



- Northern Wings photo

Alan Simpson explains flight planning to Aero Club members.

Aero Club members tour Jeppesen flight planning center

Need a flight plan to go from the United States to a country on the other side of the world? A permit to overfly some Asian or African country? Or briefings on weather systems half way around the globe?

On the top floors of a high-rise office building in downtown San Jose, where jet airliners glide by on final approach to Mineta San Jose International Airport, a group of men and women provide just that to the business aviation community.

Members of the Aero Club of Northern California toured the Jeppesen Data Plan facility on March 24 to see how the company

provides this critical support to the corporate jets and other aircraft 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Club members enjoyed Jeppesen's hospitality with a lunch, and marveled at the view from the company's top-floor outdoor patio, with an eagle's-eye view down the runways at Mineta San Jose International Airport two miles to the north.

Despite the international planning tasks, there's a local flavor to the operation. A number of the employees, from managing director Bob Overby on down the ladder, are
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Moffett Field museum reopens after 3 years

*Historical artifacts
in new facilities*

More than three years after the Moffett Field Historical Society had to close its exhibits because of toxic contamination of historic Hangar One, the museum has re-opened in new quarters that are twice as large.

The museum welcomed the public again April 13 -- the 72nd anniversary of the commissioning of what was then called Naval Air Station Sunnyvale in 1933. Now the museum is in Building 126, at the southwest corner of Hangar One next door.

A visitor can walk through 70 years of Moffett Field history, from the 1930s dirigible era to the maritime patrol operations that ended only a few years ago. There also are exhibits of Moffett's partnership with NASA

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-Moffett Field Historical Society photo

**Dirigible USS Macon emerges from
Moffett Field's Hangar One in 1934**





Board profile: John C. Pfahnl

From carriers to accounting

Like most board members of the Aero Club of Northern California, John C. Pfahnl has a long personal history in aviation. It began early in World War II.

Over the years, Pfahnl, now a certified public accountant in San Jose, flew Navy carrier-based torpedo bombers and fighters in air combat in the Pacific and on long-range flights to Alaska, Mexico and Europe in a single-engine light plane.

It was a long journey from the tiny, fabric-covered Piper J3 Cubs he first flew in the Navy's Civilian Pilot Training Program after enlisting in July 1942.

That November, the San Francisco native was designated an aviation cadet and began formal training to be a naval aviator. He received his U.S. Navy wings on Sept. 1, 1943.

After operational training in the TBM Avenger torpedo plane and completion of carrier landing qualifications, Pfahnl was assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Bismarck Sea, operating in the Pacific. He participated in the invasions of the Philippines and Iwo Jima.

But on the night of Feb. 23, 1945, as the carrier cruised the waters off Iwo Jima, two Japanese kamikaze aircraft slammed into the ship, sinking it. Pfahnl was rescued by a Navy destroyer and was transferred to a troop transport off the beach at Iwo. From the ship, he witnessed the Marines raising the United States flag on the island's highest point, Mount Suribachi.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

41st annual Watsonville Fly-In and Air Show

May 27-29 at Watsonville Municipal Airport. Large numbers of antiques and warbirds will be on display. Airshows will be flown Friday night and Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Information at website, www.watsonvilleflyin-org.

Aero Club members-only tour

June 18, Saturday. Aero Club members will tour Cal Pacific Airmotive at Salinas Municipal Airport, where World War II-vintage P-51 Mustang fighter planes are created from parts. Contact Aero Club director Jerry Bennett at (408) 646-7139 or jerbennett@comcast.net for reservations. Space is limited.

Crystal Eagle Award Banquet

Oct. 22, Saturday. 6:30 p.m. Annual Crystal Eagle banquet of Aero Club of Northern California. Hiller Aviation Museum, 601 Skyway Road at San Carlos Airport.

Pfahnl was next assigned to fly F6F Hellcat fighter planes. His air group was about to board an aircraft carrier assigned to the invasion of Japan when the war ended.



John C. Pfahnl

After Pfahnl was discharged from the active Navy, he enrolled at Golden Gate University in San Francisco and obtained his certified public accountant credential. He joined a national accounting firm in 1948 and was later transferred to the San Jose office.

In 1964, Pfahnl started his own accounting business in San Jose and continues to be active in the firm.

It was in San Jose that Pfahnl resumed flying, this time in general aviation aircraft. He became a partner in a Beechcraft Bonanza A-36, which carried him on many long-range flights across the United States and to Alaska and Mexico.

Those weren't difficult compared to a flight across the Atlantic in the single-engine aircraft. It took 44 hours flying time, with stops at Iceland and Greenland before reaching Europe.

Pfahnl has been on the Aero Club board of directors since 1991 and currently is the club treasurer.

He and his wife of 58 years, Betty, live in San Jose. They have four sons, ten grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Florida aviation exec named new director at San Jose airport

William Sherry, aviation director at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport in Florida where he headed a \$750 million expansion project, has been named San Jose's aviation director.

Sherry, also former aviation director for the state of Florida, has 15 years experience in the airport management field. His appointment came after a nationwide search that attracted some 100 candidates for the job to succeed Ralph Tonseth, who retired in December.

Sherry will head a multi-billion-dollar expansion program at Mineta San Jose International Airport.

Aero Club members tour flight data center

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graduates of the San Jose State University Department of Aviation.

The members-only tour was part of a series of activities the Aero Club is planning for the summer months. Next up in June – a visit to a shop at Salinas Municipal Airport where World War II-vintage P-51 Mustang fighter planes are built from scratch.

Aero Club of Northern California 2004-2005 Board of Directors

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Moffett Field museum – portal to past 70 years

(Continued from Page 1)

Ames Research Center.

While the paint is peeling from the outside of the building, it's brand-new inside.

A dedicated group of volunteers worked not only to put the former displays back together but also to add new exhibits, install a new sprinkler system, upgrade the restrooms, lay down a new carpet and open a new gift shop and library in a building that formerly housed the Computer History Museum.

Entering the museum, visitors can start with the USS Macon era in 1933-1935.

Moffett was built by the Navy as a West Coast base for the huge dirigible, which unlike the much-smaller blimps had a rigid frame. The 785-foot airship was so large that it carried its own complement of tiny Curtiss Sparrowhawk fighter planes, which it could launch in mid-air for long-ranging patrols, then recover in flight.

But the Macon was lost in a storm off the Big Sur coast on Feb. 12, 1935. All but two of the airship's 83-member crew survived.

Next is the 1935-1942 Army Air Corps era, then the World War II



– Northern Wings photo

Museum docents “Red” Brooks and Howard Garrison explain how 785-foot dirigible USS Macon squeezed into Moffett’s Hangar One.

blimp period from 1942-1947, the 1950s when Moffett housed Navy jet fighters, and finally 1962-1999 when it was home base for Navy maritime patrol and transport squadrons.

Museum docents, many of them retired Navy pilots, are on hand to tell personal stories and explain the artifacts and the history of the base.

Among them are “Red” Brooks, retired Navy pilot and former museum curator, who will tell visitors how the Macon operated from Moffett and was housed in Hangar One.

The museum, he said, “displays the total Moffett Field experience, from lighter-than-air until the final P3 departed,” Brooks said.

Louis Helms, who began his Navy flying career in World War II, can guide visitors through the museum and, if asked, show his favorite exhibit -- the flight suit he wore when piloting helicopters in Antarctica.

The Navy left Moffett Field in 1994, although some P3 operations continued for another five years. The field is now operated by NASA, which built Ames Research Center on part of Moffett Field in 1940.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Enter through the main gate on Moffett Boulevard or, on weekdays, through the Ellis Street gate. Show a valid photo ID at the gate for entrance, then drive to the museum. Admission is free.

Check out the museum’s website at www.moffettfieldmuseum.org.



–Moffett Field Historical Society photo

Dirigible USS Macon inside Moffett Field’s Hangar One in 1934

AERO CLUB OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA National Aeronautic Association

We invite you to join The Aero Club of Northern California. Throughout the history of flight, the people and organizations of California have played key roles in advancing aviation and space exploration. Membership in The Aero Club of Northern California gives you a connection with others in the aerospace industry and aviation community, here and around the country, at awards programs, luncheons and other special events, including:

- **“Members-Only” tours**
- **Membership in the National Aeronautic Association**
- **Participation in funding of aviation-related scholarships**
- **Invitation to attend the annual Crystal Eagle Awards Dinner**

Your membership in The Aero Club of Northern California automatically makes you a member of the National Aeronautic Association (NAA), founded as the Aero Club of America in 1905. Our Club is a chapter of the NAA, which is America’s oldest independent non-profit aviation organization and also the U.S. representative to the Federation Aeronautique International which certifies all aviation world records. As a member of the Aero Club and the NAA, you will receive benefits including:

- **National Aeronautics Association - NAA’s bi-monthly publication**
- **Discount on Smithsonian’s Air & Space Magazine (37%)**
- **Eligibility for NAA Air Crew Card (FAA licensed pilots only)**
- **Rental car discounts**

We look forward to having you become part of our organization.

New Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: _____ Email address _____



Individual membership:	\$35.00
Scholarship Fund donation: (optional)	\$ _____
Total Enclosed:	\$ _____

Make check payable to: *The Aero Club of Northern California*
Mail to: Aero Club of Northern California
c/o Santa Clara County Airports
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San Jose, CA 95148

(The Aero Club of Northern California is a tax deductible 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization.)

The Aero Club of Northern California

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National Aeronautic Association



- To keep the public informed of the importance of aviation and space flight to the nation’s economic progress, its security, and to international understanding.
- To support a vigorous aviation and space education program for students at all levels of learning.
- To recognize and honor those who make outstanding contributions to the advancement of aviation and space flight.