
The Ghost Writer

Canandaigua Composite Squadron

New York Wing, Civil Air Patrol

Canandaigua, New York

Volume 3 Issue 2, February 2002



Hard Work is Noticed *CC, DCC, and 1st Sgt set direction*

From The Commander:

The new year is already one month old and the Squadron is on the move. We just completed the first aid and CPR class on the weekend of the 26th. There was a good showing for that class and I want to thank you all for your participation. It is a class that we all need to get our 101T or keep our 101 cards up to date.

The weekend of the 26th we also had a campout down in Italy Valley. There were nine people that attended the campout, and we had a great time as usual. We set up camp, built a good fire and baked a cake. Then we went out for a moon light walk up the road and then into the woods it was a beautiful night. We could see 80 yards with no flashlights in the woods.

The Commanders call on the 30 of January went well. I do hope you all were listening when I said that the seniors have beat the cadets in recruitment for the second time. I would like to see the cadets turn this around. I know they don't want to be beat again. Next Commanders Call is going to be in June, so get to work and bring in some of your friends to join. Remember to be a good leader you need new recruits to lead. A special thanks goes out to Maj Stanley Skrabut and Capt James Herrmann for the work they did on the commanders call presentation. THANK YOU !!!

Our new cadets have started the 8 week Phase One Cadet Basic Training School and from what I hear they are doing a fine job. I would like to congratulate them on their progress and welcome them to the cadet program.

Promotions are moving in the right direction. A congratulation goes out to Cadets: Michael Miller promoted to Chief Master Sergeant, Yann Schutter promoted to Senior Master Sergeant, Gregory Horrocks promoted to Technical Sergeant, Nicole Bradley promoted to Staff Sergeant and Tracy McClure promoted to Airman. Congratulations and keep up the good work, you all set a fine example to your peers. GREAT JOB!! Those cadets that weren't promoted this is your month to move up the ladder to success. Let's get into those books and study. Don't forget to get on line and use those practice test.

Open house went well on the 23 rd of January. Lt Keith Delmar had a great Aerospace presentation set up and by the looks of things I believe the cadets as well as the guests had a great time landing the plane. Thank you all for setting up your presentations and spending time with the guest. I do believe we will end up with one or two new recruits for our efforts.

As you can see we have only finished the first month of the year and we have been very busy, and I do believe that it is going to stay that way for awhile, so I hope you all keep up the good work and let's get through another month.

Cadet Programs

Greetings and welcome to the New Year. Since January we have had many changes and improvements. So, first I would like to say "good job" for the transition to the current command structure. You have completed the first major step into the new cadet program.

During the month of January we awarded four promotions. Cadet Michael Miller was promoted to chief master sergeant after completing the requirements for the Armstrong achievement. Cadet Yann Schutter was promoted to senior master sergeant having completed the requirements for the Goddard achievement. Cadet Gregory Horrocks was promoted to technical sergeant having completed the requirements for the Lindbergh achievement. Cadet Tracy McClure was promoted to airman after completing the requirements for the Curry achievement. Excellent job. I hope to see more this month.

To those cadets who are in the eight-week program: congratulations. You are half way there. As you continue through this introductory program, now is the time to start setting goals. At the end of February, you will have completed your first achievement. Don't let it stop there. You have nineteen more achievements and awards to go. Remember to test and participate. You need both to advance.

January was our first month with our squadron activity on the 4th weekend. We had an excellent turnout for the First Aid/CPR class, and a good turnout for the campout afterward. Everyone had a great time at both activities. Participation in these activities is required for advancement in both the cadet program and emergency services. A note for cadets and parents, each 4th weekend we plan to camp out after the daytime activity, unless we announce different.

February we're planning a trip to the Curtis Museum in Hammondsport, NY. This will be a day trip. Parents are invited to join us and drivers are needed. We'll leave the Canandaigua Army Reserve Center at 8:00AM and return at 3:00PM. Anyone interested in camping out afterward, please let your flight staff know. We'll be camping at Capt Bradley's property again.

Upcoming meeting topics include recruiting, activities, and projects. We fell just shy of our goal for recruiting last year. We have come a long way though. Currently we have twenty cadets. We must set a new goal for this year, hopefully in the high 30's. I know we can get there. Activities and trips need planning. If there is a trip you'd like to take, or group activity you'd like to participate in, please let your flight staff know so we can try to arrange it. There are already some things in the works. Projects like model rocketry and model airplanes are available. The key is letting your flight staff know what you'd like to see and do.

Again, I congratulate you all on your motivation and desire to succeed. We've started the fire, now you have to feed it. Action, urgency, excellence!

Capt James D. Herrmann

Hardwork is Noticed

I would like to take this time to recognize a few of our cadets for their determination and hard work. Cadet Yann Schutter has dedicated his time and service to Civil Air Patrol and has gone above and beyond his call of duty. Cadet Schutter is very knowledgeable in modern aviation, and from what I notice, is a skilled artist drawing planes. Cadet Schutter has been climbing up the ranks and has performed his duty as an element leader and flight sergeant very well.

Cadet Compton has been grabbing my attention for the past few months. From what I have seen, Mr. Compton is very knowledgeable in drill. He is now excelling at the position of flight sergeant. He shows professionalism when performing his duties and he is a good follower and leader.

Cadet Nicole Bradley is another shining example of another outstanding cadet. She is a good leader and follower. Nicole is thinking about joining the Air Force. Good luck to you if you decide to go in.

I encourage everyone to challenge themselves to go above and beyond their own expectations, and mine. Your hard work will not go unnoticed. Congratulations to those cadets mentioned in this article. Keep up the hard work and motivation. On a last note, don't forget to RECRUIT, RECRUIT, RECRUIT.

C/CMSgt. Miller

Correction

It was noted that the announcement for Senior member of the Year for 2001 was Stan Skrabut. This is incorrect. The Senior Member of the Year for 2001 is Captain John E. Bradley III. Sorry for the mistake. Here is the corrected news release.

Senior Member of the Year for 2001

STANLEY, NY---Captain John E. Bradley III of Stanley has been nominated as Canandaigua Composite Squadron's Senior Member of the Year.

Captain Bradley serves as the Commander of the Canandaigua Composite Squadron, and has been a Civil Air Patrol member for seven years. He works as a mechanic and

union steward for the power engineer section of the United Parcel Service.

The Senior Member of the Year is an annual award to recognize the senior member in all of CAP who has contributed most to the success of CAP's missions over the years. The selection is based on the member's lifetime contributions, not just his/her accomplishments during the year nominated.

A Flying Legend Revisits the Past

By James Kindall
Staff Writer
July 5, 1992

For a brief moment as Francis (Gabby) Gabreski sat staring at the instrument panel of the Thunderbolt P-47 on display at a classic airplane show at Duxford, England, he was back in the clouds of his youth.

Once again the Dix Hills man, there for the "Return to England" activities being held throughout East Anglia for visiting members of the 8th Air Force, was the most famous American pilot in Europe.

Once more admirers, this time plane aficionados and veterans strolling through the hangar, gathered around the man who ripped through squadrons of German planes in World War II like a buzzsaw. Even the Luftwaffe appeared, as a German veteran who also flew fighters strolled over to introduce himself.

Gabreski admired the Farmingdale-built plane as he stood in front of the crowd.

"I felt like I could turn the key and fly off."

At 73, Gabby Gabreski will no longer be heading into the air for famous battles, such as the flurry of World War II confrontations in which he shot down a record 28 planes over Germany, or the period when he added six more as a jet pilot in the Korean War.

The former president of the Long Island Rail Road knows he is securely placed in aviation history as a grounded icon.

"I'm only an image," he said. "Some of these guys saved my own tail and they deserve just as much credit as I do. You don't feel like a hero. You just did what has to be done."

The airshow, held yesterday, was the peak event in the "Friendly Invasion" commemoration, which is a tribute from Britain to the 350,000 American airmen who were based in eastern England for three years while bombing Germany's war production plants. Events that began in spring have included dances, parades and receptions at the small villages where the crews were stationed. Commemoration organizers said they expect the most returnees this weekend.

Prince Andrew was scheduled to appear at the airfield near Cambridge for the airshow, but judging by the crowd that gathered in the hangar on Friday as Gabreski looked over his old cigar-shaped plane, it looked like royalty was already in attendance.

"I've read about you since I was a little boy," said Steve Hinton, 40, the Chino, Calif., man who rebuilt the gleaming Thunderbolt of Gabby's golden days.

Ignoring official signs to keep out, veterans stepped into the cordoned-off area around the plane to ask Gabreski to pose for photos.

"This guy saved my butt a lot of times," said one bomber crewman.

Two young French aviation enthusiasts appeared with history books about the 8th Air Force and asked in awkward English for an autograph. Television cameras rolled as Helmut Peter Rix, a former German fighter pilot shot down at war's end, came over. He is a retired textile engineer who has lived in England since 1951, he explained. Rix smiled as the crowd shouted for the two to grasp hands again.

There wasn't much on the enemy side that Gabreski, a Pennsylvania native who nearly flunked pilot's school, didn't take a shot at in the 1940s.

He began his career in Hawaii where he watched Japanese pilots who had bombed Pearl Harbor chew up parked U.S. planes. He wanted to get into action so bad, he joined the Polish Air Force (his parents were Polish and he speaks the language) for combat missions before the U.S. air forces arrived in full.

As a member of the 56th Fighter group, one of the most famous bands of air duelers in military history with 42 aces, he developed a deadly method of attack in his powerful Thunderbolt. Using the plane's high altitude capability to spot German squadrons, he dived like a falcon through their formation spraying them with his eight machine guns.

He was never shot down, but came close once when, after an air battle, he became disoriented and tried to rejoin his squadron. Instead, he accidentally cruised up to an enemy formation. One enemy plane crippled his craft with a shot that reduced its power. Gabreski made it back by ducking into clouds and playing life and death tag until the fighter finally gave up.

But he grounded himself later in the war when he swooped down on an airfield to strafe some parked German planes (in addition to the 28 in the air, he destroyed three on the ground). The pass took him so low, his propeller hit the field forcing him to crash land a short distance away. After 10 months in an enemy POW camp, he was freed at war's end.

His return may have been a taste of past glory, but it was also a confrontation with reality. He strained getting into his old cockpit and was carefully guided to the right footholds as he climbed down. "That's a long step up there. I used to be able to grab hold and spring up. Not any more."

Being here conjures up mixed emotions considering memories of dead friends, he said, but both glory and animosity are best left in the past. He has readily met with Luftwaffe pilots during other commemorations with no ill feelings. Besides, he said, fighter pilots are a different breed.

"It's almost like a scientific society. We all had a common bond and the bond was flying. What we were shooting at then wasn't the man. It was the flying machine."

Anyway, it's all just history now.

"We all thank God we're still here and we wonder why we were the lucky ones," he said. "There's no explanation or reason."

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Francis S. Gabreski Dies

Was fighter ace, former LIRR president

Staff Reports

February 1, 2002, 3:33 PM EST

Francis S. Gabreski, a leading World War II fighter ace and later the president of the Long Island Rail Road, has died.

The longtime resident of Dix Hills died yesterday of a heart attack at Huntington Hospital, where he had been undergoing treatment since Tuesday, his daughter, Frances Phillips, said this afternoon. He was 83.

The Pennsylvania-born Gabreski, who worked for Grumman after the war, was, in recent years, the nation's highest-ranking living fighter ace. He had 28 confirmed kills in Europe, and destroyed three more German planes on the ground.

He also downed six enemy planes in the Korean War.

He retired from the Air Force in 1967 after flying more combat missions than any other American fighter pilot.

He was a member of the national Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton, Ohio.

Gabreski was LIRR President from 1978 to 1981.

The plain-spoken Gabreski declared that the LIRR's commuter service "stinks" and proposed a massive capital improvement program. It was never funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and he was forced out of the job.

The much-lauded Gabreski received another honor in 1992 when Suffolk County Airport in Westhampton was renamed Gabreski Airport.

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Tailwind

Up, Up...and Away! Local Flight Before the Wright Brothers.

Americans had heard of the Montgolfier brothers and their French balloon flights by the time George Washington was sworn in as president. Benjamin Franklin, a noted scientist as well as politician, had witnessed balloon flights while he served as a diplomat in France. While dreamers as far back as antiquity had conjured up images of imagined flight. In the late 1400's, the Italian artist and engineer, Leonardo da Vinci, had produced drawings of such things as helicopters and man-made "birds." However, only the lighter-than-air craft, balloons inflated with hot air or hydrogen gas, gave any immediate promise of real flight.

The honor of the first American balloon "ascension" (the word balloonists use instead of "take-off") goes to French showman, Jean Pierre Blanchard who crossed the English Channel by air in 1785. He was a veteran of many flights when he decided to ascend from what was then the US Capital, Philadelphia. It was really a business proposition for which Blanchard sold rather expensive tickets, \$2.00 and \$5.00 depending on seating.

After considering several suitable sites, Blanchard chose the yard of the Walnut Street Prison in Philadelphia. It offered security, a wind break, and crowd control where he could insure that paying spectators got their money's worth and freeloaders were kept at bay. Blanchard's ascent, January 9, 1793, was witnessed by George Washington and four later Presidents,

together with thousands of others. It was a great success scientifically but not financially. Blanchard realized only \$405 because tens of thousands of people chose to view the ascent free from local rooftops.

The first American to be a "professional balloonist" was Charles Ferson Durant, a native of Jersey City, NJ. His first trip was a spectacular flight over New York City which extended from Battery Park in Manhattan to South Amboy, NJ on September 9, 1830. Durant "retired from the air" after 12 flights at the age of 29, although he inspired an ever-growing group of "aeronauts, as balloonists were frequently called.

John Wise, a native of Lancaster, Pa., was born in 1808. He took his first balloon flight at the age of 27. Thus began a career in ballooning that lasted until he tragically disappeared over Lake Michigan in 1879, at the age of 71. Wise was a popular aeronaut at summer entertainments such as county fairs and Fourth of July celebrations. In 1847, Wise flew from Auburn to Syracuse where he was paraded through the streets for his glorious accomplishment. He had a number of harrowing experiences widely covered by the press.

In 1859, Wise was attempting to learn more about high altitude air currents (over 12,000 feet) he hoped to follow west-to-east across the ocean. He and two companions were taken on a wild 809 mile ride which started in St. Louis and ended in Henderson, NY, in the Thousand Islands. Wise's balloon, the "Atlantic," was huge; 120 feet high and 60 feet in diameter. Wise carried a lifeboat; lots of food, wine, and lemonade; 1000 pounds of sand ballast; and a bag of express mail.

The voyage, which lasted almost 20 hours, set a distance record which lasted for 50 years. However, Wise and his crew nearly drowned in Lake Ontario, and were nearly dragged to their deaths when the wrecked balloon was forcefully blown through woods. Wise's name was familiar to Finger Lakes residents who read of his exploits in many area newspapers.

The first balloon ascension in Rochester lifted off in 1836 with John Wise at the controls. It was an attraction, entertainment, as airplane flight would be until it became clear that passengers could be carried. Balloon flight, except for its use for military observation and weather reporting, has never progressed.

By 1847, Ira J. Thurston, a resident of Ontario County living near Canandaigua, was following the example of John Wise. That year he flew from Batavia to his home near Canandaigua in 55 minutes (better than 60 miles per hour), greatly impressing local residents and reporters. So many people came to see balloon flights that local newspapers had to assure the public that there would be enough "officers in attendance to keep order." Even the balloon inflation process, a technological marvel of its time which could last seven hours, was considered a sight to behold in awe. Thurston is known to have made ascensions from Batavia, Canandaigua, Geneva, and Elmira.

The use of balloons for military intelligence and observation was promoted during the Civil War by a New Hampshire practitioner of the new science of meteorology, Thaddeus S.C. Lowe. A week after the firing on Fort Sumter he went up in a balloon over Cincinnati and came down in South Carolina; much to the chagrin of secessionists. They let him go when he convinced them he was just a scientist. However, two months later Lowe was in Washington convincing Union military leaders that using balloons was a good idea. On June 18, 1861 Lowe transmitted the first air-ground telegraph message. Eventually, the Confederacy also authorized a balloon corps, but it was never activated. Many Southern women, however, donated silk dresses for the manufacture of the balloons.

In 1862 there were several regiments of Finger Lakes soldiers serving in General McClellan's "Peninsular Campaign" in Virginia. They could see balloons being used for military observation and intelligence. Lowe's controversial claim that his balloon was the winning factor at the Battle of Fair Oaks (one of the Seven Days Battles) is still debated. Matthew Brady, the renowned photographer, published several photographs of balloons being used by the Union army.

Balloons would continue to be used by the US military in the Spanish-American war at the Battle of Santiago in Cuba. Several local soldiers were there also. The English, French, and Germans also put the balloon to military use.

By the turn of the Twentieth Century, larger balloons with rigid skeletons, called dirigibles, were making regular appearances at public celebrations. Count Zeppelin's contributions to Germany, in particular, would give that nation an important weapon used in World War I, and a leg up on trans-Atlantic passenger travel.

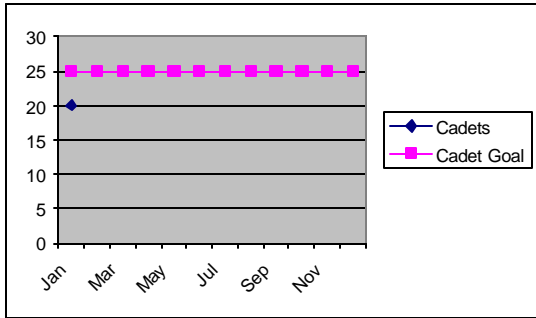
About the time the Wright Brothers were taking to the air, "Captain" Thomas Scott Baldwin came to Hammondsport to see Glenn Curtiss. Baldwin was a showman and balloon promoter who entertained crowds across the nation. He had already employed Lincoln Beachey who later captured the attention of many local people with his daredevil exploits. Baldwin was also impressed with the light-weight engines Curtiss manufactured primarily for motorcycles. He wanted Curtiss to power his dirigibles. Baldwin and Curtiss struck up a long-standing friendship after 1904. Baldwin established a balloon factory in Hammondsport and Curtiss took a liking to flight which would lead him to surpass the Wright Brothers in less than a decade.

Today, brightly colored balloons are frequently seen in local skies during the summer and fall. Even for those who only stand and stare, they are exciting, and somewhat puzzling, as they silently glide through the sky. The next time you see one, remember that what you feel has been shared by Finger Lakes residents for more than 150 years.

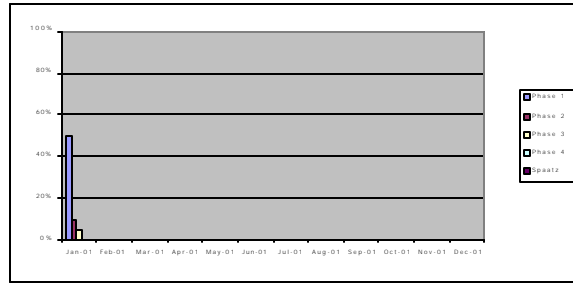
SM Preston E. Pierce

Where do we stand at the moment?

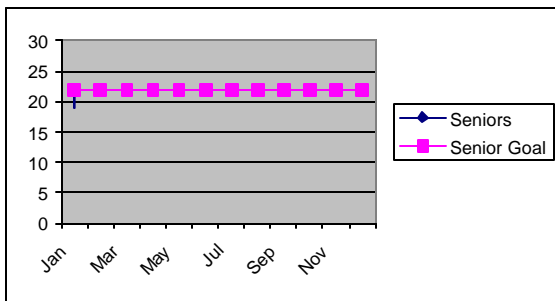
These next couple of charts will show you where we stand in regards to cadets, senior members, and a squadron for 2002.



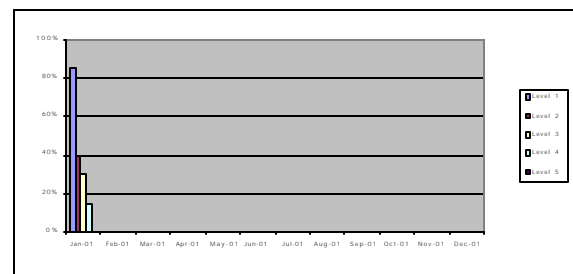
Cadet Recruiting



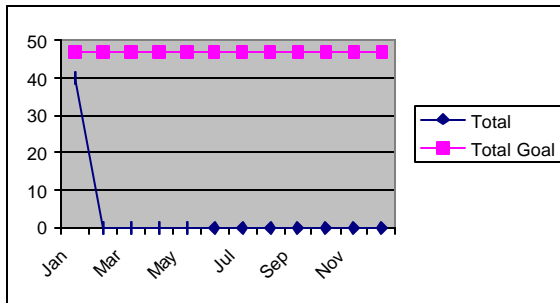
Cadet Progression



Senior Member Recruiting



Senior Progression



Total Squadron Recruiting

Only seven members from this years goal!!!

Recruit! Recruit! Recruit!

What's Happening in New York Wing

☞☞☞ - Indicates a Suspense

** - Indicates New Item

February

23 AE Museum Trip @ Hammondsport

25 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

March

**16 Counterdrug Telecast

25 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

April

4-6 NCASE @ Arlington, VA

5-7 Bivouac @ Camp Cutler

20 Wing Inspection @ Finger Lakes Group

22 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

27-28 Squadron SAREX

May

3-5 NY Wing Conference @ Albany

10-12 Corporate Learning Courses @ WNY Group

18-19 Field Trip @ West Point

27 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

June

8-9 Wing SAREX

6 THE GHOSTWRITER

24 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

July

**14-21 NER Staff College

22 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

August

13-17 National Boards @ Philadelphia, PA

24-25 Squadron SAREX

26 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

September

13-15 NER Conference @ TBA

**21 Counterdrug Telecast

21-22 Squadron SAREX

23 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

October

**16 Squadron Annual Awards Selection

18-25 National Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL

26-27 Squadron SAREX


28 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT


November


16-17 Squadron SAREX


25 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT


December


15 Senior Member of the Year Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's


15 Cadet of the Year Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's


15 Cadet NCO of the Year Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's


15 Air Force Sergeants Association Award to Outstanding CAP Cadet NCO of the Year Applications Due @ AFSA

15 Air Force Association Award to Outstanding CAP Cadet Applications Due @ Air Force Association

15 Communicator of the Year Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's

15 Brewer Aerospace Award Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's

15 National Special Activities Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's

15 Scholarship Applications Due @ NYWG HQ's

15-16 Canandaigua Squadron Training

18 Squadron Christmas Party

23 Finger Lakes Group Meeting @RIT

Have News?

Contact Major Stan Skrabut at 315-781-8208 or E-mail sskrabut@rochester.rr.com

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