

Summer 2010
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100 Years of Progress and Achievement

CENTENNIAL

of Naval Aviation



“Modern Day Heroes”

USCG!

Tier 1 Events List Published

“The Bravest Man I’ve Ever Seen”





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COVER: "Modern Day Heroes", an acrylic painting of the flight crew of a Detroit-based US Coast Guard HH-65C "Dolphin" and its flight crew, was completed by renowned aviation artist Bryan Snuffer of Muskegon, Michigan. (Imagery courtesy of the Artist)

Word From the 'Air Boss'



**Vice Adm.
Al Myers
Commander, Naval Air Forces**

As the new Air Boss, I want to share with you the growing excitement for the Centennial of Naval Aviation. We have an opportunity to showcase

the past, highlight the present and view the future where Naval Aviation continues, in all its forms, to play a significant national role. As the SECNAV's executive agent for the Centennial, Naval Air Forces will lead the Task Force of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard commands to execute a commemoration to remember. From the earliest days on Keuka Lake and the Spanish Bight with Curtiss Hydroaeroplane in 1911, to the first flight of the F-35C in June 2010, Naval Aviation is a great story, and one that endures. It is the passion of our Sailors, Marines and Coastguardsmen that will continue to shape the history of our great nation into 2011 and beyond. Fight to fly, fly to fight, fight to win! Mad Al

From the Editor

With six months to go, the Centennial is nearly upon us. So much to do! As planning solidifies, you will note a change to this newsletter. We will start to report on events and initiatives as our planning turns into execution. As we speak, aircraft are in paint shops receiving "retro" schemes, which you will see starting later this summer. We have also determined our "Tier 1" events and this is seen on page 11.

We're expanding! As the Centennial draws near, we have decided to add four extra pages to bring the total to 16. With focus on the Coast Guard in this issue and some top-notch aviation cover art by Bryan Snuffler, we hope you'll find the articles we've gathered to be enlightening and worthwhile.



- Capt. Richard Dann

Centennial Force Leadership



**VADM Allen G. Myers
USN
Commander, Naval
Air Forces**

**LtGen George Trautman
USMC
Deputy Commandant for
Aviation**



**RADM Pat McGrath
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Vice Commander, Naval
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Commander, Naval Air
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Big Ben - A Marine Perspective



USS FRANKLIN (CV-13) blazes fiercely following two bomb hits that sparked a chain reaction among fully fueled and armed aircraft. The most severely damaged American carrier ever, FRANKLIN managed to survive, but lost 724 killed and 265 wounded. (NDU Library)

By Dr. Fred Allison, History Division, U.S. Marine Corps

USS FRANKLIN, the fifth of the ESSEX-class aircraft carriers, departed from Bremerton, Washington on 2 February 1945, and after training exercises and pilot qualification operations, she joined the Task Group 58.2 for strikes on the Japanese homeland in support of the Okinawa landings. On 15 March, she rendezvoused with Task Force 58 units, and three days later launched sweeps and strikes against Kagoshima and Izumi on southern Kyūshū. The next day, 19 March 1945, another full schedule of strikes was planned.

Taking off before dawn, Maj. Stan Bailey, VMF-214's commander and the squadron executive officer, Maj. W.H. McPherson, led a twelve plane flight on a fighter sweep over Kyushu. The bombers, torpedo planes, and fighters were loaded with bombs, rockets and bullets and fueled for the launch, due to commence near 0700. The weather was typical of the place and season, cool and hazy, with low layers of thin clouds. Black Sheep pilot Lt. Kenneth Linder sat in his Chance Vought F4U-1D Corsair, parked at the front of the strike group waiting the signal to launch. The Corsairs that were to lead the strike began to roll down the deck, taking off. Scheduled to take off third, Linder was delayed due to a mechanical problem. More Corsairs took off while his aircraft was serviced. When ready, he signaled the Flight Deck Director. His Corsair moved into position and the director gave Linder the "go" signal. Advancing the throttle, the Pratt & Whitney roared, his feet came off the brakes and his Corsair lurched forward. Linder might have been the last aircraft to take off from the Franklin--ever.

As he rolled, Linder looked forward and noticed a plane dead ahead and about a mile in front of him. He thought little of it as aircraft were being launched from other carriers for the massive strike on Osaka and Kobe. Off the Franklin's bow, and safely airborne, Linder yanked his F4U into a hard left turn

to join up with the rest of his flight. Suddenly he found himself in midst of anti-aircraft fire. He thought it was like "every ship in the fleet was shooting like crazy at him!" Continuing to climb, Linder then saw another plane in front of him, there was no mistaking the "honimaru" —it was a Japanese plane, a Yokosuka D4Y Suisei "Code name JUDY." He charged his guns and maneuvered behind the Judy. He was close enough to see that the back seat gunner was slumped over his machine gun. Linder fired. The Carrier Air Group Commander, Cmdr. Edwin B. Parker, Jr., who was leading Linder's flight, also appeared on the Judy's tail and fired. Under the guns of both Corsairs, the Judy flamed and plunged into the sea. Linder was excited about having shot down a Japanese aircraft, his first; it happened so fast and so unexpectedly. Then he circled and looked down. There below was the FRANKLIN, "It was a sight to see, blowing like crazy. All the gas lines were flowing, the bays were open, everything was exploding---including those Tiny Tims [an 11.75-inch air-to-ground rocket] on the fantail." Linder joined up with Parker and the other fighters and they turned toward Japan; they had a mission to complete.



A Chance Vought F4U-1D Corsair from FRANKLIN's air group initiates a deck run takeoff. Note the geometric "diamond" shape symbol identifying it as belonging to FRANKLIN's Air Group. (NNAM)

“The Bravest Man I’ve Ever Seen”

From a Story by Katie O’Brien, reprinted with permission of the Catholic Heritage Curricula

Editors note: While not strictly a Naval Aviation Medal of Honor recipient, the story of Father O’Callahan’s actions on board the aircraft carrier USS Franklin (CV-13) on 19 March 1945 are worth repeating in the pages of the Centennial magazine.

It was 6:05 a.m. on a cool morning, March 19, 1945, the Feast of St. Joseph, when LCDR Joseph Timothy O’Callahan, S.J., a Boston priest, sat down for his breakfast. He had just given general absolution over the PA system to the men who were to take off in their planes on a bombing mission to Kyushu, one of the islands of Japan. During World War II, LCDR O’Callahan was serving as chaplain aboard the carrier FRANKLIN, nicknamed “Big Ben.” He had just finished visiting the pilots and asked them to join him in a prayer before they set out on their mission. Although he was a Catholic chaplain, he always invited the non-Catholics to join him in prayer as well. As he sat down with his french toast, he could hear the planes leaving from the flight deck and again he said a silent prayer for them. Suddenly, he heard a loud bang and then another. He and the other officers crouched under a table to protect themselves from the flying glass of the shattered light fixtures. No one knew what had happened. Could one of their own bombs on the ship have exploded or could it have been a Japanese attack? Although stunned, O’Callahan ran to his room to get the holy oil that he needed for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, which he knew he would need. He got his oil and proceeded through the smoke-filled hallways to the junior aviators’ quarters where he found many badly injured and dying men. He prayed with each for a minute or two and in some cases administered Last Rites. O’Callahan would bend over the men and put his hand on their forehead or hold their hands tightly, trying to comfort them amidst the noise and confusion of the explosions. After he had seen to the men in that room, he went to the hangar deck but saw that it was engulfed in flames, and he knew no one could have survived there. He then went to the flight deck where, as he expected, he found many injured sailors. It was cold on the



Lt. Cmdr. O’Callahan administers Last Rites to YN3/c Robert Blanchard. Blanchard would survive his injuries. (NHHC)

top deck, and he ordered some men to get blankets for the injured. At some point that morning, although he does not remember when it happened, O’Callahan received a deep gash on his left leg after being hit with a bomb fragment. He did not tend to it right away, as he had more important work to do. Several hours later, the ship’s doctor forced him to allow his wound to be bandaged. It was only 9:30 in the morning, and the FRANKLIN was ablaze and dead in the water. Men were desperately fighting fires, and O’Callahan joined in. He led men into an ammunition locker and began throwing the 5 inch shells overboard. The shells had become so hot that at any time they could explode, and O’Callahan knew that if that happened, no one would survive to tell about it. Without concern for his own safety, he helped dispose of the dangerously hot shells. He also organized a group to spray water on the 1,000 pound bombs that also were getting very hot. He knew that if these bombs were to explode, the ship would be destroyed.

Even after endless hours of fighting the fires and administering to the wounded, Fr. O’Callahan’s work was far from done. For the next two days he would have to bury at sea the many men who did not survive. Due in great part to O’Callahan’s energy and leadership, the Franklin did not sink and was to be the most heavily damaged vessel to survive in World War II. After the battle, Capt. Gehres recommended O’Callahan for the Medal of Honor. Capt. Gehres claimed that O’Callahan was “the bravest man I’ve ever seen in my life.” President Truman presented the medal to O’Callahan on January 23, 1946, making him the first chaplain ever to receive such a high honor. Lt Cmdr. Joseph Timothy O’Callahan, according to the citation with his medal, “ministered to the wounded and dying, comforting and encouraging men of all faiths... Serving with courage, fortitude and deep spiritual strength... inspired the gallant officers and men of the FRANKLIN to fight heroically and with profound faith in the face of almost certain death...”. He went above and beyond the call of duty, helping to keep his ship afloat. Yet he always remembered that in his job as chaplain, his spiritual duty in caring for the souls of his men was his most important duty of all.



USS FRANKLIN (CV-13) lists at 13 degrees to starboard as USS Santa Fe (CL-60) renders assistance in battling numerous fires after being struck by two Japanese bombs on 19 March 1945. (NMNA)

Centennial of Naval Aviation

The Aeroplane Becomes a Weapon of War

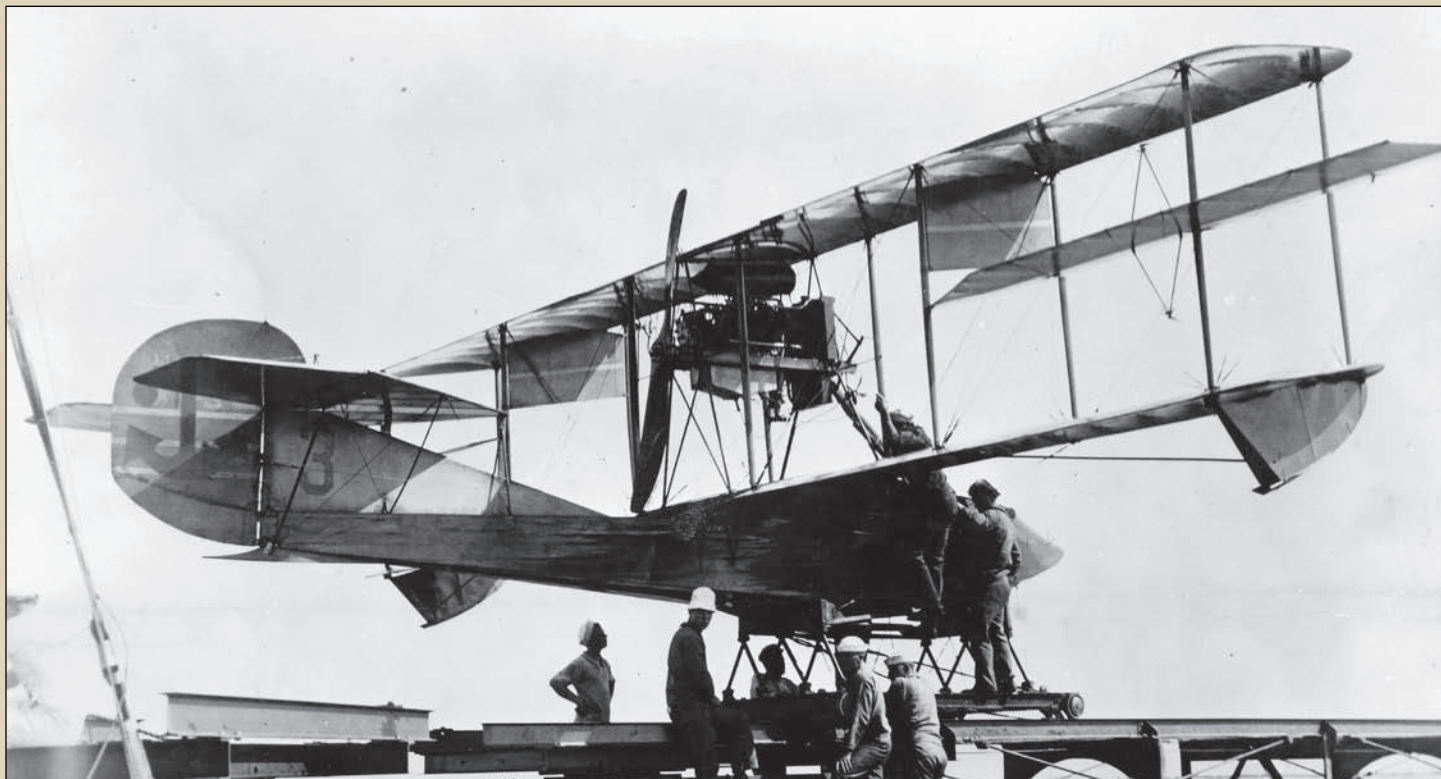
By Mr. Hill Goodspeed, Collections Manager, NNAM

Operating a handful of assorted aircraft, the personnel of the Navy's small naval aviation arm had barely settled into their new home at Pensacola, Florida, when word came to prepare to deploy to foreign waters. Responding quickly in a manner that would become a hallmark of their successors operating from aircraft carriers, within twenty-four hours the first of two detachments of airplanes, aviators, and ground support personnel put to sea, first the cruiser Birmingham (CL 2) and then the battleship Mississippi (BB 23) setting course towards Mexico. The dates were 20-21 April 1914, and for the first time in U.S. military history, American aircraft were being called to arms.

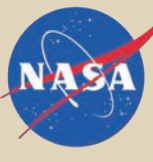
The reason for their dispatch to Mexico, which since 1910 had been in the throes of revolution, was a decision by President Woodrow Wilson to put American Sailors and Marines ashore in the city of Veracruz. This came less than two weeks after a patrol of Mexican soldiers of the government of General Victoriano Huerta detained a small group of sailors on a fuel detail from a Navy ship anchored off Mexico and in response to news that a German merchant ship carrying machine guns and ammunition bound for Huerta's forces was scheduled to arrive in Mexican waters.

The aviation personnel arrived too late to participate in the landings, which occurred while they were still en route. By 25 April, pilots and planes were ready for action, Lt. j.g. Patrick N.L. Bellinger climbing aboard the AB-3 flying boat and making a reconnaissance over the waters around Veracruz in search of mines. This marked the first flight of an American military aircraft under combat conditions. Operating from a rustic encampment ashore, the aviation detachment instituted a regular schedule of patrols. On one such mission Bellinger and Lt. j.g. Richard C. Saufley returned with bullet holes in the fabric wing of their aircraft. As Bellinger later recounted in an article for *National Geographic*, the U.S. aircraft carried no bombs and on one of his last flights in Mexico, he decided to exact some measure of revenge on the Mexican forces and grabbed the nearest thing he could find in camp. Thus, he made a bar of soap the first air to ground ordnance dropped from a Navy aircraft.

By June, the "daily soaking and baking" the aircraft were receiving in Mexico had taken their toll and the aviation personnel received orders to return to Pensacola. Their first overseas cruise to fly against a foreign enemy had represented a modest effort when compared to subsequent operations, yet it marked an important first step in the airplane being accepted as a viable weapon of war.



The Curtiss AB-3 was the first U.S. Navy aircraft to fly in combat conditions. Lt. j.g. Patrick Bellinger and Lt. j.g. Richard Saufley took fire during the action and also dropped ordnance in the form of a bar of soap! (Courtesy of Thomas E. Doll Collection)



2011 Blue Angels Schedule:

March

12 NAF El Centro, CA
19-20 Keesler AFB, MS
26-27 NAS Meridian, MS

April

2-3 Sun-N-Fun, Lakeland, FL
9-10 NAS Corpus Christi, TX
16-17 Fort Worth JRB, TX
30 MCAS Beaufort, SC

May

1 MCAS Beaufort, SC
3-4 NAS Pensacola, FL
7-8 NAS New Orleans, LA
8 Flight Academy Fly-over, Pensacola, FL
14-15 La Crosse, WI
21-22 Andrews AFB, MD (reunion show)
25 & 27 USNA show and graduation fly-over
28-29 Millville, NJ

June

4-5 Rockford, IL
11-12 Evansville, IN
18-19 Davenport, IA
25-26 North Kingston, RI

July

2-3 Muskegon, MI
9 Pensacola Beach, FL
16-17 Rochester, NY
23-24 Ypsilanti, MI
30-31 Kalispell, MT

August

6-7 Seattle, WA
13-14 Fargo, ND
27-28 Brunswick, ME

September

3-5 NAS Patuxent River, MD
10-11 Lincoln, NE
17-18 Millington, TN
24-25 NAS Oceana, VA

October

1-2 MCAS Miramar, CA
8-9 San Francisco, CA
15-16 NAS Lemoore, CA
22-23 El Paso, TX
29-30 San Antonio, TX

November

5-6 NAS Jacksonville, FL
11-12 NAS Pensacola, FL

Navy Lightning Flies



Lockheed F-35C Lightning II, airframe CF-1 took to the air for the first time on 6 June 2010. The F-35C is the carrier variant of the F-35 family and will be operated from the Navy's aircraft carriers. The first flight, by Lockheed test pilot Tim Knowles lasted 57 minutes. (Lockheed Martin)

The most advanced aircraft in the history of the U. S. Navy made its inaugural flight on June 6, 2010, assuring a future of long-range, first-day-of-the-war stealth striking capability from the Navy's big-deck carriers. The first Lockheed Martin F-35C Lightning II carrier variant took off from Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base at 11:46 a.m., and logged a 57-minute flight.

"I am thrilled the F-35C has attained this milestone," said Vice Adm. Thomas J. Kilcline, Commander of Naval Air Forces. "This flight marks the beginning of a new chapter in Naval Aviation. The mission systems in this aircraft will provide the Carrier Strike Group Commander with an unprecedented ability to counter a broad spectrum of threats and win in operational scenarios that our legacy aircraft cannot address."

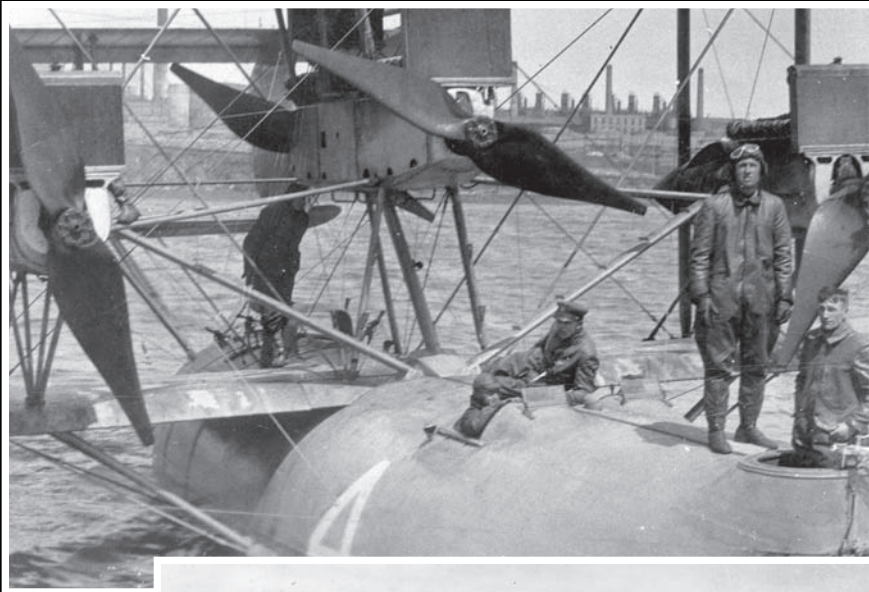
"As a long-range, stealthy, carrier-based aircraft, the F-35C will provide Naval Aviators a fifth-generation fighter with the most advanced technology possible to perform our nation's missions. I look forward to the F-35C's continued progress, and observing developmental flight testing at Patuxent River later this summer," Kilcline said.

The F-35C is unique in its uncompromised carrier suitability, with a larger wing and control surfaces for safe, precise handling and low approach speeds to the carrier, excellent over-the-nose visibility, and additional structural strength for at-sea operations. The aircraft's stealth materials are designed to withstand harsh carrier conditions with minimal maintenance.

"For the first time ever, and from now on, wherever on the world's oceans we position a 98,000-ton nuclear carrier, we can launch a long-range, lethal, stealth strike fighter with the ability to defeat the most sophisticated air defenses," said Tom Burbage, Lockheed Martin executive vice president and general manager of F-35 Program Integration. "Sunday's flight marks the beginning of the true introduction of a next-generation weapon system capable of providing joint, coalition striking power on Day One, from both land and sea bases."

The mission was flown by Lockheed Martin test pilot Jeff Knowles, a retired Naval Aviator and test pilot who flew F-14As and F-14Ds operationally, and who served as chief test pilot on the F-117 stealth fighter program.

A GLANCE AT THE PAST - COAST GUARD AVIATION



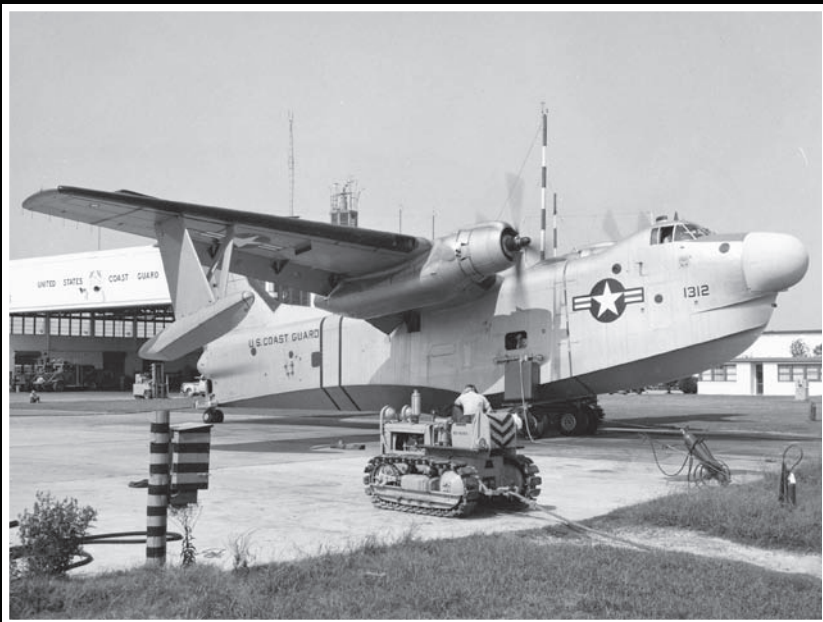
The Navy-Curtiss NC-4 was the first aircraft in history to fly the Atlantic ocean, completing the voyage in May 1919. Lt. Elmer F. Stone, USCG was copilot of this aircraft for the Transatlantic flight. Note the oddly shaped and highly efficient Olmstead propellers. (San Diego Air and Space Museum Collection)



Shown here is an Atlantic-Fokker PJ-1 (FLB-53) Accepted by the Coast Guard on 1 September, 1932. It was christened "Acrux" and launched on that day by the daughter of the Commandant, Miss Jean Hamlet. (Thomas E. Doll Collection)

Cmdr. Frank Erickson, USCG and Mr. Igor Sikorsky demonstrate a Navy Sikorsky HNS-1 (BuNo 39040) at NAS Floyd Bennett Field, New York. (Thomas E. Doll Collection)





This Martin P5M-2G Marlin (1312) sits on the ramp at an unknown Coast Guard Air Station (CGAS). This particular aircraft was later transferred to the Navy. (USCG)



Sikorsky HH-3F Pelican (1486) was assigned to CGAS San Diego and is seen here at Brown Field in May 1979 (Mark Aldrich Collection)

Sikorsky HH-60J Jayhawk (6008) on the ramp at CGAS Astoria, Oregon. 42 Jayhawks were built and the Coast Guard is currently upgrading the airframes to the MH-60T configuration. (USCG)



Centennial of Naval Aviation

Above and Beyond

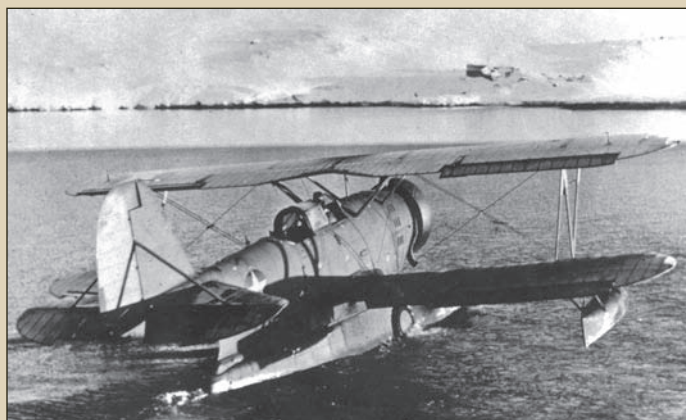
Dr. William Thiesen, USCG Historian

There are so many Coast Guard service personnel whose devotion to duty has put them in harm's way that it would take a lifetime to write an article about every one of them. But the history of the Coast Guard includes the exploits of countless personnel who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty and the story of Lt. John A. Pritchard is one of them.

"Johnny" Pritchard graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1938 and earned his wings at NAS Pensacola in 1941. His initial tour was in Miami before he was re-assigned to the Greenland theatre of operations, the "Greenland Patrol". Not long after joining the ice-breaking cutter *NORTHLAND* off the east coast of Greenland, Pritchard volunteered to lead the search party for three Royal Canadian Air Force aviators that had crash-landed on the Greenland ice cap. On 23 November 1942, Pritchard led the party 2,000 feet up the coastal mountains to the ice cap and traversed the heavily crevassed ice at night using only a flashlight to guide him to the exhausted Canadian flyers. Pritchard received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for leading this Search and Rescue effort (SAR).

Earlier that same month the U.S. Army Air Corps had lost a C-53 transport aircraft on the ice cap. The aircraft and crew would never be found; however, on 9 November, a B-17 Flying Fortress took to the skies in an effort to find the missing transport. In poor visibility, the bomber crashed on the ice cap and, for the next two weeks, the B-17 and its crew of nine became the subject of a second SAR.

On 28 November, within days of his successful rescue of the Canadians, Pritchard and Radioman 1/c Benjamin Bottoms departed *NORTHLAND* to search for the downed bomber crew in the cutter's Grumman J2F Duck. Within hours, Pritchard and Bottoms had located the crash site and landed on the ice cap near the B-17. While Bottoms stayed with the J2F to man the radio, Pritchard hiked back to the B-17 testing the heavily cre-



Pritchard's Grumman J2F "Duck" prepares for takeoff with Greenland's icebergs in the distance. Along with Radioman Benjamin Bottoms, they successfully rescued two U. S. Army fliers and met their death in an attempt to rescue a third. (USCG)

vassed ice with a broomstick over a two-mile stretch. Pritchard took two survivors back to the J2F and planned to evacuate the rest of the bomber's crew two at a time to the cutter. When he returned to the cutter that evening, *NORTHLAND* had to use its searchlight to light the way.

On the morning of the 29th, Pritchard and Bottoms completed another successful ice landing near the downed B-17 using his aircraft's floats as makeshift skis. By coincidence, an Army rescue party using motor sleds approached the crash site at the same time as Pritchard. Before the Army party arrived at the crash site, one of their motor sleds broke through a snow bridge carrying an Army officer into the deep fissure. Fog set in and visibility grew worse, so Pritchard decided to return to *NORTHLAND* for men and equipment to help rescue the lost Army rescuer. One of the B-17 survivors climbed on board the J2F and the three men flew up into the fog.

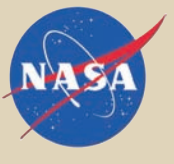
That was the last that anyone saw of Pritchard and his crew. As



Lt. Pritchard stands alert as his plane is readied aboard the CG Cutter *NORTHLAND*. After landing his aircraft, Pritchard trudged 4 miles round-trip over icy terrain to rescue the Army fliers, all of whom were suffering intensely from cold and hunger. (USCG)

dense fog and blowing snow closed in, the plane's radio signals grew weaker until they were heard no more. Once again, the rescuers became the subject of a large SAR effort as *NORTHLAND* sent out rescue parties on foot over the next month. Four months after Pritchard's disappearance an Army aircraft spotted the crash site, but the crew was never located. Treacherous ice and weather conditions postponed evacuation of the B-17's crew until early spring 1943 when a Navy PBY Catalina flying boat repeated Pritchard's daring feat of landing an amphibious aircraft on the ice cap.

For his actions, Pritchard posthumously received the Distinguished Flying Cross, although some believe he deserved the Medal of Honor. The lives, equipment and time invested in this rescue effort testify to the incredible conditions experienced by Coast Guard personnel that served in World War II's Greenland Patrol. However, Pritchard's particular story exemplifies the Coast Guard's core value of "devotion to duty."



Centennial 2011 "Tier 1" Events Schedule

In 2011, the Sea Services will partner with and execute 32 "Tier 1" Centennial of Naval Aviation events across the country, plus two gala events. These events will include extensive Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard involvement, in conjunction with existing Fleet Weeks, Navy Weeks, Marine Corps Weeks, Blue Angels' Air Shows, and other significant aviation events during the Centennial year. There will be other events with a Centennial of Naval Aviation theme throughout the year, and the Centennial Team will support these within the constraints of other operational commitments. Join us across the country next year as we celebrate 100 years of progress and achievement during the Centennial of Naval Aviation.



Centennial Kickoff & Aerial Review, San Diego CA	10-Feb - 13-Feb
Jackson Navy Week, (NAS Meridian & Keesler AFB air shows), MS	19-Mar - 27-Mar
NAS Corpus Christi Salute to 100 Years of Naval Aviation, TX	9-Apr 10-Apr
NAS Fort Worth JRB Air Power, TX	15-Apr 17-Apr
MCAS Beaufort Air Show, SC	30-Apr 1-May
Centennial of Naval Aviation Week Pensacola, FL	3-May 9-May
New Orleans Navy Week & 'Nawlins Air Show, LA	5-May 11-May
Marine Week St. Louis, MO	May TBD
MCAS New River Air Show, NC	13-May - 15-May
DoD Joint Services Open House, Andrews AFB, MD	20-May - 22-May
New York Fleet Week & Jones Beach Air Show, NY	22-May - 2-Jun
Philadelphia Navy Week & Millville AAF Show, PA	23-May - 29-May
Rockford AirFest 2011, IL	4-Jun 5-Jun
Evansville Freedom Festival, IN	11-Jun 12-Jun
Davenport Navy Week & Quad Cities Air Show, IA	16-Jun 22-Jun
National Guard Association of Rhode Island Open House & Air Show, RI	25-Jun 26-Jun
Rochester Navy Week & ESL International Airshow, NY	11-Jul 17-Jul
Detroit Navy Week & Thunder over Michigan Airshow, MI	18-Jul 24-Jul
EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, WI	25-Jul 1-Aug
Seattle Fleet Week & SeaFair, WA	31-Jul 8-Aug
Fargo Navy Week and Air Show, ND	8-Aug 14-Aug
The Great State of Maine Air Show, ME	26-Aug 27-Aug
NAS Patuxent River Air Expo '11, MD	3-Sep 4-Sep
Omaha Navy Week & Guardians of Freedom Air Show, NE	6-Sep 11-Sep
National Championship Air Races, Reno Nevada, NV	14-Sep 18-Sep
Memphis AirFest, TN	17-Sep 18-Sep
NAS Oceana Air Show & AIAA Centennial Convention, VA	20-Sep 25-Sep
San Diego Fleet Week & MCAS Miramar Air Show, CA	19-Sep 2-Oct
San Francisco Fleet Week, CA	8-Oct 9-Oct
NAS Lemoore Air Show, CA	15-Oct 16-Oct
El Paso Navy Week & Amigo Air Show, TX	17-Oct 23-Oct
NAS Jacksonville, Birthplace of the Blue Angels Air Show, FL	5-Nov 6-Nov
Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming, FL	11-Nov 12-Nov
Centennial Closing Gala, Washington DC	3 Dec

Centennial of Naval Aviation

A Family Tradition

Capt. Rich Dann, Centennial Executive Director

Just two weeks prior to his change of command and retirement as Commander, Naval Air Forces, Vice Adm. Thomas J. Kilcline, Jr. bore witness to a time-honored event by attending his son's Naval Aviator winging ceremony at NAS Meridian, Miss. A proud father attending his son's winging is not out of the ordinary, but this particular ceremony held great meaning for the Kilcline family. When Lt. j.g. Thomas Kilcline III received his wings June 18, 2010, he became a fourth-generation Naval Aviator, meaning that someone in his direct bloodline has worn the Wings of Gold since 1926, nearly the entire span of Naval Aviation's existence. There are many notable Naval Aviation family names – Flatley, Crommelin, McCain and Holloway – and the Christensen family has also achieved four generations of Naval Aviators, what sets the Kilcline family apart is that all four generations of Naval Aviators are carrier aviators.

The Kilcline family's association with Naval Aviation starts in 1902, with the birth Vice Adm. Thomas Kilcline Jr.'s maternal grandfather, Robert Thomas "Tommy" Thompson, born in Whiteville, N.C. At the age of 16, Tommy ran away from home to join



RADM Tom Kilcline Sr. and LT Tom Kilcline, Jr. following a flight in an F-4 Phantom II in 1976. (Tom Kilcline Collection)

was assigned to VT-2B aboard LANGLEY before being reassigned again to VT-9S aboard USS WRIGHT (AV 1). Subsequently he flew the TG-1 and TG-2 (Great Lakes-built T4M) from USS LEXINGTON (CV 2) with VT-2B and spent time in Panama and Pensacola as an instructor starting in 1935. He was also promoted to Chief Aviation Pilot (CAP) in 1929.

Following his time as an instructor, CAP Thompson transitioned to patrol aircraft and flew PBVs with VP-15, VP-53 and VP-73. He was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer in 1945 and assigned to NAS Key West. It was during this assignment that he was involved in a mishap. Warrant Officer Thompson died from complications of that mishap in June 1945.

The second generation appeared on the scene December 9, 1925 when Thomas J. Kilcline was born in Detroit. Enlisting in the Navy in 1942 under the V12 program, he was commissioned as an Ensign in 1945. But with the war's end, he was not able to retain his commission. He applied for and was accepted to attend the Naval Academy, and re-earned his commission in 1949. He flew Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer four-engine patrol aircraft during the Korean War and later transitioned to Carrier Heavy Attack, first flying the Douglas A3D Skywarrior and later the North American A-5 Vigilante. He commanded RVAH-11, an RA-5C Vigilante squadron in 1966-67. His squadron was embarked in USS FORRESTAL (CV(A)-59), when a Zuni rocket ignited July 29, 1967. The ensuing explosions killed 168 shipmates. Kilcline lost every aircraft in his squadron, but fortunately none of his men. His subsequent shore assignments included a tour at Test Pilot School and, later in his career, several key positions managing flight test programs at the Navy's Test Center in Patuxent River, Md.; Program Manager for the RA-5C Vigilante; Commander of Naval Base, Subic Bay, Philippines; and three and a half years as the Navy's Chief of Legislative Affairs. He retired as Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, in 1983. Sadly, Vice Adm. Thomas J. Kilcline, Sr. lost his battle with cancer in July 2002.

In 1973, after graduation from the United States Naval Academy,



Portrait of Naval Aviation Pilot AMM1/c Robert Thomas Thompson in flight school in 1926. (Tom Kilcline Collection)

the Navy. After finishing boot camp, Tommy was apprenticed as a Machinist's Mate and took advantage of the opportunity to attend flight training in 1924. Assigned to flight school class 24 #15-27, Machinist's Mate First Class (MM 1/c) Thompson earned his wings November 11, 1926 and was designated a Naval Aviation Pilot (NAP) in January 1927.

His first flying assignment was to VJ-1B aboard USS LANGLEY (CV 1), where he flew the Martin T3M torpedo bomber starting in November 1926. Following a transition to the Martin T4M, he

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Vice Adm. Tom Kilcline, Jr. and Lt. j.g. Tom Kilcline III following a father/son flight in a Northrop F-5F in June 2010. (Tom Kilcline Collection)

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the third generation of Kilclines embarked on his career in Naval Aviation. Ens. Thomas J. Kilcline, Jr. earned his Wings of Gold in 1975 and was assigned to fly the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II with Fighter Squadron (VF) 51, where he made his first deployment aboard USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CV 42).

Following a transition to the Grumman F-14 Tomcat, he served aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and was then assigned to VF-126 as an adversary pilot. Two deployments followed with VF-213 aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65). He commanded VF-154, the forward deployed F-14 squadron in Japan aboard USS Independence (CV 62), and was commander, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 14 aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). He also served as Commander, Carrier Group 2 and Commander, Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group, and on the Navy staff as the Director of Air Warfare (N88) and Director of Air Warfare Requirements and Integration (N8F).

Reaching the pinnacle of Naval Aviation leadership, Thomas J. Kilcline, Jr. was promoted to Vice Admiral in 2007 and served as Commander, Naval Air Forces/Commander, Naval Air Force U.S. Pacific Fleet. He has flown over 5,600 hours in F-4, A-4, F-5, F-14 and F-18 aircraft, and has logged 63 combat missions and 1,150 carrier aircraft arrested landings.

Even as the Air Boss, he kept his flight qualifications current in the Northrop F-5 Tiger. Just as he and his father had done, Vice

Barbara Allen Rainey

By Mr. Hill Goodspeed, Collections Manager, NNAM

It was a day ordinary in its time-honored tradition, but at the same time extraordinary in its groundbreaking importance. At Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi, Texas, another in the long line of officers received the wings of gold of a naval aviator. Yet, on this day, 22 February 1974, one of those designated was unlike any before her as Lieutenant (junior grade) Barbara Ann Allen became the first female naval aviator in history.

Those that followed her have reached heights previously thought unattainable, including flying combat missions from the decks of aircraft carriers, commanding squadrons, and launching into space as Space Shuttle astronauts. Tragically, the woman upon whose shoulders they stand did not live to see the dreams of her gender increasingly fulfilled. On 13 July 1982, while flying as an instructor in a T-34C Mentor from NAS Whiting Field, Florida, the now married Barbara Allen Rainey crashed while avoiding another aircraft during touch and go landings at an outlying field. Both she and her student, ENS Donald Bruce Knowlton, were killed.

Thirteen years later, on 22 June 1995, President William Clinton spoke at Arlington National Cemetery. The occasion was the groundbreaking ceremony for the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, and appropriately the Commander-in-Chief spoke of “[Lieutenant Commander] Barbara Allen Rainey, the mother of two daughters, the Navy’s first female aviator, tragically the victim of a training crash. Her story reminds us that even in peacetime, those who wear the uniform face danger every day. Now she rests just behind me in the quiet of these sacred grounds.”

Adm. Kilcline and his son Lt. j.g. Kilcline were able to fly together in a two-seat F-5F in June 2010. Completing a 37-year career, Vice Adm. Kilcline retired July 1, 2010.

The fourth generation of Naval Aviators in the Kilcline family is a story yet to be written. Lt. j.g. Thomas J. Kilcline III graduated from the Naval Academy in 2008 and began flight training. He earned four Navy “E’s” for bombing accuracy during Total Strike Training and received the Chief of Naval Air Training “Top Gun” award for outstanding achievement in the Air Combat Maneuvering (ACM) syllabus. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) April 27, 2010. He completed Total Strike Training with Training Squadron Seven and reports to the East Coast Fleet Replacement Squadron, VFA-106, where he will learn to fly the F/A-18 Super Hornet. During the winging ceremony, a very proud Vice Adm. Kilcline gave his son the same wings worn by the three previous generations of Kilcline carrier aviators. That set of Wings, which dates back to the 1940s, now represents – between the four generations – 111 total years of service to our country, and counting!

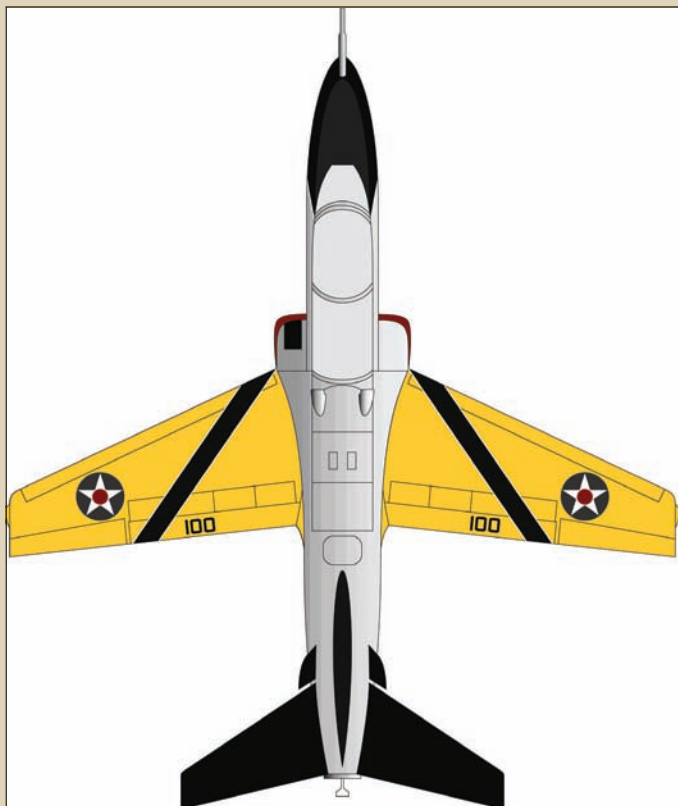
Centennial of Naval Aviation

Going Retro

In an effort to pay tribute to the past, the Navy is in the process of painting a number of current Navy aircraft in the inventory in “retro” and commemorative paint schemes. As this edition of the Centennial newsletter goes to print, we are happy to report that the first of these aircraft are in the paint shop.

Boeing T-45A Goshawk (BuNo 163656) will be the first aircraft to receive such a paint scheme. The aircraft is expected out of the paint shop in late July. The scheme selected closely resembles that carried by Fleet aircraft between 1935 and 1940, a period commonly referred to as the “Yellow Wings” era. The aircraft will be silver overall, the top of the wings will be orange yellow, and the tail will be gloss black. In the 30s, the color of the tail designated which carrier a certain airplane was assigned and in the case of USS WASP, it was black.

Squadrons were typically assigned 18 aircraft in those days, with three-plane sections - each section being denoted by “section colors”, red, white, true blue, black, willow green and yellow. Slight



Concept drawing of 163656's paint scheme based on the paint specs of the day. The fuselage is silver and the wings are orange yellow. (Artwork by Capt. Dann)



Boeing T-45A Goshawk (BuNo 163656) in the paint shop awaiting its Centennial scheme. It will bear markings similar to its namesake, the Curtiss F11C “Goshawk”. (Gabe Pincelli)

News and Notes

- President Obama called out the Centennial in a recent speech at NAS Pensacola and was quoted as saying;

“As you meet the missions we ask of you, we’re going to make sure you’re trained and equipped to succeed. That’s why we halted reductions in the Navy. That’s why we increased the size of the Marine Corps. That’s why we’re investing in the capabilities and technologies of tomorrow. And as we come up on the 100th anniversary of naval aviation next year, we’re committed to the next generation of aircraft. We’re going to keep you the best-trained, best-led, best-equipped military that the world has ever known.”

- The Florida State Legislature has designated 2011 “Centennial Year of U.S. Naval Aviation” in House Bill HR 9097 and companion State Senate Bill SR 2328.

- VMFAT-501 stood up as the F-35B Lightning II USMC Fleet Replacement Squadron in a ceremony at Eglin AFB on 1 April 2010

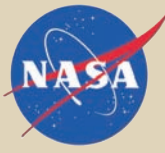
- HS-10 “Warhawks” celebrated their 50th Anniversary on 25 June 2010

- VT-10 “Wildcats” celebrated their 50th Anniversary 23-25 June 2010

variations in the markings in each section denoted who was Section Lead, number two and number three. This was carried through 1940 when war clouds changed the mindset of leadership, and camouflage schemes were adopted. Needless to say as you’ll see, the “Yellow Wings” era of Naval Aviation was one of the most colorful.

A second aircraft is expected out of the paint shop in July as well. An HH-60H from HSC-84 (163787) has been inducted into Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRC SE) for paint. It will receive a paint scheme reminiscent of HAL-3, the “Seawolves”. The aircraft will be overall Olive Drab with White lettering. TH-57C (BuNo 162064) is likely to be the third aircraft to be painted.

These unique paint schemes are being applied as the aircraft come up to existing maintenance periods and must be repainted anyway. The intent is to use the aircraft to teach Naval Aviation heritage in a unique way. Each Centennial aircraft will carry a fact sheet about the paint scheme for teaching purposes. We will feature these aircraft throughout the next 18 months.



Saving a Whale

Mr. Robert Bernier

Decrepit and forgotten, the old A-3A Skywarrior sat grounded in a remote area of Edwards AFB for forty years, visited only by souvenir hunters and the high desert winds that sandblasted the paint and the past off its surfaces. Then retired Navy Master Chief Mike Glenn came along.

Working with Fred Johnsen, Director of the Air Force Flight Test Center (AFFTC) Museum and with financial assistance from the A-3 Association, Glenn began the process of restoring Skywarrior (BuNo 135434) in October 2009 for display at the AFFTC Museum at Edwards.

This particular Skywarrior rolled off the Douglas production line in 1955 and was immediately dispatched to Eniwetok Atoll to support nuclear weapon testing. It then flew a number of record setting long distance flights before assignment to VAH-3. After squadron service, the A-3 performed JATO tests at NAS Patuxent River and later was flown to Edwards AFB for landing barrier testing in the mid 1960s.

Restoring a vintage Navy jet bomber is a big job—even for an old hand like the Master Chief—so Glenn recruited a group of friends made during his thirty years of naval service, mostly former shipmates with aviation backgrounds. But, before the facelift could even begin, the inevitable paperwork had to be completed. Once the A-3 was “loaned” (nearly a three month

process) by the National Naval Aviation Museum to the AFFTC Museum, Glenn and his crew of “maintainers” started the grunt work of restoration.

The team relocated the twin jet bomber to a hangar space provided by Johnsen and began by replacing the nose radome, cockpit windows and attacking corrosion found in the lower fuselage. They were able to fold the wings after hydraulic pressure was applied and work continues on refurbishing the cockpit, bomb bay and tail gun turret. The unpaid volunteers are pushing hard to ready the veteran plane in time for display during the centennial year of Naval Aviation—2011.

Museum Director Johnsen has chosen the Skywarrior as a symbol of the Navy’s contribution during the innovative era of jet aircraft development that took place at Edwards AFB through the post-war years. The bomber will be painted in the same glossy dark sea blue color scheme that the A-3 prototype sported when first test flown at Edwards in the early 1950s and will become a primary display in a modern new building being built for the museum.

Glenn notes that the hardest part of the A-3 restoration so far has been finding replacement parts and financing to complete this multiyear effort. The work is being done on a limited budget and he figures the total costs of saving this early- model Cold War warrior will be \$7000. “This is a really good price to obtain a museum showpiece, which I intend to give them,” says Glenn.

Douglas A3D-1 (later A-3A) Skywarrior (BuNo 135434) as it sat at Edwards AFB prior to the restoration process. The aircraft will be repainted in the same glossy sea blue paint scheme with which it was delivered. Restoration is expected to be complete in 2011. (Mike Glenn)



Exploration - From Past ...



This Curtiss R4C-1 was the primary means of air transport during Rear Adm. Robert E. Byrd's third Antarctic expedition, 1939-1940.



Capt. Kay Hire salutes Naval Flight Officers everywhere from the International Space Station during Space Shuttle Flight STS-130/International Space Station Assembly Flight 20A in February.

... To Present

