

THE SCOOP

March 2012



Connecticut Lighter than Air Society



Photo by Jack Perry, August 2010

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CLAS Calendar

March 7 – Erwin Dressel presentation on ballooning at the Cheshire Grange, 44 Wallingford Road, Cheshire; presentation begins at 7:30 PM

March 15 – CLAS meeting, 7:00 PM, Southington Fire Department. See note below for details.

April 19 – CLAS meeting, 7:30 PM, Plainville Police Department

March 15th CLAS Meeting: Hands-on Fire Extinguisher Training Session

The March 15th CLAS meeting location has been changed to the Southington Fire Department and the start time has also been changed to 7:00. These changes are to accommodate a hands-on fire extinguisher training session that Tony Roswell has arranged with the Southington Firefighters. The Southington Firefighters are hosting this training exercise for the CLAS Pilots and Crew. They will provide all equipment needed. (*Please **do not** bring your old fire extinguishers to use.*) The Fire Department is located in the center of Southington on rt.10 about ¼ mi. North of the Southington Green. This is a great opportunity for pilots and crew to gain hands-on experience in extinguishing a fueled flame in a controlled environment. This opportunity does not come around too often. Please make a strong effort to attend this Education/Training meeting and be sure to invite, or even better yet, bring your crew.

About The Scoop

This newsletter is published by The Connecticut Lighter than Air Society for its members and interested parties. Portions of this publication may be reproduced of credit is given to the written and CLAS. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the organization or members of the organization. Submissions for the newsletter are welcome.

Thanks to this month's newsletter contributors!

Jack Perry

Erwin Dressel

Garry Guertin

Ellen Dressel

Penny Christy

Keep it coming!

Silas Brooks

Submitted by Erwin Dressel

On November 22, 1997 CLAS members placed a memorial marker on the public grave site of [Silas Brooks](#). About 40 club members, Burlington's First Selectman, and other history buffs attended the service under a gray sky with rain and snow falling. The group that worked researching and getting the marker was Bill Colyer, Tony Roswell and Kathy Wadsworth. I remember many meetings devoted primarily to finalizing plans for the Silas Brooks memorial.

Ellen and I were asked to present some ballooning history to our local Cheshire Grange. While researching Silas Brooks I've come upon some tragic news. The cemetery we placed the plaque in has been vandalized. Silas Brooks was buried in a Seventh Day Baptist Cemetery. The cemetery has been mistakenly referred to Burlington Center Cemetery, but is best known as **Green Lady Cemetery**, due to a ghost that supposedly haunts the grounds.

You can pull up an excellent article on the internet written by Lawrence S. Carlton, M.D. in the HOG RIVER JOURNAL in the spring of 2008. He states, "With 187 known ascensions, this man is arguably Connecticut's foremost air traveler of the 19th century.

Brooks ended up a ward of the town of Burlington, living in the local poorhouse. He died in 1906 at the age of 82. The Courant obituary concludes: "The funeral Saturday was a pathetic scene - made pathetic by the thought that this man whose going out was of so little consequence except to a very few had once been really great in the eyes of many. It takes no

Prophet to predict that briars will soon overgrow Brooks' grave and that even the memory of his fame will be a forgotten story of the past." The prediction proved to be true until 1997 when CLAS came to the rescue.

PRESENT

The cemetery was vandalized in the 1970s and again during the overnight period of July 20 and the 21, 2010. The Connecticut state police are investigating the disappearance of the Elisabeth Palmiter headstone. The cemetery is now private property (owned by the New Britain Public Works) and the Burlington police and local residents usually patrol the area at night. Visiting the site during the day for the purpose of historical research is permitted.

Knowing about the many robberies of brass, copper, and bronze, Ellen and I took a ride this afternoon over to Upson Rd. in Burlington. It's sad to see the old cemetery minus all the headstones with just remnants of their original bases left. **The Silas Brooks memorial marker is gone!** There is only one large stone which lies flush to the surface engraved "*In memory of Mrs. AMY, wife of Mr. Michael Spencer who died April 12 1817 AE.50*" Nothing else left in the cemetery is engraved.

Suggest we, as members of CLAS, again look at the situation. Perhaps a plaque, next to the [Silas Brooks basket](#), located in the Bradley Museum would stand the test of time. I think anything less than a large engraved stone at the cemetery would again be destroyed or stolen. We will notify the State Police of the missing Silas Brook plaque, but I'm certain that will just be another act of futility.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS AND DUES ARE DUE FOR 2012

Now is the time to renew your CLAS Membership. At this time, we are asking everyone to complete a new membership application to ensure we have your updated mailing address, phone number, and email address on file. Please mail the form along with your membership payment to Ellen Dressel at the address on the form. It can be found below or at www.lighterthanair.org/clas/application_form.htm#form

CONNECTICUT LIGHTER THAN AIR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society is a club for anyone interested in learning about, participating in, and improving the sport of ballooning. Pilots, crew, and enthusiasts alike are welcome and ALL can contribute to the safety, enjoyment and education of the sport. Meetings are scheduled monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Plainville Police Department, 19 Neal Court, Plainville, at 7:30 PM. For more information, contact any of the officers listed in this newsletter.

CLAS DUES \$20 include membership privileges
Extra voting family member add \$5

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
TELEPHONE (Home) _____ (Work) _____ (Cell) _____
E-Mail _____

CLAS Membership Info:

Single (\$20)___ Family (\$20)___ Extra Vote (\$5) Name: _____
New ___ Renewing ___
Crew ___ Student Pilot ___ Private Pilot ___ Commercial Pilot ___ N# _____
BFA # _____ BFA CAAP Level _____ BFA PAAP Level _____
FAA Wings Level Completed _____
Pilot Certificate # _____ Type(s) of Certificate(s) _____

Make checks payable to CLAS and mail to: CLAS, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053

GPS Program available for some parts of the country (Compliments of Nebraska Balloon Club)

The mapping system is called Hunting GPS maps and for \$99, you can insert the microSD card in your Garmin GPS. It will then display a detailed map with landowner names and exact property boundaries. When I heard this I sat up and listened a bit more carefully as I could see this being a great tool for the chase team. I could use the technology in the basket as well but it would probably be more advantageous to the crew. Obviously it was designed with hunters in mind but has definite benefits for our industry. If you are interested, take a look at their website: www.HuntingGPSmaps.com. Their phone is 208-GPS-MAPS or 208-477-6277.

**Interesting article on using a pibal to estimate winds peed aloft.
Submitted by Garry Guertin. Article from www.balloonlife.com**

http://www.balloonlife.com/publications/balloon_life/9508/windspee.htm



Like us at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Connecticut-Lighter-Than-Air-Society/193563443995591>

CLAS Meeting Minutes, January 19th, 2012

Meeting was called to order at 7:55 p.m. by President Mick Murphy. 13 members present.

Officer's Reports:

Treasurer, Checking account balance is \$3117.42. CD's balance \$6211 has been placed into a savings account at TD Bank North.

Committee Reports:

Sunshine: no activity

BFA/FAA: Nothing to report

Education: March meeting to have fire extinguisher demo at Southington Fire House.

Mark Sand will do a sectional quiz again.

Competition: no report.

Nominating: no new candidates for election.

Garry Guertin to move up from VP. No VP names. Robert Zirpolo for Treasurer. Ellen Dressel is to remain as secretary.

Winter Dinner: Everything in place for the Manor Inn on the 28th. Just need the RSVP's. Tom Crouch will be guest speaker, 'Abe Lincoln's Air Force. Need names for awards. 2 Crew, Sh*t happens, & Spirit award.

Safety Seminar: Penny reported things are moving along well. Date is February 25th, 2012 again at Yale. Be sure to get your application in to reserve your seat.

Old Business: Tax status, not discussed. Calendars netted \$274

New Business: Mick Murphy gave a discussion on possible ideas for help generate interest.

Speakers for meetings, Gas ballooning, Bert Bertell & Sam Parks. Visit to Bryan Boland's in VT, a pre-dawn flight.

The attendance: Rick Silva, Mark Sand, Erwin & Ellen Dressel, Charlie Perrault, Tom Murphy, Garry Guertin, Mick Murphy, Tom Whelan, Doug Sherman, Penny Christy & Tony Roswell

CLAS Meeting Minutes, February, 16th, 2012

This month we had an educational experience.

Joe & Janet Doerer from Whitehouse Station, NJ gave a talk and slide show about their experience with power lines. While flying 'Dream Chaser' at the St. John festival in Canada Joe encountered a power line. It was an evening flight and Joe experienced the low level jets that occur from time to time.

As all pilots are instructed to do, 'when in doubt, RIP OUT'. Well this was Joe's intent but he found that low level jet and could not 'fall' in time to miss the high tension wires. The uprights found the wire and they had a 'zip-line' ride until they encountered the upward angle of the power line. Joe was trying to shut off the pilot light, tanks and pull the red line all at the same time.

There was no spark or arcing upon contact with the wire so Joe could not be sure they were 'live'. But you always want to assume they are. Joe was able to contact Janet and crew to let them know that all was well. The basket was about 30 feet over a corn field, away from the road. One upright of the Balloonworks basket was already severed and in the time span the envelope allowed the basket to slip closer the ground. Now, only 5 or 6 feet from the ground, Joe was able to undo the two remaining toggles and allow the basket to fall to the ground.

Emergency personal and equipment were on hand but not needed. The wind was in Joe's favor now. With every gust the envelope was gradually falling down off of the wires. At the end only the crown line was still draped over the wires. Five hours later the power company arrived and assured everyone the power was off and it was safe to pull the crown line down.

22,000 power customers were without power for the 5 hours. The passengers and pilot were okay. There was just minimal damage to the basket and envelope.

In attendance were: Mick Murphy, Mark Sand, Rick Silva, Garry Guertin, Lisa Huck, Santo Galatioto, John Bond, Robert Zirpolo, Charlie Perrault, Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, Erwin & Ellen Dressel.

March meeting: Rick Silva has refreshments.