

# ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE



## 1 May 2011 Newsletter 54th Edition

### FINAL FLIGHT



We want to share with those of you unable to attend the memorial service for Suzi Amundson Rogers that a large number of local Roadrunners exchanged precious memories of Suzi's life with her and our many mutual friends from Groom Lake, her church, family. The family shared with all many stories of Suzi's life to which all of us fortunate to know her could smile and relate to. We thank the family for allowing those to be the memories we will retain of our Roadrunner daughter. She truly lit up a room merely with her presence. We feel assured that when each of us take our final Janet flight, Suzi will check our name on the manifest against our badge, give us her famous smile, and welcome

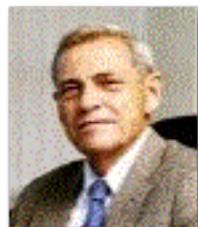
us aboard her flight.



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**SICK CALL:** There is a rumor that one of our SR-71 test pilots is lollygagging in the rehab unit of the Palm Springs Hospital after a bit of neck surgery. We imagine all those cute nurses are happy, but extend our sympathy to the telephone operators having to handle the mass volume of international phone calls of the most popular man on the planet. Behave and get well, Bob Gilliland. Should anyone not know, Bob was the first test pilot to fly the SR-71, one of many first time feats of one of our favorite aviation icons.

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/gilliland.html>



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**SICK CALL:** It may have been a sick call for daughter Kristin, but for Marty Knutson, it was merely another escape and evasion venture like he did conducted with Dick Roussell way back when. Kristin reports checking him in for a stomach bug and faster than the doctor could lay out a 14-day stay, Marty had shed that behind-exposing gown, put on his golf shoes and headed out the door. Even Kristi's blueberry muffin trick failed this time. We lay odds that daughter Robin and son Eric suddenly experienced reception problems on their iPhones when they heard that Sis (a.k.a. the Warden) was trying to shove "daddy" into a hospital again.

Kidding aside, Marty stayed overnight and was released. For those who don't know, Marty served in the Air Force in the Korean Conflict before joining the CIA Air Service to fly U-2 overflights of the USSR. He later

served as Director of Flight Operations at NASA's Ames Research Center and also as Site Manager of the Dryden Research Center at Edwards, California. Treating Marty's hospitalization lightly is intended as a compliment to his being one tough cookie. For those who don't know, Marty suffered a stroke a few months ago while trout fishing in Alaska. He spent a night with the wolves and bears on the tundra until daughter Kristin, a law enforcement officer, located him and got him to a hospital. Handling a father such as Marty, who has never seen the edge of an envelope that he didn't feel a duty to challenge, has been an adventure shared with Marty's friends as he returned to the golf course much sooner than this family and doctors advised. We have watched as he entertained resuming scuba, skydiving and many others things in life to which we can merely marvel with envy. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/knutson.html> We salute you Kristin, Eric, and Robin for caring for another of our great guys.

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**MESSAGE FROM KRISTIN KNUTSON:** DAD IS TURNING 81 on May 31<sup>st</sup> and we are thinking of doing an open house/backyard BBQ sort of drop in thing around June 4<sup>th</sup> from 1 - 6 pm at his home in Los Altos Hills, CA. We think that if folks just dropped by for a short time, had some snax and maybe a beverage. I am trying to get a feel for if folks could come – so please let me know at my cell 503-871-3628 or E-Mail: [Krisice@aol.com](mailto:Krisice@aol.com)

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Now that the story is out, I feel I can relate the following; I worked with James Barracks, Kermit Roosevelt and Mark Colby (former Director of CIA) in Beirut on this in 1956-7. I think Barracks died in Nigeria in 1964. 30'ish, tall and slender, dark hair and a nice personality. He was not in the station often as he was a street worker and came in only to do a report on his latest acquisitions. Probably some from the bar at the now destroyed St. George Hotel. A spot well known as a hot place for meeting people. Colby was a quiet guy who sat at a desk in the corner and seemed to be not pleased over having to leave his plush post of Rome. Kermit was the head of the task force for the project. Grandson of Teddy Roosevelt and his brother, Archie, was also an agency officer. I worked there three times and also passed through several times going somewhere else in the area, I always had to stay at least one day to get a visa to go onward. I was based in Cyprus and there were no diplomatic Arab missions there due to the recent Suez War. The Brits and French staged much of their military in Cyprus for the attacks-invasion on Egypt. Beirut at the time was wonderful and properly called the "Riviera of the Middle East". It was destroyed during their civil war.  
Charles Christian Santa Rosa, CA

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The "Meet the Pilots" day the Intrepid Museum will feature six pilots with close associati

ons to some of the aircraft on display. The program will begin with introductions and comments from each pilot regarding their career and time with the aircraft they are representing. The general public will have



a chance to meet these men and ask questions. There will also be a lunch served and 100 visitors, first come first served, will have the opportunity spend more time with the guys. Included in this year's panel of pilots (aircraft) are: Frank Murray Lew Chatham (F11F Tiger, Blue Angel #5, 1961-1963), Sam Folsom (FJ-3 Fury, WWII fighter pilot with 3 victories and USMC test pilot), Brent Richardson (F-16 Falcon, Desert Storm), John Gill (TBM Avenger, WWII torpedo bomber), Leslie Scott (Concorde, holds NYC to London commercial speed record). Mike Barger, former US Navy Top Gun instructor and co-founder of Jet Blue will moderate the event.

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The Intrepid Museum has a 250-seat theater on the ship, built in the space that housed the forward aircraft elevator in the center of the forward deck. We have started a program to recognize and honor our veterans; it's called Seats of Honor. Organizations can participate as well individuals and it would great to see the Roadrunners represented since we have one of your airplanes. Visit this web site: [www.seatsofhonor.org](http://www.seatsofhonor.org) for all the information and let me know if you are interested. Yes, it is a capital fund raising campaign and as a non-profit museum, we are always looking for some kind of support. Let me know if you have any questions about it. <http://www.intrepidmuseum.org/Seats-of-Honor.aspx>

Best regards, Eric Boehm Curator, Aviation and Aircraft Restoration Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum

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You have created an excellent web page dedicated to the people who developed some of the great aircraft in aviation history. I volunteer at the Evergreen Aviation museum where the Spruce Goose ended up. I wrote an article for our newsletter on the A-12 and YF-12 for people who don't know what lead up to the SR-71. Your site was very good for reference and will be mentioned in my article. I sat at your table for the Blackbird dinner for Edwards 40<sup>th</sup> first flight gathering. Tom Green Pacificorp Enterprise Operation Center Ad Inexplorata EAFB

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I had the privilege of meeting Major General Pat Halloran at the Holiday Inn at Sun and Fun 2011. It was the absolute best part of my sun and fun trip. He was alone, eating the complimentary breakfast at a table with one from our group. The only hint that we were in the presents of greatness was a small SR-71 logo on his yellow shirt. When I asked about it and learned his name all the pieces started to come together. He was kind enough to talk to us and answer questions, He has no idea how profoundly he impressed me with his gentlemanly demeanor and been there done that coolness. The best part was that our small group of flying buddies were the only ones in the room who knew they were talking to a guy who flew U-2s, SR-71's, F-84's, experimental homebuilts. If you are ever reading this General Halloran, thank you very much for speaking with us I won't forget it. Regards, Damian Frattasio, Pembroke Ma.



Served with General Halloran on the OJCS. A great commander. Col Helmut Tramosch, USAF, Retired  
[You make us proud, Pat.](#)

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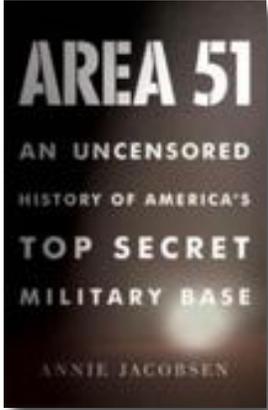
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The month of May is a big one for demonstrating the accomplishments of our Roadrunner legacy project. National Geographic documentary "Area 51 Declassified" will air on May 22 at 10:00 p.m. EST on the National Geographic Channel. Annie Jacobsen's book "Area 51" will go on sale 17 May. Check out these promos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCqcx59Hduo>

<http://www.spymuseum.org/events/area-51>

The confirmed media dates are:

	<p><b>Event Coverage</b></p> <p>May 18 Washington, DC/Spy Museum          May 23 San Francisco/Commonwealth Club          May 24 Dallas, TX/World Affairs Council          May 25 Los Angeles, CA/Google, Lunch Event          May 26 Las Vegas, NV/Paseo Verde Library          June 2 Santa Monica Public Library          July 26 Los Angeles Public Library          (Area 51; Little, Brown; 05/17/2011; 978-0-316-13294-7)</p>	<p><b>National Media:</b></p> <p>May 16, ABC Good Morning America          May 16, ABC Nightline          May 17, NPR Fresh Air          May 17, Fox News, Hannity          May 17, ABC Radio Satellite Tour, May 17          May 17 or 19, Comedy Central Daily Show          May 17, Los Angeles Times, Review          May 17, Bloomberg, Review          May 17, Washington Post, Review          May 17, Publishers Weekly, Review          May 20, Fox News Radio Alan Colmes Show,          May 22, NatGeo Documentary, "Area 51 Declassified,"          Date TK, C-SPAN Book TV,</p>	 <p><b>Author Annie Jacobsen</b></p> 
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Some of our Roadrunner members plan to attend the National Geographic premier screening and Annie Jacobsen's book signing at the International Spy Museum on May 18, and local Las Vegas members plan to support Annie's book signing in Henderson, NV on 26 May.



Reunion update by Harry Martin. The attendance for the reunion is looking good. We thank all of you who responded to let us know what to expect. We will send out formal announcements, and invitations in June to rope in the stragglers. By then, we hope to have the activity options nailed down so everyone can plan their days and nights. The registration form is available for download on the home page of the web site and under member activities. Many have already registered so now it's merely a race to see who will be the last one to do so.

Charlie, I was out there from February 1963 to 1966. We were assigned to Frankfurt from there (if you remember you all sponsored us). Married Las Vegas woman who has stuck around for 47 years. Fyi, there are no aliens there!! Also was TDY to Cyprus (British base, do not remember how to spell it) from early October 1974 to late December 1974 Ron Bantom



Colonel Charlie Trapp has come through again, locating and contributing a truckload of photos taken at Lake Mead during the parasail boondoggle. We need your help identifying everyone in the photos. Please follow this link and help us identify everyone in the photos

posted at the bottom of the Parasail article. We can hardly wait for Colonel Trapp to locate the naughty, naughty photos he took from the helo as he skimmed over the skinny dipper beaches of Lake Mead. Judging by the happy, half drowned look of the Area 51 honcho of the 1129<sup>th</sup> SAS, Colonel Slip Slater, we suspect he was with Trapp when they found the beaches – or more likely, that is where Trapp located our missing commander.  
<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/parasail.html>

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Colonel Trapp also located several photos relating to fire drill activities at the Ranch. Not only do we need identification of those in the photos, we need more from all you former firemen at the Ranch.  
[http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/fire\\_drill.html](http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/fire_drill.html)

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For those who have not visited the website of late, the input of new material from our members has been great. Several have updated their bios and posted new stories in the War Stories section link below. The very latest



postings are also linked at the bottom of the home page. We've come a long way towards hearing from the previously unknown or undocumented elements to CIA OXCART activities around the world, but have a way to go. None of the flight doctors, medics, tower operators, airlift pilots and crews has posted your personal accounts of your time in the project. Same applies to many of you CIA commo, security, couriers, etc. We urge you to visit our War Stories page on the website and if we don't have your story, you need to make it happen.  
<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/stories.html>

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Thank you, Andy Meyer for sharing with us the photos taken this past month during the **Sabre Pilots Association reunion** in Las Vegas. Was it your reunion that a covey of babes crashed, confusing you "high flyers" with the "High Roller" reunion? We may adopt that line for our reunion as well.

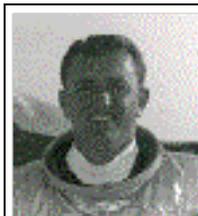
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Were you on Saipan in the 50s? Does this look familiar? Young and old: lets get together in the Fall of 2011.



Interested? We can book in Northern VA/DC area.  
Please contact Suzen Roman Bailey  
Daughter of Mae and John Roman - 1955-1959  
Cell [603-289-4853](tel:603-289-4853)  
[suzen27@gmail.com](mailto:suzen27@gmail.com)

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Very little is known about three elements of Project OXCART for which we welcome additional information and editing to get the full story told. The first is the Seven Sisters radar coverage. Number two is Project Palladium, the evaluation of the radar and air defenses of the Soviet Union, the results of which influenced the decision to never make an overflight of the Soviet Union in the A-12 for which the plane was originally intended. Number three is the use of the Mach 3 A-12 as a testbed for aerial, high-speed radar cross-section development and evaluation for future stealth development and application. (No classified details please – we merely want to credit the CIA Project OXCART for its pioneering American stealth technology.) In our April 2011 newsletter edition, we sought information on the Seven Sisters. To start this thread of discussion for the sake of oral history, Sam Ursini (left) and T.D. Barnes (right) have compiled details known to them. These can be viewed at: [http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven\\_sisters\\_ursini.html](http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven_sisters_ursini.html) (Seven Sisters Tagboard/Oxcart by: Sam Ursini)  
[http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven\\_sisters\\_sage.html](http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven_sisters_sage.html) (Seven Sisters Sage By: Sam Ursini)  
[http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven\\_sisters\\_beatty.html](http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/seven_sisters_beatty.html) (NASA High Range Beatty - OXCART By: TD Barnes)

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