

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE NEWS

Estrella Squadron



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

Volume V Number 4

Paso Robles, California

April 1994

April Meeting

Meeting Coordinator:
Col. Anthony Castiglia M.D.
434-1529

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 1994 at the Hangar. Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm.

The program for the evening will be varied and interesting. The speaker will be brand new member, Mr. Jim Webber, a Captain for USAIR for the past 17 years, currently flying 737s, and with PSA previous to that. Jim is an ex-Navy pilot with 10,000 plus hours in everything from a 7FC Champ to Bonanzas, T-34s, T-28s, S-2s E-2s A-4s B-727s, B-737s DC-9s and dozens of other light planes. The E-2 "Hawkeyes" were flown in Vietnam, by the way!!

Evidently Jim made several trips to Greenland during the time that the Greenland Expedition Society was removing the Lockheed P-38 Lightning from beneath 264 feet of ice. He has a number of slides to show us and should be able to provide some most interesting insights about this fantastic adventure. We look forward to his presentation and welcome him as a new member!

"Mixed Co." Trio To Sing At Meeting

In addition to the more formal program at our April meeting, we will be entertained during dinner by the female trio, Mixed Co., singing songs from the 1930's and '40's. The Trio is composed of three lovely ladies, Jenny Shaheen and Linda Wilson from San Luis Obispo and Kristie Dart from Paso Robles, wife of Squadron member Mark Dart. They have been singing together for over three years, performing at private parties, clubs and theaters, and to quote the group:

"It is really a joy for all of us to sing for those who remember and appreciate this era of war-time music. We are currently looking forward to a trip to England where we will participate as an 'Andrews Sisters' Act during the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of D-Day.

Closer to home, we are entertaining on April 16 in Fresno during the event, "An Evening With The Doolittle Raiders."



Air Show Progress

By the time this Newsletter is in your hands there will be only two months left before the opening of our Air Show. As usual, there is plenty to be done.

The individual Air Show Committee chairpersons have been knocking their socks off as always.

Rather than make our usual generalized pitch for help, this is a real plea to the entire membership. Your help is really needed to make the Air Show a success.

Everyone understands that each individual has joined the group for his or her own reasons, the main one being to have fun being associated with a great bunch of people. Some like to work, some like the social aspect and some just like to come to dinner every so often. This is great and everyone should do what makes them happy.

The fact remain, however, that unless there is a certain amount of involvement the operation as a whole cannot survive.

What is really being asked is that each member make an assessment of his or her talents and time and make some sort of commitment to one or more of the Committee Chairpersons. We need help in all areas.

The Estrella Squadron Newsletter

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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Operating Task Teams

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Program Team | |
| George Marrett | 466-7640 |
| Dinner Team | |
| Bob Miller | 434-1594 |
| Hangar Team | |
| Hal Chilton | 239-3679 |
| Grounds Team | |
| Bruce Toomey | 238-9266/9516 |
| PX Team | |
| Open | |
| Safety Team | |
| Bob Singleton | 239-2084 |
| Ground Equipment Team | |
| Dave Geiger | 239-1598 |
| Insurance Team | |
| Rusty Roy | 237-9684 |
| Meeting Coordinator - Different member appointed for each meeting | |

It is also understood that many of us simply pay for them ourselves to avoid the hassle of being the neighborhood pain in the tush ,but whatever the end result, please try to do your best. It means a lot.

Bud Anderson's Book

A number of members and others have asked where they could get copies of Bud Anderson's book "To Fly And Fight; Memoirs Of A Triple Ace."

We are happy to inform you that they are available from Zenith Books at 800 826-6600 for \$19.95. Ask for item 115871 on their list.

CAF Cadet Program

CAF Headquarters in Midland has announced the formation of a Cadet program for young men and women ages 14 through 17. This may well be in response to a suggestion made by some of our own Squadron members a couple of years ago at the annual Staff Meeting.

Cadets would receive cadet wings, a certificate, a Ghost Squadron T-shirt, name tags, I.D. card, museum admissions and the two publications, the "Dispatch" and "Contrails."

They will be able to participate in Unit activities as far as insurance will allow (no riding in CAF owned aircraft) but will not have voting rights and cannot hold office.

This sounds like an excellent program for several reasons. Number one, it is vital for the CAF to interest younger people in our activities in order to keep the association going. The early 'teen years are perfect for enlisting and training young people interested in aviation as to the patriotic aspect of our organization as well as the importance of keeping the great planes flying.

Keep in mind that a tremendous amount of planning has already been done. All that is being asked is that you give a day or two before the show, during the Show, or even just a few hours. This isn't much to ask in view of the fact that many people have been working for months.

Within the next few weeks every member will be contacted personally to see if they won't sign up for just a little bit of time, either before or during the actual Show. This will make all the difference in the world. If 50 or 60 people could be counted on to be on hand and do what is required the Show can run smoothly and be a tremendous success.

This is a golden opportunity for the CAF and the Warbirds Museum to generate some substantial income which will make our group even better and more fun.

PLEASE TRY TO HELP

Dues Due!

Yes, it's that time again folks! Annual Estrella Squadron dues are due and

payable by May 1st. Please try to bring a check or cash with you to the April meeting so that we can avoid sending out repeated expensive requests for payment for the next several months! The Squadron dues are our only real source of income except for meal donations and a little rent so it's vital to get these dues in on time. The Air Show revenue is a whole other matter and is earmarked for things other than operating expenses.

Donation Award

Tickets

As in past years, all of us will again be receiving Donation Award Tickets (read raffle tickets) in the mail that we are expected to sell.

It's understood that this is a major pain for some while others dig right in and sell every one they get. Keep in mind that they are a very good source of revenue. We hope to have 10 prizes this year, one or two major ones and others of somewhat less value but still of considerable interest.

Secondly, it is also a wonderful opportunity for the Estrella Squadron to make a real and highly visible contribution to the community. By sponsoring a number of worthy young people or even by helping some less fortunate or "problem" kids to get a handle on a better life we could be performing a true service to and for the community. In addition, as many of you know, there are a lot of personal rewards that come from this type of sponsorship, especially when some young person really responds to what you are trying to accomplish. This program is presently being brought to the attention of some of the local service groups on an informal basis to get an idea as to what the response would be. More later!

Safety Report

Bob Singleton,
Safety Officer
4/16/94

During the week ending March 12, I received two telephone reports on low-flying incidents involving L-Bird aircraft. The sightings were made by a pilot and member of the Estrella Squadron and provided to me as Safety Officer. Both sightings were made in the vicinity of the Paso Robles golf course near Niblick and Creston.

The first observation involved three aircraft in formation flight on March 9 with the lowest aircraft estimated at 500 feet AGL (above ground level). The second observation was on March 12, a single aircraft at an estimated altitude of 200 feet. In both cases the aircraft were over a populated area of Paso Robles.

The issue now is; what should we as Squadron Officers and Board Members do about this situation? We can either put our heads in the sand or face up to our responsibilities.

I suggest that our first step is to define and announce our policy on low flying. I suggest that our policy should be that all pilot members of the squadron are expected to obey the FARs (Federal Air Regulations) on flying close to the ground. FAR 91.119 says that, "except for takeoff and landing, no person shall operate an aircraft below the following altitudes:
a) Anywhere: an altitude allowing, if a power unit fails, an emergency landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the surface.
b) Over congested areas; Over any congested area of a city, town or settlement or over an open air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1000 feet above the highest obstacle

Airshow Committees & Chairpersons

The various Airshow committees and chairpersons are shown below:

General Chair

Pasquale Mastantuono
238-0676W / 238-2203H

Co-Chair

Gus Gustafson
772-3445

Flight Operations

Keith Bowers
239-3358

Traffic Control/Tickets

Gary Corippo
238-0888W / 238-2090H

Internal Communications

Bob Miller
434-1888W / 434-1594H

Safety/Crowd Control

Bob Singleton
239-2084

Concessions

Hal Chilton
434-4543W / 239-3679H

Show Publicity/PR

Lloyd Needham
239-3085

Donation Awards

Bob Miller
434-1888W / 434-1594H

Medical/Emergency

Tony Castiglia
434-1864W / 434-1529H

Formula One Races

Jeff Welles
544-7864W / 541-5765H

Military Aircraft & Performers

Gary Corippo
238-0888W / 238-2090H

Warbirds

Glen Thomson
238-4858

Hospitality Tent

Judy Corippo
238-2090

Pilots Sign-in & Motel

Bill & Pat Kitchen
238-5131

Audio Systems

Ralph Grasso
237-2813

Aircraft Fueling

Dave Geiger
239-1598

Sponsors-Planes

Obbie Atkinson
238-9212

Financial

Rosemary Netto
467-3521

Setup & Cleanup

Bruce Toomey
238-9266H / 238-9516W

Insurance

Rusty Roy
238-3940W

PX Sales

OPEN

Security - Night

George Netto
467-3521

CAF/Museum Info Booth?

P-51 Raffle/Rides?

Programs?

Friday Park Activities?

Corporate Sponsor Area/Tents?

Hang onto this list. If you can help in any area call the chairperson. THANK YOU!!

within a horizontal radius of 2000 feet of the aircraft.
c) Over other than congested areas; an altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure."

Why does the FAA have these rules? To promote safety for people in the plane and on the ground and for noise reduction. Low flying as a category of flying has a bad accident history - for obvious reasons, If the problem of low flying persists, the Squadron should enforce more serious penalties.

Here is some more food for thought on this issue. The Squadron wants to be a responsible member of the North County community. We are blessed with a large area of open space east of the airport for those who enjoy low flying.

(The above report was read at the March 16 Squadron Staff Meeting. After a serious discussion the members present decided that the Estrella Squadron policy shall be that the pilots must obey the FARs.)

Public Information Officer Appointed

It is with great pleasure that your Editor announces the Staff appointment of member Lloyd Needham as our new PIO!

Lloyd does not really need an introduction to most of the airport habitués having spent the last 4 to 5 years in and about the place as an aircraft owner and as a Flight Officer with the Coastal Division, Air Operations group of the California Highway Patrol.

Lloyd has an extensive background in hands-on public affairs and public relations work for the CHP both

locally and in Southern California at the Division level.
With his help we should be getting our Air Show publicity off the ground in short order.

Building Demolition

What's going on!
Just the most amazing amount of work you can imagine for a few retirees and a bunch of kids. What Dave Geiger and his crew have done since December 4th is nothing short of fantastic. Now that FIVE buildings have been taken down they are even getting the steel window sash from the old main building along with extra siding that we can use.

On top of that they have saved conduit, pumps, fans, beams, ventilators, motors, poles, piping and a PILE of other stuff that we can use when rebuilding and which will save us a tremendous amount of money!

To top it all off it was even arranged that the foam covered siding on the big corner building be taken off by an outside outfit at NO expense to us! The red iron will be left which Dave's crew can take down and save and which will provide the basis for a superb building, hopefully on the second tract of ground nearest the taxiway.

Now they're even talking about taking down the pole barn!!

If you haven't been by the 4th street site on a regular basis during all the demolition it's almost impossible to understand the magnitude of what has been accomplished. The removal of the buildings and the extra effort involved in saving all the accessory materials has, quite simply, made it possible for us to have the most fantastic operation of its type anywhere!

There just isn't enough that can be said except as old Winnie put it, " Never has so much been owed by so many to so few"

"WARBIRD SCENE

By: Col. Tom Leatherwood

No. XIV

"Where to start". ??? Lately "safety" seems to be on my mind a lot. Maybe in reporting the many incidents I do and particularly as I'm flying a new and more demanding type of aircraft, this topic seems to come up more often. I'm sure too that as "50" approaches my immortality seems somewhat less assured than it used to be.

Admitting mistakes and/or errors in judgment seems to be particularly hard for pilots, who pride themselves on their skill and training, to admit. Yours truly being no exception. The reason I bring this up is the news of an L-Bird mid-air back in Texas. As I write this I have as yet no details on this accident, although it doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out the most likely scenario. And barring a simple un-related mid-air, formation flying is the likely culprit. Probably by un-qualified pilots. Not incapable pilots, or poorly trained pilots. Simply pilots un-trained in the "Art" of formation flying. And it is an "Art". And an L-Bird can kill you just as dead as a P-51.

Let me be the first one to admit an error in judgment that nearly cost me and my wife the ultimate price. It happened at Madera a few years ago. Soon after I had acquired my BT-15. Well, I was hot stuff now. With my World War 11 airplane, which I felt perfectly capable of flying in any given scenario. "Formation work"? NO PROBLEM! The three other BT's there agreed to do some formation work (they had flown together before) and when I said "fine" they assumed (mistake) that I was formation qualified (capable) and off we went. I actually did OK although I don't remember ever having to work that hard or concentrate that hard or had ever found an airplane so dead set against going exactly where I wanted it to go!

The only thing that kept this flight from being a statistic was A. the professionalism of the other pilots involved B. A pretty thorough briefing beforehand. and C: My unwillingness to fly it as tightly as they would have liked. As it was we very nearly bought the farm when during a formation take-off, a four plane diamond the configuration of which we were the right point, we caught the leaders wing tip vortice which rolled us left, into middle of the diamond. For a brief moment I "kissed it off"! There was nowhere to go! We had just broken ground so there wasn't enough speed to climb over the other two aircraft on my left or enough altitude to slide under them. Full right aileron and hard right rudder had no discernible effect. Fortunately we were pretty wide and as I rolled in behind the leader I was out of the vortice and regained control, broke right out of the formation and landed. Well I won't repeat the expletives used at this moment (there's not enough space) Lets just say the word "stupid" was used with abandon.

What's the lesson here? Formation flying is dangerous and shouldn't be attempted? Not at all. It simply requires proper and extensive training and an intimate knowledge of the aircraft being flown. And practice, practice. Loosely at first and tightening up as you go. But how tight does it need to be? My answer is "not that tight"!

We're not the Blue Angels. We don't have to have overlapping wings to make it look good. It's not worth it. None of us have the time to practice and train enough (together) to make close formation flying safe.

Generally when we fly formation it's over or near a function on the ground. One or more aircraft incapacitated in a mid-air falling into a gathering of people is too horrible of a picture to contemplate. And as a side note could very well be the end of any such groups continuing activities.

AIR RACING NEWS:

I have to apologize for, again, not having the full dope on my topics

but my activities with the new airplane have kept me pre-occupied so I come to you with only bits and pieces this month. The Phoenix air races have come and gone and I'd like to report that John Moore and company has brought home the elusive "Gold" but not yet. T-6 racing is fiercely competitive. Restrictions in the modifications allowed makes the airplanes very close in performance. Tactics plays a big role in winning here and these take time to develop. John is confident that with a little more time, a tweak here and there and a little luck thrown in that given these things and with Sherman Smoot's talent in the cockpit its just a matter of time.

The racing community lost one of its more recognizable and enduring racers at Phoenix this year. The "Planes of Fame" Corsair was destroyed after pilot Kevin Aldridge(?) had to bail out due to an engine fire that got out of control. Luckily Kevin is OK although he suffered a broken leg after hitting the tail on his way out. The airplane came down in General Motors proving ground and no one on the ground was injured. Many of you will remember this the most highly modified Corsair ever. Clipped wings, cut down canopy and powered by an R-3350. As radical as it was the airplane never lived up to the expectations of it's owners as mechanical and design problems always seemed to keep it from being a true threat to Shelton, Destefani, and the like.

In my book though it was probably the most beautiful racer ever and certainly the most unique and I will miss it's presence, competitive or not.

Last month I spoke about the wealth of experience that many of our members possess and how little most of us know about you. Well have I got one for you. Even though he's not an official member of our group he occasionally attends our meetings and is known to many of us. He's very quiet and un-assuming yet probably has more experience and has flown

more different types of aircraft than any 10 of us put together.

Intrigued? There's more. While in the Navy serving in the South Pacific aboard a Carrier flying SB2C Helldivers, this pilot was switched over to F6F Hellcats (in fact his first flight in the "Cat" was a catapult assisted take-off) where in a short time he managed to down four Zero's through this "on the job" training program. This individual who still flies professionally then went on to, among other things, fly as a test pilot for Northrup and later North American not to mention Howard Hughes!

Well of course it's none other than???

See if you can figure this one out. George Marret, you know the answer so keep it to yourself.

Don't forget the Twin-Beech Fly-in April 22-23-24 right here in PR....ADIOS!

Used Oil Disposal

The Grounds Team is trying to get rid of all the barrels of old oil and whatever else may be residing in some of the rusty drums and other containers around the place. Unfortunately the powers-that-be (EPA, CHP etc.) have so many regulations that it is almost impossible to transport anything like oil in quantities of more than 20 gallons. Some of you may have noticed the small 4 and 5 gallon buckets stacked up by the southwest corner of the hangar which are being taken, one or two at a time, down to the 24th street Texaco station and Kragen Auto Parts. They will take 5 gallons at a time from regular customers.

The point of all this is simply that all concerned should understand that getting rid of old oil is a pain and if not done properly could cause some hellish problems, both monetary and legal.

There is one 55 gallon drum at the corner of the hangar that is about half

full. If the owners of various "Squadron" planes wish to dispose of oil please use this drum only. If you run out of room please notify Bruce Toomey of the Grounds Team who has other drums available. DON'T just pick any old drum and use it. They may have solvents or other contaminants already in them which can make the combination of oil and whatever is in there virtually impossible to dispose of without considerable expense, meaning hundreds of dollars.

ALSO, please do not dispose of ANY solvents or anything else but engine oil in ANY drums. We have a local "benefactor" who will take larger quantities of oil for us when we get a decent transport setup built but if what we take to them is contaminated it will cost them the same big bucks to get rid of it and they will promptly look to us for recompense. All we are asking is that everyone use their heads and handle oil disposal properly. We will have the other old drums out of there as soon as we can determine what's in them.

Missing Items

We have been informed that the parachutes belonging to or with the T-28 have disappeared. If someone put them in their own locker for safekeeping please let one of the T-28 owners know. Other than that, if anyone has ANY information about these items please let someone know about it. They may have been simply stacked in some weird place during one of our mad cleaning sessions but, in any event, lets try to get them back to their rightful owners.

More Missing Items, (Maybe!)

Was that nice long white hose on the structural Fiberglas reel just a short term loan or has that taken feet too. If someone just brought it down for

their own use or for a temporary job that's fine but if someone swiped it, bring it back. Please!!

Hats And Other PX Items!!

Bill and Pat Kitchen have arranged for the purchase of baseball caps imprinted with Paso Robles Air Show and others marked "Staff". They have arrived and they look really great. The Staff hats are obviously for use by those working the Air Show and should be left alone until handed out by the Show Chairman.

The Air Show hats are primarily for incoming pilots during the Air Show as part of their package. The REST of them are for SALE as PX items, If anyone wants one they are six bucks each or two for ten bucks. Don't just walk off with one to put on the back window shelf of your '67 Chevy next to the dachshund with the nodding head. These things have to make money for us!!

Actually they're a great way to advertise the Air Show so plunk down your bucks and get one!

BT-15 Heads East!

It's true folks! One of "our" flagships will soon be missing. Tom Leatherwood has sold his beautiful blue and yellow bird to a gentleman in Pekin, Illinois. We understand it takes so much time to keep his new bird polished that he just didn't have time to fly the BT! Just kidding, but it is sad to see such a nifty bird leave and we thank Tom for sharing it as a "CAF" plane for as long as he did. It must be said, however, that the Beech is one hell of a replacement!

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