

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE NEWS

Estrella Squadron



All the news that's fit
to print and then some!

Volume IV Number 10

Paso Robles, California

October 1993

October Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 5, at the Hangar. Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm.

The program for the evening will be a review of the Airshow Video that Obbie Atkinson and Ralph Grasso have been working so hard to produce. Be there for this!!! The video is a **BLOCKBUSTER**. The few of us who were privileged to preview it were absolutely stunned. The music is enough to bring tears to your eyes and the whole thing is as professional a production as you will ever see!

This is all being done on our behalf, as CAF members and as individuals. Some tapes will go to sponsors and some to organizations that will help with promotion but every member should be proud to own and show one of these tapes.

More particulars as to disposition of the tapes will be forthcoming at the meeting so **BE THERE!**

Navy League Invitation

The California Central Coast Council of the United States Navy League, in San Luis Obispo, will honor Brigadier General Everett W. "Brick" Holstrom at their next meeting on October 12, 1993. General Holstrom is one of the true heroes of our time, having been the pilot of the 4th aircraft to take off from the carrier Hornet to participate in the Tokyo Raid on April 18, 1942. General Holstrom's many other fine achievements are outlined below in a brief biography.

It is coincidental that this meeting will take place so soon after the death of another of America's truly great heroes, General Jimmy Doolittle, the leader of the Tokyo Raid, but his recent demise only serves to make this meeting all the more poignant.

The Navy League is extending an invitation to all Estrella Squadron members to attend their meeting on Tuesday, October 12, 1993 at 6:00pm. The meeting will be held at the Veterans Memorial Building at the corner of Grand & Monterey in San Luis Obispo. There will be a "no host" bar, a chicken barbecue dinner and a video of the Tokyo Raid launch.

The viewing of the video should be of extreme interest in view of the fact that one of the participants will actually be with us to comment on the happening itself!!

There will be a \$15 charge per plate for the dinner and since there will be limited seating it is **IMPERATIVE** that those wishing to attend call one of the following by Friday the 8th of October:

Warren Miller 466-3737

Bob Bostrom 543-4447

Mike Merchant 937-2925

As an alternative, if we can get an interested group together at our own meeting on the 5th we can make arrangements to let them know how many will be attending.

There aren't many heroes left, dear friends, and this would be a wonderful opportunity to honor one of them and also to remind ourselves what our own CAF group stands for.

Biography

EVERETT W. HOLSTROM, Brigadier General, United States Air Force (Retired) Born May 4, 1916 at Cottage Grove, Oregon. Graduated from Pleasant Hill High School, Pleasant Hill, Oregon in 1934 and attended Oregon State College until he entered military service at Ft. Lewis, Washington, in December 1939. Commissioned a

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is published monthly as an unofficial voluntary contribution. Content and opinion is the sole responsibility of the Editor, Bruce M. Toomey. Submissions for inclusion are gladly accepted and solicited, including articles, display and classified ads etc. Send all submissions to: P.O. Box 3065 Paso Robles, CA 93447

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Second Lieutenant and rated as pilot upon graduation from Kelly Field in 1940.

Destroyed first enemy sub sunk off West Coast of the U.S. on December 24, 1941 while a member of the 95th Bomb Squadron.

Participated in the Tokyo Raid on April 18, 1942 with General Doolittle. He was the pilot of the 4th airplane off the carrier Hornet. Remained in China-Burma-India Theater after Tokyo Raid as 11th Bomb Squadron Commander until the end of 1943.

Following World War II, was assigned to Strategic Air Command where he held various operational assignments and is one of the few men who has commanded wings and flown all the multi-engine jet bombers in the SAC inventory - B-45, B-47, B-52 and B-58. He commanded SAC's first supersonic Bombardment Wing at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas.

Decorations include, Silver Star, Legion of Merit with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters,

Commendation Ribbon with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster and Chinese Army, Navy and Air Corps Medal, Class A, 1st Grade. Holds aeronautical rating of command pilot and is entitled to wear the Air Force's Missile Badge. Married Harriet Fisher on August 30, 1941, a Senior at Stanford University at the time. They have five children: Susan, Everett Jr., Marianne, John and Daniel.

Information Card Return

We have had a wonderful response to the information cards sent out with the last newsletter. Twenty six have been returned so far which is about a 20% response. Along with a few address changes we have received some incredible information regarding various members abilities and interests, some of which can be of tremendous advantage to the Squadron in general and in the area of special projects in particular.

We have also had the usual wonderful replies from many of the old regulars who either claim to have no particular talents (which we know is not true) or do not list any, but who say they will "help with anything, anytime, wherever needed", and they always do! How much more can we ask??

To the rest of you, please return the cards. We have been amazed at the talent uncovered as a result of this simple request for information and we are also more than pleased to hear from those who will simply give of their time and effort which is greatly needed and appreciated.

Hangar Telephone Number

For those of you who may wish to get in touch with someone at the Hangar the number is 238-9317. Please write this in your phone book. We have had the number for maybe three years and

there are probably no more than 20 people who know it!!

Operating Task Teams

We are again listing the Task Teams and Team Leaders for the benefit of those who may not have seen the list before. To rehash just a bit, the Task Team concept was initiated to handle the day to day operation of the Squadron. It is designed so that the leaders will be appointed on a rotational basis (6 months, 12 months or whatever) so that no one individual gets stuck in a job. Each team leader is responsible for recruiting his own team, whether it be one more in addition to himself or a whole crew, whatever is necessary.

If anyone or a group LIKES a certain task and wishes to continue doing it indefinitely, that's just fine and could conceivably make good sense instead of trying to reinvent the wheel every time there is a job change.

In any event, if we all cooperate and do our share the mechanical running of the Squadron will become almost automatic, tasks will be accomplished promptly and properly and time can be devoted to other important tasks rather than constantly playing "who's got the responsibility for this particular job this week!!"

- Program Team George Marrett
466-7640
- Dinner Team Bob Miller
434-1594
- Hangar Team "Open" (Need a volunteer)
- Grounds Team Bruce Toomey
238-9266/9516
- PX Team Emil Mesko
238-6629
- Safety Team Bob Singleton
239-2084
- Ground Equipment Team
Dave Geiger 239-1598



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- Insurance Team Rusty Roy 237-9684
- Meeting Coordinator - Different member appointed for each meeting.

Do not be intimidated if asked to be the Meeting Coordinator. This individual simply calls the Program Leader, the Hangar Leader, the Dinner Leader, etc., a day or two before the meeting to insure that each team is ready for the meeting; i.e., hangar swept, tables & chairs up, program ready, dinner arranged for etc. It's a way of getting new members to call and get to know the others so it's kind of fun and a worthwhile job as well.

A description of what is involved in the Team Tasks will be posted whenever we get a bulletin board, which should be fairly soon, so everyone will be able to determine what job they might want to volunteer for.

Airshow '94

The 1994 Air Show is scheduled for May 22 which is the weekend following the Wine Festival so there should be no major conflicts with other community projects.

The theme for the Show will be "Turning the Tide" which is intended to refer to the period of time in 1943/44 when America's production efforts finally became an irresistible force and the Allies in both the European and Pacific Theaters of War received the results of that force in the form of superb aircraft and other equipment.

Mastantuono to Chair Airshow

The Chairman for the Show will be Pasquale Mastantuono of Mastantuono Winery who was elected unanimously (in absentia!!) at the last staff meeting but who graciously consented to accept the position when asked. Pasquale

brings with him a wealth of promotional experience to the position as one of the originators of the Wine Festival and as a local businessman involved in many community activities. He will be calling on all of us so please be prepared to give him your support.

Safety Report

by Bob Singleton

First, I want to tell you about the International Liaison Pilot and Aircraft Association (ILPA). This is a new organization, not part of the CAF but many CAF members are involved. Their annual fly-in is in Keokuk, Iowa, which is a long way to fly in an L-Bird...just ask Dick Griffith or Jeff Welles. The ILPA decided to try shorter distance Regional Fly-ins for the L-Bird people.

Don Leedom, Jeff Welles and I flew the L-2 and L-16 to the West Regional Fly-in on September 10 and 11 at the CAF hangar on the Camarillo Airport. We flew down by L-Bird but back by rental car...bad wx. The Camarillo CAF Squadron hosted the ILPA L-Bird Gathering. The visitors included two L-16's, three L-2's, one O-1 (L-19), one L-17 and three L-5's. More were expected but the coastal wx did them in.

The Camarillo CAF folks were fine hosts. Chuck Baxter and Floyd Lefevere handled the arrangements. Fria Hooper, who flew her L-2 in from Palomar, was in charge of promotions. Five meals were served at the hangar which included a Tri-Tip Barbecue and dance on Saturday night. The dance included Glenn Miller music by boombox and decorator lights above the dance floor. Some came in 1940's outfits, the men in WWII pilot uniforms and the women in semi-long dresses and hats.

The program on Saturday afternoon included a status report on the ILPA by ILPA Newsletter Editor, Bill Stratton from San Antonio, Texas, Larry Shrum, also from Texas and Chuck Lefevere

from Agoura Hills, California. W.W.II veterans of liaison aircraft operations in the European Theater spoke of their experiences.

Maybe the Estrella Squadron could host a future regional gathering of L-Birds?? If you want to join the ILPA talk to other members like Jeff Welles or Don Leedom.

And now for a short pilot flight safety report. As I arrived at our Hangar on Saturday the 18th at about 8:30, I noticed a Cessna in the pattern doing touch & go's. He was flying in and out of the clouds. The airport was totally overcast and definitely not VFR. Paul Schweich noticed him too and was concerned because he had seen a twin execute an instrument missed approach in the area a few minutes earlier. A real scenario for a mid-air. Paso Robles Airport is a Control Zone and the VFR requirements are 3 miles visibility and clear of the clouds by 500 feet below, 1,000 feet above and 2,000 feet horizontally. You need 500 feet of terrain clearance and 500 feet below the clouds, so the ceiling has to be 1,000 feet or better for VFR.

Past Dues

There are still 17 members who have not paid their Squadron dues. We are enclosing a separate personal letter to each of these members with this newsletter asking that they please honor their commitments. We feel that this is a fairly mild request, however, it must be noticed that this the last one. Henceforth those who have not paid will have their choice of being either, drawn and quartered, tarred and feathered, strung from the yardarm, keelhauled, shot or strung up. We feel that this is quite a varied number of choices for those who have particular or unusual tastes in personal entertainment. Pay up, dudes, or we'll get the Dues Police after you!!!



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WARBIRD SCENE

by Col. Tom Leatherwood

It doesn't seem possible that a year has passed since I started this column. But as I started to open with an update on the Reno air races I realized that that was the very story I started out with one year ago.

Reno has again come and gone. Although this years event was overshadowed by the death of Rick Brickert who crashed during qualifying on Wednesday while flying the "Pond Racer". This aircraft was a hybrid composite, twin engined aircraft that many felt had the potential to challenge the "Warbirds" at their own game. Unfortunately it was plagued with engine problems from the start. Suffering 3 engine failures (one with a resultant fire) and as many forced landings (with Rick at the controls), the last failure was just the week before while enroute to Reno. Rick had recently decided to back off from flying it at Reno, however, decided to go ahead if they would consider it more of a test run than an actual competitive attempt as the aircraft was just not ready for an all out assault. They felt that if they were going to test fly it anyway that it might as well be at Reno where a lot of technical help and emergency facilities are available if needed. Plus the notoriety of simply entering a revolutionary design.

Rick apparently suffered a massive engine failure on the right side. Bad enough to keep the Hartzell propeller from feathering causing a tremendous amount of drag. Rick clawed for altitude at which point he rolled it over and headed straight for the deck in order to keep it flying, picked the smoothest spot he could find and did a masterful job of putting it down gear up. Touching down at about 140 mph (it stops flying at about 135). Unfortunately, the aircraft lacked

crashworthiness and Rick probably didn't survive the first impact.

Some people feel that unlimited air racing was, is and should remain the domain of "Big Iron" and that trying to build "homebuilt aircraft" to compete against them is asking too much of the aircraft and the pilots. Apparently it asked to much of this one. Our condolences to Rick's family and friends. He was well thought of both as a pilot and a friend.

The good news from Reno is that Bill "Tiger" Destefani, flying "Strega" his highly modified Mustang took home the "Gold", while John Moore's T-6, Bad Company, placed fifth in its class. Not bad considering they just got it airborne the week before after a total rebuild.

Locally there's not a lot happening. We seem to be kind of marking time, Warbird wise, although I feel that this will start to change fairly soon. Paso Robles seems to be a well kept secret in the Warbird community. In reality it is probably the best facility with the most potential for this kind of activity anywhere in the state.

With Chuck Wentworth planing a move here. Javier Arango. Jerry Smith with his Sabre. Our growth and expansion as a group. It's bound to happen. Say you read it here.

Anyone who went to Oshkosh this year was treated to an incredible sight as Kermit Weeks arrived straight from England in the Sunderland flying Boat. Dating back to WW11 the Sunderland is a huge 4 engine flying boat that had quite a career with the RAF as a sub hunter, destroyer, air-sea rescue aircraft. The Germans called it the flying porcupine as it fairly bristled with guns.

Kermit flew it non-stop, something like 24 hours enroute. Although if you have to do it the Sunderland with its full galley, plush lounge and sleeping quarters is the way to go. What'll this guy come up with next?

I like to focus this column on the aircraft themselves as a rule but some months it just seems like the people around them dominate the story. This is one of those months. so here's the rest of it.

Any WW11 aviation buff will remember Francis "Gabby" Gabreski of P-47 fame. His exploits would fill more space than I have available. Gabby was also honored last year by the EAA. Gabby and his wife Kay were involved in a car accident in Europe a few weeks ago and sadly Kay did not survive. I don't know if or how bad Gabby was hurt but our deepest sympathy to him and family.

Jimmy's gone west. Jimmy Doolittle has passed over at 96. Somehow I thought he would live forever. A legend well before his time. A little guy that everyone looked up to. To me he seemed bigger than life. Not particularly handsome, his was every face you've ever seen in a cockpit rolled into one. If anyone deserves a "Star" on Hollywood boulevard its Jimmy. You know they give actors "Stars" for their portrayals of personalities. What about the "Stars" who inspire those parts? Who can forget Spencer Tracy in "30 Seconds over Tokyo" as Jimmy Doolittle? If ever a man was miss-named it surely has to be Jimmy. Imagine a man who did so much having to live with a name like Do-little.

I can't think about Jimmy Doolittle without hearing a host of male voices in the distance singing "Off we go, into the wild blue yonder.....nothing can stop the Army Air Corps!" And nothing did.

Random thought: Some of those guys who flew that mission could have trained in my BT.....? Delivered in February 1941.....? Its possible. Adios!

L-Birds Fly High!

by Col. Don Leedom

The L-Bird contingent of the Estrella Squadron has been in high gear this summer, what with airshows and formation flying at most any function held in the North County. The latest of the civic celebrations was Pinedorado in Cambria where the intrepid group of Col. Corippo, Sgt. Marrett, Col. Atkinson, Pvt. Foote and Col. Leedom performed their derring-do before thousands of spectators in awe of their precision and bravery. The reaction from the ground has been great.

Not to be outdone, our Bugsmasher group has instituted a monthly activity meeting to be held the 2nd Saturday of each month. This last month featured introductory lessons in the L-16 given by Maureen Curran. Five of our members who had not had much time in the Bird got a chance to see how it was done.

Also on the agenda was a bombing contest. Col. Atkinson conducted this event using the L-2 and L-5 aircraft which are uniquely adapted for this type of precision exercise. The quality of our bombardiers might have left a bit to be desired and the result were that "each contestant qualified for the next event".

The Bugsmashers are trying to make these days "fun" and if any of you are in the area, drop by.

By the way, we served a delicious breakfast as well!

Building News

The only news regarding the Castle & Cook buildings is that there is no news. Col. Corippo has been in constant touch with the powers that be at C & C but has not received a formal go-ahead as yet. C & C did agree to let us go into the area and sweep out the buildings and mark them for teardown & rebuild so we hope this is a good omen.


On Saturday the 25th a fair-sized crew showed up at the plant site and two of the building were swept out and a third open one also cleaned up partially. Be assured that this was above and beyond the call. Not only did they sweep out several hundred pounds of bird droppings, which were dusty themselves and liberally mixed with almond dust to boot, but the sweepings included such delightful items as a dog carcass, several thoroughly used mattresses and a myriad of other gems equally as unpleasant. Don Leedom brought a small but very maneuverable, welcome, and most useful, tractor with a front end loader which was a Godsend when it came time to move the sweepings out of the buildings. We hope that this has not been a futile effort and can only pray that we hear from C & C soon.



CLASSIFIEDS

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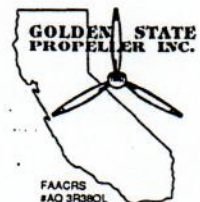


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6

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