



## *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 July 14, 2010**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Eddie Felix

**Invocation:** Frank Orzio

**Guests Present: (13)** Celeste Ames, Celeste Ames, Ed Baume, Fred Bella, Betty Bell, Jesse Lawson, Jonathon Pelanne, Judy Selling, Lee Swofford, David Taylor, Paul Turgeon, Don Vigna, Ed Wolfe, and Raymond Wong.

#### **Members Present: (45)**

Jim Baker, Rally Bates, Howard Bender, Jesse Carranza, Jack Cole, Robbie Conn, Bus Cornelius, Vi Cowden, Bob Cowley, Bobbie Cowley, Tom Egan, Eddie Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Francis Flacks, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Dick Higgins, Ramona Hill, William Holliday, Dag Larsen, David Lester, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Charles Mitchell, Richard O'Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Orzio. Bob Perry, Harry Rawlins, Larry Schnitzer, Terry Schnitzer, Harry Selling, Bob Sternfels, Bob Stoddard, Ted Tanner, Michael Trerotola, Fred Whitaker, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams, and Elizabeth Yee.

#### **Special Presentation**

***Major General William J. Mall, Jr. (Ret.)***

***"The Forward Air Controller"***

***Filmed by Dr. Raymond Wong, "The Training Masters"***

**General Mall** began his military career with a commission as a second lieutenant from the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at the University of Pittsburgh in 1954. **2nd Lt. Mall** began his pilot training at Grenville Air Force Base, Mississippi. **Captain Mall's** first assignment after graduation was the 310<sup>th</sup> Strategic Bombardment Wing, Schilling AFB, Kansas, where he flew aerial tankers and strategic bombers. He then attended the Air Command and Staff College.



**Major Mall** was then assigned to the 436<sup>th</sup> Military Air Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, as a C-141 pilot and later as chief of the wing airlift command post. While a C-141 pilot, he was assigned to fly from Dover AFB to South Vietnam. The great circle route took him from Dover, Delaware to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, to Yokota AFB, Japan, to the Republic of South Vietnam, the final destination. Because of the spherical shape of the earth, the Great Circle Route is a shorter distance than flying directly west from Norton AFB, California to the Republic of South Vietnam.

His inbound flights brought military supplies, including ammunition, to support the war effort. On many occasions the C-141 bay was converted to an emergency medical bay to medivac critical wounded military personnel to hospitals in the states. During the flight the wounded were treated by a critical care nurse and her staff.

In the late 60's, his military career took a surprising twist. Instead of being assigned to a post command position, he received orders to report to a "FAC" school in Hurlburt Field AFB, Florida. The man who flew –



and commanded pilots who flew – the most powerful and largest multi-jet engine airplanes was now being instructed on how to fly the O-2, a military version of the twin in-line engine, civilian Cessna 337 Skymaster. This assignment was typically given to new lieutenants (ugh!). He decided to make the best of it! Although he had to adjust to the Cessna's top speed of 140 MPH (vs. jets @ 400-600 MPH), his training went well. The exception was his final check ride on O-2. With the

flight examiner in control and in midflight, a very loud clanging and banging erupted from the rear area. The flight examiner thought the rear engine cowling was loose and about to fly into the rear propeller. He shut the engine down and looked for an alternate landing site. While descending, Lt. Col. Mall determined that the action view window was not secure. He reached back behind the rear seat and closed the window. The noise stopped. As the flight examiner was so committed to the emergency landing, he ignored a suggestion to restart the rear engine and continue on their flight plan. The plane landed at an emergency air strip in the Florida jungle. Everyone walked away from the landing. This was the only forced landing in Mall's entire career.

After completion of the "FAC" school, **Lt. Col. Mall** received his orders for Vietnam, with a departure date on Christmas evening. All incoming pilots were required to report to Jungle Survival School located near Clark AFB, Philippines, prior to reporting to Vietnam. The training prepared them to survive in the jungle and to escape the enemy in the event of an unplanned jungle landing. The training taught them how to live off of the land by eating plants and bugs.

The last day of training was the "Escape and Evasion" session. The goal was to escape into the jungle, evade the "enemy", and return to the objective point. The cadre took the students to an unknown destination deep in the jungle. **Lt. Col. Mall** was determined to excel past his much younger classmates. As his classmates headed into the jungle along a path, he went off the path heading into foothills above the valley floor. After several hours, he found a perfect hiding place under heavy vegetation and a heavy infestation of all things that crawl in the jungle soul. Feeling uncomfortable, but satisfied that he was winning in the evasion game, he heard an unusual metallic, jingling sound as something or someone bounded up the foothill near his hiding place. Soon he saw the source of the strange noise. It was the tracker who carried a key ring partially filled with brass coins attached. Much to Lt. Col. Mall's relief, the tracker ran swiftly past his hiding spot. The relief was short lived, as the tracker back-tracked and located "Escapee Mall". The tracker asked for and received the brass coin, or "chit", carried by the escapee. The tracker placed the brass chit on his key ring and went about finding the next escapee. At the end of the day, the tracker exchanged each chit for a 25-pound bag of rice. The tracker was a local tribesman who, for years, had a spotless record of finding "escapees."

Mall's first assignment as a forward air controller in South Vietnam was to fly over designated jungle areas and observe the terrain for indications of the enemy, while staying out of range of AK-47 rifles. When he observed a target, he would radio the Blue Chip command center in Saigon. The command center would respond by assigning available aircraft to the target area. He worked with A-37, F-100, B-57 and F-4 aircraft. His job was to fire a white phosphorous marker in the vicinity of the intended target. As the attacking aircraft approached, he would direct the pilot to the target by giving a bearing and distance from the leading edge of the smoke. This approach reduced the chance of alerting the intended target of the incoming ordinance.



Later, the OV-10 Bronco military aircraft was brought in as a FAC aircraft. It was designed by the military for aerial recon and target missions. It flew 2 to 3 times faster than the O-2, and carried rockets and a machine gun.

The introduction of the C-121, a propeller-driven aircraft with 4 engines, the military version of the Constellation used by airlines, allowed the Air Command Post to be in the air in proximity to the target. The cargo bay was filled with a command center communication and a tactical listening post. At times, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam's military personnel were aboard to assist the command center commander for in-target acquisition and ordinance delivery. At times, the commander had to apply measures to separate the different cultures and ethnicities, as they disliked each other.

Many targets were off limits under the USAF Rules of Engagement. The tactical advantage of air supremacy was minimized by tightly constrained Rules of Engagement.

This was not only an outstanding informative and entertaining presentation with great graphics, but also performed with great humor and speaking acumen..... *Well Done General!*

**Remarks:**

- **Larry Schnitzer, Treasurer:** Gave a financial report on the FCOC including passing out copies to the membership. The Freedom Committee's Net Income is \$1,673.63 through July 14, 2010. The members contributed an additional \$166.00 today.
- **Jack Hammett, Chairman,** complimented *Major General William J. Mall, Jr. (Ret.)* on his excellent presentation which received 2 resounding rounds of applause from the audience.
- **Girard Films** gave Jack permission to edit the Girard film "**45 Wars**" into two 20-minute DVDs. One DVD will cover the European Theater of Operations and the other will focus on the War in the Pacific during World War II. Jack will be assisted by Tom Egan and Brad Long in making a top quality video for the committee's living history presentations in the schools for Jeff Girard, the producer of the film.
- **Chaplain Frank Orzio** introduced his friend **Frank Bella** a Korean War veteran. He was trained as an infantry man but was assigned as a combat engineer in-country. Later, Frank returned to the infantry and assigned to the graves registration section. Frank leads the United Mexican American Veteran Association. They meet in the City of Orange.
- **Lee Swofford** spoke of his close encounter with the 7', tall gendarme, whose wife he had intended to visit. The gendarme answered the door knock, and invited Lee in to share a bottle of fine French wine, which they enjoyed, even though neither spoke the other's language.
- **David Taylor**, a United States Army veteran, 2003-07, served in Korea, China, Kuwait, and Iraq and indicated his interest in joining the Committee.
- **Bill Holiday** invited all FCOC members to attend the dedication of "**The Four Chaplains**" chapel aboard the Queen Mary ship located in the Long Beach Harbor, on August 14<sup>th</sup> and the 28<sup>th</sup>. The event is hosted by Vanguard University's Veterans Center. The **USS Dorchester** tragedy will be narrated by **David Fox**. In response to Bill's request for a show of hands of those interested, approximate 20 people responded. The Chairman asked Mona Hill, Corresponding Secretary, to prepare a signup sheet at the front table.
- **Scott Williams** gave a brief report of the Executive Committee meeting held on Thursday, July 8<sup>th</sup> at the Home Town Buffet in Santa Ana.
- **Fred Whitaker** reported that the **Speakers Committee** members want to improve the Freedom Committee's marketing efforts to the top teachers, principals, and school districts. An information packet containing an introductory letter including our "**Living History**" mission statement, and teacher, principal and school referrals, and URL of our website will be prepared. The marketing packet would be an aide to accessing more schools.
- **Mona Hill** thanked all of the volunteers who assisted her today: name labels, library, greetings, and snacks and coffee. She reminded the members that her nephew **Lt.Col. Hans H. Miller**, USAF will be the guest speaker on September 8, 2010.
- **Tom Egan**, Webmaster, reports that the committee's web site is in top shape.
- **Larry Schnitzer** invited all veteran military officers to come to the monthly meetings of the Huntington Beach chapter of the Military Officers Association.

. The meeting then at 1:30 p.m. adjourned.

*(Minutes of the meeting prepared by **Scott Williams**)*

(Pictures on the web site [www.fc-oc.org](http://www.fc-oc.org) courtesy of **Tom Egan**)

Respectfully submitted,

