



NOTAMS.

NEWSLETTER OF THE AVIATION MUSEUM OF SANTA PAULA

Second Quarter • 2013

April, 2013

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DIRECTORS & OFFICERS:

- Judy Phelps, President
- Bruce Dickenson, Vice President
- Janice Dickenson, Treasurer
- Jerry Deanda
- Wendell Dowling
- Clay Phelps
- Jeff Wenig
- Eric Dullenkopf
- Judy McCarthy
- Luci Galgano
- Mitch Stone, Director of Ops
- Pat McCollum, NOTAMS Production

CASINO ROYALE

WINE, WINGS & WINNINGS

JUDY MCCARTHY, EVENTS COORDINATOR

What is Casino Royale and Wine Wings & Winnings? It's a Dinner, it's Casino Night, it's a Silent Auction, it's a Party!

Please accept a personal invitation to all of you to join in the fun.

This is the Museum's annual fundraiser. It is a combined Dinner, Silent Auction and Casino Night. An evening at the Museum with a "Bond, James Bond" 007 theme. Who knows? Maybe Mr. Bond may show up himself.

Of course, on display will be motorcycles, cars and airplanes that "Q" would love to get his hands on but are there for your viewing pleasure.

Included in your entrance price: dinner catered by Agent Wenig and MI6; \$500 in funny money to cash into chips at the Casino; 2- drink tickets for premium wines from local wineries, hand crafted beer & non alcoholic drinks; a private bidder number for the sensational Silent Auction. All this for only \$40 per person with advance reservations, \$50 at the gate.

The Casino will have Roulette, Craps, Poker-Texas Hold 'em, as well as

8 Blackjack tables, with celebrity blackjack dealers, from Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and local pilots.

You will be able to park on the airport near the event with lots of handicap parking available. Enter at 5th St. from Santa Maria St. Look for the Airport Event Parking signs. Her Majesty's Secret Service will direct you to parking.

Make your reservation today! You can contact Luci 805/340-8549 or email lucigalgano@sbcglobal.net.

The gate opens at 6:00PM.



NOTAMS.



JUDY PHELPS

MUSEUM PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Things are still moving along and much progress is being made on completing the headquarters building.

Currently the heating and air conditioning is being installed. After that the roof is to be repaired, insulation installed and flooring selected. It seems to never end with the countless details but I do believe we are nearing completion. Then comes what we have all been waiting for "displays." Several people have been working on the project and I hate to name names but there is one individual I would like to recognize and that is Mike Dewey. A few months ago Mike took the lead as project coordinator and has been the key to keeping things moving.

Last year, Julie Shular who was our Director of Operations had to step down unexpectedly due to illness. Julie did a fabulous job and we soon missed her. This is when Board Director Luci

Galgano offered to be the interim director until a replacement could be found. Once we started the search for a new director of operations it wasn't long before Mitch Stone came out of the woodwork and was selected as our new Director of Operations. Mitch is a long time Santa Paula resident and historian. He is a pilot and owns an airplane and hangar here at Santa Paula Airport. Welcome Mitch and thank you Julie and Luci for doing a great job.

With better weather and spring in the air, the past few First Sundays have been well attended. We are trying to have a display of different airplanes or cars each month and so far this is going well. I am a member of the Santa Paula Rotary Club and last First Sunday I invited the club to the Airport. The club had a BBQ

(spring event) at the west end of the airport and I was able to round up 6 pilots including myself to give free airplane rides. The turnout was wonderful with 68 Rotarians and their families enjoying the airport for the day and 25 taking a ride in an airplane.

On May 18th we are having our annual Silent Auction and Casino Night. You may have already seen the postcard we mailed a few weeks ago. This is

our only fundraiser for the entire year so I hope you will come out and support the Museum. You are sure to have a great time!

NOTAMS.



Jeff Paul diligently working on getting the Museum finished



L to R; Santa Paula Rotary club president, Guy Cole goes for a ride at the club picnic at Santa Paula Airport; Aviation Museum Director, Jerry Deanda helps load another Rotarian in a plane piloted by his wife, Dianne Williams; Museum President Judy Phelps with Maria Bombara prepare for take off in Judy's Pitts.



DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS REPORT

MITCH STONE

About fifteen years ago, I was hanging around the airport, minding my own business (or some fair approximation of it), when a

tiny blond-haired lady in a tan station wagon drove by. She stopped, for some reason I can't recall, and we chatted. Before I knew what hit me, I'd volunteered to work for the Aviation Museum of Santa Paula.

Many could repeat this story. The gifted persuader was Sally Phelps, of course. For several years after that first conversation, Sally and I were teamed on the production of the Museum newsletter, which was called "Wing Tips" in those days. I could never quite keep up with Sally's boundless energy and enthusiasm, but her

determination was infectious. We got our newsletters out, and had fun doing it.

The Chain of Hangars was just getting started back then, and a permanent headquarters for the Museum was only a vision. Achieving that vision turned out to be a long and complicated process. But something wonderful happened along the way: Santa Paula became the true Museum capital of Ventura County.

We now have four museums in our little city. Who would have ever predicted it? The possibilities that flow from this development are really quite stunning, both for the Aviation Museum and the community as a whole.

I also could never have guessed that my chance meeting would lead, all these years later, to my appointment as Museum's Director of Operations. Even more remarkably, it's happened when the Museum is closer than ever to the vision being fulfilled.

I'm truly appreciative of the opportunity to work on this wonderful project. I am also more grateful than ever for the persuasive powers of the tiny blond-haired lady, who made more dreams a reality than even she could have imagined.



MUSEUM VISITORS

JANICE DICKENSON

We recently had a couple of great visitors by the name of Guy Sibley and Clinton Alexander. Guy is the cousin of Edith Bond. Edith was a lovely young aviatrix at our airport when it opened in 1930. Her father, George Bond was the local Superintendent of Schools and was also an avid supporter of aviation. Though Edith elected to stop flying when she began raising her children, during her short aviation career she made quite a name for herself. Clinton contacted our Museum and he and I exchanged emails and photographs of Edith and her family. Clinton also purchased and donated a couple of books to our museum in which Edith is mentioned and has her photographs. We arranged a meeting at our Museum (even though it's under construction) and Clinton drove Edith's cousin, Guy, up from Gardena. Bruce and I had a very nice visit with these two gentlemen. We showed them the airport's dedication DVD that includes footage of Edith and her father and we went through the myriad of photos that I scanned from Edith's scrapbook that her son so generously loaned me to scan. Guy clearly



Guy Sibley & Clinton Alexander with Bruce Dickenson in the background

recalled flying with "Eddie" as a boy. She gave him a helmet that he cherished for years. Guy also mentioned the Bond's home and could describe it in some detail. I called our new Director of Operations, Mitch Stone, who fairly recently wrote a book on the local neighborhood called "The Oaks of Santa Paula" and wouldn't you know it, Mitch included the Bond's home in his book and he gave me the address. I drew some directions for Clinton and he drove Guy to the home to reminisce. This is wonderful example of what our Museum is about-- sharing stories, memories and bringing joy. We had a great time.



Torn FROM THE SCRAPBOOK

JANICE DICKENSON



Rex Wells arrived at Santa Paula Airport in 1935. He married local girl, Mildred Armstrong, and they called our airport home for the rest of their lives. Their story on this airport is a long and interesting one but for our purpose here I must severely condense it. Between 1935 and 2002, Rex and Mildred both worked on the airport and were an integral part of the airport's backbone. For many of those years they were with Bassett Flying Service (in the large hangar and building that

is now CP Aviation). After Wally Bassett's tragic death in 1966, the business became Wells Aircraft and they later moved out to the runway where the Flight Center building is now. Wells Aircraft was the FBO, flight school, maintenance business, etc. Mildred was well known for her fabric work and running of the business, as well as some managing of the skies with her radio (not to mention managing the youth growing up and running around the airport as well). Along with traveling around air shows in the early years doing stunt flying, Rex instructed for many years and was also an A&P Mechanic and an Inspection Authorization (IA). Their daughter, Christine, grew up at the airport and worked with her parents and, after their retirement, for other businesses on the airport. Chris recently found a treasure in a collection of her father's things. We don't know who wrote it but it is hand written on two pages that are taped together and it was rolled up and carefully stored in a cardboard tube. Who knows how old it is but one thing is for certain - the author had a good sense of humor.

Thank you Chris Wells for sharing this with us!!! Enjoy...

NOTAMS.

Santa Paula's Uncanny Airport

*My wife and I like the flying game
and cross country trips are swell.
But we had an experience Sunday
of which I'd like to tell.*

*We arrived Santa Paula Airport,
after three hours flying time.
We landed uneventfully
and taxied to the line.*

*We came to visit old friends there
whom we hadn't seen in years
but conditions, we soon discovered,
were unbelievable to our ears.*

*Friend wife said, "Go phone George
and Ruth
and while you're doing that,
I've got to use the rest room
or I'll have to use your hat."*

*Ten minutes later she returned,
yelling as she ran,
"Start the engine, pull the chocks,
this damn place has no can!"*

*She climbed aboard and I'm
telling you
we left in nothing flat.
There was very little damage done,
but you ought to see my hat!*

*In thinking back, we ask ourselves,
how in thunderation,
could anyone build an airport
without a "comfort station."*

*If ever we return there,
I'll make this statement flat --
The Airport Association
owes me one new hat!*



NOTAMS.

Get the whole picture!
Enjoy the newsletter
in color at our website

www.aviationmuseumofsantapaula.org

GONE WEST: JACK FELKER

JANICE DICKENSON

Jack Felker was a wonderful, long-time member of our airport family. Jack arrived at the Santa Paula Airport in 1979 and immediately fit right into our great little airport community. He learned to fly at Michael Dewey Aviation (now CP Aviation) and he was a master



at woodwork on the great old antique airplanes for Air Repair. For a time after that Jack was the airport's grounds manager and then, after his close friend Ray Maxon opened his shop on the airport, Jack

spent the rest of his years working there with him.

Where he got the nickname "Mad Jack" is a mystery but it is a good name for this guy - he was one cool character. A very private man but he was generous, helpful and had a really good sense of humor. His pranks were sly and fantastic and it didn't appear that he did them to gain attention for himself - he enjoyed a good laugh. Getting called "Knucklehead" by him was sort of like getting a "Mad Jack" blessing. This was the airport Jack that we all knew and loved. But did you know the private Jack who loved to fish? Who loved learning anything and everything about space and planets? That he would build airplanes out of soda cans, egg cartons or even juice boxes? That he was a devout baseball fan and played on a softball team until he was 80 years old? Or that he loved to sit quietly in the yard, hand feeding wild blue jays?

When Jack was 16 years old he begged his father to sign for him to enter the military during World War 2. Just after his 17th birthday, his father relented and Jack entered the Marines. He was a trained mechanic on an

amphibian tank that was in active service on the Island of Peleliu during the later years of the war. What Jack experienced on that tank he kept close to himself. He fulfilled his service duties in 1945 and left the Marines with hearing loss and lots of memories.

Jack was a hard worker and active father throughout his kid's life. He raised two daughters and two sons and he had 4 grandchildren and two little great grandchildren.

Jack loved aviation from the time he was a kid and it was just right that in his later years he found Santa Paula Airport where he could realize his dream of flying and enjoy some fun times and good friendships. Jack died peacefully at the Santa Paula Hospital with his partner of the past 20 years, Chris Wells and his good buddy, Ray Maxon, at his side. He was 86... hard to believe, he always seemed so young. Jack will be greatly missed by all of his family and friends.

NOTAMS.

TIN TOWN 'TOONS™



"Marv Tootle wants to donate his 1939 Skyplummet to the Aviation Museum. Before we decide, the Gift Shop wants to know how it will look on a refrigerator magnet."

VOLUNTEER BEACON: BARBARA McELMEEL

JERRY DEANDA

Our Museum runs on volunteers and we have some really good ones. Here's one of our best! Meet Barbara McElmeel of Valencia, California. Barbara is most often seen working in the gift shop on First Sundays, but quite often helps with our special events, like the dinner dances and our Las Vegas nights. Born and raised in Hawthorne California, Barbara has lived in SoCal all her life, in Torrance, Mission Hills and now lives in Valencia.

Barbara has an aviation background. Her father worked for many years at North American Aviation, working on the P-51 program as a machinist and then continuing as a wind tunnel model maker and Laboratory Technician. He worked on the Apollo moon mission program and sadly, died just before the first moon landing in 1969.



Barbara herself has worked at several of the big aviation firms in Southern California variously as a Secretary and Administrative Assistant, finishing up with 15½ years at Rocketdyne.

She has a son and a daughter, and three grandchildren, one grandson, 11 years old, and twin granddaughters, 9.

Barbara has been volunteering at the museum since she retired a few years back. She loves being around airplanes and airplane people (don't we all?) and says the airport is "Always a good place to be."

She loves seaplanes and flying off water and was found at the Clear Lake Splash-In in 2011.

You can find her in the Aviation Museum headquarters hangar at our First Sunday Open House events... stop by and say Hi!

NOTAMS.

GONE WEST: ROGER HARVEY

JANICE DICKENSON

We've lost one of the last of the "Good Ol' Boys." Roger Harvey lived a full and incredibly active life for all his 90 years but sadly, he passed away on February 4, 2013. Many of you on the airport now did not know him but he spent a good portion of his life on this airport as well as serving approximately 35 years on the board of directors, volunteering a great deal of his time for the benefit of our airport.

Roger was 8 years old when the Santa Paula Airport was built. He was very excited to take his first airplane ride in a Bach Tri-motor at the opening dedication in August, 1930. He explained that as a teen, he was small for his age - this changed in his later teens - but at the time his father realized that Roger wasn't going to be

going out for sports like most of the boys so he told Roger that he'd back him in flight lessons to become a pilot instead. Roger was flying airplanes before he got his driver's license and aviation was an important part of his life from then on.

When World War 2 broke out, Roger, just a couple of years out of high school, joined the military. He signed up with the Army Air Corps and was a B-17 pilot with the 398th Bomber Group stationed in England. After completing the 24th of his flights over Germany and Poland, Roger was surprised that instead of flying the standard 25 missions, he had an additional 7 missions posted on the duty board. The next morning he learned in the pilot briefing room that *continued on page 7*

ROGER HARVEY *continued*

he was going to be among 171 American and British squadrons to fly in the highly classified strike known as D-Day. On June 6, 1944, Roger's B-17 flew right over Omaha Beach and he continued those bombing runs for the next 6 days, successfully completing a total of 32 missions. Roger gave public talks about his experience and knowledge of the Army Air Corps during World War 2 and one of the most astonishing and humbling was his report that during the war, 82% of his squadron did not return to base. Roger was in that less than 20% who did. 82% were downed, wounded, taken prisoner, etc. These were brave young men, some just kids. Roger was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal and three Oak Leaf Clusters.

Roger went on to work at his father's insurance company, Santa Paula Insurance Agency. He also raised cattle on family properties and he got flying time in by working for Wally Basset, at Basset Flying Service, flying charters. He had some pretty interesting stories about flying some on our local citizens on trips out to the newly built Las Vegas. Actually, Roger had a lot of interesting stories about flying and our airport period. He was a regular for coffee at the old Airport Café with the other "Good Ol' Boys" of the early years and he was well known in his younger days as being quite the prankster. He served for most of his years on the airport's board of directors in the position of Secretary/Treasurer. Roger went to bat for our airport many times, dealing with difficult issues with the city, county, state and federal governments. One of his personal favorite memories happened in his later years. The underground fuel tank fiasco hit our airport hard in the late 1980s, early 1990s. The county identified, forced removal and was testing soil all over the airport and we ended up with 54 open holes that were encircled with ugly orange fencing. They dotted the airport from one end to the other. And there they sat. Month after month. Over a year passed and still no end in sight and these open, dangerous, eyesores were still everywhere. And no one could get anywhere with the people at the



county. Until heavy rains caused mudslides... and a huge one covered and closed South Mountain Road. The government repair crews had only one way to access the slide area and that was Roger's property. In short, Roger told them they could come on his property only if the holes at the airport were released to be filled in and the fuel tank matter closed. And he succeeded! He had the upper hand this time and he (rightfully so) enjoyed it.

From stomping gopher holes and pitching rocks off the runway as a kid... to belly crawling with Benny Taketa during the night, hoping that the property owner's guard dog didn't get their scent. This mission was a tree poisoning expedition to kill the menacing Pepper tree that grew to be a hazard to airplanes - that the tree owner refused (for years) to cut down... to staying up all night during a horrendous thunderstorm, calling Mike Dewey at 1:00 a.m. to inform him that his hangar blew away... the stories go on and on.

Roger did not look or act as if his 90 years of age was even slowing him down. His son, Mike, said that he was cutting down trees with a chainsaw the day before he died! And he had enjoyed a good dinner with his wife, Marilyn and kicked back with a couple of bourbons while he watched the Super Bowl. That night after he went to bed, he had a massive stroke and he passed away quietly the next day at Cottage Hospital. He is greatly missed by family and friends.

Roger's time on the airport's Board of Directors included Ralph, Don and Bruce Dickenson's years as president and they all respected him and appreciated his hard work. To quote Bruce, "Roger was truly one of Santa Paula Airport's greatest defenders and he was always there to fight the battle, no matter what the battle was." To quote Don (who died in 1991), "Roger is a good man and he's done a lot for this airport." And though Ralph has been gone now for 28 years I do have a quote regarding Roger that I remember... it is, "Roger, why didn't you run faster?"

And to find out the story that goes with that be sure to read the next issue of the NOTAMS newsletter.

NOTAMS



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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:

MAY

5 First Sunday
18 Wine Wings & Winnings

JUNE

2 First Sunday

JULY

7 First Sunday



HOW PATIROTIC!

This Fourth of July celebrate
with a Museum membership!



Become a Museum Member Today!

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