



Missions for
America
Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!

The Coastwatcher

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

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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENT

31 MAR-TRCS Meeting

18 APR-CT High Power Rifle Clinic
18 APR-Pilot Meeting-MMK
21APR-TRCS Meeting-Guest Speaker
18-26 APR-Ground SAR at McGuire
25 APR-2 MAY-Aircrew School at McGuire
25 APR-CTWG TRAEX
25 APR-O Flights at GON

14-15 MAY-NER Aerospace Education School-
Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA
16 MAY-Commander's Cup Rocket Contest
15-17 MAY-NER/PAWG Conference-Ft.
Indiantown Gap, PA

13 JUN-CTWG Op Eval TRANEX
01-08 AUG-CTWG Encampment
TBA-NER Cadet Competition
21-23 AUG-CTWG/USAF Evaluation
15-23 AUG-NER Glider Academy@KSVF
26-29 AUG-CAP National Conference
12 SEP-Cadet Ball-USCGA

CADET MEETING REPORT

24 March, 2015

Physical training was followed by a safety briefing presented by Maj Paul Noniewicz.

SENIOR MEETING REPORT

24 March, 2015

*Submitted by
Rocky Petauristini*

Major Paul Noniewicz, Squadron Safety Officer presented an extended briefing for the mandated Safety Down Day.

Four major safety areas were covered: CAP Regulations 62-1 and 62-2, Operational Risk Management, eService tools available to support the safety mission, and member responsibilities not only to meet regulatory requirements but to develop habits of safe behavior and a Squadron culture of safety.

AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS

*Congressional Gold Medals Awarded to
Connecticut World War Two CAP
Veterans*

Ceremonies to honor members of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) who served during World War II were held at the New England Air Museum on Saturday. Eleven Connecticut citizens or their families were presented with replicas of the gold medal authorized by the Congress of the United States for "civilian volunteers who flew armed and humanitarian missions' between 1941 and 1945.

In 2014, Congress voted to award a single gold medal to honor the services of all of CAP's World War two veterans. Each veteran or next of kin will be presented with a replica to commemorate their service.

The Connecticut awardees represent a wide range of CAP services from pilots to a teenager who collected scrap metal and performed aircraft spotting duties. Others served as mechanics, clerks, teachers, and guards.

CAP lost 65 members in the line of duty, two from Connecticut.

1st Lt. Welles Bishop earned his pilot's certificate at the Meriden Airport. He was posted to the CAP base at Bar Harbor, Maine. On February 2nd, 1943, he and his observer, 1st Lt. William Hites were lost while performing an offshore patrol.

A week after Pearl Harbor, Andrew Maye, joined CAP's war effort. He was the father of three children and not eligible for the draft. Taking a leave of absence from General Electric, he joined CAP and was based at Bradley Field. On September 14, 1943, accompanied by mechanic George Menzel, Lt. Maye departed Bradley for Grenier Field in New Hampshire. Their aircraft began to smoke and in an emergency landing, both men were killed.

Four living CAP veterans attended the ceremonies.

In 1944, Judith Calandrelli was working a Norwalk Aircraft as a welder when she volunteered to serve. She trained in civil defense skills and was one of three women chosen for flight training.

Joel Fairfax was a charter member of the Danbury Squadron. His assignment to the Bar Harbor patrol base was curtailed by his crucial wartime occupation as a quality control specialist in Bridgeport. Fairfax appeared in uniform. He been stationed at Danbury but was transferred to Stormville Airport in New York where he flew the Piper J-5, the Aeronca Champion, and the Bird

BK, his favorite airplane.

In far off Belfield, North Dakota, Loering Johnson served as a Cadet and collected scrap metals, studied aeronautics and served as an aircraft spotter. He recalls the fear of invasion which pervaded the northland. This fear was not unwarranted since the Japanese had occupied Attu and Kiska two islands in Alaska's Aleutian archipelago. Johnson and a dozen of his classmates studied flash cards depicting Japanese aircraft and rotated through one hour shifts on the roof of the high school, scanning the northern skies towards Canada, 150 miles away. Upon graduation, he joined the U.S. Army and served with the 88th Infantry Division in Italy.

Technical Sergeant. Helen Sarr-Hill was working for Thomas Lockhart at the Connecticut Department of Aeronautics. She joined CAP and served as Connecticut Wing Secretary, one of the few paid positions. She remembers reporting to the National Guard Armory in Hartford where she passed on information for Lockhart and also drilled. Her fiancée returned from a tour as a tail gunner in a B-17 in Europe and they got married. She laughs when she recalls how she outranked him. After the war, she continued to serve in State government as an administrative secretary.



Loering Johnson, Joel Fairfax, Sen. Richard Blumental, Helen Sarr-Hill, Judith Calandrelli pose in front of the Sikorsky S-39B, another World War II CAP veteran.

Deceased veterans were represented by close family members who received their citations and medals.

Sgt. Norman E. Allgeier performed 1000 hours of service flying forest fire watches and patrolling coal, oil, and gas resources.

Lt. Col. Lawrence Lockhart was Connecticut's first Wing Commander. When war broke out, Lockhart was serving as Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Aeronautics. In 1944, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and participated in the Battle of Okinawa. When the war ended, he returned to his former position as Commissioner and then went on to establish a career in advertising.

Maj. Ernest L. Markham was a U.S. Navy veteran and Naval Aviator at the end of World War One. In 1928, he became the first manager of Meriden Airport, now named Meriden-Markham Airport in his honor. His service was performed at CAP's Bar Harbor base where he was temporary commander and operations officer. When the war ended, he returned to Meriden and continued with CAP as Commanding Officer of the Meriden Squadron.

Hyland Tasker, a licensed pilot and Pratt & Whitney employee joined CAP at the beginning of the war and supported U.S. Army Air Corps missions. He flew until 1974 and passed away in 20089 at the age of 92.

Col. Nancy Hopkins-Tier was a rated commercial pilot and a nationally known aviatrix with a number of aviation achievements under her seat belt. She joined CAP in 1944 and in 1947, was appointed as the Connecticut Wing Commander, the first woman to hold that post. She is a member of the Pioneer Women in the Aviation Hall of Fame and a charter member of the Ninety-Nines, a women's aviation organization.

After the formal ceremonies at the New England Air Museum, the awardees and guests adjourned to the headquarters of the 103rd Airlift Wing, the Flying Yankees at Bradley International Airport. There a citation and miniature medal was presented to each awardee by Connecticut Wing Commander Kenneth Chapman, Chief of Staff James Ridley, and New Fairfield First Selectman

Susan Chapman.

The ceremony concluded with refreshments and the music of the 102nd Army Brass Quintet.

AVIATION HISTORY

A Week of First Flights

26 Mar, 1940 – First flight of the Curtiss C-46 Commando.

Designed to be a pressurized airliner, the Curtiss CW-20 abandoned both its airline future and its pressurization in the emergency of World War II.

The Commando was the lesser known sister of the Douglas C-47. Skytrain. Using supercharged Pratt & Whitney R2800 engines, the aircraft made its name in the China-Burma-India theatre flying the supply route from India to China over the Himalayan Mountains. Known as "the Hump," the dangerous route cost 600 aircraft and the lives of almost 2,000 men.

Three times as many C-47s were produced compared the C-46. However, the payload of the larger Commando was 2.5 times that of the Skytrain.

Lt. Tyrone Power, USMCR and Twentieth Century Fox actor, left his Hollywood gigs to fly the Commando, known in the Corps as the R5C, in the later stages of the World War II in the Pacific.

Seventy years after production ended, a few Commandos still serve as freighters. Like Tyrone Power they also starred on screen in the TV series *Ice Pilots, NWT*.

A Commando freighter undergoing maintenance on a high altitude field in Bolivia.



27 Mar, 2004 – First flight of the [Eurofighter Typhoon](#).

French Airbus, Italian Alenia, and British BAE got together to produce this canard delta design but the French retreated favor of manufacturing their own Dassault Rafale. Over a half dozen air forces fly this multi-role fighter which has had a production run of about 500.



After 14 years service, this Typhoon was retired to the RAF Museum, Hendon.

28 Mar, 1957 – First flight of the Canadair CP-107 Argus.

In the mid 50's Canadair took the wings, tail, and landing gear from the Bristol Britannia and married them to a fuselage of its own design. Designed as a maritime patrol and anti-submarine aircraft, in Canadian service the Argus replaced the Lockheed P2V Neptune and was itself eventually replaced by the CP-140 Aurora, a Lockheed P-3 which carries the S-3 Viking

electronics system.



The red lightning stripe was a common motif on many RCAF aircraft in the '50s and '60s.

29 Mar, 2001 – First Flight of the X-32B Joint Strike Fighter Concept Demonstration Aircraft.

The Boeing X-32 contended with the Lockheed-Martin X-35 for the military Joint Strike Fighter contract in the 1990s. The aircraft were supposed to incorporate stealth design and short and vertical take-off capabilities. Eventually, Lockheed-Martin won the contract and their X-35 concept became the F-35 Lightning II, produced in three different flavors for the USAF, USN, and USMC.



An X-32 sits in the rain at NAS Patuxent River.

30 Mar, 1934 – First flight of the Sikorsky S-42.

The S-42 was built for Pan American World Airways and was the first of a long line of PanAm Clippers. Only ten were built and they all saw service on PanAm survey flights and on the South American and Frisco-Hawaii runs.

The noted Captain Edward Musik, once on the cover of *Time Magazine*, was lost when the *Samoan Clipper* blew up near Pago Pago, an accident attributed to a fault in the fuel dump system.



A PanAM S-42 taking off. (Credit: National Museum of Naval Aviation-Pensacola)

31 Mar 1990 – First Flight of the Robinson R44 Raven.

Frank Robinson's aircraft company has produced one of the most successful series of helicopters. Over 5,000 Ravens have come off the assembly line.

In November of 2014, Iran Helicopters publicly flew one of four Ravens which they purchased through third person sales as a demonstration of the ease of end-running the international sanctions which have been levied on Iran.



*"But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,"
hovers lightly o'er the tarmac, perching on an airy column,
Hobbes meter compiling
dollars plenty by the score. (with apologies to
Edgar Allen Poe)*

Two History Notes

Bridgeport Woes

Lt Col Sandy McDonough added some information about the Mollison-Johnson crash in Bridgeport which led to another interesting crash story. McDonough stated that Amy Johnson and husband Mollison landed in Frash (not Fresh) Pond at the end of old RWY 31.

In checking out the details, it turns out that the noted Polar aviator, Bernt Balchen, who was mentioned in the same issue crashed at Bridgeport on 05 July, 1939. The aircraft struck a wire fence. No injuries were reported. Balchen was not flying the plane.

Stidsen on the F-84 Question

Lt Col Carl Stidsen questioned the identification of the F-84A in Thunderbird livery which appeared in the last edition of *The Coastwatcher*. He was right. Stidsen is a retired USAF officer, a long-time CAP member, and the Research Librarian at New England Air Museum's John W. Ramsey Research Library. The following notes are a model of how documentary research ought to be done and what might constitute historical proof.

The issue: Is the photo which appears in *Coastwatcher* 9.12 that of an F-84A? Stidsen questions this identification. The photo below is the picture *which appeared in Coastwatcher 9.12*. The information plaque at Chanute AFB stated that this was a YF-84A. That was incorrect. Readers of information plaques, newspapers and Wikipedia should not believe all that they read.



Stidsen states that

Only 15 A's were built and they were pretty much out of the inventory when the P to F category changed. Also, none of them were fitted for tip tanks.

I suspect your bird is more likely one or the much more numerous E or G variants. Where was the picture taken - looks like Luke AFB ?

The picture was not taken at Luke AFB but Lt Col Stidsen has a good point. First, a careful check of the aircraft flown by The Thunderbirds indicate that the only F-84 which they flew was the F-84G which was a straight wing bird.

Second, there is no record of an F-84A or P-84A survivor because according to the USAF, the

contract for 99 F-84A models was cancelled.

There is another one labeled as a YF-84A at Chanute AFB and it also is in Thunderbird livery. Upon receiving the photo, Stidsen note the following:

I cross checked the s/n on the tail (488656), which should translate to 44-88656.

Using John Andrade's seminal U.S. Military Aircraft Designations and Serials 1909 to 1979 and David McLaren's Republic F-84 Thunderjet, Thunderstreak and Thunderflash, I derived the following :

The Serial range of the YP-84A was 45-59482 / 59477 (YP-84-1-RE : 45-59482 / 484; YP-84A-5-RE :45-59485-491; / YP-84-10-RE: 45-59492 - 496) , so the serial listed on the tail fin of the pictured F-84 wasn't even in the correct Fiscal Year . I then checked all the serials for all F-84 production (through 57-6716, a batch of RF-84Fs) in all Fiscal Years of procurement (1944 - 1957) , and only one of the last three numbers matched (an F-84E , s/n 51-656, one of 215 built under contract AF-14802 , range 51-577 / 691) .

I also ran the serial number against aircraft produced in Fiscal 1944 , and found a curious 200+ number gap in serial ranges between 44-85841 (the last Vega Built B-17G-110-VE) and B-25J 44-86692 (a B-25J-30-NC). I also checked the s/n ranges for the P-38, P-39, P-40, P-47 , P-51, P-59, P-61, P-63 and P-80. The P-47 breakdown was somewhat muddled , so I went deeper into that.

So, I ran the Serial against Joe Baugher's masterful Serial List and got a hit - a batch of Republic P-47N-25-RE (44-88651 / 88695) included s/n 44-88656.

So - the above is a very roundabout way of saying that the serial on the fin of the pictured F-84 is incorrect and was originally given to a P-47N. I wonder if the painted number was a private joke or memorial on the part of the

painter or someone at Chanute who might have worked on or flown the P-47N in question, and memorialized its serial on another aircraft when he got the chance? Just a surmise.

Nonetheless , I do not believe that the aircraft pictured is a YP-84A or YF-84A, nor is it an F-84G (the G had the ribbed canopy - the bird pictured has a clear canopy). As near as I can tell it is an F-84E.

Note how LtCol Stidsen uses three reliable documentary sources and cross checks his data with each of them. This requires background knowledge such as understanding the USAF system of tail numbers. He also discerns contradiction in the tail number data provided by some of the pictures, recovers the serial numbers of the aircraft which actually had the numbers in question, and provides a plausible explanation of how the mislabeling might have occurred.

Aviation historians are well advised to take extraordinary care in making claims about aviation history. The evidence should be well-documented, coherent, plausible and open to public scrutiny. In case of doubt, forensic expertise can be utilized in establishing the provenance of a document or picture. Finally, eye witness testimony should be open to cross-examination.

Stidsen's commentary on the F-84 type used by the Thunderbirds is:

Oh - as for the Thunderbirds usage of the F-84 T-Jet? The F-84G was their first mount, from May 25, 1953 through the end of the 1955 Season. For the 1956 Season - and only for that season - , they flew the swept wing F-84F . They transitioned into the F-100C for the 1957 season (and that was their bird the first time I saw them fly - at the 1957 Boy Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge, PA.

Oddly enough, the Editor of The Coastwatcher had the same experience at the 1957 Jamboree at Valley Forge but he did not see Stidsen, probably

because he was looking skywards at the Thunderbirds. However Stidsen claims he saw me.

I remember seeing you at the Jamboree - you were in a brown BSA uniform, short pants and a Jamboree neckerchief, right? I was an "Auslander" attached to a Troop from Haverhill, Mass. (I was from a Worcester troop) . They ignored me the whole trip and I returned the favor. So, I got a chance to do a lot of exploring on my own.

This observation probably occurred during one of his exploring expeditions. I followed the same lone exploring routine since my Troop, Troop 27, was out of favor with the Pequot Council leadership and I would set out on my own when snubbed by the Pequot Council appointed Scoutmaster and his minions..

The Straight Wing F-84 Line

The Republic F-84 Thunderjet Straight Wing Fighter Family



Three XF-84 prototypes were built.



Republic supplied the USAF with 15 YF-84A service test aircraft. Note that the tail bears the P-84 designation (pursuit) soon superseded by the F for fighter. (USAF Photo)

The contract for the F-84A was cancelled. None were produced.



This F-84B, one of 226 produced, is on display at the Planes of Fame Annex, Valle, Arizona



This F-84C resides at Tucson's Pima Air Museum. The C model has a 191 aircraft production run and had a more reliable engine than the B model



Connecticut National Guard F-84Ds in formation. The "Flying Yankee" insignia is visible on the nose. An improvement on the F-84C, 154 were delivered. (USAF Photo)



This picture of an F-84E is unique. It was taken with the camera used by the Wright's to photograph the first flight. The E is an improved D with a stretched fuselage, new canopy and additional fuel tanks. The USAF accepted 843 E models.
(USAF Photo)

The F models were all swept wing designs.



The F-84G was the most produced Thunderjet. Some 3,025 were manufactured with 1,936 going to NATO nations. The aircraft pictured bears the livery of the Skyblazers. The Skyblazers were a Europe based USAF aerobatic display team which started in 1949 and flew until 1962.
(USAF Photo)

"Buzz Numbers"

The discerning reader will not that all of the F-84s bear identification numbers starting with the letters FS or the sole exception, PS on the prototypes. The three digits are the last three numbers of the aircraft's serial number, found on the vertical stabilizer.

This allowed for easy identification of an aircraft, especially if the pilot was pulling off a "buzz job" on the local population. F identified the aircraft as a fighter, S identified the aircraft as an F-84, and the three digits identified the specific airplane and, if a complaint was filed, the pilot.

Each type of aircraft had its own letter. The North American F-86 Sabrejet has a naughty FU prefix. The last USAF fighter to carry "buzz numbers" was the McDonnell F-110 Spectre, better known as the F-4 Phantom II.

Trainers, a likely airplane to do a "buzz job" with an over-exuberant student at the controls carried a T prefix. Bombers used B, cargo aircraft used C, and liaison aircraft used L.



The classic AT-6A Texan with a "buzz number" and some high visibility paint.



A B-25A Tornado at Castle AFB Museum has a plethora of numbers.

The only single piston engine Cessna to be assigned a "buzz number" was the Cessna L-19 Birdog which used an LF prefix.