



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](mailto:srocketto@aquilasys.com)

C/CMSgt Virginia Poe, Scribe  
C/SMSgt Michael Hollingsworth, Printer's Devil  
Lt David Meers & Maj Roy Bourque, Papparazis  
Hap Rocketto, Night Dispatcher & Feature Editor

Vol. IX 9.10

17 March, 2015

### *SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENT*

21 MAR-CTWG WWII Gold Medal Ceremony  
24 MAR-TRCS Meeting-Guest Speaker  
31 MAR-TRCS Meeting

18 APR-CT High Power Rifle Clinic  
21 APR-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  
15-17 MAY-NER/PAWG Conference-Ft.  
Indiantown Gap, PA

13 JUN-CTWG Op Eval TRANEX  
01-08 AUG-CTWG Encampment  
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

*17 March, 2015*

Due to inclement weather, a short staff meeting was held by conference call. The timing of the meetings for the next cycle was established.

### CADET, AND OFFICER AND FRIENDS OF THE COASTWATCHER INTELLECTUAL SCAVENGER HUNT II

“The Hunt” is open to any TRCS Cadet, any CAP Officer, or any reader of the Coastwatcher who is neither a TRCS Cadet nor a CAP Officer. You are not looking for material objects but you are using your memories, publications, web searches, or any other investigative techniques to solve the conundrums.

Last week's contest requires you to do two things. First match the aircraft bearing the name to the aviator or aviators who are crewmen. Second, name the aircraft and its manufacturer. Both the crews and vehicles are listed in alphabetical order.

All contestants achieved scores which although not perfect, received bonus points for interesting commentary and received, as he British say, 100 marks.

C/SMSgt D. Hollingsworth earned the Cadet Prize and will be allowed to select on of three premiums at the next meeting.

Eric N. Thompson CAPT (MC) USNR (ret) won bragging rights among those who are not members of CAP.

Lt Col Carl Stidsen, CAP was the top CAP officer and recollected the answers from memory.

Hap Rocketto, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt, AUS (ret) got the answers in first. They arrived within one hour after the Coastwatcher was transmitted.

Viola Mullin scored 100% on the matches but did not provide the aircraft designations.

### *The Answers*

1. Bockscar- Q. Charles Sweeney, Boeing B-29A Superfortress.

*Cadet Hollingsworth made an interesting observation. Although a Boeing design, this particular aircraft was made by Martin as indicated by its designation B-29A-40-MO. Fifi, the last 29 flying has a BO suffix indicating it came from a Boeing plant.*

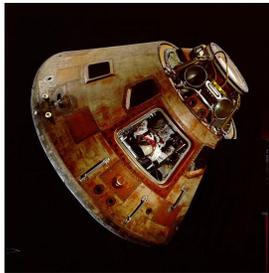


(Right: Credit USAF)



2. Columbia (solo)-C. Michael Collins/North American Apollo 11 Command Module

*Apollo 11 was not regarded as a sufficient answer since the Apollo Spacecraft were composites of different parts from different manufacturers.*



(Photo Credits: NASA)

3. Columbia (STS-first flight)-T. Young and Crippen-North American/Rockwell OV-102 Orbiter

*As with the Apollo Spacecraft, the Space Transportation System is made of of composites from different manufacturers.*



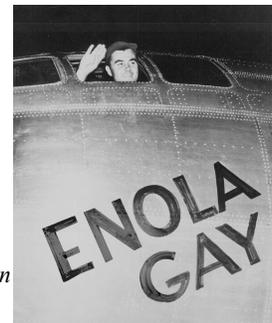
(Credit: (NASA))



4. Enola Gay-R. Paul Tibbetts/Boeing B-29A



(Credit Right: PFC Armen Shamalian, USAAF)



5. Excaliber III-A. Charlie Blair/North American P-51C Mustang



*Blair checks his sun compass*  
(Credit:NASM-SI)

6. **جمال**. pronounced *Gamael* or *Gamal* -P. Snoopy/Sopwith Camel

*In Snoopy's fertile imagination, Sopwith built his "airplane" but it was probably a product of Mr. Brown's carpentry workshop.*



*( Charles Schultz-Fair Use)*

7. Glamorous Glennis-S. Chuck Yeager/Bell X-1



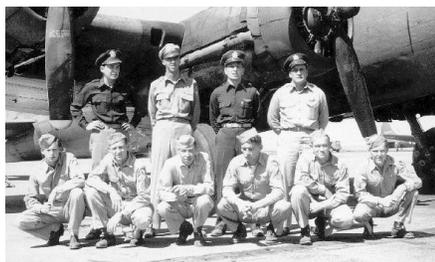
*Left Credit: USAF)*



8. Hel'n Hiwater-M. Harold Rocketto/Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress

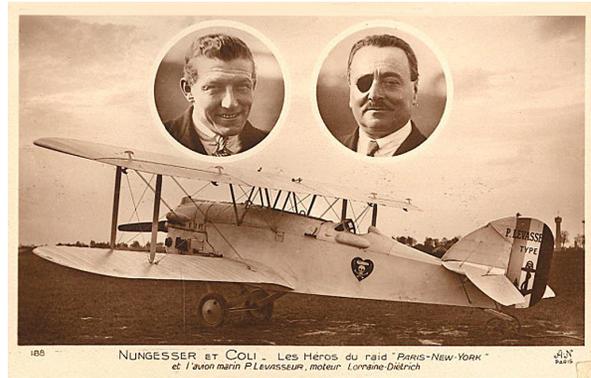


*Watson Crew-358<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 303<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group-Rocketto is rear row, second from right*



*(Credit:USAAF)*

9. *L'Oiseau Blanc*-J.Nungesser and Coli



10. Marge-B. Richard Bong/Lockheed P-38 Lightning



*Bong and Marge  
(Credit: Bong Heritage Center)*



11. Memphis Belle-H Robert Morgan/B-17F Flying Fortress

*The Memphis Belle was one of the first 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force bombers to complete 25 missions. A documentary movie was made aboard her. After returning to the States where it participated in a war bond drive, it ended up on Mud Island, Memphis. For years it sat on Mud Island and deteriorated until the Air Force Museum acquired it and started its restoration.*



*Memphis Belle on Mud Island*



*The Morgan Crew (Credit: USAAF)*

*and Space Museum and shows how Fred Keys changed oil and performed routine maintenance. As for food, don't stray far from home without a good wife. Louise and Evelyn prepared their meals which were lowered from above in a basket.*



*Fred and Al*

12. Miss Veedol-C. Pangborn and N. Herndon/Bellanca J-300



*Pangborn in plane-Herndon, a Princeton drop-out in oil stained t-shirt and trousers.*



*Louise and Evelyn*

13. Ole' Miss-D. Keys Brothers/Curtiss J-1 Robin

*In 1935, the Keys brothers set a non-stop endurance record flying for over 653 hours traveling 52,000 (about twice around the earth) and using 6,000 gallons of gasoline. The entire flight was in the vicinity of Meridian, Mississippi. Ole' Miss is now enshrined in the National Air*

14. Pudgy V-G. Thomas McGuire/Lockheed P-38 Lightning (series of five H/J/L)



*Lightning with McGuire's markings at McGuire AFB.*

*Somewhere in the Pacific- McGuire confers with Lindbergh*



15. *Que Sera Sera-O.* Gus Shinn/Douglas R4D-5 Skytrain

*In the days before the McNamara reform which changed the system of designating aircraft, the Navy used a specific system. In the case of Que Sera Sera, R4D-5 stands for transport, fourth model accepted, Douglas Aircraft, fifth modification. The aircraft's ancestry is the C-47 which in turn is the DC-3.*



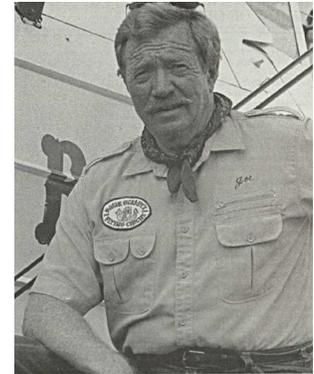
*Que Sera Sera crew enjoying the -60° Fahrenheit air at the South Pole.*

16. Rosie O'Grady-E. Joe Kittinger/Yost GB55

*Kittinger's aircraft was a problem, both for the contestants and the puzzle master. The specific reference is to the balloon, a Yost GB55, in which he made the first balloon solo across the Atlantic Ocean. However, Yost bossed the Rosie O'Grady Flying Circus that had a number of aircraft, and some of these were presented as answers.*



*Rosie O'Grady ready for launch from Caribou, Maine. Its full name was Rosie O'Grady Balloon of Peace.*



17. Spirit of St. Louis-F. Charles Lindbergh Ryan NYP

*The Spirit of St. Louis was custom built by Ryan Airlines, not the Ryan Aeronautical Corporation (RAC), and officially designated NYP for New York/Paris. T. Claude Ryan, the founder of Ryan Airlines, sold it to Benjamin Franklin Mahoney and used the money to found RAC.*



*(Right:Credit Library of Congress-PD)*



18. USS Shenandoah-I. Zachary Lansdowne Naval Aircraft Factory ZR-1

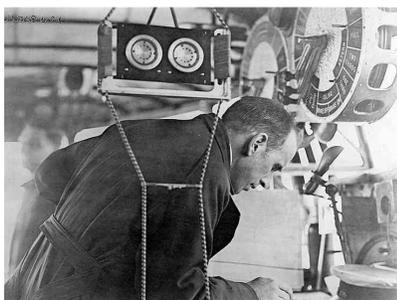
*An interesting quibble arose about the USS prefix on the name. One authority states that USS is only applied to a U.S. Navy surface vessel. Not being a New Londoner, he forgot to mention the class of warships called submarines which carry the USS designation.*

All US Navy dirigibles carried the ZR prefix but they were all christened as are the aquatic vessels. Two other airship authorities, J. Gordon Vaeth and William F. Althoff do use the USS prefix. Curiously, a study of pictures of four of the dirigibles, Shenandoah, Los Angeles, Akron, and Macon show very large US Navy markings but in all photos found to date, have the name in relatively small letters with no USS prefix.

A fifth dirigible, R-38 was designated ZR-2 but crashed during testing in Great Britain It was purchased but never officially accepted.



Shenandoah moored to USS Patoka off Panama in 1931. (Credit: U.S. Naval Historic Center)



Lansdowne in the control cab of ZR-1

(Credit: U.S. Naval Historic Center)

19. Voyager-N. Rutan and Yeager/Rutan Model 76

Rutan and Yeager flew Voyager on the first non-stop un-refueled flight around the world. The nine day trip covered 26, 366 miles.



Rutan and Yeager in the cockpit

(Credit: Airandspace.si.edu)

20. Winnie Mae-L. Wiley Post/Lockheed Model 5C Vega



Wiley Post not only set world distance records but pioneered high altitude flight.



Winnie May, Post, and navigator Harold Gatty set a world record for round the world flight in 1931. Post also used the aircraft for speed trials and high altitude research.

## **SENIOR MEETING REPORT**

17 March, 2015

Submitted by

Major Gervais Raoul Lufbery

Due to inclement weather, a staff meeting was held by conference call.

Squadron Commander Lt Col John deAndrade chaired the meeting.

The first order of business was the CAP safety policy. Lt Col deAndrade made it clear that in order to participate in any CAP activity, a member must be safety current. Currency may be maintained by attending a monthly safety briefing, taking an on-line CAP course, or showing evidence of equivalent training at some outside organization.

Emergency Services Officer Maj Scott Farley noted that on 25 April, a SAREX in Hartford conflicts with Thames River's turn to host Cadet Orientation Flights. O Flights have priority.

A van shuttle from the airport parking lot will be instituted to relieve the parking problem caused by the mounds of plowed snow in the lot at our trailer.

## **AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS**

### *Petition to Reopen the "Day he Music Ended" Crash Investigation*

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February in 1959, a Beechcraft Bonanza crashed near Clear Lake, Iowa. On board were Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and J.P. "the Big Bopper" Richardson, all of whom were killed. The fourth fatality was Roger Peterson, the pilot.

Holly, Valens, and Richardson were popular entertainers in that music genre known as "rock and roll." The crash inspired Don McClean to write the song "American Pie" to commemorate the musicians. The phrase "the day the music died" marks the end of an era, rock and roll and a golden era of American prosperity and global prestige.

Mr. L. J. Coon, reported to be a New England resident, has petitioned the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to re-examine the findings of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) which fixed blame on Peterson, pilot error, for loss of control in instrument

meteorological conditions. Mr. Coon disputes these findings.

The plane departed Mason City, Iowa airport and crashed four minutes later, five miles from the field. Snow was indicated as a secondary cause of the crash.

The CAB report said, "It is believed that shortly after takeoff pilot Peterson entered an area of complete darkness and one in which there was no definite horizon." Mr. Coon disputes this finding since visibility was six miles at Mason City, only 4.9 miles away.

Much of the arguments for the cause of the crash are more speculative. Weight and balance is one possibility. This reasoning seems to revolve around the placement of sixty pounds of baggage whether on the passenger laps or an aft loading in the rear baggage compartment. Recovery of baggage loading data may be difficult if not impossible. If the aircraft was overloaded or the center of gravity was outside the envelope, the blame for the crash still resides with the pilot.

Even more speculative is a suggestion that the passenger in the right front seat inadvertently pushed on a rudder pedal, making the aircraft difficult to control, which resulted in the aircraft striking the ground with the right wing down and causing it to cartwheel.

The NTSB has up to a year to study the merits of the case and come to a decision whether to open it up for study.

### *Privateer Issued Letter of Marque?*

A unit of the U-Haul Corporation has restored a World War II Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer to flight status and it will be displayed at Oshkosh this year.

The aircraft had been converted to a fire bomber and was owned by Hawkins and Powers in Greybull, Montana.

The original plane was a B-24 Liberator modified for Navy use. The fuselage was extended to accommodate an additional navigator, the supercharging was removed since high altitude

flight was not required, additional armament was added, and the twin tail of the “Lib” was replaced by a high single tail.



*A Privateer sans the two top turrets at the Navy Museum facilities at Pensacola.*

The Navy used them as “ferrets,” aircraft specially outfitted for signal intelligence duties. In 1950, a Privateer was shot down over the Baltic Sea, the first casualty of the intelligence gathering operations during the Cold War,

## AVIATION HISTORY

### *A Look Back at the Coming Week*

18 March, 1945 – The Douglas XB2D-1, prototype of the AD Skyraider, makes its first flight. Arguably, one of the greatest attack aircraft ever, the SPAD as it was known, had an 11 year production run and flew around 25 years before retirement.



*XB2D-1, the earlier prototype Skyraider.  
(Credit: NACA/NASA)*

19 March, 1964 – Geraldine Mock, in a Cessna 180, becomes the first woman to fly around the world solo. In another one of aviation's disputes over primacy, partisans of Joan Merriam Smith

claim that the honor belongs to her. Smith left two days before Mock flying a Piper Apache and sought to replicate Amelia Earhart's route. She was delayed by a revolution in Brazil and several mechanical problems and finished the trip 25 days after Mock but flew over 4,000 miles further.



*Gerry Mock and her Cessna 180, the Spirit of Columbus  
(Credit : Sheldon Ross, Columbus Dispatch)*

20 March, 1991 – Cuban Air Force pilot Major Orestes Lorenzo Perez defects in his Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-23BN to Naval Air Station Key West, Florida leaving his wife and two sons behind. For 18 months, Lorenzo attempts to gain their release for humanitarian reasons. Raul Castro challenged him to return and get them himself. He does! Lorenzo arranged for his wife and children to be at a certain place on a highway east of Havana. Using a borrowed Cessna 310, he landed, snatched his family out of the Land of Fidelismo, and brought them to the United States.



*The Cuban Flogger on the Key West ramp.  
(Credit : US Navy)*



*Victoria Lorenzo is greeted by a friend after her freedom flight from Cuba to Marathon Key, Florida. One of the sons is exiting and Orestes Lorenzo is just visible shutting down the plane.*

21 March, 1951 – Ensign Floryan “Frank” Sobieski discovers that The “flying blind” is not just a metaphor. Piloting a Grumman F9F Panther off the *USS Princeton*, Sobieski is blinded by North Korean ground fire. His wingman, Lt (jg) Pat Murphy guides him back to the ship where with the assistance of Murphy and the landing signal officer Sobieski makes a successful trap.



*A Grumman Panther F9F-5 at the Midway Air and Space Museum in New York.*

22 March, 1982 – Columbia is launched on a planned seven day mission. The end of this mission would mark the only time that the Orbiter did not land at either Edwards or Cape Canaveral. Flooding at Edwards Air Force Base forced a decision to land in New Mexico. Commander Jack Lousma and Pilot Gordon Fullerton guide Columbia to a landing on the Northrup Strip at White Sands. This was the only time that this back-up site was used for a shuttle landing.



*Columbia touches down at White Sands.  
(Credit: NASA)*

It did see service as a practice site for the Shuttle Training Aircraft (STA). The STA was a modified Grumman Model 1159 Gulfstream II which could mimic the approach characteristics of the shuttle.



*One of NASA's STA aircraft on a typical steep shuttle approach profile."(Credit: NASA)*

There are two runways, 15,000 feet paved, with 10,000 foot overruns on the hard gypsum surface at each end, a total of about 6 miles. They are 900 feet wide.



*Approach end of Runway 23 with the San Andres Mountains in the background.*

Two favorable features of the site is that it is easy to find from space since the bright white gypsum stands out against the darker desert background and the skies are almost always clear with unlimited visibility.

“Northup” is a misspelling of Northrop, the company that once used the site for testing drones. A press release misspelled “Northrop” and the mistake persisted, resulting in the misspelling on official signs and maps. The wisdom of Congress has corrected this grievous error. In 1982, they passed a bill changing the name to the more pretentious White Sands Space Harbor.

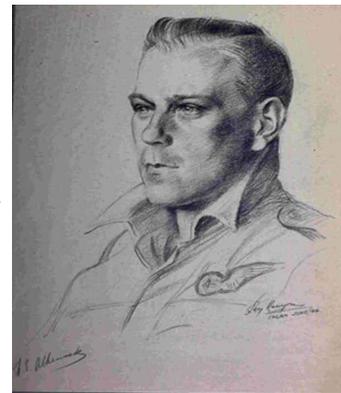
23Mar, 1948– First flight of the Douglas F3D Skynight, an all weather interceptor. The Skynight was beloved by pilots because Douglas supplied each of the two crew positions with stainless steel thermos bottles in convenient holders. The Skynight was disliked by base commanders because its angled exhaust caused melting of the tarmac. To satisfy the boy which lurks in every fighter pilot, the Skynight's escape system consisted of an inclined ramp, akin to a playground slide. The slide faced aft. The crew abandoned ship by sliding face up and feet forward exiting the aircraft through the bottom.



*F3D-2 at the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum, Mirimar, California*

24 March, 1944 – RAF Flight Sergeant Nicholas Alkemade's parachute was unserviceable when his Lancaster bomber was hit and caught fire. Rather than burn to death, he leaped from the aircraft and fell 18,000 feet. He fell into a forest and the tree branches decelerated him until he landed in a deep snowdrift. Suffering from sprained leg, he was captured and spent the rest of the war in Stalag Luft III.

*Portrait of  
Flt. Sgt.  
Alkemade at  
the RAF  
Museum*



25 March, 1955 – The “last of the gunfighters” the Vought F8U Crusader makes its first flight. The nickname was chosen because the Crusader was the last US aircraft designed with guns as its main armament. The wing could be adjusted upward seven degrees in incidence during a landing approach. This increased lift, lowered the landing speed, and gave the pilot a better view forward.



*An F8U-2NE Crusader from VMF(AW)-312, the Checker Boards. This is an all-weather squadron plane from the Vietnam era.*