

# Estrella Squadron Newsletter



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

Volume X Number 10

Paso Robles, California

October 1999

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## October Meeting

The October Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 6, 1999 at Thomson Hall with Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm.

Our program for the evening will be provided by Col. Chuck Miller who will give us an update on the circumstances surrounding the Air Show, or lack of, for the year 2000. In addition he will show a 20 minute tape, which was created at the time the City purchased the Airport from the county to promote Paso Robles and the surrounding area as a tourist and recreational area. This should be interesting, not only from a historical point of view but might also improve the awareness of some newer Paso Roblans, such as the writer, as to what is available in the area.

There are many interesting possibilities coming up for next year and this will be a great time to get some advance information and to begin to plan for the immediate future.

A brief biography of Col. Miller appears on page three.

Our decorating team(ERM) is planning on a Halloween theme for the meeting and everyone is invited to wear a costume that would be appropriate. How many guys can squeeze into their old uniforms??

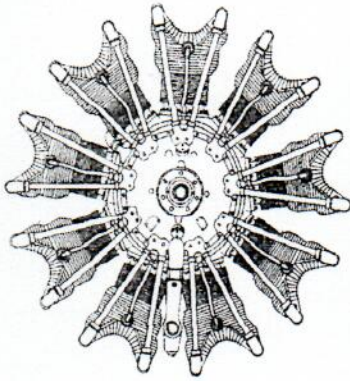
Chef John Himes is planning a Mexican Style dinner to go along with the

Halloween theme so we should have a fun evening.

## Speaking of Dinner Meetings

Evidently a comment was made at the last monthly meeting questioning the expenditure of having the Oak Park young people helping at the dinners. Well dear friends, the reasons are four-fold. Number one, the kids are very helpful, arriving early and setting up the dining area as well as helping with food preparation and doing anything else they are asked to do. Number two, they are very pleasant and well-mannered as well as being most helpful and go about their tasks with unquestioned willingness. Number three, they stay as late as they can and clean up the entire kitchen including washing pots and pans and all utensils and taking out the considerable garbage which gives John Himes' regular kitchen crew a bit of a break so they can attend the meeting. Number four, and the main reason, is because it is damn near impossible to get enough members out there from the duty Flights to handle the necessary chores even for the one time in the year that they are asked to do so!!

The Flight Program has been stripped of most of it's previously conceived duties and ideas because it has been simply too onerous for the Leaders to try to get volunteers to do anything when asked. The only duty that was left was to help with the



### The Estrella Squadron Newsletter

is published monthly as an unofficial and voluntary contribution. Contents and opinions, other than by-line columns, are the sole responsibility of the Editor, Col. Bruce MacE. Toomey unless otherwise noted.

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 or Fax to 238-9516 or e-mail to [bruce@toomey.com](mailto:bruce@toomey.com)

Graphics, computer layout, design and use of photocopying machine as well as paper and other supplies are the contribution of Stuart Toomey and,

Toomey Racing USA  
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dinners and it has become nearly impossible to get help even for that except for the few who always turn up whether it's their turn or not.

So that's the reason for the kids plus the fact that we think it's a pretty good program to support for the small amount it costs and for the help they provide.

Apparently another comment was made at the meeting as to how well off the Museum must be to be able to acquire the very nice stainless tableware that was used at the dinner. Another classic totally uninformed observation since the tableware was a donation by our own Tom Gabele and is another welcome addition that didn't cost a dime.

C'mon folks, let's not get petty. We squeeze every nickel we can find to get the most out of it and everything we do is open for any member to see.

### Donations of Things

As we are all aware, donations we love. Especially of money or good usable items and thereby hangs a problem. We are continuing to get stuff that, for all practical purposes, just isn't in good enough condition to use without a lot of expense to repair or a lot of man-hours to fix or it's just stuff that we don't need. Now don't take this wrong because the writer is just as guilty as anyone in this regard having dumped stuff off that I really wanted to get rid of but that was too good, I thought, to throw away. This is not right. If it just isn't good enough to use ourselves it probably isn't good enough or appropriate for the Museum. If you have something that could be of value, call Gary Corippo or Glen Thomson or Warren Bailey to see if there is a need for it. It's getting more and more expensive to take stuff to the dump so let's not add to what we already have. Don't give up on donations though. troops. We can use

all sorts of stuff but just give a call first, please.

What we really could use at the moment is a small Hi-Fi stack for the Museum building. We pretty much stripped the Museum of all electronics gear for our new set-up in the Meeting Hall so we would really like to have a tape and disc player combo with a good amplifier. We need to have background WWII music in the Museum building on certain occasions as well as other recordings so give this a thought.

### The New Sound System

As mentioned above and also at the last monthly meeting, we have a completely new projection system as well as a refurbished sound set-up. This was accomplished by Marty Wright and John Cromwell and we are forever indebted to them having suffered with the old set-up for years.

Marty and John and a very few others are familiar with the new system and we have been asked to inform the membership, if you are not checked out on the new system, PLEASE don't mess with it. There are a number of changes in the older equipment, now used in conjunction with the new stuff, and hookups and connections have been changed so it's not like it used to be. It's a good system, the projector is expensive and professional and we would like to have it remain in good condition for years to come.

If you have a need to work with the projector, call Marty Wright for a pre-flight and John Cromwell for the audio set-up. Thank you.

### Help Needed (What Else is New)

Those of you who have occasion to drive by the Museum during the day will probably notice a white pickup

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Executive Officer  
Col. Elizabeth R. Miller

Finance  
Col. John Himes

Adjutant  
Col. Conrad L. "Marty"  
Martin

Operations  
Col. Glen Thomson

Maintenance  
Col. Al Schade

Safety  
Col. John Cromwell

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PIO  
Blake Wideman

PX Officer  
Marty Wright

Aircraft Restoration Projects  
Col. Al Schade

Historian  
Rosemary Netto

Flight Coordinator  
Col. Bob Singleton

**CAF & Museum  
Phone  
227-0440**

**FAX 238-9317**

**Museum Hours**

Wednesday 2pm - 4pm  
Saturday 10am - 2pm  
Sunday 12 noon - 2pm

In reality, whenever the gate  
is open!

almost always there. This belongs to Warren Bailey who seems to be there every day, including weekends. You will probably also see a red van with the back lid raised. This belongs to Glen Thomson. It is also there almost everyday, all day.

The reason this is being brought up is because it seems as though these are the only two vehicles that are there most of the time and these are the only two guys who are working during the week days. I don't mean to put down people like Gary Corippo who is out there almost every evening and weekend and our wonderful landscape guys who just quietly keep the place looking like a golf course month after month. There are others, occasionally, sure but day after day the turnout of volunteers for just plain grunt work is pretty slim.

Glen is involved in half a dozen projects that he can handle himself up to a point but there are many, many times when an extra hand would be most appreciated. There are also a whole lot of projects that he simply cannot handle himself and should not try to do himself.

What we are asking is that those of you who have some time, please get in touch with Glen (238-4858) and see if you can help him in one way or another on some of these daily projects that have to be done before our meeting building and Museum building can be called completed. We need a sign off inspection on the meeting building but there are just a whole raft of small jobs that have to be finished before we can call for an inspection. Give it some thought guys and put in some time.

Brief Biography of Lt. Col.  
Charles Miller

Chuck Miller was born in Corvallis, Oregon in 1930 where his father was a logger. One of six children, Chuck joined the U.S. Army Air Corps. at the

age of 16 following the loss of both parents. Assigned to Crane and Shovel school, Chuck was shipped to Guam after the course ended. Chuck was promoted to Buck Sergeant 10 days after his 17th birthday. After his discharge in 1949, Chuck and a friend traveled around the U.S. working at odd jobs until the fall when Chuck entered the University of Oregon. In January of 1951 he reenlisted for Army Airborne and was assigned to the 11th ABN Division at Ft. Campbell as a Heavy Equipment Platoon Sergeant with the 127th ABN Engineers. In January of 1954 after completing his hitch, Chuck went back to Oregon just long enough to decide he really wanted to make a career in the military. Four months later in April of 1954, Chuck reenlisted and was sent back to the 11th ABN Division at Ft. Campbell, KY. He applied for Officers Candidate School and completed the Artillery Officers School at Ft. Sill, OK where he was in the top 5% of his class. Because of his high scores Chuck was allowed to change branches and switched to the Army Corps of Engineers.

In 1957 Miller completed Army Flight Training and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1959 Chuck was assigned to the 30th Topographical Survey Battalion and was sent TDY to Iran for a year. Returning to the U.S. in 1960 Miller was assigned to ground duty at Ft. Belvoir, VA as a Company Commander and later as the Battalion Commander of the 2nd Battalion of the Engineer Center Regiment. Completing the Engineer Officers Advanced Course, Miller was assigned to the Mediterranean Engineer Division in Livorno, Italy as a pilot and Area Engineer. The Division was responsible for all construction for Southern Europe, all of Africa and the Middle East as far as Rangoon, Burma. During his three year assignment Miller traveled extensively to 63 countries.

## Committee Chairs

### CAF

#### Program

George Marrett  
466-7640

#### Dinners

John Himes  
466-6680

#### Membership

Obbie Atkinson  
238-9212

#### Hangar/Grounds

OPEN/  
John Kendall

#### Air Show

Chuck Miller  
466-1212

#### Ground Equipment

Dave Geiger  
239-1598

#### Project Manager

Gary Corippo  
238-2090  
237-2090

#### Insurance

Brian Webster  
237-0222

#### Refreshments

Tom Gabele  
237-1567

#### Activities

OPEN

#### Photo

Wally Engle

#### Newsletter Editor

Bruce Toomey

### JOINT CAF/EWM

#### Joint Site Improvements

Glen Thomson

#### Joint Community Events

Committee  
Gary Corippo

Miller had two tours in Vietnam, the first being in 1966 with the 1/9 CAV, First Air Cavalry Division where he was the Scout Platoon Leader and Troop Commander. Returning home he was transferred to Presidio, San Francisco as the Senior Arm Engineer Advisor to the California National Guard. His second tour to Vietnam in 1970 was with the First Aviation Brigade as Airfield Commander at Dong Tam in the Delta and then at Marble Mountain, Da Nang.

Chuck retired in May 1972 as a Lt. Colonel with 24 years of active duty at the age of 41. Chuck married his wife, Betty Renton, in September of 1972. Miller worked as a Construction Superintendent for Dart Industries and flew for a period as a commuter pilot with Swift Airlines out of San Luis Obispo before going to work for the City of Paso Robles as the Airport Manager when the city acquired the airport from the County of San Luis Obispo in 1973.

As the Airport Manager, Miller was instrumental in getting the airport subdivided into separate leasable parcels for an Industrial park and Aviation uses.

Miller started the first Annual Paso Robles Airshow in September of 1973 to show the citizens of the North County what they had acquired for \$1.00 and to attract business people to the airport. From the initial crowd of 3,000, Miller averaged 10,000 persons in attendance during the 12 years he was the Airport Manager, with such acts as Bob Hoover, Art Scholl, the USAF Thunderbirds and the USN Blue Angels. The largest crowd was in 1983 with 27,000 people. Chuck retired from the City in 1983 and after building custom homes in the Camarillo area, traveled extensively around the United States in a motor home with Betty. The Millers relocated to Bend, Oregon in 1992 where they owned a small farm and lived there where Chuck served on the Board of Directors for the Central Oregon

1994  
Airshow for four years and Betty worked at an Interior Design Studio. Moving back to Atascadero in 1997, Chuck got back into putting on the Paso Robles Airshow in 1998 and 1999.

Chuck holds Master Aviator Wings and has over 7,000 hours of fixed wing and rotary wing time. He is also a Senior Parachutist.

Some of his Military Awards include:

Distinguished Flying Cross; Bronze Star Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters; Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; the Army Commendation Medal; the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm; the Vietnamese Civil Action Honor Medal 1st Class as well as numerous other awards.

## Raffle To Be Held Again at October Meeting

Our raffle experts will again be in full swing at the October meeting with a special bonus. The first prize will be an overnight package from the Tobin James Winery Bed and Breakfast operation. This would make a nice gift for someone coming to the area to visit, or as a gift for anyone, for that matter, as a pleasant way to spend a weekend. There will be other things as well so be prepared to dig a little into those deep pockets for the good of the organization.

## CAF Staff Meeting, Sept. 15, 1999

Staff Present: Cols. Toomey, B. Miller, Himes, Thomson.

Guests: Col. Chuck Miller, Warren Bailey, Marty Wright, Jim Pickens, Tom Gabele, Paul Clark

In the absence of Adjutant Marty Martin the minutes of August 18th were not available and a motion was

made, seconded and passed to dispense with them.

The financial report was presented by Col. Himes and approved unanimously.

### Old Business

There was discussion regarding having the Board of the Estrella Warbird Museum meet on a different day of the month rather than holding their meeting prior to or after the Squadron Staff Meeting. No action was taken.

### New Business

Year 2000 Paso Robles Airshow Annual Airshow - Because the City of Paso Robles will be starting construction of the new terminal facility, parking area, roads and sewer in March or April and continuing through October of 2000, there will be a serious impact on trying to hold an Airshow. Col. Chuck Miller, Airshow Director, proposed that the 2000 show be canceled and resumed in 2001 when there will be adequate ramp area and support parking available. Moved, seconded and passed to cancel the 2000 show and resume in 2001.

USO Dinner Dance - Col. Miller proposed to have the existing Airshow Committee work on putting on the Annual USO Show Dinner Dance as a fund raiser for the Estrella Warbirds Museum. This will be open to the public with tickets made available to the Estrella Squadron membership first before going on sale to the public. The Sponsor Program is being revamped for 2000 and

2001 and will cut back the number of seats available for Sponsors at the Dinner Dance to ensure more seats are available for sale to raise money for the Museum. Discussion followed on the location. Chuck will check into the use of the Fairgrounds so that more tickets can be sold. It was moved, seconded and approved to hold the Dinner Dance in either June or July of 2000 depending on available dates.

There being no further CAF business, the meeting was adjourned..

Respectfully submitted,

Col. Elizabeth Renton Miller, Acting Secretary.

### Museum Looking Good

If you haven't been in the Museum building for a while take a look when you come out to the October meeting. Our hard working curator, Warren Bailey, is beginning to work many small miracles with the material he has to work with. The place is clean which is a vast improvement in itself and displays are beginning to be set up with actual name plates or identification plaques which are long overdue. These latter are, for the most part, the result of Marty Wright's efforts and the good auspices of some great guys at the PG&E Diablo plant.

Many items have been moved into better and more prominent locations and the whole place just looks good.

Warren also doubles as weed puller, ditch digger, junk hauler, vacuum cleaner pusher, parts reconitioner and just about anything else you can imagine and we owe him a real debt of gratitude for his efforts and positive attitude.

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### Missing Documents

Does anyone know the whereabouts of our former Adjutant's meeting notes, pictures and other memorabilia for the period 1994 or 1995 to 1997 and maybe even later? As you know, we received a whole raft of stuff that belonged to John Davis but meeting minutes and many pictures and CAF memorabilia seem to have gone astray. He might have loaned them to someone for a specific purpose or they may be in a file in the trailer or almost anywhere.

Wrack your brains folks and see if you remember anything that might help us fill the gap in meeting notes as well as the photos and other stuff that John had.

~~~~~

### WWII Aircrew & Support Group

From Harold Schuchardt and our friends at the Aircrew and Support Group comes the following:

"Kindred Spirits,

Our 16th semi-annual luncheon will be Thursday 14 October at the SLO Elks Lodge (in San Luis) . Check-in at 12:30.

At 1:00pm a roast beef buffet is available at \$8 per person. Wives and guests are invited. NOTE on your calendar NOW. There will be no follow-up phone calls.

I will need a check no later than Monday 11 October. Send it to me (Schuchardt) at 636 Cuesta Drive, SLO 93405. No checks will be cashed until after the luncheon,

Bring your favorite WWII paraphernalia for display.

I am coordinating with other local veteran's organizations in an effort to get publicity for 11 November Veteran's Day/week. Needed: Veterans of all services to volunteer for interviews or video recording. Call me evenings at 545-4485

Harold Schuchardt)

(Ed. note: Apparently the program will be "B-24 highlights by a Mr. Charles Palmer".

I believe our own Harry Hines was also active with this group!)

~~~~~  
Newsletter Editor  
Wanted

This is a plaintive plea from your Editor who has been grinding out this deathless prose for the past 11 years. Frankly, I am just getting a bit pooped and I firmly believe that a fresh outlook and style would be good for the organization. Maybe something a little less personal and more objective.

The newsletter needs to be expanded both as to content as well as readership numbers and since Joan and I have been doing it alone all this time the thought of handling even more in our amateur hand to hand manner is a bit tiring.

If we get a steady 200+ mailing we can have John Himes run it through his print shop with bulk mailing and all that good stuff and while it would cost a bit more than just the price of postage it wouldn't be too much. (At the present time Stuart Toomey and Toomey

Racing USA provides the majority of the paper and the free use of the copier and has been doing so for the same 11 years!)

Seriously, I really believe a new outlook and a new approach would be good and I would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to take a crack at it.

I have really loved doing it because it kept me in touch with everything that was going on and has helped me get to know almost every member. Since I am not much of a mechanic, plumber or hammer wielder I felt this would be a more or less continuing contribution and I have been very proud to be involved. If anyone is interested, please give me a call at 238-9266.

And Last But Not Least

A Little Reminder From Bob Kinsell  
(Bob gave this to me weeks ago)

July 21, 1999

To: Estrella Squadron Newsletter Editor.

After listening to the news from Martha's Vinyard and remembering our own Paso Robles take-off crash a few weeks ago, I am reminded of the advice of our Base Commander of the Advanced Flying School, Ellington Field, Texas.

July 2, 1942 ---

"To all graduating pilots as you start your Military Operational Training program --- The best advice I can give you to remember --- Each time you start your take-off roll remember this little rhyme ---

There are old pilots and there are bold pilots but there are no old bold pilots!"

This may not be new but it's well worth remembering!

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What is it?



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Confederate Air Force  
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To: