

The Freedom Committee of Orange County
Neighborhood Community Center
1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627
Web Site <http://www.fc-oc.org>

Minutes of the Meeting of January 13, 2010

The Star Spangled Banner was played for the salute to our Flag to open the meeting.

Invocation: Frank Orzio

Binnacle List: Ed Decker, and “Bud” Hohl.

Special Guest: Denise Weiland, Director of Community Activities, CdM High School

Guests Present: Bob Baron, Betty Bell, Arlene Cole, Robert Cowley, Roberta Cowley, Marty Flacks, Clifford Kraft, Dag Larsen, Glen Lewis, Istvan Petrik, Martha Somers and Al Yarrington,

Members Present: Harvey Abernatha, Jim Baker, Bob Bankston, Rally Bates, Jesse Carranza, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Tom Egan, Kirk Ferguson, Jack Ferris, Francis Flacks, George Grupe, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Dick Higgins, Ramona Hill, Dan Huston, David Lester, Syd Lucas, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Richard O’Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Orzio, Sherrie Orzio, Bob Perry, Gene Pickett, Harry Rawlins, Gladys Refakes, Tim Richards, Larry Schnitzer, Terry Schnitzer, Harry Selling, John Skara, Bob Stoddard, Ted Tanner, Bob Thomas, Fred Whitaker, and Paul Wilder

Special Presentation

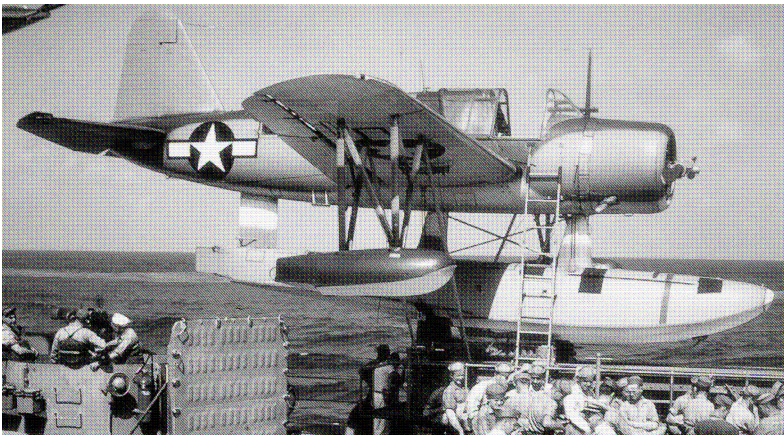
“Sighted Sub, Sank Same”



Lt. (jg) Daniel D Huston’s duty during WWII was to take off from the USS Colorado aircraft carrier – make that Battleship. Actually his take-off was launched with a 125 lb charge “push” down a short rail. The Navy terminology was catapulted “athwartships.” And his plane had no wheels, just a large float directly below the plane, and a balance float on each wing. And landing, the floatplane was on the sea close to, but not in front of, the ship. In the book, Down Memories Runway, “The Kingfisher” was the U.S.

Navy's primary ship-based, scout and observation aircraft during World War II.

Dan’s military service began in San Francisco’s Navy Base at Los Alameda. He learned to fly in a biplane and communicate using Morse code. Once he had his wings, he was transferred to Corpus Christi, Texas. Two good things happened there. He learned to fly the new Vought OS2U Kingfisher floatplane that had a single wing, single engine, and was all metal. Defensive armament was one fixed .30 cal machine gun in the nose and a .30 cal on a flexible mount for the observer. Under the wings the plane could carry two 325 lb depth charges, and the pilot carried a .45 pistol. The second good thing: he got married.



At the time of Pearl Harbor attack, all Navy battleships were equipped with the floatplanes for spotting of naval gunfire and general observation. They were gradually replaced by radar. **Lt. (jg) Huston** was assigned to the Battleship USS Colorado. The USS Colorado had two Kingfisher planes and a launching rail. During the November 1943 battle for Tarawa Atoll, he was flying spotting duty and observed the Marines as they tried to make an amphibious landing on the beach. He could see

that there was a coral reef that obstructed the beach landing and forced the Marines to wade 500 meters to reach the beach, all the time under fire. Tarawa was the most heavily defended atoll attacked by the Marines.

Sometime after the Battle at Tarawa, an escorting destroyer had a sonar contact of a possible enemy submarine. The float planes were launched and suddenly he observed surfacing the largest submarine he had ever seen. He turned and attacked with depth charges. When he released the depth charges he was too close to the water. Instead of sinking and exploding, one depth charge skipped along the surface until it hit the sub and lodged aft, jamming the rudder and dive planes. The 400 ft long Sen Toku I-400 class Japanese submarine aircraft carrier was designed to carry and launch three planes. A US destroyer rammed the sub and cut the bow off. As the Japs poured off the sinking sub, the destroyer stood by to pick up survivors. **Huston** landed on the water nearby to spot the Japs in the water. One survivor grabbed a hold of one of the wing floats and could have capsized the plane. A quick shot from Huston's pistol prevented that. Later aboard the USS Colorado, he was explaining his actions at a "Captain's Mast" when the Captain was called away for an urgent matter. The "Captain's Mast" was never completed.

The best part of **Lt. Huston's** duty was in August 1945, when the USS Colorado participated in the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Denise Weiland announced that Corona del Mar High School Sophomore Class will conduct the "Interview a Veteran" program. The students/Veteran interviews will be between now and March 2010 with a Luncheon on March 12th. Interested Veterans should let Jack Hammett know of their availability.

Larry Schnitzer volunteered to accept the office of Treasurer to replace **Fred Whitaker** who had resigned.

Jack Hammett will be the Master of Ceremonies at the Costa Mesa Memorial Day Ceremony located at Harbor Lawn/ Mt Olive Cemetery. FCOC members are asked to attend and support this activity if possible.

The March 10 FCOC Meeting will be a hosted luncheon. No brown bags needed. (Yes, February 10th you have to bring a brown bag lunch.)

*(Minutes of the meeting prepared by **Tim Richards**)*

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Hammett, Chairman