

## Fly Schellville January 21, 2011



Just over the hills to the west of Sacramento and a mere 4 miles northwest of the Scaggs Island VOR sits the Sonoma Valley Airport. The locals named it Schellville after a crossroads 2 ½ miles away. The airport web site calls it the Home of the Taildraggers. They're not kidding. It boasts a photo gallery of 66 taildraggers and another half dozen restoration projects under construction. They're on display the second weekend of every month. On any given day in January flying out of Sacramento is problematic given the dense fog that usually hangs in the central valley. This was our third try in a month, but luckily the fog cleared out by mid morning and Schellville was clear with nine miles visibility.

A flock of nine guys and one woman in five airplanes from the Sacramento Valley Pilots Association swooped down on the airport. The place was deserted. All of the hangar doors were locked tight with only a few taildraggers parked in the grass. Viewing the collection of antique aircraft would have to wait for another day. We were there for lunch anyhow. It's a monthly ritual. Our group knows where to find the eating places within walking distance of all the airports within 150 miles of Sacramento.



About a quarter mile up the road from the Sonoma County Airport is CornerStone, an artsy-craftsy place with shops, a garden, a wine tasting room and Sage Fine Foods. To walk along the narrow shoulder of State Route 121 with cars whooshing by mere inches from my backside gives me a prickly feeling and is certainly more hazardous than any kind flying I can imagine. However, being aviators, we swallowed our fears and walked single file along the grass shoulder like airplanes on a busy runway looking for the turn-off.



Sage Fine Foods is a soup, sandwich, and salad place with tables and benches for eating. They also serve drinks including wine, though the latter is taboo for us pilots observing the 8 hours from bottle to throttle rule. We liked the food and would give it an overall thumbs-up.

If a person were so inclined they could spend a few hours browsing the antique and gift stores at CornerStone offering everything from funky to elegant, like the landmark Blue Tree that is not for sale(See photo).



When my passenger and I returned to the airport ahead of the others, a Curtiss P-40 Warhawk had been pulled from its hanger and was on display. A beautiful restoration job painted with the olive green Army Air Corp colors, (but no sharks teeth on the cowling) it featured a

tandem seat behind the pilot. Unaware that the owner was getting it ready to fly we departed down runway 7, headed for Sacramento, and never looked back. We were told later by our lunch companions that it had taken-off, circled the field and made a low pass. Darn! Would I have loved to hear the roar of a twelve cylinder Allison engine.

