

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE NEWS

Estrella Squadron



Volume V Number 7

Paso Robles, California

July 1994

July Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 5, 1994 at the Hangar. Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm. There will be an excellent dinner but there will be no formal program.

Instead, there will be a review of the CAF Headquarters mandate regarding the Warbirds Museum and the consideration of it by our Estrella Squadron Staff at their regular June meeting. We will also discuss the questions raised at an informal meeting of colonels last week, questions which we would like to have Headquarters answer before any final decisions are made.

As most of you know, we are at a crossroads with regard to our membership in the Confederate Air Force versus a duality of both CAF and Estrella Warbirds. We have been given an ultimatum by Headquarters that we choose between the two. We are trying to work out the best arrangement possible and we need the thoughtful consideration by all the members regarding the direction our group should take. The decisions made will affect everyone and will ultimately decide the success or failure of our organization.

It is important that everyone attend this meeting.

Special Member and Friend Makes Final Flight.

The entire Squadron was shocked and tremendously saddened by the untimely death of our good friend, Col. Paul Tardiff, who was stricken at the Hangar on June 20th, while preparing to work on one of the L-Birds.

Paul died doing something he loved, working with and being around airplanes, something that many of us think would be a good way to go. This still does not make our loss any easier because Paul was a unique individual, a hard working member and a steadfast friend.

Paul was a true contributor; one of those quiet types who takes on responsibility and always comes through. He was also inclined to do things on his own for the enrichment of the whole Squadron, not the least of which, for instance, were the name tags which he recently designed and produced which help tremendously by enabling our members to get to know one another.

Paul was our historian, our adjutant and a loyal member. In times of need he was forever being asked to do something that others had forgotten and he always came up with something that was better than asked

for. He was always there for work parties, always willing to help in any way and always tackling unpleasant task with a tremendous good will and often with a few choice wisecracks.

Paul was born on December 31, 1922, in Salem, Mass. He pioneered the first air mail helicopter company with Los Angeles Airways. For 21 years he worked at North American Aviation on the F-86, F-100, X-15, B-70 and F108 programs. He also worked at the Bendix Corp., Williams Research and the Yankee Air Force in Willow Run, Mich. He was responsible for all of the Apollo Space Program's maintenance manuals.

Paul is survived by his wife of 47 years, Eileen A. Tardiff, three sons, five daughters, a brother, a sister and 18 grandchildren.

Paul's passing leaves a big hole in our organization and a bigger void in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.

As a group and as individuals we offer our heartfelt thanks to his wonderful family for having known him and our equally heartfelt condolences for their great loss as well as ours.

Air Show: Superb!!

The Fifth Annual Air Show has come and gone and from everything we have heard from those who attended,

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

Graphics, computer layout, design and use of photocopying machine as well as stationary and other supplies are the contribution of your local FBO, Stuart Toomey and

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it was a tremendous success. Obviously, we were somewhat disappointed with regard to the number of people attending over the two days and our "take" was sort of a tradeoff but the show itself was excellent in all respects.

The air acts were superb, in general, and the contributions by some of our own members were absolutely stupendous. Jerry Smith in the F-86 made pass after pass both as a single and in formation and each one was a real crowd thriller.

Tom Leatherwood in his beautiful Twin Beech was an outstanding part of the show and the condition of the airplane and his many flybys drew favorable comments from everyone..

The Races were both unique and exciting and contributed much to the overall event. The pit areas and general workings of the air race business were of considerable interest to many who crowded the area on both days.

Our L-Birds made an excellent showing as well and all in all it was a highly acclaimed affair.

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	
Emil Mesko	238-6629
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 was also encouraging to see so many members coming out and volunteering to help. For a time there we wondered if anyone would show up, but many did and we even had non-members volunteering, several of whom put in two full days in various areas. (These guys we want!!) As a group we learned a lot from this year's event in many areas which, if really analyzed, will go a long way toward improving next year's show.

The Case of the Missing Signs

We have a mild mystery on our hands regarding the missing air show signs. On the Tuesday after the air show the sign at Creston and River Road on the Heer property was still there as was the big sign on Airport Road. On Wednesday morning both sets of signs were missing!

The Fire Department enforces the sign code, generally, but they claim to know nothing about the removal of either. Neither do the Police nor does the Planning Commission nor the

Zoning Officer. The Street Department also denies any knowledge and Roger Oxborrow is as mystified as we are.

Somebody had to have a ladder to get the big sign down because the top screws were 14 feet up. Fortunately the 16 foot 4x4s were left, probably because they were very difficult to get out but the Creston sign was taken completely, board 4x4s and bracing.

Unfortunately, the framing of the Creston sign belonged to the Balloon Festival group which granted us the right to use it by merely putting ours on top. We had said that we would return theirs when we took ours down so we are probably obligated to offer to replace their materials, at least. In any event, if anyone has any knowledge as to the whereabouts of either sign please let Bruce Toomey know at 238-9266 or 9516. No questions asked!!

Dues Due

Yes friends, there are still some, (many!!) who have not sent in their dues which were supposed to be in on May 1. As you know, this is one of the few sources of money we have during the year, along with dinner donations and the like so they are vital to the group. Please get with it and mail your check made out to the Estrella Warbirds Museum to Box 570. Paso Robles, 93447.

S-2 Airshows

Glen Thomson is still planning to attend several air shows this summer after he gets back from an Alaskan Cruise/Vacation. On July 16 there is the Sacramento Air Fair, a 1 day affair; on the 22nd Solano, and Madera on August 12 & 13. Hawthorne is on the 26th of August and, of course, Midland on October 8. There are still seats open so, if interested, call Glen.

"Warbird Scene"

Vol: XVI

By: Col. Tom Leatherwood

The airshow has come and gone, for better or worse, for richer or for poorer. A lot of people did a hell of a lot of hard work and put on one hell of a good show. All the ingredients for a financially successful event were in place. With one major discrepancy. Spectators. We just did not convince people that our event was the one to go to that week-end. Who knows why. From my perspective our strength lies in our main focus, "Warbirds"! The public let us know how they felt about Formula racing. Nada. I believe that had we placed a greater emphasis on getting a bigger fleet of WWII aircraft here, and letting the public know, the results might have been different. We spent a lot of money and TOO much effort on the race portion of our event with little return. Lets stick with a "formula" we know works!

"TO BE OR NOT TO BE" ?

That seems to be the burning question. Remain with the CAF or not. This will or should be the main topic of discussion at our next meeting and needs everyone's input. I'll not get into the issues surrounding this decision other than to say this. We exist today because of the CAF. Those are our roots. When we started we believed in what the CAF stood for, and cheered their accomplishments, which are many. But these accomplishment came about because of the involvement of groups just like ours. Our input and financial support. Do we now feel that their goals are different from ours? Do we not believe in what the CAF stands for any longer?? I for one still do. That 165 bucks I send in every year isn't an expense. It's an investment in an great organization. Having a lot of nice buildings and all is a nice concept. But what are we going to put in them? Its all well and good to say we'll have a museum, but of what? Artifacts? Relics? The facts are, there's not many relics left out there. Take Joe

Davis of Eagle Field. He's been collecting WWII artifacts for about 15 years. Seriously pursuing items and beating bushes all over the country, and in that time has managed to accumulate 2 small rooms worthy of exhibition. The wells have pretty much dried out. An aviation museum without airplanes is a pretty dull place and I believe without the CAF involvement we stand little chance of acquiring any.

WATSONVILLE FLY-IN:

The theme this year was "D-DAY" and besides having the biggest turnout ever, had the largest Warbird gathering ever. This included the Collings Foundations B-17 and B-24. Saturday night at the banquet they encouraged everyone to wear period dress and a lot of guys turned out in their old Air Corps uniforms, it was great fun.

EAGLE FIELD FLY-IN & DINNER DANCE

This a really fun little event we finally were able to make it to. Eagle field is (or was) a primary training base up near Los Banos in the valley. All that's left is one of the large old hangers and a few outbuildings which now belong to Joe Davis of Stockton. He is in the process of restoring it back to a semblance of its former days and has in addition has put together a small collection of WWII artifacts. They hold a fund raising dinner every year and everyone gets dressed up in their old (or new) uniforms and flies or drives in for a great catered dinner and big band dance featuring 40's music. An extra attraction this year was "Mixed Company", those three great gals that entertained us last month. VERY nostalgic.

GONE SOUTH:

Everyone is aware by now of the passing of our friend Paul Tardiff. His helpfulness, his ready smile and "explosive" laugh will be missed. I wish I had known him better. He had an amazing and colorful background in aviation I wasn't aware of. Eileen and Paul raised NINE children! A significant lifetime achievement in

itself. The last time I saw Paul he was riding with us in the twin-beech on memorial day while we did the fly-overs at the ceremonies. He was alone in the cabin and at one point I looked back at him and he was staring out a window with a grin from ear to ear and as he turned to look at me that grin, impossibly, got larger and he shouted something I couldn't hear over the engines and didn't really have to. We were alive! And we were flying! That's how I'll remember Paul.....ADIOS!

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