



NOTAMS.

NEWSLETTER OF THE AVIATION MUSEUM OF SANTA PAULA

First Quarter • 2014 March, 2014

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MUSEUM DIRECTORS & OFFICERS:

- Judy Phelps, President
- Bruce Dickenson, Vice President
- Janice Dickenson, Treasurer
- Eric Dullenkopf, Secretary
- Jerry Deanda
- Wendell Dowling
- Judy McCarthy
- Luci Galgano
- Mitch Stone
- Dave Watson
- Pat McCollum, NOTAMS Production

SPECIAL VISITS WITH THE GURNEY FAMILY

JANICE DICKENSON

I wrote a Torn from the Scrapbook article not too long ago about the first flight of Harlan A. "Bud" Gurney together with Charles Lindbergh and their life-long friendship thereafter. To reiterate for those who are new to our mailing, Bud was a hangar owner at Santa Paula Airport for many years, until his death in 1982. Bud's friendship with the famed



Pictured left to right are Bud L. Gurney with Mother Hilda and wife Carol photo by Wendell Dowling

Lindbergh is certainly special but as I have learned over the years, Bud's story in itself is fantastic. We are currently working on an exhibit for the Museum that will hopefully do justice to this wonderful story.

Harlan L. Gurney, who also goes by "Bud," is the first born son of the "elder" Bud. He is not truly a junior since they have different middle names (and there is a good story on this). "Son" Bud and I have kept in contact over the years and he most graciously drove to Santa Paula from Lompoc recently, bringing 2 large containers of photo albums and scrapbooks of his father's, dating back to the early 1920's! Wow. This family did the most amazing job of saving things I've ever seen. As a history buff, this is equivalent to a pot of gold. Bud and I spent the morning pouring through these treasures and upon seeing various photos and articles, Bud's memory lit up and he regaled me with the most fabulous stories. To put it simply, I had a blast. And I want to include also that we ran across photos of "son" Bud too that invoked stories of his own life that, though I have known him for years, I had not known. And again, wow! Clearly it's genetic.

I was so honored that Bud entrusted

continued on page 2



MUSEUM PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JUDY PHELPS

The Heat is on!

The New Year has gotten off to a great start. The heat has been turned on by Janice Dickenson to get exhibits in place and great progress is being made. Just yesterday there was a paint party and now all the walls have matching paint. In addition large photographs are being printed and will be going up in the next few days. Also in the works is a Gurney/Lindbergh display. In the coming days there will be plenty of new things to look at. Feel free to stop by and have a look.

A few months ago Dale Summersille became the Director of Operations. She is doing an outstanding job on many fronts. The volunteer base is growing rapidly and many activities have been planned for future First Sundays. It's unfortunate that March got rained out

and we didn't see the Corvette Club or the Roam'in Relics. Dale has a great line up of car clubs along with airplane displays. In addition she has arranged for food trucks so you won't go hungry when you come out to visit on First Sundays.

Mitch Stone and Dave Watson have joined the Board as Directors. They filled the positions that were previously held by Clay Phelps and Jeff Wenig. Clay and Jeff oversaw the construction of the new hangar in addition to many other things. By no means are Clay and Jeff leaving the Museum, they just felt it was time to make room for new ideas. Both of them will still be very involved with the Museum. A big thank you goes to Clay and Jeff for their many years of service.

On May 17th we will be having our Wine, Wings & Winnings fundraiser.

Judy McCarthy, the Museum's Event Coordinator, has come up with a Caribbean theme. Each year this event just gets better and a good time is had by all who attend. We are also having a silent auction and are looking for donations. If you are a business owner or individual who has something to contribute please call the office 805-525-1109 or send an email to amszp@verizon.net.



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SPECIAL GURNEY FAMILY VISITS Continued from page 1

these treasures to my safe keeping so that I could scan them for our Museum. I took them home and set up shop on my dining table and spent literally hours scanning and copying. Time flew - it was that interesting! I stopped only for meals until I finished and had it all packed up safely to go back home. On behalf of the Aviation Museum and all involved, I thank you Bud and family for this wonderful gift to our Museum. We will treasure it and share it honorably. Thank you!!!

And what a great delight it was the following week when "son" Bud and his wife, Carol, came to visit...

bringing special guest, "Mother Hilda." Yes, "elder" Bud's wife is alive at the impressive age of 97! And she is amazing. Though she has had some health problems recently, she was in great form at our visit and I was absolutely awed by her energy, sharpness and her everlasting beauty that I remembered so well. She was the most enthusiastic and gracious visitor to our Museum. Hilda has many fond memories of our airport and she was so pleased that we are sharing these wonderful stories and she clearly showed her delight at seeing what we have created so far. We had a very enjoyable lunch afterwards and the entire visit by the Gurney family was a real treat for me. Again, thank you!

See Torn From The Scrapbook article on page 3

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Torn FROM THE SCRAPBOOK

JANICE DICKENSON

The Spirit of St. Louis Movie

Charles Lindbergh and Bud Gurney took their first flight together in 1922 and for a time afterwards they barnstormed together, performed in Air Shows, then both followed with flying the mail. Their friendship spanned their lifetime. Lindbergh visited Bud over the years and they came to Bud's hangar at Santa Paula Airport. One time, in 1969, Bud and Hilda got into their 1927 Gipsy Moth and Lindbergh jumped into one of Cliff Robertson's Tiger Moths and they went out to play around in the skies as they did in their youth. It turned out to be their last time flying together, Lindbergh died just 5 years later at age 72.

The classic movie "The Spirit of St. Louis," released in 1957 and starring James Stewart, was a film depicting Lindbergh's famous 1st solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927. Lindbergh insisted in the contract negotiations with Warner Bros. that his friend Bud be hired on as the "Technical Advisor" for the film. This was to help assure the movie be made "as accurate" as possible. Bud accomplished much in this role but some things got "Hollywood-ized" regardless because that's just what they do in Hollywood; they can't seem to help themselves. Bud is also depicted in the movie by the actor Murray Hamilton and he did quite a bit of the flying for the movie as well. The scene where Lindbergh is taking off in the Spirit from New York headed for Paris? That is actually Bud taking off from Santa Maria in a Spirit replica. The trees he appears to barely clear are actually eucalyptus trees that then bordered Santa Maria Airport. Boy, that Hollywood, they fool us all the time! Bud also helped (and son Bud worked with him on this) fabricate the multiple drop parachute drop assem-

*Left top, Newspaper shows Pilot Bud Gurney and wing walker Billy Wilder flying over Los Angeles
Right, Bud Gurney shows director Billy Wilder how to strap himself in for wing walking
Far right, actor Murray Hamilton, Bud Gurney and actor Jimmy Stewart*

blies and then he flew the Standard J-1 with his name on the side in the Flying Circus scenes, most of which sadly ended on the cutting room floor because the movie became too long. Bud was granted a leave of absence from his job at United Airlines for this project.

Some fun stories from behind the scenes...

The two Standards used in the Flying Circus sequences were restored from scratch by Otto Timm, who was the pilot who gave Bud and Lindbergh their very first flight together. Strong bonds were formed by these men in their youth that lasted a lifetime.

And another is the both famed producer, Leland Howard, and director, Billy Wilder, had a serious discussion regarding the hazards of the stunt flying sequences for the Flying Circus scenes in the movie. It went to the point that Wilder bet Howard that he could do the stunt safely himself. This led to an actual bet - reported in the paper as being \$50 but Bud jotted in ink on the article that it was actually \$200. Wilder told Bud that he would do it if Bud would fly him. Bud was a wing walker in his early years - beginning at age 16! - so Bud got up on the wing of the Standard J-1 with Wilder and checked him out on the "how to" of wing walking. They then took off and performed for the crowds above Los Angeles. As Gurney noted on the newspaper clipping of this story, "Poor Leland!" He apparently lost \$200 but Wilder's win was reportedly donated to the Damon Runyon Cancer Fund.

How many people can scratch "flying 1918 airplane over Los Angeles with world famous Hollywood director standing on top of wings - on a bet" off their bucket list?

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THE 2014 WINE, WINGS & WINNINGS

JUDY McCARTHY

Welcome to Wine, Wings & Winnings, A Caribbean Getaway! This is my personal invitation to you to join the fun!

Feel the Caribbean breeze, come and celebrate the Aviation Museum of Santa Paula's annual Wine, Wings & Winnings, Calypso style! Be entertained with Steel drum music as we celebrate the many different cultures, food and dress of the Caribbean islands.

Our famous eclectic Silent Auction will not disappoint, and we have added a few new items to our Casino Night for your gaming pleasure.

Each guest will receive a souvenir wine glass, drink ticket, \$500 funny money for the Casino and a private bidder number for the Silent Auction. Enter to win one of the three trips to Las Vegas to be drawn at the end of the night. There will be spicy salsa tastings from Red Hot Foods, hand crafted beer, premium wines, Caribbean food and a fun evening for all.

Thank you for your Support.

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Join us for a
**CARIBBEAN
GETAWAY**
WINE & WINGS
CASINO NIGHT
AND SILENT AUCTION
\$40 ADVANCE
\$50 AT THE DOOR
SATURDAY, MAY 17, 2014, 6:00 P.M.
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PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE
AVIATION MUSEUM OF SANTA PAULA
SANTA PAULA BIDDING!



THANK YOU BRUCE & BARBARA ANSPAUGH

JANICE DICKENSON

Those of you who have visited the gift shop in the Museum for the past couple of years have certainly noticed the gorgeous wood and glass display case and counter where the store's office and check out area is located. Bruce and Barbara Anspaugh built this gorgeous piece from a design that Wendell Dowling created. It is perfection! Well, just recently this creative team came up with a new piece and it is a display case located at the wall hanging the horizontal stabilizer of the International. It is again, perfection and we are so happy that these generous and talented people are a part of our Museum team and we truly appreciate all the time they give in contributing these fine pieces to our Museum. Thank you Bruce, Barbara and Wendell!!!

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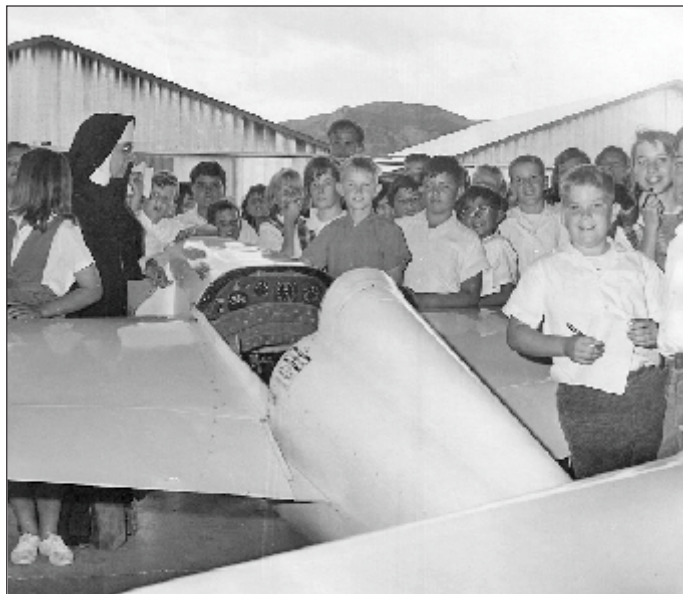
CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY: GWEN DEWEY

IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE VENTURA COUNTY NINETY-NINES

DALE SUMERSILLE

On January 21, over 75 people attended the Ventura County Ninety-Nines' presentation at the Aviation Museum of Santa Paula. Susan and Mike Dewey spoke about their mother Gwen, founding member of our Museum, as well as founding member of the Santa Paula Ninety-Nines (now the Ventura County Ninety-Nines), part of the International Organization of Women Pilots. We delighted in their stories of a feisty, free-spirited woman with a zest for life and a passion for flying, her family and her community. To sweeten the evening, they also brought some rum balls made from their mother's favorite receipt.

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DO YOU KNOW?

This photo was taken in 1964 at SZP by the Santa Paula Daily Chronicle. It depicts a field trip from St. Sebastian's Elementary School. Leading the field trip is a gentleman standing at the back of the group. Can you guess who it is? Answer on page 7



GONE WEST: JOE HITCH

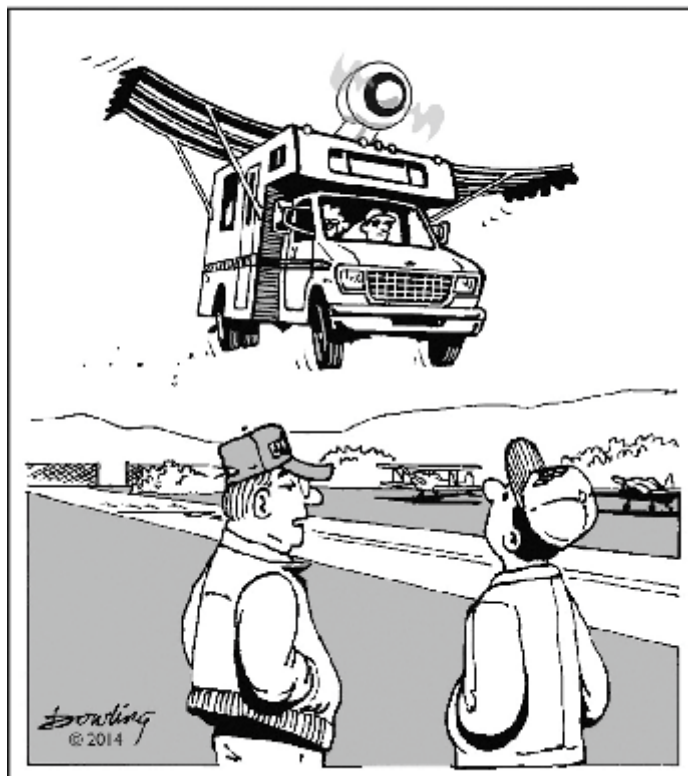
BILL HESSER

Joe Hitch, a long time resident and pilot in Santa Paula, passed away December 18, 2013 at the age of 90. He had close ties with the late Sammy Mason. A memorial service was held on Friday, January 24th, 2014 in Reno, NV.

I knew Joe was personal friends of many "old timers" but maybe some of the legacy residents might remember Joe. For additional information, please contact me at plncrzy67@gmail.com or 775-828-4979. Thanks, Bill

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TIN TOWN 'TOONS™



"HERE COME THE KEEGLE'S IN THEIR RV."

ANOTHER STUPID STORY ABOUT PURPLE BELLY OR SPOT LANDING CONTEST! SOME SANTA PAULA AIRPORT LORE

JERRY DEANDA

Some of us used to have impromptu barbecues across the runway, near the tetrahedron, after work on nice summer evenings. Nothing elaborate... a hibachi, some hamburgers, hot dogs, Frisbees, airport dogs running around, soft drinks and a beer or two. Not too long after we got Purple Belly the Champ flying someone got the idea that it might be fun to have an informal contest using Purple Belly as the airplane of choice. After all, anyone can fly a Champ, and just about everyone did.

The rules were fairly simple but just a little more hardcore than the normal spot landing contest you see at fly-ins... somebody would go to the Michael Dewey Aviation ramp and get Purple Belly and taxi it to the tetrahedron. Anybody we could rope in that was qualified to fly the airplane gave the designated "Holder of the Money" a couple of bucks and got in line. When his or her turn came up, they'd get in the airplane and take off, fly a normal traffic pattern and when they were opposite the spot (actually the one third line across the runway) they would close the throttle all the way and glide to a landing. The object was to land three point (all three wheels touch at the same time) so that the tailwheel was as close to the line as possible without touching ahead of the line. If any part of the airplane touched early, you were considered to have hit the end of the aircraft carrier deck and crashed. Landing early was a disqualification. The pilot was expected to close the throttle fully and not open it except for maybe using a brief blast of power to clear the engine, then land just over the line. The pilot would do this by skillfully playing his turns and airspeed. Slipping (making the airplane fly sideways to use up excess altitude) was permitted but considered very bad form. Pilots who had not soloed yet were allowed to fly too, they just had to take a safety pilot. The honor system assured everybody that the student did all the flying. Each pilot got two trips around the pattern, one right after the other.

Volunteers marked where the tailwheel touched with high tech instruments... their eyeballs and a rock. The rock only moved when a landing was shorter than where the rock happened to be. There was no second place. Second place was considered first loser, only the shortest

distance was counted or even got recorded. Winning distances were rarely more than 5 feet and the competition could get pretty close. We had some great stick and rudder fliers on the airport in those days, just as we do now.

The winner got all the money that the "Holder of the Money" was holding. That flyer was also rewarded with the responsibility of paying for the airplane rental (\$10 an hour, wet, ha!) and going to the grocery store to buy the barbecue. If the pot was big, we had steak, if it was small, we had hot dogs. Folks brought their own beer.

We did several of these and I don't recall any problems. No accidents, no scary moments, no drunks, no arguments, not even a harsh word. It really was just a bunch of local pilots and airport people getting together and having a good time.

Naturally, when all this was happening, everybody else partied and had a good time. Nobody drank until they were done flying, of course. There was a lot of Frisbee throwing and, well, some folks kind of got up on the tetrahedron and got spun around, which wasn't all that good for the tetrahedron. Seems like there were always a couple of airport dogs around, too, and that was a nice touch.

I have great memories of the time I won this thing. Hey, lucky is better than good any day, right? OK, maybe I HAD practiced a little. Or a lot. We had tried to get Steve McQueen to fly that day, but he was already drinking his first beer of the day and declined. We did have quite a few competitors that day though, and one was Perry Schreffler, a retired airline pilot who had flown B-17s over Germany and then flew the Berlin Airlift. "I don't mind losing to you" he gallantly told me. I had a proud moment to hear something like that from such an airman. And Steve McQueen shook my hand and congratulated me, as did a bunch of other competitors.

These events just kind of trailed off. I don't know when or why they finally stopped but it was years before we had another spot landing contest, and those weren't quite as good. There was some FAA involvement and everybody flew their own airplanes. Still lots of fun, but not quite the same.

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MEET THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS DALE SUMERSILLE

LUCI GALGANO



Dale Sumersille has been AMSP's Director of Operations since last fall. She has been breathing air into the museum's membership, volunteers and First Sunday Activities. She has a history of developing and running a museum and was instrumental in creating the Reyes Adobe in Agoura Hills.

Dale loves volunteers and says she loves to find out their hidden talents. Her short term goal is to bring youth to the Museum via educational tours and community service projects. She already has a high school student signed on to clean the Museum's Stinson and he will also talk to our First Sunday guests about the history of the airplane.

Dale has been interested in aviation since she was 10 years old when she met a WASP who was actively flying and had great stories to tell. She is a student pilot flying the Skycatcher at CP Aviation. In her spare time, she loves to go fishing, camping, gardening and riding her motorcycle.

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DO YOU KNOW?

Answer: Guy in back is Mike Dewey



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OUR MISSION

*To educate the public of all ages
in aviation and its history,
both in general, and as it relates to
Santa Paula and to inspire, motivate
and challenge the younger
generation to carry on the dreams
of our aviation pioneers*

AMSP CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

APRIL

6 First Sunday
featuring Ventura County Chevy &
Ventura County Model A Clubs

MAY

4 First Sunday
"Wings and Wheels Day" featuring
San Fernando Vintage Chevy, Mini
owners of America Los Angeles,
Porsche 356 Club, Ural & Triumph
Motorcycle Clubs

17 Wine Wings & Winnings

JUNE

1 First Sunday
Featuring Roamin' Relics Car Club,
Porsche Club and Ventura Early
Ford V8 Club

Join us!



Become a Museum Member Today!

Make checks payable to and mail to:
Aviation Museum of Santa Paula, Inc.
800 E. Santa Maria St., #E • Santa Paula, CA 93060
*Membership and donations are renewable annually
and tax deductible to the extent allowable by law*

- First Flight (*students & seniors*) \$20.00
- Solo Pilot (*Individual*) \$35.00
- Squadron (*Family*) \$45.00
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Listed on the AMSP Tribute Tower in perpetuity

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Yes, I'd be interested in Volunteering at the Museum. Call me.