



## **The Freedom Committee of Orange County**

### ***“Passing the Torch of Liberty On to Future Generations”***

*(A California nonprofit 501(c) (3) Public Benefit Corporation)*

**Neighborhood Community Center**

**1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of April 9, 2014**

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Chase Wickersham**

**Invocation:**

**Adrian Michael, Associate Member**

**Taps:**

**Robert “Bob” Cowley, Sgt. USA, WWII  
Edward M. Decker, RM1c, USCG, WWII**

**Binnacle List:**

**Roberta Cowley, Bob Sternfels & Gene Wallace**

**Guests Present: (18):**

**Bob Bolin, Shirley Bolin, David Fey, Ronan Flynn, Kindra Gladish, Joseph Glines, Tom Grossclose, Craig Manderville, Wanda Martin, George Masaki, Rudy Montes, Sarah Moss, Charlene Pedersen, Pete Pedersen, Stan Smith, Gene Vaughn.**

**Me Members Present: (67):**

**Bill Anderson, Jim Baker, Bob Bankston, Rally Bates, Howard Beach, Jesse Bequette, Larry Bersch, Malcolm Campbell, Jesse Carranza, Pat Coburn, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Andy Cullinane, Bob Dugan, Bruce Ellyson, Tom Evans, Eddie Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Tom Gorla, James Grimm, Ray Grissom, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Dwight Hanson, Bill Hardy, Harold Hayes, George Hill, Vince Howley, Vince Hubbard, Peter Katz, Michael Knybel, Tom Knybel, Hans Lamm, Dag Larsen, Dave Lester, Norm Loats, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Bob McClain, Bob Meyer, Edison Miller, Charles Mitchell, Dick O’Brien, Don Pageler, Frank Pangborn, Larry Petersen, Jim Powers, Ken Pruitt, Dale Quinlan, Frank Ramirez, Keith Reagan, Timothy Richards, Ed Royce, Bob Ruiz, Ted Tanner, Allan Thompson, Michael Trerotola, Buck Wall, Fred Whitaker, Chase Wickersham, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams and Sid Yahn.**

**Associate Members Present (24):**

**Solveg Bankston, Jim Bette Bell, Gretchen Coburn, Arlene Cole, Robby Conn, Teresa Drain, Kay Felix, Geri Hanson, Shirley Hanson, Betty Hayes, Ramona Hill, LaVonne Larsen, Wendy Leece, Lori Martin, Adrian Michael, Audrey Miller, Pat O’Brien, Beth Refakes, Gladys Refakes, Astrid Rice, Linda Williams, Ray Wong, Rob Wood and Elizabeth Yee.**

## Special Presentation

### Radar Bombing, 14th Air Force in India, Flying the Hump & Typhoons

## Vern P. Martin, Sgt, USAAC, WWII



Many WWII Veterans can say they fought and bombed the Japanese. How many WWII Veterans can say they flew missions from China? **Vern Martin** was a member of the 373<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron, 308<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force based in Kunming, China and flew against the Japanese Forces.

**Vern** joined the US Army Air Corps in November 1942 and was trained as a radio mechanic. Graduating in the top of his class, Airman Martin was selected for additional special training on a top-secret instrument, radar. After being cleared by the FBI, he attended training on using radar from a B-24 bomber to improve bombing at night and overcast weather. Then he was sent to his air base. The B-24's route followed a course from Florida south to Brazil then across the Atlantic Ocean, across Africa, across the Middle East, arriving in India. This base was in the far-east section of India at Ledo, elevation 90 ft.

Flying the "Hump" from Ledo, the B-24s had to flyover the Himalayas Mountains. Icing problems began at 12,000 feet and the Himalayas were higher. Kunming China was 500 air miles and was remembered as the "Aluminum Trail" for the plane wreckage scattered along the way; all supplies for the American had to flown over the Hump.



Their B-24's carried (what was at that time) a top-secret technology designed to help win the war – on board **radar**. Flying at night from Kunming, the bombers of the 373<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron would take off alone to attack Japanese ships in the South China Sea They flew a low altitude and in total darkness.

Vern remembers one mission where his radar indicated a slightly larger target than normal and he directed his plane to the area. The last portion of the bomb run was directed by the Bombardier. Approaching at low altitude, two bombs were released. The tail-gunner reported big explosions but the target remained on radar. Flying the second mission, bombs again were on target. Flying a dangerous third bomb run, the Japanese opened up with anti-aircraft fire. As the bombs hit the ship again, Vern lost the target on his radar. They had sunk a large Japanese heavy cruiser of the Imperial Navy.



**Thank you Sergeant Vern Martin for your excellent presentation..**

### Announcements

**Bettie Bell** delivered the financial report for April. Copies were available. She announced that there were FCOC hats and FCOC patches available for sale.

**Denise Weiland** reported that May will be a very busy month for the FCOC main mission of *“Passing the Torch of Liberty On to Future Generations”*. Four high schools have requested speakers from FCOC to appear in their classrooms during the entire month of May.

**Jack Hammett** stated that he always ends his presentation with, *“As we veterans have fought for our nation and the Freedoms you enjoy, Please Take Care Of Our Country For Us!”*

**Minutes prepared by Timothy Richards**

*Promulgated by Jack Hammett*