

Screening at Yale on Veterans Day - 2011

The Yale Veterans Association in partnership with Humanus Documentary Films Foundation invite you to a special screening and panel discussion of the film documentary THE FIRST YALE UNIT and THE BIRTH OF U.S. NAVAL AVIATION. Please join us on Veterans Day for this fascinating look at a key chapter in our nation's military history and great conversation with the filmmakers and special guests.

This film chronicles the story of a group of Yale students who, in 1916, formed a privately funded air militia that became the founding squadron of the U.S. Naval Air Reserve and whose members were among the first to ship overseas and fight for their country in World War I. The story of the First Yale Unit is one of service and sacrifice and paints a representative picture of America coming of age in the 20th century and the American experience in the First World War.

This screening of *The First Yale Unit* celebrates the 100th Anniversary of U.S. Naval Aviation, and the return of Navy ROTC and Air Force ROTC to Yale!

Friday, November 11, 2011
1:30-3:30 p.m.
Yale University
Whitney Humanities Center
53 Wall Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Film Production in 2011



Hill Goodspeed interviewed at the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida.

The film production team has made great strides in 2011. We conducted extensive interviews with author Marc Wortman, military historian Geoffrey Rossano, NNAM historians Col. Denis J. "Deej" Kiely and Hill Goodspeed, author William Trimble, Yale Unit descendants Adele Brown, Puck Purnell, Martin Vorys and Bill Lynch, Larned Professor of Yale Gaddis Smith and former Navy Secretary, John Lehman. We have filmed at locations of the Yale Unit story including Yale University, The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida and Huntington, St. John's of Lattingtown and Locust Valley Cemetery on Long Island. We also filmed the commemorative flight of the Navy's first aircraft on Lake Keuka at Hammondsport, NY, the site of the home and factory of aviation pioneer Glenn H. Curtiss.

Research

The film production team has also conducted extensive research at the National Naval Aviation Museum, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the New York Historical Society, Yale University, the Historical Society of Palm Beach County, the New York Public Library, the corporate archives at JP Morgan Chase and with Yale Unit descendants and associates.

Future Production

Even as the feature-length version of the documentary is continuing to be edited, the producers are busy planning for upcoming shoots in Europe and an intense period of post-production to commence in the New Year. The filmmakers have identified a World War I aerodrome in England that is being restored to its original appearance in the Great War. They have also started planning a shoot with a group of highly experienced pilots who own, fly and film World War One aircraft in flight. The crew will capture the "by the seat of your pants" combat flight experience of First Yale Unit members David S. Ingalls (the "Baby Ace") and Kenneth MacLeish. They are also starting consultation with a historic aero group in France to film a Spad XIII in flight; the same aircraft flown by Yale football hero and Yale Unit pilot Artemus "Di" Gates when he was shot down and captured over the front.

Fundraising

None of the production and research could have been accomplished without the incredible support of our donors! We have been able to accomplish the work in production due only to the diligent efforts of our primary fundraisers, producer Harry Davison and his cousin Mike Davison, who have guided the rest of the team through the shoals of the fundraising challenge to reach the sustaining winds of success. However, to complete the film in 2012 we will also need to complete our funding. We continue to work toward this goal and we invite your support to help us complete the film. Please visit our website for more information. <http://millionairesunit.org/home.php>

Sincerely,

Darroch Greer
Co-Producer/Director

Ron King
Co-Producer/Director

Harry Davison
Producer



Frank R. V. Lynch Naval Aviator #88

Frank Lynch served at Squantum NAS and Rockaway NAS in New York. He received advanced training at Ft. Worth, Texas, and was then detailed to Hampton Roads, Virginia. Lynch, along with Unit mate 'Lotta' Lawrence, was sent overseas to serve at Killingholme, England, where he did sub patrol work and tested the first U.S. made H-16. In October 1918, Lynch and Kenney MacLeish ferried DH-4s from Eastleigh, England, to Lafraine, France. He returned to the U.S. just after the Armistice with fellow Unit mates Harry Davison, Graham Brush, Reg Coombe and 'Shorty' Smith aboard the Balmoral Castle. Read more about the members of the First Yale Unit on our [People](#) page.

Screenings in 2011

2011 is the Centennial of Naval Aviation in the United States and throughout the year the producers have helped to celebrate this milestone by presenting the film at several events including:

- Dolby 24 and Dolby 88 in New York City
- National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida
- Planes of Fame in Chino, California
- B-17 Combat Crewmen and Wingmen in Long Beach, California
- The Association of International Aeronautics and Astronautics, Centennial of Naval Aviation Forum in Virginia Beach, Virginia
- AirVenture 2011 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin
- The League of World War One Aviation Historians seminar in Monterey, California
- The Eighth Air Force, Second Air Division, Debriefing Team in Palos Verdes, California
- Yale Veterans Association at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut



Nathan Hale statue at Yale.