

If the reader wishes to see some of the other flying scenes mentioned, here are the references:

*Strategic Air Command* is worth watching for the B-36 startup and takeoff. Col Stidsen says take a look at the blue flight suits.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGjyH2ulsCk>

An explanation of "Catch-22" and the mass B-25 take-off is located at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLNnWw1YHGg>

*The Blue Max* flight under a bridge could not be found but a World War Two TV drama, *Piece of Cake*, has a fine scene of a Spitfire doing the deed. Go to:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_HdXdVvXc8w&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_HdXdVvXc8w&feature=related)

The flight home in the nose of a B-17 from *The Best Years of Our Lives* is at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHXJW2fwjBk>

And finally, a fitting end to this series is the melancholy scene in an aircraft boneyard, also from *The Best Years of Their Lives*, in which Fred Derry, a veteran bombardier, failing to heal his personal life and unable to find a job, cuts his family ties and prepares to leave town. While waiting for his flight, he wanders through a field of partially dismantled aircraft, awaiting final disposal. Finding a B-17, he climbs up, clears away the cobwebs, brushes away the dust, and takes up his old position in the bombardier's station. As he reflects on the war, the foreman of the work gang interrupts. On the spur of the

moment , he asks for and is granted a job turning the old bombers into material for prefabricated housing, quite the reverse of his former role of bombardier. He removes his jacket and prepares to work, walking away from the ambiguously named B-17, "Round Trip?" This selection will be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tU0d3DVcKoY&feature=related>

*FADE OUT!*