

Missions for America
Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!



The Coastwatcher

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

300 Tower Rd., Groton, CT
<http://ct075.org>

LtCol Stephen Rocketto, Editor
srocketto@aquilasys.com

C/SSgt Justin Ketcham, Reporter
C/Amn Virginia Poe, Cub Reporter
Lt David Meers & Maj Roy Bourque, Papparazis

Vol. VII, No. 37

15 October, 2013

SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

19 OCT-CTWG Field Trip-Intrepid Museum
22 OCT-TRCS Meeting
26 OCT-Rifle-Quaker Hill
26-27 OCT-TLC Course-Camp Niantic
29 OCT-TRCS Meeting

CADET MEETING

15 October, 2013

by

C/SSgt Justin Ketcham & C/Amn Virginia Poe

New cadets did basic drill movements under the guidance of C/CMSgt Carter while more experienced cadets performed column of files and flanks under the direction of C/CMSgt Ray.

C/2nd Lt. Schultz led cadets in the recitation of the Cadet Oath.

C/2nd Lt. Schultz solicited suggestions for squadron activities during the winter season.

Maj. Wojtcuk presented another mind intriguing Character Development lesson. This week's topic was accountable actions and morally right choices.

C/2d Lt. Schultz announced that the squadron will be performing a formal inspection next week. Preparatory inspections were given in advance. C/CMSgt Carter, noting the unsatisfactory state of our boots, gave an impromptu lesson on boot polishing.

Lt. Col. Rocketto presented a short lesson on lunar movements in which he explained how the daily rotation of the earth on its axis and the and the monthly revolution around the earth combine to make the moon seem to appear about 12 degrees eastward on each succeeding night. Cadets were urged to check the lunar position on each of the succeeding nights and watch as full moon occurs when the moon rises on the eastern horizon.

SENIOR MEETING

15 October, 2013

Maj Noniewicz conducted a review of the squadron's performance at last weekend's Groton Fall Festival. Participants offered suggestions for a more effective promotion of our squadron in future events.

GROTON FALL FESTIVAL

submitted by

2dLt Emily Ray and 2dLt David Meers

The Squadron set up and manned a booth at the Groton Fall Festival on 12 October. The booth was visited not only by people interested in our mission but old CAP members.

Squadron members who worked at the Festival were C/CMSgts Ray and Carter, C/MSgt Johnstone, C/TSgt Meers, C/A1C Brouillard,

C/Amn Jaskowicz, Conway, D. Hollingsworth, M. Hollingsworth, and C/B Ray.



2dLt Emily Ray supervised the program and was supported by LtCols Kinch and Doucette, Maj Noniewicz, Lt. Meers, and Cadet Johnstone's grandmother, Barbara, enrolling as a cadet sponsor member.

A newspaper reporter interviewed Cadets Carter and Ray and Maj Noniewicz.

The cadets and officers answered questions about CAP and demonstrated our new "hoverseat." The table display included some of the squadron rockets, informational panels, and an video projector with a 30 segment program about CAP history and missions.

AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS

Scott Carpenter Goes West

Malcolm Scott Carpenter, the second American to orbit the earth died last week. A Navy pilot, he was accepted as one of the first seven astronauts. He was exceptional as one of the Mercury 7 in that his military flight career involved multi-engine propeller driven aircraft, notably the Lockheed P2V Neptune during which he participated in anti-submarine and intelligence missions.

In 1969, he piloted Aurora 7 on a three orbit flight. The mission was somewhat controversial. A malfunctioning attitude indicator caused Carpenter to assume manual control which led to an over-expenditure of fuel. Control problems led to a 250

mile overshoot of the landing area. The cause of overshoot has never been settled. Some blamed Carpenter for inattentiveness. Others argued that fuel burn was a ground controller responsibility and Carpenter displayed a high degree of piloting skill in overcoming the problems caused by the misbehavior of his instrument.

He interspersed his subsequent career with work in the Navy's underwater program and NASA's moon landing efforts.

As a member of the Navy's Man-in-the-Sea Project, Carpenter earned the sobriquet of Aquanaut. He spent 30 days in an underwater habitat and participated in ocean engineering projects involving salvage, rescue, and saturation diving.

His duties at NASA involved development of the Apollo Lunar Excursion Module and using an underwater environment to train crews in low gravity operations.

We are diminished.

AVIATION HISTORY

LtCol Rocketto returned from Arizona on Columbus Day after presenting instruction in the art and technique of using the AR-15 rifle at the Small Arms Firing School held at the Civilian Marksmanship Program's Western Games

He took time to visit the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, the Planes of Fame annex in Valle, and the Confederate Air Force Museum in Mesa.

Here are a comments and photos of some of the some historically interesting aircraft which are on display.

The Chino, California based Planes of Fame Museum has an annex at Valle Airport, 6000 ft MSL, a short distance south of the Grand Canyon. Several dozen aircraft are housed, many of which

still fly. Among them are a Martin 4-0-4 and a Convair 240. Rocketto's first airline ride was on an American Airlines 240 from Boston's Logan to New York LaGuardia.

But chief among these airliners at Valle is a Lockheed 749A Constellation. Originally designated a C-121A and assigned to the Military Air Transport Service at Westover AFB, the aircraft was refurbished with deluxe accommodations and later served as the personal transport of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and was named *Bataan*, after the Philippine peninsula which was the site of the notorious "Death March." As a VIP transport, it was re-designated VC-121A.



The Lockheed Constellation, arguably the most graceful airliner ever built.

MacArthur used it while serving as the Supreme Commander Allied Power during the occupation of Japan and while in command of UN forces during the Korean Police Action. Later, it served as transport for General Matthew Ridgeway and, stationed in Hawaii, carried a host of notables including Generals Curtis LeMay and Maxwell Taylor, Syngman Rhee, President of Korea, and President Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon. Its final service was as a support aircraft for the Apollo Moon Program.

A second interesting aircraft at Valle is a Consolidated-Vultee L-13. The original aircraft is a Stinson design but Stinson was absorbed by Consolidated-Vultee, itself a merger.

The spartan interior and simple structure is pretty

well exposed by the large windows and the large cargo door on the right side, designed to allow the loading of two casualty litters.



Front and rear quarter views of the L-19 in its folded configuration.



What is most unique about the design is its ability to fold up into a box whose cross-sectional area is the same as that of a jeep. The wings then fold back the horizontal stabilizers and elevators fold upward and the landing gear compacts to the same width as that of a jeep. The whole apparatus can then be towed on the road, loaded on a truck, or fit into the cargo hold of aircraft designed to carry jeeps! As a final variation, the L-13, unfolded, could be air towed by a C-47.

Incidentally, the airport owner has a very interesting collection of old automobiles and motorcycles in the terminal next to the museum building.

The Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force, formerly the Confederate Air Force, maintains a hanger at Falcon Field, just west of

Phoenix. The national organization was formed to acquire, preserve, and restore military aircraft.

Alas, their B-17G, *Sentimental Journey*, and their B-25J, *Maid in the Shade*, were on tour and would not be back for another day so were missed.

One of their aircraft, apropos to this publication, is an Aeronca L-16A. The L-16A is a militarized version of the line of Model 7 Champion series and with its Continental 85 HP engine, it is know by the company designation of 7BCM.



The aircraft was used during the Korean War for liaison and transport and in 1956, 332 were transferred to the Civil Air Patrol. The particular model which flies out of Falcon Field bears the anachronistic markings of Patrol Base 3 which was stationed at Latana Airport Florida, now Palm Beach County Airport.

The Arizona Wing is currently reconstructing a Grumman AF-2S Guardian. The aircraft was part of an interesting dual act developed by the US Navy. Envisioned as a torpedo bomber, its mission was changed dueling submarines but the equipment and weaponry needed could not be accommodated by one aircraft. Therefore, it was decided to build two aircraft, a “tracker” and a “killer.”



The Guardian Team
(US Navy Photo)

The “tracker,” designated AF-2W was equipped with a ventral dome for a search radar and associated electronic equipment and carried two additional crew members. The “killer,” designated AS-2S had a bomb bay and suitable weaponry, a short range radar, a search light, and one additional crewman.



The Falcon Field Guardian Under Restoration.
Note the vertical fins on the horizontal stabilizer need to compensate for the side load of the ventral dome.

At that time, before nuclear propulsion, submarines were essentially surface vessels that often attacked on the surface. They submerged only for concealment of a stealthy attack. Consequently, radar and high intensity lights were suitable countermeasures to the submarine threat.

Another AF-2W was found at Tucson's Pima Air and Space Museum, a favorite hang-out of CTWG's LtCol Carl Stidsen when he was a SAC missileer with the 390th Strategic Missile Wing at Davis-Monthan AFB.



Pima's Guardian exhibits its swollen belly, a result of the installation of the slurry tank.

This particular model had been converted to a borate bomber, is on loan from the US Forest Service, and is painted in the colors of Aero Union, an aerial fire fighting outfit that was based at Chico, California. Aero Union pioneered the development and use of the Modular Airborne FireFighting System II (MAFFS II) used in aircraft such as the C-130.

Another unusual aircraft found at Pima is the Budd RB-1 Conestoga. Old timers will remember the “Budd” cars, stainless steel passenger rail cars, self propelled, and often seen on the Old New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad.



The Conestoga, stripped of engines and empennage, rests forlornly in the Arizona sun.

The Budd Company was a pioneer in the development and use of stainless steel in the vehicle industry. At the request of the US Navy, they acquired a staff of aeronautical engineers and developed the stainless steel Conestoga.

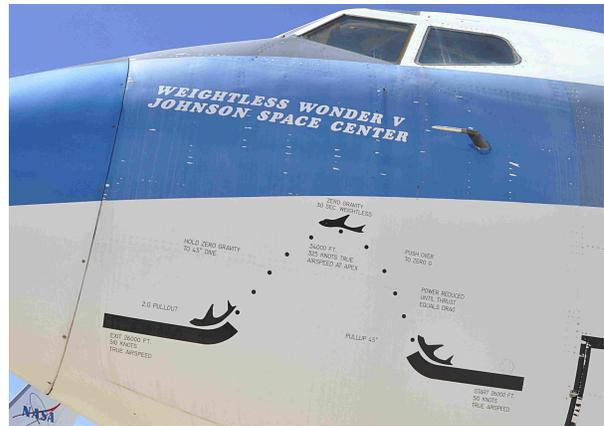
The low slung fuselage could be loaded by an aft ramp or side doors. The port and starboard side doors also provided egress for paratroopers. The cockpit sat high up and was accessed by stairs from the cargo compartment. Given its cargo capacity, the two Pratt & Whitney R-1830s at 1,200 HP each made for an underpowered aircraft.

Few were built and some were released to commercial operators at the end of World War II. One of them, Skyways, was the precursor to Flying Tiger Airlines. The example at Pima is the only survivor.

It sickens some aviation historians to note that many interesting aircraft such as the Consolidated

B-32 Dominator, the Boeing 314 Clipper, and the Martin XM-51 have not been preserved. However, Pima has one aircraft, a fairly common one, which has sickened a wide range of passengers from teachers to astronauts.

The “Vomit Comet” is a Boeing KC-135A, NASA 931NA, which was used to familiarize astronauts to weightless conditions. Weightlessness was induced by flying the aircraft through a parabolic arc which induced nausea in some of the trainees. Several of them were used but both have been retired and replaced by a McDonnell-Douglas C-9B formerly owned by KLM.



The “Vomit Comet” displays its mission profile as “nose art.”

While at Valle, There was no sign of N414H, the Ford Tri-motor in which they offer aerial tours and type ratings. However, Pima houses a Northrop YC-125A Raider displaying Mexican registry numbers. The “YC” designation indicates a “prototype cargo” aircraft. A YC-125B, the arctic search and rescue model exists at the USAF Museum.



The aircraft was powered by three Wright 1830 radials at 1,200 HP each and was designed to operate as an assault transport to and from short, rough fields. By the time that it was delivered, better aircraft had been accepted for its role and the 125s were relegated to technical schools to train mechanics. When finally declared surplus, most of them were sold off and “emigrated” south of our border to find work, an interesting reversal of our recent border control problems.

The last aircraft in this report was seen on my way out and was on display at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. It hangs from the roof and is a rebuilt SPAD XIII carrying the colors of Frank Luke.



The display is somewhat reminiscent of O'Hare Airport's Wildcat display honoring Chicago's Butch O'Hare, World War II Navy ace and Medal of Honor winner.

A Phoenix native, Luke's character was cowboy-like in that he was a “loner” who preferred to fly alone. He was somewhat careless about obeying orders but his outstanding flying ability and aerial marksmanship balanced what were seen as faults in his military bearing.

At one point, he found a “pardner,” Lt. Joseph Wehner. They specialized in attacking German observation balloons, highly dangerous due to heavy concentrations of protective anti-aircraft cannons and machine guns. Frank attacked and Wehner flew top cover. When Wehner was killed, Luke shot down two of the attackers.

In his meteor-like two week career, Luke was credited with 14 balloons and four aircraft. While shooting down his last balloon, he was wounded and on his way to a forced landing behind enemy lines, strafed a group of enemy soldiers. According to legend, he crawled from his aircraft, drew his Colt 1911, and took on a squad of German infantry who sought to capture him. Whether or not this is true, he did succumb to his wound and was buried in France.

When the war ended, he was the second ranking ace in the Army Expeditionary Force behind Eddie Rickenbacker. In 1919, his family received his Medal of Honor, the first ever awarded a US pilot.

Of him, Rickenbacker said:

He was the most daring aviator and greatest fighter pilot of the entire war. His life is one of the brightest glories of our Air Service. He went on a rampage and shot down fourteen enemy aircraft, including ten balloons, in eight days. No other ace, even the dreaded Richthofen had ever come close to that.

Luke AFB is named in his honor.

CITRUS FRUIT FUNDRAISER

The squadron's annual fund raiser has started. Squadron members who have not received their sales packets should contact LtCol Rocketto.

All hands are reminded that an early start is imperative. Cadets and their parents and senior members should exert a maximum effort in order to make this year's sale successful.

