

*...a journal of
CAP history,
feature articles,
scholarly works,
and stories of
interest.*

CIVIL AIR PATROL

CAP National Historical Journal

Volume III, Issue II: APR-JUN 2016

The Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal is published quarterly by professional volunteer staff. As academic historians by trade, we recognize the demand for quality publications reflecting a variety of interests to Civil Air Patrol readers, and strive to provide the best in feature and thought provoking articles. We trust you will enjoy what the journal has to offer and will consider contributing to the mission of our staff in providing a forum for the great traditions of our organization.

Without Wings: A History of the Philip Composite Squadron Horse Mounted Search and Rescue Team 1992-2012

Bruce Kipp, PhD.

In 1992, after substantial discussion and planning the South Dakota Wing Commander at the time, Colonel Alden House, authorized the commander of the Philip Composite Squadron (NCR-SD-053) in Philip, SD to form a horse-mounted ground search and rescue team, hereafter the Mounted SAR Team. The team was variously identified in the local newspaper, the Philip Pioneer Review, and in a regional newspaper, the Rapid City Journal, as the Philip Mounted Patrol, the 53rd Mounted Patrol, the 53rd Mounted Ground Team, Philip Composite Squadron Mounted Patrol, and the Philip Composite Squadron Civil Air Patrol Mounted Ground Team. For consistency, in this article it will be referred to as the Mounted SAR Team.

There were multiple rationales for the formation of a Mounted SAR Team: The town of Philip, a small agriculture and ranching community, is surrounded by acres of cropland and pasture land. The watershed area to the Bad River around Philip adds to the dimension of rough terrain as well as land that breaks into the Cheyenne River to the North in Haakon County. A little south is Bureau of Land Management land that is hilly and covered by pasture. Nearby are the unforgiving Badlands of South Dakota, an extensive area of rugged eroded buttes, rock spires and pinnacles. Because of the diversity of the land many members of the Philip Composite Squadron owned and rode horses to handle their daily chores, much as their Western forefathers did.

The Philip Composite Squadron was a small unit and it sought for a way to integrate itself into the South Dakota Wing's emergency services missions without duplicating existing capabilities. It was the then squadron commander, Lt Marsha Sumpter, who pursued the idea of a mounted search and rescue team which would take advantage of the local expertise in horsemanship in the

rugged terrain around and near Philip. She reasoned that horses could pretty well get around and through most terrain obstacles encountered on SAR missions, not often having to divert too far off a search line. Their squadron had enough horses and riders to support such a team.

A horse-mounted search and rescue team has the ability to cover a vast area quickly and quietly. Such speed made the Mounted SAR Team superior to a regular ground search and rescue team in mountainous and hilly regions. Horses can carry more supplies to stay out longer, offer a higher viewing platform for searching, and provide a more rested rescue worker when a subject is found. Furthermore, medical or emergency services personnel can be transported to a rescue site in a timely manner.

As the horse component of an overall ground search and rescue team effort, they can be used to set up mobile radio relay points in rugged terrain, and trails can be quickly checked and blocked if needed.¹ Packhorses can be used to transport medical equipment, block and tackle, litters, and radio gear. Six 40-pound backpacks can be carried on a large packhorse, leaving foot searchers more mobile and not as prone to exhaustion.²

For the rescue itself, many types of injuries do not prevent rescue on horseback. Not only does this speed up extraction time, it reduces the number of rescuers needed, since the subject does not have to be carried out of the field on a litter.³ While not comparable to dogs for their air-scent capability, horses are aware of their surroundings and will alert at anything out of the

ordinary, thus warning their rider who may be looking in another direction.⁴ Additionally, horses are a relatively quiet mode of transportation, unlike ATV's and snowmobiles which can cover a large area but are noisy, and may muffle cries for help.⁵

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Colonel Alden House, who commanded the South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol from 1990 to 1994, took some convincing. It took over a year of discussion and planning before Lt Sumpter submitted a formal proposal for authorization to form the Philip Mounted SAR Team.

In an undated letter, most likely in the spring of 1992 Col. House approved Lt Sumpter's request, albeit with five stipulations: The Civil Air Patrol will not be liable for injury/loss/damage to personal property (including horses); All Mounted SAR Team personnel must meet the same qualifications as any other ground team to serve as a qualified team member; All members must be members of the Civil Air Patrol and have completed Level 1 to

¹ Philip (53rd) Mounted Search and Rescue Fact Sheet, undated.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

include CPPT; All members must retain a CAPF 101 marked as "Ground Team – Mounted"; [and] All members not fully qualified must have completed the CAP 116 test and have the basic knowledge in horsemanship to be able to handle their horses.⁶ *Continued on page 5*

Night of the Bomber

Phil Saleet

The following is a reprint of the article "Night of the Bomber", by Lt Col Phil Saleet, CAP, written for the North Carolina Wing Paper "Wing Span" August 2011. The narrative is from the author's own memories of events, as well as excerpts from the article, "A Night to Remember" by Dan Whetzel, in the "Mountain Discoveries Magazine", Fall/Winter, 2007.

In the early morning hours of Monday, 13 January 1964, the telephone rang in my home. My father answered (I was a teenager; I did not get out of bed to answer a telephone in the middle of the night). It was my Squadron Commander (Odenton Cadet Squadron). We had been alerted, for a REDCAP, which is what we old timers used to call a real mission. The number was EARC 2-13. A US Air Force B-52 had gone down in a blizzard somewhere in the Appalachian Mountains of Western Maryland, not far from the town of Lonaconing.

Squadron Commander, Major William Klob, arranged to pick up two other Cadets and myself at my house around 0400. It was snowing so hard that only 4-wheel drive vehicles were allowed to travel on the roads. Major Klob pulled up in front of my home in our old surplus military jeep. We had to report to Friendship Airport (now Baltimore Washington Intl. Airport) right after sunrise to be airlifted by Army H21 Helicopters to Cumberland Municipal Airport, our Base of Operations.

You have not lived until you ride in an old jeep with side curtains that would not stay shut in 20 degree weather. It was a long ride to the Airport. We were loaded onto the helicopters and lifted off early in the morning, bound for Cumberland. I learned another cold weather lesson; in a H21, with overhead heating, your body above the waist is extremely hot and below is chillingly frozen. I was supposed to be a Ground Team member but, upon arrival, we found out that the aircraft carried nuclear weapons and only Military personnel would be used for Search and Rescue/Recovery. My base assignment became Cadet Commander, due to the fact that, as a Cadet Captain, I was the ranking cadet officer.

The cadets were tasked with manning the Communications Van and served as a Security Cordon, as survivors and victims were flown into the airport. At night we were quartered in St. John's Lutheran Church in South Cumberland. They fed us fried chicken dinners and other meals. Hundreds of meals were prepared by many volunteers, from church members to local citizens, who had assembled to provide us with the meals and cots to sleep. The weather conditions that night, which caused the crash, are very well known today. The cause of the B-52 crash near Lonaconing, MD was directly related to a combination of two storm systems, one heading from the west and a super storm from the southwest that caused very extreme turbulence, as remembered by co-pilot Captain Parker Peedin. Increasing turbulence prompted the pilot, Major Thomas McCormick, to ask to be cleared to a lower altitude of 29,000 feet. After several minutes, he was granted

⁶ Alden House, Colonel, CAP, Horse Mounted Ground Team approval letter, undated.

permission to proceed. Even with this maneuver, the weather conditions continued to rapidly get worse and the B-52 proceeded into the perfect storm.

Major McCormick tried to return to a higher altitude but even this attempt did not solve their problem as they continued to be battered by the strong winds. As the aircraft was tossed about by the severe turbulence, Whetzel wrote, "the tail fin snapped off, hurling the massive metal piece into the left horizontal stabilizer and tail gunners pod." Now unbalanced, the aircraft rolled over and began a tight spiral toward the ground. "A Mayday and then bailout call was issued by Major McCormick at 1:30 A.M. on 13 January", Whetzel noted.

Captain Peedin ejected and fell toward the earth, the frigid night air soon numbing the body and mind. He fortunately landed on a farm roughly two miles from the town Grantsville, Maryland. A Civil Air Patrol plane from Maryland Wing found him, and using their radio, directed the ground teams to his position. He was picked up by an Army helicopter and flown to Cumberland Airport, where the CAP members, myself included, formed two lines from the copter to the terminal, to keep reporters and unauthorized personnel from getting access to him. Major Tom McCormick ejected and landed next to a tree just, a couple of miles from where Captain Peedin was located. McCormick decided to stay at his location until morning. At first light he walked roughly two miles until he came upon a farm house setting along US Route 40. He was picked up and transported to Cumberland for medical treatment.

Letters to the Editor

The Editor at the CAP NHJ welcomes your comments and feedback. Please submit letters for review by emailing the editor at the address provided.

All comments will be reviewed by the entire editorial staff prior to publication. The CAP NHJ Editorial Staff reserves the right to refuse publication to any member based on the content of the letter.

CAP members are encouraged to maintain a professional and collegial attitude when submitting correspondence. kefinger@sercap.us

Sergeant Mel Wooten was not so lucky. He was struck by a piece of the plane which caused severe injuries. "Landing in a field known as Dye Factory, he could see the lights of Salisbury, Pennsylvania only a half mile in the distance", added Whetzel. Injured, and in a blinding snowstorm, it was believed he thought the city was closer than it was and he attempted to crawl to it. His body was found near the Casselman River. Navigator Major Robert Payne ejected from the aircraft but was injured. His parachute and equipment, plus tracks in the snow also were located from the air by Civil Air Patrol aircraft. He was believed to have been in shock because he walked into a barn, walked around in circles, and then went back out into the storm. He then tried to build a fire which did not light. Being unable to climb the embankment of a creek, he slid backward into the almost frozen stream where he perished before being located. Major Payne's body was flown by helicopter to Cumberland Airport where again, myself and other Civil Air Patrol personnel, were cordoned around the helicopter while his body was transferred to an awaiting ambulance for transport to the Hospital. Again, we had to hold reporters at bay.

Bombardier Robert Townley did not eject from the aircraft and died in the crash. The location of the downed aircraft was critical due to its payload. When it was located, the Maryland State Police arranged a security ring around the main wreckage site until arriving federal officials could insure the security of the crash site. The major concern was the two, 24-megaton nuclear bombs that were onboard. The location of the aircraft prevented efforts to successfully remove the nuclear bombs from Big Savage Mountain until 15 January. The bombs were taken to Cumberland Airport for transport by an Air Force C-124 Globemaster II.

The Civil Air Patrol stood down from this mission on 17 January 1964. Whetzel stated that “a large memorial, located about a mile east of Grantsville on US Route 40, called the Mountain District American Legion Monument, was dedicated in 1964.”

Authors note: Captain Peedin became a member of the Civil Air Patrol and served until his death in 2004.

Lt Col Phil Saleet, is the Historical Projects Division Head for National Headquarters. He served two combat tours in the Tonkin Gulf off the coast of North Vietnam and worked for 32 years in the airline industry where he taught at the US Airways Training Center. He resides with his wife Pat in Newport, NC.



Continued from page 3

The pickup trucks, trailers, horses, horse tack and specialized rescue equipment were all privately owned by the members of the Mounted SAR Team. There was some question at the time the team was formed as to whether the Wing would pay for fuel for the Mounted SAR Team’s vehicles if called out on a real-world mission. It was decided that the team was responsible for all costs

associated with their trucks and trailers, horses and animal tack as well as the costs for feed and the fuel. Certain standard items of Civil Air Patrol search and rescue gear such as a field litter and the had-held radio-direction-finding emergency beacon locator were provided by either the Wing or the squadron.

The members of the Philip Composite Squadron’s Mounted SAR Team wore a unique CAP uniform authorized by the Wing Commander. They did not wear the camouflage battle dress (BDU) uniform. Their duty uniform consisted of black cowboy boots, gray Wrangler brand jeans, a white aviator shirt with epaulets, an Air Force blue necktie for males, and a black “Stetson”-style western cowboy hat with a South Dakota Wing patch on the front. Essentially the same uniform was worn in the field as the Wranglers were durable and easy to ride in; cowboy boots were authorized because military boots were too bulky for horseback and the low heel tended to slip through the stirrup. The white aviator shirts showed up well in the field and were easier to spot from an aircraft. In February 1993, a request was made and approved for a large blue silk bandana to replace the blue necktie. The justification for the bandana was that the necktie was basically useless in the field whereas the bandana was multipurpose; it could serve as a head and/or face cover in inclement weather or as a smoke mask. It could also serve as a splint sling or tourniquet.

The Philip Composite Squadron was a small unit averaging about 21 members. Of those some 12-15 senior members and cadets were directly involved in one capacity or another with the Mounted SAR Team. There were on average 5 qualified riders utilizing 4-5

horses, the rest of the personnel provided mission base support services such as driving the pickup hauling the horse trailer, caring for reserve horses and/or the pack horse, maintaining a communications base station, equipment logistics, etc. They were essential in moving the mission base to a new location as the perimeter of the search area expanded. The squadron was one of the few, if any in Civil Air Patrol to focus their monthly unit safety briefings on equine safety.

Members of the Mounted SAR Team were eager to perfect their skills and exhibit their expertise to validate the team's value to the South Dakota Wing's search and rescue capability. From the time they were formed they were very active in participating in search and rescue training missions (SAREXs). So much so that within the first few years they logged about 580 hours of training mission assignments participating in SAREXs in the Black Hills, at Onida and Pierre, Custer, Mitchell, Philip and in Aberdeen and the surrounding area.⁷ While most of the SAREXs in which they participated were routine, two SAREXs stand out for drama and humor.

The first official search and rescue training exercise for the Mounted SAR Team took place on the weekend of 16-17 May 1992. The South Dakota Wing held a major Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) in Philip. Senior members and cadets, vehicles and aircraft from across the state gathered at the Philip Municipal Airport. The Mounted SAR Team was dispatched in conjunction with a ground

search team and supported by two CAP aircraft to seek two cadets who played the role of hikers lost in the Sage Creek Wilderness Area of the Badlands National Park. Initially the two cadets deliberately did not make themselves visible to the aircraft. However, later that day the temperature plunged from 70 to 50 in about 30 minutes, with the wind gusting up to 60 mph. When the cold, blustery weather moved in the "lost hikers" definitely wanted to be rescued as they were wearing shorts and t-shirts. Because the Sage Creek Wilderness Area is walking or riding only, the Mounted SAR Team brought them out of the area to the comfort of a CAP van parked on a nearby roadway.⁸

This SAREX was not without drama at the Mission Base at the Philips Municipal Airport. Wind gusts of up to 60 mph necessitated the dispatch of wing-walkers to meet the CAP aircraft returning from their missions. In addition, CAP vans were used as a mobile wind break to help get the aircraft to their tie-down locations.⁹

The SAREX also had a humorous episode. The strong winds allowed the South Dakota Wing to try out a new experimental aircraft – the "flying outhouse" – which took off and cleared the airport's three-strand barbed wire fence. When the porta-potty crash landed, a team of emergency services personnel were dispatched on a real-world search and rescue mission to the site to determine if there were any physical damages or personal injuries. As it turned out, the flying outhouse was unpiloted.¹⁰

⁷ Philip (53rd) Mounted Search and Rescue Fact Sheet, undated.

⁸ 1st Lt. Vaughan, Roberta, CAP. "Mount Up! Move Out!", *The Pioneer Review* (Philip, SD), Page 2, May 21, 1992

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

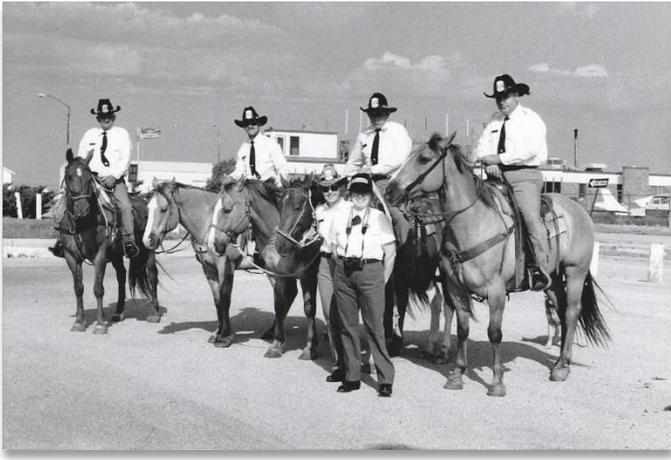


Figure 1. This photo, taken by Maj Don Barbalace, Wing PAO at the time, shows some of the members of the Philip Composite Squadron Mounted SAR Team at the evaluated search and rescue exercise held June 13th 1993 at the Rapid City Regional Airport. Members of the team mounted are (l to r) Senior Member Merle Johnson on Red, 2d Lt Steve Millage on Blue Pine; the unit pack horse Howdy; Cadet Stanley Reimann on Chief; and Senior Member Rick Reimann on Poko. Standing (l to r) is 1st Lt Marsha Sumpter, the Philip Squadron Commander wearing a hat unique to her position, and 1st Lt Roberta Vaughan, squadron PAO. On her cap is a reflective “Civil Air Patrol” patch.

The next significant SAREX for the Mounted SAR Team came in mid-June 1993 when the South Dakota Wing underwent an Air Force Evaluated Search and Rescue Exercise. The Mission Base was at Rapid City’s Regional Airport. As part of the SAREX the Philip Composite Squadron’s Mounted SAR Team was deployed to Hermosa, SD in the rugged Black Hills area to search for a missing small aircraft with a pilot and a passenger aboard.

The Mounted SAR Team was accompanied by a USAF evaluator. In the usual “hurry-up and wait” pattern of SAREXs after the team got to Hermosa they had some down time before commencing the search. While waiting, the USAF officer had the opportunity to mount the pack horse Howdy and take a short trail ride for instructional purposes, a uniformed “Zoomie” on horseback was an incongruous sight to see.

Members of the Mounted SAR Team were sent out on a search and rescue training mission in the Black Hills. This SAREX was also not without its drama. 1st Lt Rick Reimann suffered an injury to his ankle and foot when his horse acted up and got him in a tight situation. We were just ending the search so Sumpter rode to a nearby farmhouse to get some ice. With his foot packed in ice, the team switched from a SAREX to a REDCAP to evacuate Reimann to Ellsworth Air Force Base for medical care.



Figure 2. Kneeling and wearing the black Stetson is SM Rick Reimann. 2d Lt Steve Millage is on the radio. Photo credit: Marsha Sumpter

While waiting for him to be treated, a storm came up making travel hazardous so the Mounted SAR Team set up camp that night near the airbase. For some reason, Rick’s dog Rex who usually rode on top of the pack horse vanished into the storm. The team launched a search and rescue mission for Rex. Radio stations were alerted and word was sent out about the lost dog. He had a collar tag with his name and number and before camp was broken the next day, with Rick on crutches, Rex was found in New Underwood about 15 miles away.

Editor's Note: The Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal continues to receive quality submissions from across the CAP community, and appreciates the continued support of its members. Please adhere to the guidelines specified in the journal with regard to format, content, and review.

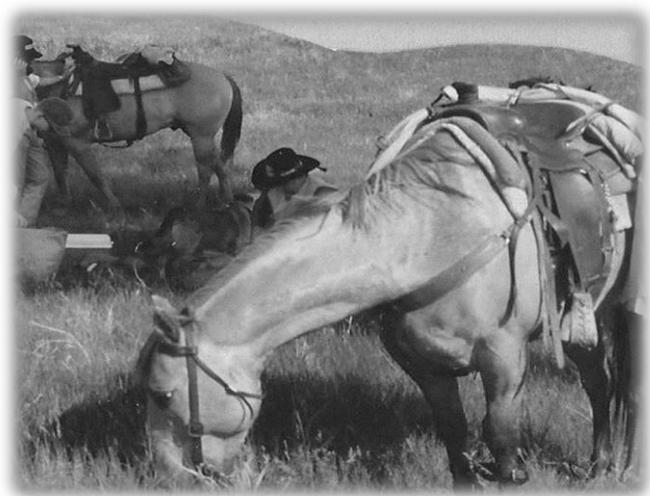


Figure 3. Close up of the tack and equipment worn by the horses. The horses in figures 2 & 3 belonged to SM Reimann. Photo credit: Marsha Sumpter

The Philip Composite Squadron's Mounted SAR Team's peak period of activity was in the early 1990s when they trained extensively, participated in numerous SAREXs and took part in many parades in their own and nearby communities. Unfortunately, the Mounted SAR Team was never called upon to demonstrate their expertise during a REDCAP. According to Sumpter, the Philip Composite Squadron commander, "By 2002, we had basically fallen by the wayside when we lost members with horse trailers and enough equipment to support [a SAR mission]." Later she added, "... by 2000 we had not been used by CAP in SARs to the potential that we could have been and it was about then that members' interest faded as well. We never officially disbanded or stood down."

Another memorable moment came when the Mounted SAR Team and other members of the squadron were invited to Custer to carry the flags for their big parade. The team took their horses to Custer and set up camp the night before the parade. The day of the parade the

Mounted SAR Team looked sharp. The riders decided to take the horses out to Custer State Park and ride a little to give the horses some exercise before returning home, about a 140 mile journey. Rick and Stanley Reimann had ridden in Custer State Park many times rounding up the buffalo, which is a yearly event. The riders unloaded their horses and took off. Howdy the pack horse was unloaded to let him graze and move around next to the trailer. Maj Vaughan and Lt Sumpter had stayed with the vehicle and trailer to tend to Howdy. All of a sudden, seemingly out of nowhere a herd of buffalo came right toward them! Maj. Vaughan jumped out of the van, grabbed Howdy and got him in the horse trailer just in time as the buffalo surrounded them. The two were stuck in the trailer for some time until the buffalo continued on their way. Lt Sumpter could have driven away, but chose to quietly stay put to see how the event was going to play out. All ended well. The riders returned in fine shape having seen the buffalo and other wildlife on their ride. Not unsurprisingly, the size of the herd, as did the size of each individual buffalo, got bigger and bigger with every retelling of the story.

The Philip Composite Squadron Mounted SAR Team had one last hurrah when the Wing organized a parade in Philip to honor the team's 10th Anniversary. The parade, also open to community participants, was held on Saturday, June 8, 2002. The theme was "A Ride like No Other". From the staging area the parade route was eight blocks down Main Street to the park downtown for speeches, food, fun and music.^{11, 12}

¹¹ "CAP Will Be Honored During Parade", *The Pioneer Review* (Philip, SD), Page 2, June 6, 2002.

¹² "Mounted & Ready", *The Pioneer Review* (Philip, SD), Page 3, June 20, 2002.

By 2002, the Mounted SAR Team had not been riding for some time so in order to stage the event the squadron had to scramble to find horses and qualified riders. Maj. Vaughan and Capt. Sumpter rode horses he had at his place over the parade route two times ahead of the parade to get the horses accustomed to being ridden and aware of the surroundings in the town. Six Mounted SAR Team riders took part in the parade. They made two trips down the parade route. It was a well-attended event with some 250 people in attendance. The parade, however, was not without incident. It was very windy that day. Team member Lt Marsha Sumpter was on the horse Christian. As the parade proceeded along the route an American flag in front of the mortuary made a loud snapping sound in the high wind. Christian got spooked at the sound and fell down. Fortunately, Marsha was able to step off and held on to the reins to keep the horse from bolting. When the horse stood up she needed help remounting as Christian was still skittish and wouldn't hold still. Once back on the horse she got back in formation and finished the parade.

In addition to the parade, the then Mayor of Philip, the Honorable John F. Hart, issued a proclamation declaring June 8, 2002 "Civil Air Patrol Day". In the mayoral proclamation the Mounted SAR Team was mentioned twice. Mayor Hart also presented a plaque marking the day to the Philip Composite Squadron.¹³ As has happened in many small towns in South Dakota, a slowly declining membership in the Philip Composite Squadron and waning interest in the deployment of the Mounted SAR Team spelled the team's demise. Later, due to declining

membership, the Wing "demoted" the Philip unit from a composite squadron to a composite flight. Sadly, membership continued to decline. In 2012, the flight was disbanded and its remaining members were reassigned to the Pierre Composite Squadron in Pierre closing the chapter on the Philip Composite Squadron. Hopefully someday the Philip Composite Squadron will be reactivated and shine in its past glory.

Maj Bruce Kipp is a former Department of Defense employee who holds a Master of Science in Strategic Intelligence from the Joint Military Intelligence College (JMIC, now the National Intelligence University), and a Ph. D. in European History. He currently serves as the South Dakota Wing's Public Affairs Officer.



Call for Submissions

The Civil Air Patrol *National Historical Journal* (NHJ) welcomes articles, essays, and commentaries on any topic relating to the history of the Civil Air Patrol, or military/civilian aviation and aerospace history.

All historiographical works and essays must be submitted in Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). Authors should submit digital photographs (minimal resolution of 300 dots per inch) and illustrations for publication. Content should be the work of the author or open source. Adjustments to pixel saturation, color and size will be made according to the editorial staff's recommendations. Please note that when submitted to the editor at the Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal, all works and related media are released from copyright infringements when published.

Editorial changes are at the sole discretion of the editorial staff, and will be discussed with the author prior to publication, and require release from the author.

The CAP NHJ editorial staff reserves the right to refuse any work submitted. All submissions must be sent as MS Word attachments and mailed to the editor at kefinger@sercap.us.

¹³ "Civil Air Patrol Day Mayoral Proclamation", *The Pioneer Review* (Philip, SD), Number 41, Volume 96, June 6, 2002.

Editor's Column: *The Good, the Bad, and Cap History*

K.J. Efinger, MMH

Quite often the question is asked of historians whether or not we can write “objectively” on a subject. As I reflect on both my profession as an historian, and tenure as the Editor of the CAP NHJ, I can say that writing objectively is not an easy task, but one that is a necessity. Since the first publication of the CAP NHJ in 2013, foremost in my mind has been the unabridged and unbiased recording of CAP history.¹⁴

Most historians have either repeated, or at least heard the maxim, “to the victor belong the spoils.” The saying is often attributed to Sen. William Marcy of New York, following the landslide victory of Andrew Jackson in the election of 1828. In fact, Sen. Marcy made the remark in defense of Martin Van Buren to the U.S. Senate on January 25, 1832—*four years after the election of Jackson to the Presidency*. In full context, Marcy stated “They see nothing wrong in the rule, that to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy” in reference to politicians—specifically Jackson and his so-called “spoils system” where he rewarded his political supporters with various government offices while President. Marcy was likely making a play on the word “spoils” in the sense of loot, or classic plunder, as well as the reference to political paybacks. Nevertheless, the victors as we have also heard, write history. This idea—and practice—alone can be frightening. To this end, all historians should strive to

avoid the fatal tendency to rewrite, alter, embellish, or otherwise fabricate history.

The Civil Air Patrol has enjoyed seventy-five years of history and service to America. Countless lives have been saved due to the efforts of its members in the air operations division of Emergency Services. Aerospace Education has motivated, and prepared American youth for generations to pursue careers in science, engineering, and aviation. The Cadet Programs division of CAP has taught leadership, responsibility, and camaraderie, as well as equip Cadets for potential military service. At all levels of interaction, CAP members contribute to the unique, and unprecedented organization that serves faithfully as the official auxiliary of the United States Air Force. That said, given the organization’s visibility, and impact at the federal, state and local levels, it should remain a transparent entity. CAP historians have a responsibility to report the “good, the bad, and the ugly” without omitting embarrassing, or even disreputable and potentially damaging history. To do otherwise would be less-than acceptable professional behavior.

In the period following the most notorious of Roman emperors, not long after the death of Augustus, we entered the so-called Silver Age of Roman Literature, and with it, a time when criticism of the Empire, and its leaders was as commonplace, and acceptable to society as the Denarius was to commerce. This age—to whatever extent it existed, and in whatever manner we see it—was one in which complete transparency prevailed. Few

¹⁴ The CAP HNJ is not limited to Civil Air Patrol related history or articles, however, this editorial focuses strictly on the collection and recording of CAP history as submitted, reviewed, recorded, and

witnessed by CAP members. The editorial staff reserves the right to “fact-check” all submissions prior to publication.

would contest the greatness of Rome as a civilization, and fewer still, the many blemishes it left in history. One may argue that if an ascendant and prolific civilization such as Rome could be exposed and survive along with its contributions to the Western world, then an organization that has spanned two centuries ought to be able to endure criticism and praise as well.

I often tell students of American history, that we are going to study “the good, the bad, and the ugly.” At first, they do not always understand, but a few weeks into the semester, they begin to realize that greatness often comes at a cost and not without “bad things” as well. As an organization, CAP finds itself in the unique position of being comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds all striving to the same end—service to our country. From this wealth of experience, we must reach a common goal. As medieval thinker Thomas Aquinas posited nearly a thousand years ago, “the common good is made up of many parts.”¹⁵ More than anything, the Civil Air Patrol fits this paradigm. Coincident with this thought, however, is the fact that CAP is also comprised of human beings, and as such, we will see all those things that human beings do—the good, the bad, and the ugly. None of this should be omitted from the record—a comprehensive, accurate, and honest assessment of an organization whose goal regardless of negative marks should be presented in perpetuity. The CAP National Historical Journal utilizes writers—professional historians as well as those whose civilian life may be far removed from the craft—who have done a good job at providing the most objective analysis

and picture of history. The perspective from which our authors come may be diverse, but the goal of providing accurate and clear assessments of history is the same.

Semper Vigilans

Maj Efinger serves as the Historian for SER HQ, and is a full-time teacher of Economics and Adjunct Professor of History at Indian River State College in Ft. Pierce, FL.



Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with 61,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 80 lives annually. Its volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 26,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. CAP received the World Peace Prize in 2011 and has been performing missions for America for 71 years. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.

¹⁵ John Morrall, B, *Political Thought in Medieval Times* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987), 77.