

Estrella Squadron

Newsletter



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

Volume X Number 12

Paso Robles, California

December 1999

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December Meeting

The December Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 1, 1999 at Thomson Hall with Social Hour commencing at 6:00pm and Dinner at 7:00pm.

Our dinner for the evening will be special!! A full turkey dinner with all the trimmings prepared by Rosemary Netto, Bob Miller and crew!! This is something we look forward to every year and it reminds us of the dozens and dozens of great meals served up by these two during the first six or seven years of our existence. We'll thank you right now, you two, in advance, for something that we know will be super!

Our program for the evening will be provided by none other than our own Gary Ryan, professional musician, raconteur, ship captain, heavy iron pilot, aerobatic pilot and provider of all of our large Museum, CAF, Air Show and aircraft signs. He will entertain us with his music and will tell us something about what it is like to own and fly a Grumman Bearcat and a few other stories! A brief biography of Gary's varied career will be printed on page three of the newsletter.

We will have some Christmas carols, some good cheer, some good friends getting together and a grand time. **TRY TO BE THERE!** Also, remember, reservations are mandatory, especially for an event like this. There will be food for approximately 100 people and there won't be any way to stretch it. Five of our dear lady members will be asked to

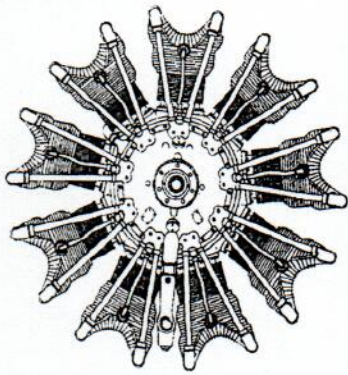
cook turkeys and there are a lot of other people contributing time and effort. SO, contribute in your own way and **MAKE RESERVATIONS**. Call or FAX the Museum numbers as shown on page three of the newsletter, or Bruce Toomey 238-9266 (after 9:00am) or Betty Miller 466-1212. Try the Museum first, please, so we can have a record of the calls on the machine.

Moving Onward

Not only do we have stairs leading to what will be our new library, we have a door instead of a hole in the outer wall and we have flooring more or less in place. At this point we are moving all the books that we can from the floor of the meeting building up to the library area. Until the heating ducts are moved around and outlets made for the bar and a couple of other areas we can't fasten the flooring to the joists but this will happen soon.

This is a job that requires some manpower and at this point Glen Thomson seems to be doing most of it by himself. Please give him a call and ask what he needs and when, so we can get this area finished off enough to move everything necessary up there. We need the space on the ground floor so we can start renting the area out and we have two events coming up in the immediate future so we need help NOW. We can work on the library area later when the floor is down.

At least at this point we can actually see the wall in the southwest corner of the meeting room and it is just about



The Estrella Squadron Newsletter

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completely useable. Please, let's get this area finished.

F-104 Starfighter

Ron Mullisen is continuing to work on getting the F-104, now languishing on a back lot at Cal Poly, to our Museum. Evidently the transfer is getting close and it will be a wonderful addition to our static lineup. This is a beautiful and unusual aircraft and, if we can obtain it, will be a real point of interest for the Museum. Our thanks again to Ron for his efforts.

"Ground School Plus" Set To Start

According to Col. Marty Martin, the ground school that was discussed in the last newsletter will be starting up on January 22 and is planned to continue up to about the end of May. This will be a most interesting program, staffed by professionals with help from museum members. It will be a great opportunity for young and old(er) alike and it is entirely possible that flight instruction will be offered as well as the program progresses. This is just the type of program that the Museum should be involved in and can be a great attraction for many people. Please call Marty Martin for details, 226-9058.

Read Your Mail!!

This is a reminder to Museum Directors, CAF Staff Members, Committee Chairs and various appointees that the mail distribution box in what was the office in the meeting hall is for your benefit. Your editor picks up the mail at the PO Box every day and distributes it at the meeting hall. There is all kinds of good stuff there for those listed above and is the only way we can distribute various types of information in addition to mail without calling on the phone.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR BOX!!!

Duty Flight For December

Meeting

The Duty Flight for the December Meeting and for the month is November Flight under the direction of Wally Engle.

As you all know, the Flight Leader system has been informally modified somewhat and will become more defined in the immediate future. For the next meeting or two, however, the duties of the Flight will be limited to helping to set up the dining area for the monthly meeting and greeting new members and guests and making them feel comfortable.

=The cleanup after the meeting will be handled by the Oak Park young people who will also assist with setting to some degree but mainly will help in the kitchen.

For the time being this is all that is being asked of the Flight groups and we actually don't contemplate very much more in the way of responsibilities. The old idea of being a labor pool just is not practical and was certainly not received with a whole lot of enthusiasm. So... if those of you who are available from November Flight will lend a hand it will be much appreciated.

Museum Volunteers

(Sort of an editorial albeit unintended)

In the same vein as the above, I have been talking with our Curator/Director, Warren Bailey who is heavily involved on a number of different fronts regarding the promotion of the Museum. (You might also note that we have had more publicity in the local papers in the past few months since Warren took over than we have had in the past several years!)

Warren has a lot going on at the Museum, much of it in areas of expertise that only he can handle. Unfortunately he has been sort of

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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!

pushed into other things that I think, frankly, are not particularly important for one with his contacts and abilities. A lot of what he has been doing is little more than manual labor and I sincerely believe that it is more important for him to operate in his own areas of expertise than digging ditches and a few other things. There are many of us who could be of tremendous help in this area and relieve him for more important things.

What I am talking about is my perennial boring subject, volunteerism. We have our regular small bunch which, for years, I have somewhat facetiously called "The Few", but I really feel that there a number of people out there who could do a lot if they would just come out and talk to Warren and see what has to be done. I'm NOT talking about raking rocks and other totally "make-work" jobs but rather things within and around the Museum that would contribute tremendously and that would be truly interesting. Some of the museum and corporate exchange programs, for instance, will help tremendously to project our image and make us known to, respected by and comparable with other museums and groups around the state and elsewhere. These things take some set-up effort and some artistic thought and I know that there are a number of individuals in the group with a flair for this sort of thing.

Warren is opening up a whole new area for us, organizations, people and contacts that I didn't even know existed. If we get behind him I think we will see a blossoming of our own endeavors in ways that we never even dreamed of. I've started to check into other museums and groups while I'm on the road and when I talk to Warren about them he knows all about them, has contacts within them and more often than not, has started some sort of project involving them that will benefit us.

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So what I'm saying, troops, is drive on out to Dry Creek road at times other than just the monthly meeting night and see what's going on. We're not looking for slave labor or garbage haulers, we're looking for people who simply will take a little time to help on some of the projects that will make our operation something of which we can be more and more proud.

By the way, although our Docents are being asked to work specific "open" hours, Warren has said that the Museum should actually be considered open from around 10:00am to 5:30 pm Tuesday through Saturday. (He is off Sunday and Monday) He is conducting more and more tours for school groups, civic organizations, Scouts and others and has many individuals and small groups dropping in informally every week. If there could be just one or two others there during some part of these days it would be a tremendous help for him and would certainly help the Museum.

Think about it guys and gals, you'll be glad you did.

(I didn't intend to get on my soap box but this is important to us. BT)

A Sketchy Bio of Gary Ryan!

More Points of Interest Than Bio!

Gary became a civilian pilot while still in High School and aviation became a major interest. Well after the end of World War II when many of our famous aircraft were being sold as surplus Gary, at age 19, acquired his first P-51 for the princely sum of \$2,500. At the same time he purchased 12 brand new engines for an amount of money that was less than the shipping costs to get them delivered!

After college Gary spent 20 years in the music business, much of it on the road traveling as was the life of a professional musician. He had his own P model Bonanza and made 21 trips

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

across the entire United States during that time.

With John Church in 1966 he purchased a Grumman Bearcat and formed the Monterey Air Racing team and they raced the airplane with professional race pilots at races all around the country. Along with his music, Gary has been involved in a number of different areas such as being the Track Announcer at Laguna Seca for auto racing as well as announcing for various aviation events. He is also the captain of the Tiger's Folly, the tour ship operating out of Morro Bay. A versatile character!

He was one of the original members of the group who started the Gathering of Warbirds in Fresno and has been a long time friend and chase plane pilot for Wayne Handley.

Gary is still actively flying and will provide us with information about his exploits which will include slides as well as stories. He will also provide us with some wonderful musical entertainment on the banjo and will be accompanied by his bass player. We have been looking forward to this ever since we tried to get him to entertain us several years ago. There was a glitch in the arrangement back then and he couldn't make it but we are delighted to have him with us this year.

Personal Apologies to Member Kevin Snyder

Well, I did it again. I was supposed to include Kevin's business card in our list of advertisers about two newsletters ago. Kevin is the nice guy who runs Fashion Dry Cleaners in Atascadero and Deep Steam Carpet, Upholstery and Drapery Cleaners also in Atascadero and who wanted to become a member of the Squadron. He looked at our newly laid and somewhat discolored rug in the meeting building and offered to clean it and rejuvenate it for free instead of

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paying \$50.00 for a membership. Since we had a previous quote for about four times that much from another cleaner we said "yes" so fast I think it scared him. In any event, he did a great job, became a member and asked for the simple favor that we run his card ad in the newsletter.

To be embarrassingly honest I forgot to do it three times in a row and when I remembered, about two minutes before I had to print the newsletter this afternoon, I couldn't find the card.

Kevin, I apologize profusely, Send me a new card and I promise I will put it on a page by itself in the next newsletter and I'll run it in the ad section for the next twelve months!
Bruce Toomey, P.O. Box 3065, Paso Robles, CA 93447.

On A More Serious Note

If anyone really reads this rag instead of just using it for bird cage bottom liners they may have noted that we have not run a column about CAF Meeting Minutes or even EWM Minutes, for that matter, for a couple of months.

The reason is that we have held two joint meetings of the CAF Staff and the EWM Board to try to iron out some of the vexing problems that continue to plague us with regard to the intermingling of the business of the two entities.

Since the inception of the EWM we have tried to meld the two groups into more or less one organization. This effort simply has not worked. We have a fractionated membership that isn't sure what they belong to and we continue to have problems with accounting for income and expenses.

While no earth shattering decisions have been suggested or made, the two groups did agree that the CAF Staff

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and EWM Board should hold completely separate meetings and have separate agendas. Over the years the CAF Staff meetings have become a complete mish-mash of CAF and Museum business which has accounted for much of the monetary confusion. CAFHQ rules and regulations are completely different from anything we do internally as the EWM and trying to accommodate both merely results in stretching the rules until they become meaningless and useless. Henceforth, meetings will be held on separate dates each month and will be limited to discussions pertaining solely to each group's business.

Since the EWM is rolling along quite nicely on its own the CAF has sort of taken a back seat. Separate meetings and more input by the colonel members will give the CAF the opportunity to decide in which directions they intend to move. Do they want to obtain an aircraft from HQ and handle it as do many other units or is there some other agenda that would be worthwhile for them.

We have been fumphering along here trying to operate together but always uncomfortably aware of the fact that certain areas of responsibility had to be considered separately and definitely aware of the fact that the finances had to be strictly separate.

We all are also well aware of the fact that the CAF in Midland is not terribly happy with what is going on here in Paso Robles because, number one, they see the Museum as

somewhat of a threat and number two, they don't own it.

It is obvious that the Museum is becoming more and more important on a local level as things continue to build. This is not the Museum versus the CAF, it's just that the growth of the Museum as a local entity seems to be much more appealing to local donors than an out of state organization and, let's face it, there are those who, not only are not overly thrilled with the para-military aspect of the CAF but, who are somewhat put off by what they think the name itself implies.

It is our understanding that this latter aspect is evidently somewhat of a problem on a national level since we have been told, even by CAFHQ personnel, that certain large potential corporate donors have indicated that they are not willing to donate to something called the CAF.

This is too bad in a way because there is not one of us who doesn't believe in the basic mission of the CAF as a patriotic, historic and educational all-American organization.

Be that as it may, on a local level we have certain aspects to consider to allow both groups to chose their own pathways and direction of growth.

It is believed that both groups should have some internal discussions and decide for themselves what they want to be. Staff and Board meetings are easy to call but the colonels as a group must do some soul searching and the balance of the membership must also be counted as to their expectancies.

We are fortunate in having Judge Ed Chidlaw and Attorney Paul Clark on our team. These two esteemed gentlemen have spent considerable time in updating the by-laws of the Museum to bring them more in accordance with the legal requirements of non-profit organizations. This updating is

presently being reviewed and, if accepted, will strengthen the Museum organization and will start us on a path of proper businesslike management and fiscal responsibility.

During this rather tentative state of affairs the present Staff of the CAF is being asked to extend their term of office into at least the early part of next year. By that time we hope to have some face to face discussions with HQ personnel to help in determining what decisions and directions may be required by HQ and what possible concessions they might be willing to make because of our rather unique situation.

More on this will be brought to the attention of the membership in the very near future because we all wish to solve the existing problems and forge ahead with one effort to become the best that we can be as soon as possible.

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