



# THE TIGER RAG

FALLBROOK, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 1990



*Dick Stanton*

## 1989 AVG - CNAC REUNION

*Nancy Allison Wright*

OJAI, CALIFORNIA

# OJAI REUNION FOR 1989

The 1989 AVG/CNAC reunion is now in the memory book. It was thirty two years since the first reunion at Ojai in 1957, and it was the first reunion there since the major remodeling and enlargement of the past couple years.

Much has been added, and much was still the same. The old buildings dating from 1957 are mostly still there, but upgraded and redecorated, and, of course, they all now have air-conditioning. This was not the case in 1957. During the years from 1957 to 1985, several new sets of buildings had been added, increasing the number of rooms, but the public areas all stayed very much the same.

New owners took over, and a major revamping has taken place. Four new buildings have been added. One is especially for banquets, receptions and meetings, it is a great improvement over the previous rooms for those purposes. No more pillars! The other three buildings are mostly guest rooms plus a new lobby, check-in desk, conference rooms and hotel offices.

There are now two new swimming pools and an exercise room, in the same general area where the old pool was. It looks very sharp.

Unfortunately, a couple of our very faithful members, Joe Gasdick and John Uebele had to cancel due to cancer problems. Mel Kempf postponed surgery, as did Don Rodewald, so as to be able to be there. Mel drove in from Oklahoma and Rode flew in from Colorado. Jeff Weiner also made it again with his oxygen bottle in tow. This time Rode and Mel were both in wheelchairs. These men sure display a fine spirit in their efforts to get to these reunions.

Carl Brown set a new record by showing up with eighteen more members of his family! This is really turning out the

clan! Ed McClure attended his first reunion, As you can see they come from far and near.

Ernie Allison's daughter, Nancy Allison Wright, joined the reunion and put on our entertainment at the CNAC banquet. She had a fine presentation about the early CNAC days, with film from the pre-WWII days in China.

We welcomed the crew of the Voyager, Dick Rutan and Jeanna Yeager. They were

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two fine people and, of course, were hounded for autographs which they patiently obliged. They were the Awardees of the Flying Tiger Pilot trophy. They accomplished one of the most outstanding aviation achievements. To really

appreciate what they did and the odds they battled, it is necessary to read their book.

Our program was similar to past reunions at Ojai. On the first night we had a BBQ and steak fry at Tiger Glen, with music from the fortys. "Doc" Richards, recovering from major surgery this spring, was out on the dance floor as usual, and "Red" Hanks was his first partner.

Our second evening was a CNAC dinner, at which Nancy Allison Wright provided the entertainment, after they got "Doc" Rich away from the mike.

The last evening, July 4th, was the traditional AVG awards dinner, where Dick Rutan and Jeanna Yeager received the trophy and enthralled us with an account of their flight.

We were pleasantly surprised to see Lt. Col. Jerry Saltness, CO of the 4th Battalion, 229th Attack Helicopter Regiment, arrive with one of his pilots, Wayne Carlson. They had just flown in from Germany on, believe it or not, the the Flying Tiger Line. Jerry talked to the group and told them what it means to his officers and

soldiers to be called Flying Tigers, and how proud they are of the name. They hope to see a group of Flying Tigers, AVG, in Germany in October. It will be the first anniversary of their graduation at Fort Hood, and they promise us a week of hospitality we will not soon forget. Illesheim here we come! (Ed. note: This was written before October, so now the German trip is behind us. It was reported in a separate Bulletin. It was really terrific!)



GEN. HSU, COL. MAO AND GEN. CHIAO

We sadly report that we lost some more members since the reunion. John and Pam Uebele both died from the cancer that caused them to cancel out from attending the reunion. Jeff Weiner joined us, but passed away later. We will all miss them a great deal.

Joe and Betty Gasdick had to cancel from the Ojai reunion, due to Joe taking treatments for cancer. He recovered with a good remission and they joined the gang in Germany in October. Unfortunately, on his return, there was additional cancer of the bone, and Joe passed away after some very painful weeks.

Wayne Ricks, who made both the Ojai and German outings also passed away.

In our program we announced the death of Wayne Snyder. Happily it was a false report, and Wayne is alive and well.

Rode went back into the hospital in Long Beach after the reunion and is still there. He has had a series of surgeries, and hopefully the last one on the 22nd of February. After so many false starts we hope to see him leave there soon. He has been through a tough session.

"Doc" Richards had serious surgery before the Ojai reunion, but was recovered enough to join the group. He is doing fine now.

John Hennessey also had heavy surgery and is in serious condition. Some cards and letters would help him through this period.

Mel Kempf is also on the mend and doing some traveling. He just made a trip to Arizona, but he still has a long way to go on the road to recovery.



#### SPECIAL NOTE

Betty Gasdick has requested that anyone wishing to honor Joe's memory make a contribution in his name to the SAN DIEGO AERO-SPACE MUSEUM.

Checks should be made out, and mailed directly to the Museum.

San Diego Aero-Space Museum  
2001 Pan American Plaza  
Balboa Park  
San Diego, CA 92101

Make a notation on your check for AVG Memorial Fund in memory of Joe Gasdick.

