

Estrella Squadron Newsletter



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

January 1998

Volume IX Number 1

Paso Robles, California

~~December 1997~~

Inside:

December Meeting Page 1

What's Going On Page 1

Charles L. Miller Heads Up
'98 Air Show Page 2

The Best Deal in Town
Page 2

CAF Staff Meeting Minutes
Page 3

Star of the Month! Page 4

January Meeting

The January 1998 Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7th, 19978 at the Hangar with Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm.

Chef John Himes has informed us that he will be having a baked chicken dinner which should be delicious, as always.

We will have a speaker for the evening and he will be none other than our own Allen Smith who entered the U.S. Naval Service in 1937 as an enlisted man and who retired 34 years later as a Commander and Naval Aviator. He will speak about his experiences at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 where he was the leading Signaller aboard the U.S.S. Ralph Talbot, DD390 during the attack.

Allen's biography is so interesting that the rest of it will be printed on page 5 of this newsletter.

While we truly appreciate all of our speakers from wherever they come, it's always especially interesting and rewarding to hear from one of our own.

What's Going On?

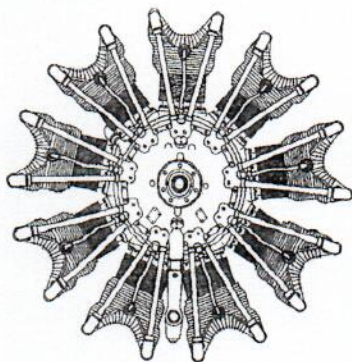
What's going on? We have more things going on than ever!! The F-86 is on the gear, the wings are on and the tail feathers will be installed as soon as we get one more part.

A huge cement base has been poured for the Titan missile, driveway market posts have been installed and painted and, in case you haven't noticed, the biggest damn helicopter on the field now graces our front display area!! Yes, a genuine Huey which was shipped in here from Billings, Montana by truck in one 68 hour trip! It is on loan to us by a Gary Roberson who has been trying to put together a Vietnam Era Museum in Santa Barbara without a great deal of success, evidently. We're delighted to be able to sort of "hold" it for him indefinitely.

In addition to the above, the whole place is looking neater and more organized, the grass is beautiful, the trees are growing and every day the place gets better.

Why not be a part of it?? The same old group, "The Few," as they are so aptly named, are out there weekend after weekend working on the displays or the grounds or at each meeting, helping out as part of the dinner crew or in some other way. The faces change somewhat but, for the most part, there are about a dozen or so individuals who make almost everything happen.

With the displays we have on hand, and especially now with the Huey, we are generating a tremendous amount of attention. People are slowing down as they pass the front of the building and they are driving in whenever the gates are open. This is definitely to our advantage and we are getting more and more inquiries about



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Submission for inclusion are not only welcomed but solicited, including articles, display and classified ads, etc. Please send all submissions to the Editor (by name) at P.O. Box 3065, Paso Robles, CA 93447.

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membership, especially from younger people, which is great.

So, why not call one of the Team Leaders on the volunteer list that's published in the newsletter and see what's going on and how you can help. You'll be glad you did.

A Generous Donation

We have recently been informed that Col. Don Hilston has made a most generous contribution to the building fund in the amount of \$5,000! This is truly a significant help in our constant search for additional funds. Not only is Don a financial contributor but he can always be counted on as one of "The Few" who readily gives of his time for whatever project is being worked on. As a group we extend our sincere thanks to Don and sort of quietly hope that this might portend future similar expressions from others.

Charles L. Miller Heads Up '98 Air Show

With the departure of Blake Wideman, Jeff Welles and Hal Chilton we sort of had much of the Air Show management staff nucleus yanked out from under us.

By a very fortunate coincidence we were able to avail ourselves of the services of Charles L. "Chuck" Miller to take over the Chairmanship of the Air Show.

Now, just because most of us haven't known Chuck there has been a lot of conjecturing as to just who he is. Well, let me assure you, this guy is not someone who just fell off the turnip truck as it passed through Paso Robles!!

From the time Chuck enlisted in the Army Air Corps at age SIXTEEN until his retirement from the Army in 1972 as a Lieutenant Colonel with over 7000

hours as an Airline Transport Pilot in multi-engine aircraft and a commercial pilot in helicopters, Chuck's background is so varied and complex that we have found it almost impossible to condense for the newsletter. As a result we will print out just the highlights which is kind of too bad because the details are fascinating. In addition to his military career, Chuck was also the manager of the Paso Robles Airport for 12 years starting in 1973 and was responsible for a number of air shows which drew from 3,000 to over 28,000 spectators with top performers such as the Blue Angels, the Thunderbirds and many civilian notables.

Now, we have struggled and worked hard for a number of years ourselves to put on our own air shows and we have come up with some questionably successful and workable systems. Chuck, on the other hand has some other ideas, born of experience, along with some of the ones we have used, and since he has volunteered to take on the management of the show this year, it is my firm belief that we should have an open mind and listen to his ideas, work them out and then line up behind him and do everything we can to help him make a success of this '98 show. If we don't we will only be hurting ourselves !!

Chuck has several ideas that are quite different from those we have implemented in the past. As an air show worker (beginning weeks before the actual show) I am 100% in favor of most of them and only question the "how" on a couple of them because of a lack of manpower.

We are going to have an air show. We have an obligation to the city to put on an air show. We can do it the easy way by cooperating with each other and helping each other in every way we can. We've all done this enough times to know how to avoid the rough spots so lets get together and work

Estrella Squadron Staff

Commanding Officer
Col. Gary Corippo
Executive Officer
Col. George Marrett
Finance
Col. Rosemary Netto
Adjutant
Col. John Davis
Operations
Col. Glen Thomson
Maintenance
Col. Al Schade
Safety
Col. John Cromwell

Staff Appointments

At Large
OPEN

PIO and Activities
Elaine Borden
Linda Hermansen
Maria Goldman

PX Officer
Willa Killion

Aircraft Restoration Projects
Col. Al Schade

Historian
Col. John Davis

Flight Coordinator
Col. Bob Singleton



CAF Hangar Phone
238-9317

with Chuck and make this '98 show the best we have ever put on.

The Best Deal in Town

Submitted by Bob Singleton

Are you interested in the REAL FLYING? Flying by feel and by your senses where you are in tune with the aircraft? The L-16 Group has several memberships for sale. This aircraft is a derivation of the 1948 Aeronca 7AC that was stripped down and refurbished by members of the Estrella Squadron of the Confederate Air Force in Paso Robles. Many Airline and Military Pilots learned to fly in an Aeronca. The L-3 and L-16 Aeroncas were liaison planes for artillery spotting and forward area observation in WW2 and Korea. You too can enjoy the experience of flying this antique aircraft.

We need a few good men (and women) who have a desire to fly this tail wheel aircraft. It will help make you a complete pilot and is the lowest cost way to fly. You also need to be a member of the Estrella Squadron (\$40 per year) and holding or capable of passing an FAA third class medical exam. For answers to your questions call Joe Nutile, L-16 Group President, 466-4529 (home) or 461-3742 (office).

Minutes of Staff Meeting, CAF Estrella Squadron

12/18/97 Location: Airport Fire House

Submitted by John Himes
Edited and condensed by Ed.

Voting Staff Members Present:

Gary Corippo, CO; Rosemary Netto, Finance Officer; John Himes, Adjutant; Al Schade, Maint. Officer; Glen Thomson, Operations Officer.

Staff Members and Chairmen**Present:**

Bob Singleton, Flight Exec; Bruce Toomey, Newsletter; Gary May, Museum Dir; Tom Gabele, Supply Officer.

Minutes: The Minutes of the 10/15/97 Staff Meeting were reviewed without correction. **Motion to accept;** Glen Thomson, **Second;** Al Schade, **Approved.**

Treasurers Report: The Treasurers Report is omitted because of length. It will be posted on the bulletin board for all to see, as usual.

Old Business

Museum: Gary May submitted a plan to enclose part of the hangar for use as a secure and proper place to display our valuable and delicate artifacts. Completion of the plan is estimated to cost approximately \$13,600. Discussion pointed to a lack of ready funds and an approved budget. Al Schade would like to see it approved in concept with financing to be approved later. **Motion** by John Himes to approve the project concept and a request that Gary May submit specific plans and costs so that Staff can address the financing at a later date. **Second** by Rosemary Netto. **Approved.**

Donations: A donation of \$5,000 was received from Col. Don Hilston for Museum construction purposes. Also an anonymous donation has been received in an amount sufficient to complete a major portion of our proposed membership building.

Building: **Motion** by Al Schade that a building committee be appointed to plan and administer the construction of our proposed membership building. **Second** by Rosemary Netto. **Passed.** Gary Corippo appointed Glen Thomson, Tom Gabele, Al Schade and Gary Corippo with Glen to serve as Chairman.

Missile: Al Schade reported that project is proceeding nicely and that he needs six pieces of aluminum to proceed with the project.

Committee Chairs**CAF****Program**

George Marrett
466-7640

Dinners

OPEN

Membership

Obbie Atkinson
238-9212

Hangar/Grounds

OPEN

John Kendall

Air Show

Chuck Miller

Ground Equipment

Dave Geiger
239-1598

Project Manager

Gary Corippo
238-2090
238-0888

Insurance

Brian Webster
237-0222

Refreshments

Doug Miner
239-1054

Activities

Elaine Borden
Linda Hermansen
Maria Goldman

Photo

Ralph Grasso
237-2813

JOINT CAF/EWM

Joint Site Improvements
Glen Thomson

Joint Community Events
Committee
Gary Corippo

Estrella Squadron

Estrella Squadron named after the Estrella Army Air Field
Estrella means "star" in Spanish

"Star of the Month"

The "Stars of the Month" for January are Col. Pasquale Mastantuono and his wife Karen, (Major Karen Mastantuono) who have supported our Squadron in so many ways that it almost impossible to remember them all. Just to mention a few of the many things that they have done for the Squadron, and what readily comes to mind, is the fact that whenever we needed a truck to go on one of our many trips to scrounge parts or items for the Museum, Pasquale is always ready and willing to pack up and go. First to Denver, Colorado to get a gun or to Stockton, California to pick up an electric panel or whatever. Once I asked him to go to Los Angeles to get an airstair that was donated to us and he said he could not get away from the plant, so he gave me the keys to his truck (full of fuel) and said, "You go," and we did. When we needed fuel for the military jets coming to the airshow and we were not sure where or how to get it, there was Major Karen with the answer to our prayers.

Now, Karen is helping us to bring about some more military equipment in the form of helicopters from her National Guard Squadron. When the helos show up they will undoubtedly be loaded with more of the great wine from their winery that seems to show up at each one of our functions!. Col. Pasquale informed me at our last Air Show meeting that the Mastantuono Winery was going to donate twenty cases of wine to the Air Show. With members like Pasquale and Karen we cannot help but succeed in our endeavor to bring a great Museum to the area.

With this in mind, we have declared them both STARS OF THE MONTH for the month of January. When you see them, congratulate them and say, "Thanks."

(The "Star of the Month" concept, and its execution, is from our CO, Col. Gary Corippo, who has long felt that some sort of recognition for many of the unsung heroes in our group was long overdue. This will, hopefully, be a monthly item in the newsletter and we thank Col. Gary for writing this and putting it together in its entirety.)

Flight Leader: Bob Singleton explained Flight Leader responsibilities for meetings and asked for our input as to how it was working. Staff congratulated Bob on a job well done and requested that he keep going as he has. Bob then requested that Gary Corippo allow the Flight Leaders to open the meetings as scheduled and planned.

New Business:

Bank signatures: Al Schade made a Motion that we approve a resolution to authorize the following persons as check signers for all bank accounts: Floyd Houdyshell (HQ) John Himes, Gary Corippo and Glen Thomson. Second, Rosemary Netto. Passed.
Meeting adjourned 9:29pm

Short newsletter again this month, my dear friends. Want to get it out on the 31st because of the holiday tomorrow.

We've had a fantastic year and it looks as though 1998 will be filled with even more accomplishments.

I personally wish the very best for the New Year to each and every one of you, the most enjoyable group of friends that I have ever known, anywhere.

Bruce Toomey