



## **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 March 12, 2014**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Major William E. Anderson, USAF (Ret.)

**Invocation:** Pastor Frank Orzio, Sgt., USMC (Ret.)

**Taps:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt., Walter D. Ehlers, USA, WWII, Medal of Honor

**Binnacle List:** Bob and Roberta Cowley, Bob Sternfels & Gene Wallace

**Guests Present: (23):** Lis-Anna Allen, Bill Bechtel, Robert Bolin, Shirley Bolin, Kevin Cabrera, Dr. Gerald Cohen, Glen Davidson, Ron Flynn, Sandra Genis, Zavier Peter Konjoyan, LaVonn Larsen, George Masak, Becky Mauger, Colin Meloti, Gary Oberts, Dennis Parent, Nancy Parent, Orville Petersen, Carmen Pilichi, Eric Piper, Millie Lugo-Rios, Mick Thompson, and Carlos Velasco.

**Members Present: (72):** Bill Anderson, Rally Bates, Howard Beach, Jesse Bequette, Larry Bersch, Malcolm Campbell, Jesse Carranza, Pat Coburn, Jack Cole, Gary Crest, Andy Cullinane, Gary Crest, Bob Dugan, Bruce Ellyson, Tom Evans, Eddie Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Tom Gorla, Richard Grabow, James Grimm, Ray Grissom, Herb Guinness, Ronnie Guyer, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, George Hill, Vince Howley, Vince Hubbard, Peter Katz, Michael Knybel, Tom Knybel, Hans Lamm, Dag Larsen, Jess Lawson, Dave Lester, Norm Loats, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Bob McClain, Bob Meyer, Edison Miller, Charles Mitchell, Dick O'Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Orzio, Don Pageler, Frank Pangborn, Jim Powers, Ken Pruitt, Frank Ramirez, Keith Regan, Timothy Richards, Bryan Roland, Larry Schnitzer, William Schultz, Ted Tanner, Allan Thompson, Jim Thurn, Michael Trerotola, Ken Ulrich, Edward Vincent, Phillip Vinci, Fred Wagner, Buck Wall, Jack Walters, Fred Whitaker, Chase Wickersham, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams *and* Sid Yahn.

**Associate Members Present (22):** Celeste Ames, Bette Bell, Cindy Brennaman, Gretchen Coburn, Arlene Cole, Guy Coulombe, Cherrie Danks, Teresa Drain, Kay Felix, Geri Hanson, Shirley Hanson, Ramona Hill, Wendy Leece, Lori Martin, Pat O'Brien, Beth Refakes, Gladys Refakes, Terri Schnitzer, Denise Weiland, Linda Williams, Ray Wong *and* Rob Wood.

## ***Special Presentation***

**Captain Robert H. (Bob) Meyer**, Army Air Corps

*“Story of a Glider Pilot during WWII”*



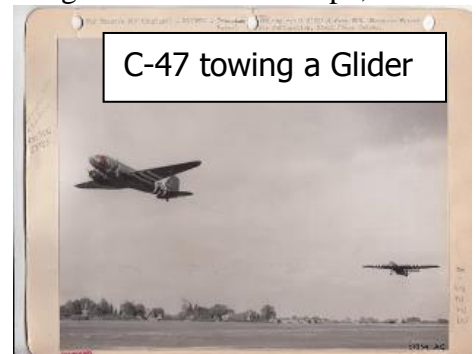
In World War II, gliders were the stealthy way to land troops and supplies behind enemy lines. Glider pilots had a simple motto, “Fly in-Walk out”. 70 years ago, **Bob Meyer** was accepted for primary flight school and completed all except the final flight. A medical problem disqualified on his final acceptance flight. At the same time, the Army Air Corps began a new program using gliders towed behind powered planes to insert troops. Bob Meyer was quickly accepted as glider pilot. He said, “Flying gliders is much safer than flying powered planes; no chance of an engine catching on fire!” The first combat mission for the 302nd Squadron, 441<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier Group, 50<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Wing of the 9<sup>th</sup> Air Force was Operation “Chicago”, delivering the first troops for the Allied invasion of Normandy, France. His Squadron of thirty nine C-47 twin-engine planes towing one glider on an 11/16 rope,



Silver wing with a G

350 ft. behind it. With the 13 glider squadrons, there was a string of planes 45 miles long. Flying at night at 1,000 ft. on June 6 1944, Bob remembers looking down at the English Channel and seeing at least 4,000 ships. The Waco glider CG-A4, made of tube steel and covered with canvas, could carry 15 troops, a jeep, or a 75 mm artillery cannon. Moderate to dense clouds covered the landing zones and the noon had set. It was dark! At 0126 hrs. the gliders began releasing from the tow planes. Unknown to the glider pilots, the landing zones were outlined with hedgerows. The hedgerows were made of trees, and rocks. Bob, exceeding all expectations, landed his glider without injuring any of the troops. Only about 10% of the gliders could be retrieved as many crashed or were shot down. The glider troops linked up with the paratroopers and held important ground against the Germans until the troops landed on the beach could link-up. The Glider Wing was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation for the Normandy operation.

Capt Meyer went on to complete three more glider operations in the South of France, Holland and the Rhine landings. Only 12 WWII glider pilots of the 6,500 pilots made the four glider landings.



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. **Denise Weiland** reminded the Veterans that were interviewed by the Corona del Mar Sophomores that there is a luncheon on March 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at the CdM gym.
2. **Bettie Bell**, FCOC Treasurer, report the FCOC financial report. Copies were available. She also announced that there are US pin flags, FCOC shirts and FCOC embroider patches available.
3. **Jack Hammett** expressed his appreciation to **Scott Williams**, FCOC President, and all the Associate Members for the efforts they make each meeting. All FCOC members are *“Passing the Torch of Liberty On to Future Generations.”*

*Timothy Richards, Secretary*