

The Estrella Warbirds Museum

# The Eagle

Honoring the Past—Inspiring the Future



Volume 16, Number 3—Paso Robles, California—March 2011

VOL: XXII-03

## Obbie Orville Atkinson



**1924—2011**

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#### Words to Live By from the Old Curmudgeon

Never interrupt someone doing what you said couldn't be done.

*Amelia Earhart*





**“Thoughts From the Flight Line”  
Musings by our President, Rob Kinnear**

The February dinner meeting featured Colonel Barbara Nuismer who is the commander of Camp Roberts. She gave a very enlightening talk about the camp. A number of people came up after the meeting and told me how much they enjoyed it. Larry’s roasted pork loin was delicious.

As most of you know we lost one of our founding members, Obbie Atkinson, this month. Although he had not been on the Board of Directors for some time, he was here regularly with a smile and ready to help. He was always a big promoter of the Museum. His family held a celebration of life in our hangar with at least 280 people attending. Bill Houston, our Chaplin, performed the commemoration. After the ceremony, nine aircraft did flyovers. We are naming the hangar in memory of Obbie.

As you know Peter Visel resigned due to relocating to Illinois. Gary Nemeth was elected to the Board this month to fill the remainder of Peter’s term. Gary is a long time member of the Museum having joined us in 2006 and has held an advisory position on the Board of Directors for sometime.

Our being open on Thursday is meeting with good success. The fact that we are getting over 20 people each Thursday so far, and this is still winter, looks good.

We are busy in the restoration shops, and with being open 4 days, we can always use more people. Come out and join us.

Rob Kinnear  
EWM President

**Dinner Menu  
Wednesday, March 2, 2011**

**Corned Beef & Cabbage  
Seasonal Vegetables  
Green Salad  
Roll  
Larry’s St. Patrick’s Day  
Surprise Dessert**

**No Host Bar  
\$20.00 Per Person**

**RESERVATION  
Call Rosemary at 467-3521**

**Or visit our website at  
www.ewarbirds.org  
By NOON Tuesday, March 1**

**Thank You  
Social Hour 6pm-7pm  
Dinner & Program Follow**

**Dinner Catering by  
Larry Eastwood of Vic’s Cafe**



**2010-11 Museum Board of Directors  
*Officers & Executive Board***

President & CEO

Rob Kinnear

Vice President

Wayne Rice

Secretary

Margi Bauer

Treasurer

Rosemary Netto

Ex-Officio

Betty Miller

Board Members

Ron Boyte

Ron Brooks

Gary Corippo

Dave Highland

Mike Kelley

Gary Nemeth

Museum Information

Phone 805-227-0440 (Voice Mail Only)

Th/Fri/Sat/Sun Phone  
238-9317





**March 2, 2011 Program—Memories of Vietnam  
The Battle of the Kham Duc Special Forces Camp  
Gregory W. "Greg" Sanders  
By George Marrett, Program Chairman**

Gregory W. "Greg" Sanders, a native California, was born in Alameda. He is presently an attorney (Real Estate and Telecommunications Law). Greg was admitted to practice in California and Washington, D. C. in 1977. He is a partner in Nossaman LLP with offices in Los Angeles, Orange County, Sacramento, San Francisco, Seattle, Austin and Washington, D. C.

Greg served as an Infantry Officer in Vietnam. He was a platoon Leader (and temporary Company Commander), 1/6th Infantry Battalion, 198th Brigade, Americal (23rd Infantry) Division (LZ Bayonet); Americal Division Psychological Operations Officer (attached to the Division G-5) (Chu Lai) - 1969-70. He will speak on the Kham Duc Special Forces Camp battle of May 10-12, 1968. The battle is now the subject of a book he has in process entitled *Bait*. The third draft of the book is nearing completion and will be going to University of Kansas Press in a couple of months.

Greg served on the Cambria Community Services District Board of Directors from 2002 to 2010 and has been a member of American Legion Post 432 and Rotary Club of Cambria. He is married to Teri and has three children - Sarah, Andrew and Michael.



**A Blood Drive In Honor Of Obbie Atkinson**

The friends and colleagues of Obbie Atkinson have decided to organize a blood drive in his honor at the Estrella Warbirds Museum.

Set aside time on the afternoon of Friday, May 6, 2011, between 2:00 PM and 6:00 PM to visit the Museum and donate blood. San Luis Obispo County has for a variety of reasons always needed more blood donors and this is an excellent opportunity for every member of the Museum to remember Obbie and do something very important for the community. The bus will be parked at the Museum and it will be convenient and easy to make your donation. Additional details will be forthcoming as we get closer to the May date.



## **Docents—The “*Sine Qua Non*” of the Estrella Warbirds Museum**

**Say Welcome and Thanks to our New Docents**

**By Jeanne Thiebault—Docent Coordinator**

Docents are the backbone of our museum, whether they work on the restoration of our aircraft, run the F-14 Flight Simulator, greet visitors in the Freedom Hall Museum or the Woodland Automobile Display, or work in the Museum Gift Shop, without them our doors would be closed! They cheerfully greet our visitors and enlighten them about our excellent exhibits. When next you visit the Museum, please take a moment to say hello to and welcome our newest docents: **Woodland Auto Display** - Chuck Kincannon, Dan & Carol Verstuyf, Bob Fritzinger, Joe Mayasse, Kenny & Toni Moore and Jerry Greer; **Gift Shop** - Mary Becker, Lynne Kincannon, Toni Moore and Vickie Tovar; **Flight Simulator** - Dave Barnick. If you have been thinking about getting more involved with your Museum and you have just three hours to spare one day a month, we would be delighted to have you as a volunteer. Please contact Jeanne Thiebault, [tbow@att.net](mailto:tbow@att.net), or call the Museum 238-9317 for more information.

### ***Supplies for Soldiers***

#### **Supporting The Men & Women of San Luis Obispo County Who Go In Harm's Way**

At the October dinner meeting we began collecting much needed personal items for shipment to the 80-150 residents of San Luis Obispo County who are currently serving their country in combat. Your response has been heartening and has reflected well on the Warbird Museum and its members. The need of these brave fellow citizens, however, has not diminished and so we will continue to have the barrel at our Monthly Dinner meetings to receive your contributions. We have listed below the things that are most asked for or most welcome. As small as it might seem, don't forget that the "Notes of Encouragement" mean so much to those who are far from home and sometime think they have been forgotten. A note needn't be eloquent or long, just a short word of thanks for the sacrifices being made and an assurance that these brave men and women remain in our thoughts and prayers will suffice. And, of course, a note accompanied by any of the items listed below is especially welcome.

#### **Items that are most requested are**

Snacks (no chocolate)  
Dried Fruit  
Flavored Coffee Creamer (small)  
Hard Candy  
Red Vines Licorice

Sunflower Seeds  
Sweetened Powdered drink Mixes  
Beef Jerky  
ANY small individual snack packages  
Gum

#### **Comfort Items**

DVD's (old & new)  
CD's (old & new)  
Disposable Cameras  
Handheld Electronic Games  
Misty Mates, Bandana Coolers/Cool-Ties  
Batteries (AA, AAA, C)

Glad Ware Plastic Containers  
Glade Stick-Up Room Deodorizers  
Notes of Encouragement  
Small Battery Operated Fan  
Small Squirt Bottles  
Swifter Dusters

The items collected at the Monthly Dinner meetings will be sent by Supplies for Soldiers directly to the men and women from San Luis Obispo County who are on the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For more information on the committee's work or what you can do to help contact Gary Nemeth at [garysam@charter.net](mailto:garysam@charter.net).

George Taylor  
Gary Corippo

Betty Miller  
Chuck Miller

Gary Nemeth

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# Movie Nite !

Wednesday, March 9

6:00pm – Pizza & Popcorn

6:30pm - Movie Time

## STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

**STARRING:** Jimmy Stewart &  
June Allyson



This film is known for flight scenes of cold war aircraft B-36 and B-47. Dutch Holland (Jimmie Stewart) is forced to give up his professional baseball career for the anonymous and dangerous existence of a bomber pilot. Also focuses on family sacrifices. Nominated for an Oscar for writing and a National Board of Review for Motion Pictures award winner for aerial photography.

★ ★ 1/2 Leonard Maltin (1955 – 114 min.)

### MOVIE BUFF'S QUIZ

What did Jimmy Stewart's character in "Strategic Air Command" Lt. Col. Robert "Dutch" Holland and Obbie Atkinson have in common? And how many combat missions did Jimmy Stewart fly in WWII? Vietnam?

The B-36 and B-47 are the "real" stars of this film, which won awards for its spectacular footage of the B-36 in action. For extra credit, what is unique about the role of the B-36 in this film?

Finally, for the title of "Movie Trivia Expert" what was the impact of "Strategic Air Command" on Air Force recruiting in the months following the films release?

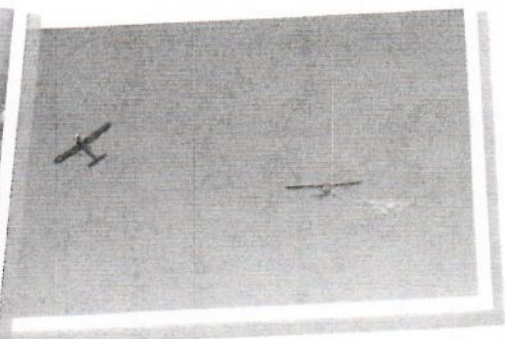
See the answers on page 9.

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## **Obbie Atkinson Memorial Service** **Saturday, February 12, 2011**

The Estrella Warbirds Museum, its members and friends, gathered in Hanger 1 on the second Saturday of February to remember and say farewell to another member of what has come to be called "The Greatest Generation". Obbie Atkinson was born in December 1924 in rural Jefferson County, Illinois. He grew up on a farm with no electricity or running water and when the Country he loved called he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in the early years of World War II and became an aircraft commander and instructor pilot in B-29 Superfortress bombers. Beginning with his first solo in a Piper Cub in 1942, he remained an active pilot for 68 years. Obbie, the quintessential American boy, married his high school sweetheart Doris in 1944 and they raised three sons and a daughter. After a long, successful career as an automobile dealer in Illinois, Obbie and Doris retired to Paso Robles in 1986 where he was a very active member of the Estrella Warbird Museum, taking especial pride in flying the lead aircraft in Freedom Flight, a formation of WWII aircraft honoring veterans each Memorial Day and Veterans Day. You shall be missed, Obbie, but never forgotten.



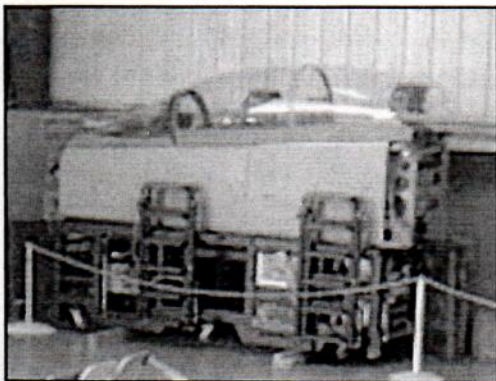
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### *U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Woesche Joins the Fleet*

At 418 feet, USCGC Woesche is the lead ship in the new Legend-class of national security cutters designed to be the flagship of the U.S. Coast Guard's fleet, capable of executing the most challenging maritime security missions including supporting the mission requirements of the joint U.S. combatant commanders. The Legend-class is the largest and most technically advanced of the Coast Guard's three major classes of cutters and will replace the aging 378' High Endurance Hamilton class cutters that have been in service since the 1960s. The Hamilton-class Cutter Dallas was the first U.S. warship to arrive in the Georgian port of Batumi after Russian troops invaded the country in 2008.



### **New F-18F Flight Simulator on Display**

Lemoore Naval Air Station has loaned the Estrella Warbirds Museum an F-18F flight simulator. The simulator has a two-position cockpit that is identical to that found in the actual aircraft. While the F-18F remains a static display the FA/18 Simulator in Freedom Hall is ready for anyone who wants to experience what flying a genuine high-performance aircraft is all about. Many thanks to NAS Lemoore for the loan.





### Committee Chairs

*Questions? Suggestions?  
Please give us a call*

#### Aircraft Acquisitions

Gary Corippo—712-1222

#### Aircraft Restoration

Al Schade—927-8305

#### Bar

Rosemary Netto—467-3521

#### City Liaison

Chuck Miller—466-1212

#### Decorating for Membership Dinner

Judy Corippo—238-2090

#### Docent Coordinator

Jeanne Thiebaut—235-0166

#### Freedom Hall

Betty Miller, Curator—471-0472  
John Gramentine, Associate Curator  
235-1195

#### Facility Rental

Betty Miller—471-0472

#### Freedom Flight

Bob Kelly—462-9128

#### Gift Shop

Jackie Brooks—703-0028

#### Ground Equipment

John Everett—237-9523  
Dave Geiger—239-1598

#### Grounds

Yardvark: The Weed Eater

#### Group Tours

Jeanne Thiebaut—235-0163

#### Insurance

Ian Webster—237-0666

#### Membership

Bob Kelly—462-9128

#### Movie Night Directors

Margi & Harald Bauer—466-4440

#### Newsletter

Quarterly Edition—Russ Surber 238-3150  
In-Between Editions—Betty Miller  
471-0472

#### Photographer

Wally Engle—610-8966  
Mike Levine—712-8336

#### Public Information Officer

Sue Dollemore—dollymore@aol.com

#### Programs

George Marrett—466-7640

#### Research Librarian

Charmaine Peckinpugh—239-9919

#### Site Maintenance

Ron Brooks—462-8141

#### Web Master

Peter Visel—423-6409

## **Docent Doings**

**Jeanne Thiebaut—Docent Coordinator**

### Freedom Hall

Simulator update: Last week Ron Brooks repaired the weapons button on the Simulator which was not firing. He also replaced a toggle switch on the seat so that it raises and lowers to fit the person flying it. Mike Levine cleaned up the Plexiglas and replaced the small white stickers on the side of the Simulator. The timing was perfect because Chuck Keezer had five rides in a row on 2/12/11. And, speaking of "simulators", check out our new F-18F Simulator on display in Hanger I, complete with front and rear cockpits. While the F-18F Simulator, on loan from NAS Lemore, is not available for "test flights" you are always welcome to take a checkout flight in our fully operational FA-18 Simulator.

### Gift Shop

The newest arrivals in the Gift Shop are the beautiful etched glass night lights. Different models of aircraft are depicted on each one including the C-47. Reasonably priced, they will make unique gift or addition to your home.

### Woodland Auto Display

Check out the Reo Speed-wagon's shrink-wrapped tow car, the Morris Minor painted to match. Other new additions are a black five window 1932 Ford Coupe (on loan,) a maroon 1932 Ford Phaeton and a green 1932 Ford Victoria. In the racing section there's a new sprint car on loan from George Snyder.

### Hall of Fame - Thomson Memorial Hall

You have probably noticed the wall of pictures in Thomson Memorial Hall featuring our members in uniform. We are still looking for any size pictures of our members who have been in the service and not honored on our wall. Please bring us one of your pictures in uniform and note when it was taken, where it was taken, what branch of the service you were in and your rank. For those of you not in the service, please bring us a picture of you standing by a plane and give it to Gary Corippo to place in our gallery.

### Coming Attractions

An M1-13 armored personnel carrier and an Army fuel truck are expected to join our collection of military vehicles in the near future.

Jeanne



## Curator Report

January 19 to February 16, 2011  
Betty Miller—Curator, Freedom Hall

The Good News is that the Estrella Warbird Museum continues to attract more and more people who wish to donate unique, interesting historical items and memorabilia. Each week brings forth a plethora of items which draw in more new visitors, as well as repeat visitors who want to see what new items are on display.

The bad news is that the Curator Storage room and Curator Office areas have reached overflow status! We are looking for additional storage to temporarily house these treasures until they can be rotated for display.

Curator Associate **John Gramentine** has been painting four new display cabinets in between inclement weather and a bad cold. The end is in sight and many new displays will be completed by the end of March. John has been working to put together a display of authentic WW I uniforms, helmets and firearms from Germany, France, and the United States. A WW II Japanese soldier in authentic uniform will soon be on display and John has plans to add a display of Spanish American War items as well.

Curator Assistant, **Carol Weiss**, has been working with a prospective Donor to obtain a WW II uniform, once worn by a well-known entertainer of that era. If we are able to work out the details, this should be a very unique display.

If you have something you wish to donate, please call **Betty Miller** at 471-0472 or **John Gramentine** at 235-1195 BEFORE you bring the items into the Museum. We are not accepting memorabilia items "on loan" at this time. All items donated to the Museum must be donated with no conditions. Donated items are subject to rotation, research and study and available display space.

Betty

### MOVIE BUFF'S QUIZ THE ANSWERS



Both Obbie Atkinson and "Dutch" Holland flew B-29s in World War II. Jimmy Stewart was a flight instructor on B-17s and then a B-25 command pilot in WWII. Stewart flew 20 combat missions in WWII and one combat mission in Vietnam. He retired from the Air Force Reserve with the rank of Brigadier General

"Strategic Air Command" is the only motion picture to ever give the B-36 a major role in its story line. However, by the time this film was made in 1955 the B-36 already was in the process of being phased out in favor of the B-47.

The Air Force claimed that following the release of "Strategic Air Command" recruitment increased by about 25%.

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**Estrella Warbird Museum**  
4251-A Dry Creek Road  
Paso Robles, CA 93446



**Non Profit Org.**  
**PAID**  
**Permit 163**  
**Paso Robles, CA**

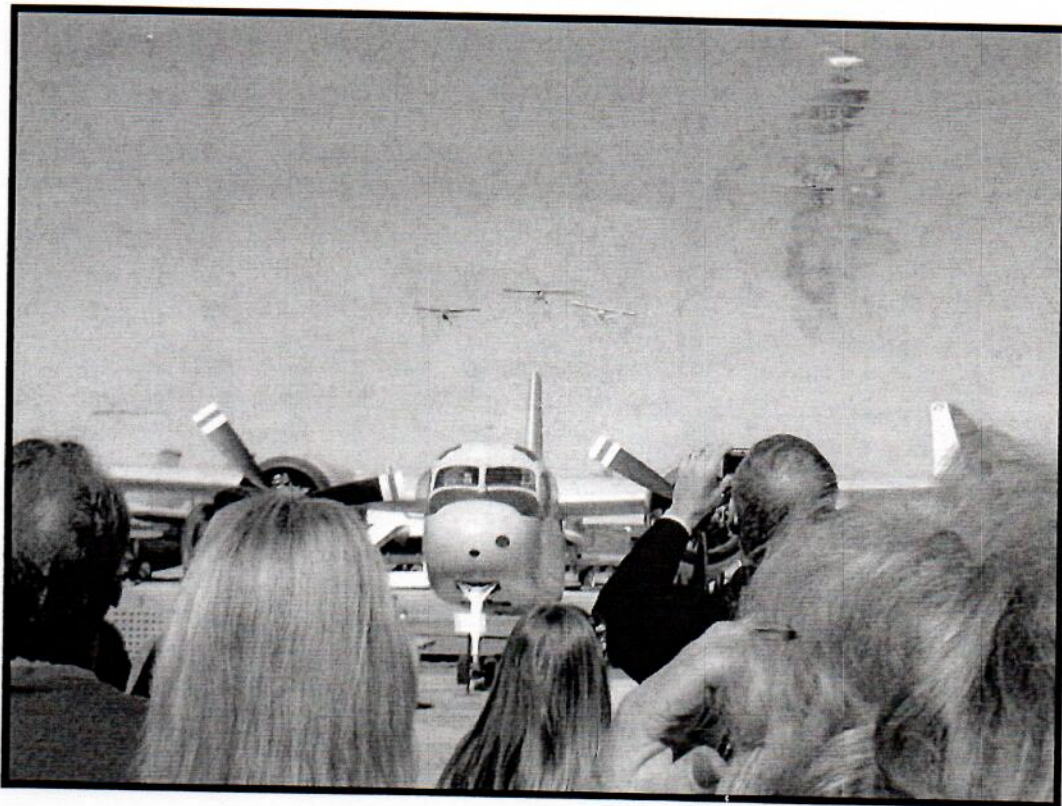


***Supplies for Soldiers***

Remember to bring something for the County's fighting men and women when you come to the March Dinner meeting.

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~~JR...~~  
~~...~~  
ATASCADERO CA 93422-1762

**"Missing Man" Freedom Flight for Obbie**



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