



*The Freedom Committee of Orange County*  
*Neighborhood Community Center*  
*1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627*

**Minutes of the Meeting of February 9, 2011**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Captain Robert Thomas, USN (Ret.) Navy Cross

**Invocation:** Frank Orzio, FCOC Chaplain

**Guests Present: (15)** Kelly Alacala, Tony Arcaro, Gabriel Castellano, Dave Ferguson, Mark Foster, Jack Hubbard, Louis Kridelbaugh, Frank Manning, June Rawlins, Pam Reick, Ernie Rettino, Ernie Rettino, Jr., Brent Thiobald, Jim Thurn, George Widley and Al Yarrington,

**Members Present: (65)**

Jim Baker, Rally Bates, Betty Bell, Howard Bender, Frank Callahan, Jess Carranza, Jack Cole, Robby Conn, Bus Cornelius, Bob Cowley, Roberta Cowley, Jeff Davis, Eliza Delpizzo, Bob Dugan, Eddie Felix, Kay Felix, Ray Grissom, George Grupe, Herb Guinness, Ronnie Guyer, Frank Haigler, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Dick Higgins. Ramona Hill, William Holiday, Dan Huston, David Lester, Norm Loats, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Charles Mitchell, Jan Moorhead, Pat O'Brien, Dick O'Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Orzio, Sherrie Orzio, Lou Possemato, Harry Rawlins, Tim Richards, Larry Schnitzer, Terry Schnitzer, Harry Selling, Judy Selling, John Skara, Martha Somers, Duke Steinken, Bob Sternfels, Bob Stoddard, Ted Tanner, Bob Thomas, Dick Tyhurst, Phillip Vinci, Gene Wallace, Linda Wallace, Denise Weiland, Fred Whitaker, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams, Ray Wong, Sid Yahn and Elizabeth Yee.

**Special Presentation**



**Lieutenant Colonel Don A. Oldis, USAF (Ret.)**  
**30 Years Of Flying As A Fighter Pilot And 'Fedexing' Atomic Bombs**

**"The War that Never Happened"**

Suppose that the United States was in an armed conflict in, say Asia, maybe Korea, and another powerful country, let's say the Soviet Union, had designs on enlarging its territory by invading West Germany. That would put the U.S. in a war on two-fronts. Germany lost WWII in a large part trying to fight a two-front war. As a U.S. President, what you do? How could you deter the Soviet Union without going to war? If we learn from history, we know that **President Harry S. Truman** called to active duty, the Iowa Air National Guard which included a pilot named **Captain Don A. Oldis**. The 20<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Wing had many WWII pilots and was equipped with 102 new F-84G jet Fighters.

WWII veteran Don Oldis, pauses in front of an F-84G he flew in 1952 while serving in England during the Korean War.



Then the 20<sup>th</sup> was trained on bombing tactics using thermal nuclear bombs AND *surviving*. The nuclear bomb had to be redesigned so that it could be attached to a fighter. "Little Boy", the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, was carried in a B-29 Bomber,



Mark 7 thermal nuclear Bomb

had a yield of 17-18 kilotons (kt) and weighed 8,900 lbs. The Mark 7 was a tactical weapon that could be "dialed" to yield between 8 to 61 kt. The Mark 7 was designed to be carried in an external fuel tank attached to the F-84. The nuclear portion of the bomb was about the size of a soft ball. There were two methods a dropping the weapon. The loft-toss was a low level approach and a sudden 4G pull-up into a



Loft-Toss method of bombing

Immelmann half-loop followed by a half-roll exiting in the opposite direction. At 70 degrees the bomb would be released giving about 80 seconds for the plane to escape the blast. The second method of dropping the bomb was dive bombing from 30,000ft. When the fighter achieved maximum speed, the bomb would be released and the jet would escape.

The 20<sup>th</sup> FB Wing with three squadrons including **Oldis's** 174<sup>th</sup>, was deployed to England in May 1952 and began practicing dropping "THE BOMB." The Soviet Union quickly saw the destruction the 20<sup>th</sup> FBW could do if they attacked and a deterrent of the Soviet aggression had worked and the *war never happened*.

There is a PS to this story. No Mark 7 nuclear weapons were ever in England. They were stockpiled in the U.S. ready to be loaded onto C-124 and flown to England after the Soviets attacked. And as part of the nuclear disarmament agreements, the F-84G were decommissioned.

**Oldis** continued flying and flew cargo planes during the Vietnam War. He is a veteran of all three wars; WWII, Korean, and Vietnam. The Cold War should also so be included. He retired as a Lt. Colonel with 30 years service.

F-84s Disarmed



Many questions followed Don's presentation; Where would you fly to after dropping the bomb? He responded, "It was a one way trip because we didn't have the fuel. We would have to walk home." Did you have any special navigational aids? He said, "Only a compass and a map." What kind of defensive armament did you have? He answered, "The planes were unarmed."

### TABLE TOPICS

- **Jack Hammett** displayed a 4 page brochure highlighting what the Freedom Committee does and how they spreads the mission of "*Freedom Isn't Free.*" The brochure will be printed and ready for the "*The Veterans Walk of Honor*" program in March.
- **Fred Whitaker** announced that the "*The Veterans Walk of Honor*" event will involve Orange County 5<sup>th</sup> graders as they tour the Santa Ana Civic Center, March 21-24<sup>th</sup>. If you can volunteer, call Fred and come, tell your military story.

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

*Jack Hammett*