

*Missions for America
Semper vigilans!*



Semper volans!

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24 JUN-Airman Into Academy
04 JUL-Groton Independence Day Parade
13-16 JUL-North Stonington Fair
14 JUL-Military App. Night-Dodd Stadium
29 JUL-06 Aug-CTWG Encampment
19 AUG-Connecticut Aviation Day-GON
09 SEP-Touch-A-Truck-East Lyme
15-17 SEP-CTWG Conference
21-24 SEP-Durham Fair Parking Detail
23 SEP-Scarecrow Festival-Preston

JOINT MEETING

27 June, 2023

submitted by Capt Schmidt

Cadets met at the Groton-New London Airport to practice marching for the upcoming 4th of July parade in Groton. Afterwards, they returned to the squadron trailers for the raising of the colors followed by a change of command ceremony in which C/Lt Col. Bosse relinquished command to C/Capt. Mazzulli.



C/2dLt Stephen Buchko briefed the Squadron on the 2023 NATO Air Defender Exercise.

Former cadet Wischman visited after military training and compared Air Force boot camp with the CTWG summer encampment.

C/1stLt Matthew Fago offered a safety briefing focused on the issue of fainting while in formation. He discussed the causes, symptoms, and preventive measures.

LtCol Stephen Rocketto offered an illustrated presentation about his past research work investigating ancient sites in Peru, Scotland and Ireland which may or may not have been used to establish calendar systems.

PROJECTS

Communication Room Upgrade

Capt. Kopycienksi and Deignan-Schmidt reorganized the TRCS communications room. A second desk was added to make it easier for separate operators to monitor and respond on different frequencies. The second desk has been equipped with VHF and HF radios, as well as a desktop computer.



Capt. Kopycienksi tests the HF radio at the second desk.

Flight Simulator and Testing Computer Stations Installed

In addition, three member-owned desktop computers were also set up and serviced by Capt. Deignan-Schmidt. Replacement system batteries, additional memory and a fresh copy of Ubuntu Linux were installed. These computers will be used for on-line testing.



June 28, 1911 – W. A. Burpee of Burpee Seeds fame had booked passage for England aboard *RMS Olympic* under the command of Capt Edward Smith who would command *Olympic's* sister ship, *RMS Titanic* on her ill-fated maiden voyage a year later.

Burpee telegraphed an order to Wanamaker's Department Store in New York for a toothbrush, pair of socks and replacement eyeglasses but the *Olympic* has already cast off and was sailing down the Hudson. The Wanamaker staff, anticipating FedEx by 62 years, contacted British aviator Tommy Sopwith and arranged for him to airdrop the packaged goods to the ship. Sopwith caught up with the ship as she headed south in the narrows between Staten Island and Brooklyn, circled it, made a low pass and dropped the package onto the deck.



Painting by Barry Spicer



Thomas Sopwith, 1911 (Credit: Library of Congress)

Before flying fixed wing aircraft, Sopwith was a noted balloonist, auto racer and ice hockey player. He earned Royal Aero Club Aviation Certificate No. 31 in 1910 and won a £4,000 for making the longest flight from England to the Continent in a British built airplane.

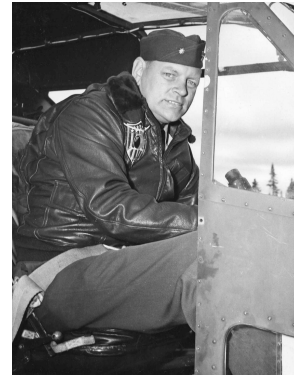
He and a partner formed the Sopwith Aviation Company and by the end of WWI had produced 18,000 aircraft including the Sopwith 1+1/2 Strutter, Pup and Snoopy's favored mount, the Camel.

After the war, he became a consultant for Hawker and what became Hawker-Siddeley but became interested in yacht racing and financed and sailed the J-class yachts, *Endeavour* in 1934, and *Endeavour II* in 1937 attempting to capture the America's Cup.

June 29, 1944 - Cdr. Frank A. Erickson landed a helicopter on the improvised flight deck of *USCGC Cobb (WPG-181)*. This was the first rotary-wing aircraft shipboard landing by Coast Guard personnel. The cutter was a converted passenger liner, the *SS Governor Cobb*, which had most of her superstructure razed and had a flight deck erected aft.



A U.S. Coast Guard Sikorsky HNS-1 helicopter (right) and a Sikorsky HOS-1 (left) conducting experimental flight operations on USCGC Cobb, 15 June 1944. (Credits: USCG)



Erickson fathered the USCG helicopter program and was designated USCG Helicopter Aviator #1. In 1944, he flew the first USCG rescue mission, transferring blood plasma from New York City to Sandy Hook to treat the survivors of an explosion and fire aboard the *U.S.S. Turner*. Normal aircraft were all grounded due to blizzard conditions and only a helicopter could make the flight.

June 30, 1977 – US president Jimmy Carter cancels the B-1A Lancer program.



The strategic bomber was envisioned as a supersonic bomber to replace the B-52 and B-58. The rising cost of the program led presidential candidate Jimmy Carter to make it a part of his bid for office stating that "The B-1 bomber is an example of a proposed system which should not be funded and would be wasteful of taxpayers' dollars.

The viability of the program also suffered from two credible criticisms of its mission. It was vulnerable to the new breed of surface-to-air missiles at high altitude and to intelligence that indicated that the new class of soviet interceptors would have “look-down” radars and missiles capable of detecting and destroying the B-1 when it attacked at low altitude. Carter proposed the use of B-52s armed with air-launched cruise missiles (ACLM), ICBMs and strategic missile submarines as the alternative and when he assumed the Presidency, cancelled the B-1A.

But like the mythological Phoenix, the B-1 would rise from its ashes. But during the next presidential campaign, candidate Ronald Reagan cited that the cancellation of the B-1 was a mark of Carter's weakness on defense and Reagan defeated Carter in the next election.

Studies continued and plans were revised for a long-range combat aircraft to replace the B-52/ACLM which was becoming more vulnerable to the newer Soviet defenses. The emphasis on strategic bombers was replaced by a mission more attuned to tactical and multi-role aircraft. Long range plans existed for an Advanced Technology Bomber (ATB) but it would take a long time to bring it to an operational status so Reagan decided that the B-1 would serve during the interim and in 1981 ordered 100.

But this would be the B-1B, an aircraft tailored for a new mission. It was optimized for high subsonic speed at low altitudes. Change to the airframe and the use of radar absorbing material made it more stealthy and it was equipped with a host of new electronic sensors.



B-1B (Credit: Staff Sergeant Benny J Davis)

Today, about 45 B-1Bs are operational along with 72 B-52s and 20 B-2s. The B-2 is the result of the ATB program that is sometimes credited with the original cancellation of the B-1A.

July 1, 1962 – The last fixed wing aircraft, a C-54 Skymaster, lifted off from Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.



The last flight out.

Bolling has had a long and storied career. Its most unusual feature was a time in which it served as a co-joined navy and army airbase.



Circa 1940. Note the taxiway joining the air force installation to the naval facility.

Today it is known as Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling and is on the east side of the Potomac River directly opposite Reagan Washington National Airport. Its only air activity is a detachment of USMC helicopters from HMX-1 assigned as Presidential and VIP transports. However, it is also home to the Defense Intelligence Agency, Air Force and Navy ceremonial units, a UIISCG station and the Colonel Louisa S. Morse Center for Civil Air Patrol History to name a few. Some 15 years ago, the CTWG made some field trips to Washington and billeted at Bolling.

July 2, 1919-Lighter-than-Air

The U.S. Navy blimp C-8 exploded while landing at Camp Holabird, Maryland.

Only 10 C Class blimps were built and served for training and experimentation but they made interesting marks in lighter-than-air history.

Sister ship C-3 caught fire while airborne and burned at Naval Air Station Hampton Roads, Virginia.

C-1 was the first airship to launch an aircraft in flight when it dropped a Curtiss JN-4 at Fort Tilden, New York. She also tracked tracked torpedoes while on duty at Key West. This ability was a useful role for torpedo testing and blimps were used for this duty into World War II.

C-7 was the first airship inflated with helium.



C-5 was at St. Johns Newfoundland being prepared for an attempt to make the first air crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. While unmanned, a sudden wind storm tore the airship from the ground handlers and it was blown out to sea.

But perhaps the oddest and most interesting story about the C-class airships is that the first operational atomic bomb casings had poor aerodynamics. Engineers used the envelope shape of the C-Class blimp in 1946 to develop the Mark IV bomb casing!



MK IV

The British airship R34 begins the first airship crossing of the Atlantic Ocean and the first east-to-west Atlantic flight, leaving East Fortune, Scotland, to arrive in New York on July 6. The journey becomes a successful two-way crossing when the airship arrives back in the United Kingdom on July 13.



July 3, 1966 – Israeli Air Force C-130 Hercules land at Entebbe, Uganda carrying 100 member of top-line Israeli commando units. Their mission is to free the 106 hostages from the hijacked Air France. Flight 139. By the time that the gun smoke had cleared, the Israelis departed with 102 of the hostages and left behind seven dead terrorists, about four dozen dead Ugandan soldiers and the wreckage of 11 Ugandan Air Force MiG-17 and MIG-21 fighters.

But what is rarely mentioned is the heroic and honorable decision by Capt Michel Bacos, pilot of hijacked Air France Flight 139 and his crew of eleven.



The hijacked Airbus A300

Negotiations led to the release of some 147 non-Jewish and non-Israeli hostages but 84 Israelis and Jews were held and threatened with death unless the terrorist demands were met. The French air crew was offered the opportunity to leave but decided to stay with the Jewish prisoners, an act in accord with the highest tradition of command responsibility.

The tradition stems from maritime legal precedence and moral norm that a captain has ultimate responsibility for the ship, crew, passengers and cargo and will exert the utmost effort to protect their charges or die trying. This concept has been extended to the pilot-in-command of an aircraft and may be found in the Federal Aviation Regulations such as 122.533(d) which states that “Each pilot in command of an aircraft is, during flight time, in command of the aircraft and crew and is responsible for the safety of the passengers, crew members, cargo, and airplane.”

Behavior demonstrated by Capt Bacos is most familiar in the incident known as the “Miracle of the Hudson” in which Capt Sullenberger performed a final check of the passenger cabin to assure that all his charges had evacuated the aircraft before exiting last. In 1966, A PanAM Stratocruiser ditched in the Pacific and Captain Richard Ogg exited last after all his passengers and crew had been rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The tradition is a theme in literature. Read Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* or Rudyard Kipling's *Soldier and Sailor Too* for examples of violation and adherence to this code of behavior.

Captain Bacos has an interesting background. In World War II, he joined General de Gaulle's Free

French forces and in 1943 ended up at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas where he trained as a naval aviation pilot. In 1955, he joined Air France and fate put him in command of Flight 139 when it was hijacked.



Bacos with the Free French and Air France

(Credit: danielbacos)

In an interview, Bacos related that when the offer was made to free the French crew he declined. “There was no way we were going to leave – we were staying with the passengers to the end. This was a matter of conscience, professionalism and morality. As a former officer in the Free French Forces, I couldn't imagine leaving behind not even a single passenger.”

Bacos got a two week vacation after returning to France and then requested that he command the first Air France flight to Tel Aviv. Israel recognized his exemplary conduct and France awarded Bacos the *Legion of Honour*. He retired in 1982 and Went West at the age of 95 in April of 2019.

July 4, 1973 – Its never too late to set a record. The USAF was retiring its fleet of Grumman HU-16 Albatrosses but two weeks before its transfer to a museum, HU-16B, serial number 51-5882, *Chuck's Challenge*, set a new altitude record for Class C-3 amphibians reaching 32,881 feet.



The Plane



The Crew (Credit: USAF)

The aircraft was flown by Lt. Col. Chuck Manning, pilot; Maj. Paul Schaefer, co-pilot, and Tech. Sgt. Ed Schindler, flight mechanic.

The Albatross was the largest in the line of Grumman amphibians and was optimized for rescue missions involving open ocean landings and take-offs. Almost 500 were built and they served in two dozen air forces and were acquired as surplus for use by a number of civil operators.



G-73T, a turbo-prop conversion

The flight broke the previous record which had been set in 1936 at Stamford, Connecticut. Boris Vasilievich Sergievsky, Chief Pilot for Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, flying a Sikorsky S-43, with Igor Sikorsky and Michael Pravikov, reached

24,951 feet.



The S-43 was a smaller version of the Sikorsky S-42 Clipper and was known as the “Baby Clipper.” A production run of about 50 aircraft was more or less evenly split between the U.S. military and commercial interests, primarily PanAm and its overseas subsidiaries.

A few survive. One, formerly owned by Howard Hughes, is now in the possession of noted collector Kermit Weekes and still flies. Another, a Pearl Harbor survivor, is on display at the National Air and Space Museum.

Boris Sergievsky flew for the Czar of All the Russias against the Austro-Hungarians and the Bolsheviks in World War I but emigrated to the United States in 1923. As Chief Test Pilot for Sikorsky, he set a number of records and freelanced in Africa and South America during slow times at Sikorsky.



Just before WWII, he partnered with another emigre, George de Bothezat, and test flew the SV-2, a coaxial rotor helicopter but the venture was unsuccessful.

In his later years, he remained active in aviation, running a charter service until Going West in 1971 at the age of 83.