

About The Captain James “Burr” Reddig Memorial Award



On August 25, 1952, Captain James “Burr” Reddig, like many young cadets, joined CAP at the age of 14. After only two years of service, he was promoted to Cadet Commander, Rochester Cadet Squadron and CAP Encampment Commandant, Sampson AFB. He actively participated in the CAP Foreign Exchange program, traveling to Great Britain in 1955, after which he became a Senior Member on July 12, 1956. That same year, he also became a 1st Class Mission Pilot with ratings in commercial instrument, and SMEL.

CAP was an important stepping stone for Burr. After attending one year at Clarkson College, he joined the USAF on October 9, 1956. He soon earned his wings and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on July 23, 1958. A few years later, he was promoted to Captain and Airlift Commander on B-47s in 1963. His service was distinguished, earning him the Outstanding Crew medal in 1964.

By 1965, Burr was assigned to the 351st Bombardment Squadron, 100th Bombardment Wing, at Pease AFB, New Hampshire – a change in location that allowed him to indulge in his passion apart from flying: skiing. On February 26, he was returning from a routine duty rotation at Torrejón Air Base, Spain when the B-47 he was commanding collided with the KC-135 from which it was refueling over the Atlantic, south of Newfoundland. All members of both crews were killed. He was 27.

Burr's entire family had been senior members or cadets at various points, including his father, Colonel James C. Reddig, who was one of the first members of CAP, joining shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor and serving for 51 years. To honor their son who shared their passion and dedication to CAP, the family created the Captain James Burr Reddig Memorial Award in 1965. The first recipient was Cadet Lt. Col. Thomas S. Vreeland and it has been presented annually ever since to outstanding CAP cadets throughout the New York Wing.

