



*Neighborhood Community Center
1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627*

Minutes of the Meeting of November 9, 2011

Pledge of Allegiance: Tom Egan

Invocation: Pastor Frank Orzio, Wounded Warriors Ministry

Binnacle List: Dr. Norman Loats

Guests Present: (18) Phil D'Agastino, Dan Baker, Gene Bakke, Guy V. Coulombe,, Lee Gillespie, Geri Hanson, Frances Harper, Russell Hawkins, Mary Kline, May Knybel, Lou Kridelbaugh, Helen Passemato, Dale Quinlan, Keith Regan, Sam Slaten, Helen Thedinga, Jack Walters, Heidi Zeller,

Members Present: (47) Bob Bankston, Howard Beach, Howard Bender, Jesse Bequette, Frank Callahan, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Robert Cowley, Roberta Cowley, Tom Egan, Tom Evans, Eddie Felix, Dan Gillespie, Raymond Grissom, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dick Higgins, William Holiday, John Hughes, Michael Knybel, Jess Lawson, David Lester, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Charles Mitchell, Dick O'Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Orzio, Frank Pelicciotti, Bob Perry, Lou Passemato, Jim Powers, Larry Schnitzer, Harry Selling, John Skara, Ted Tanner, Brent Theobold, Jim Thurn, Eugene Verge, Phillip Vinci, Fred Whitaker, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams and Sid Yahn.

Associate Members Present: (12) Bette Bell, Robby Conn, Eliza Delpizzo, Ramona Hill, Carmen Holiday, Gladys Refakes, Terry Schnitzer, Judy Selling, Denise Weiland, Ray Wong, Rob Wood and Elizabeth Yee.

Special Program

**Captain Robert H. (Bob) Meyer, Army Air Corps
441st Troop Carrier Group – 302nd Squadron**

“Suicide Missions”, Story of the Glider Pilots In Action during WWII”

Robert H. (Bob) Meyer served in Army Air Corps during WWII as a glider pilot. He flew by the seat of his pants as there was no motor to maneuver a glider to a safe landing. So you were either very good or very dead. Flying a glider was simple; a tow line from a two-engine C-47 pulled the glider into the air. Once airborne, there few rules: Maintain 70 mph, the prop wash from the C-47 could spin you, and the tow line could snap. And if there were two gliders being towed, stay the hell out of the way of the second glider. Rules when ~~crashing~~ landing: don't choose the same spot as another glider, trees are bothersome, and flying at night is very hazardous especially if you are over enemy territory.

The WACO glider was very cheap to build; it had a metal tubing frame covered by a painted canvas. Instruments were nil; a light to see the elevation gauge and a towing release handle.



A WACO CG-4A with striped invasion markings

Captain Meyer flew in gliders in 4 airborne insertions in Europe. June 6th Normandy was his first glider operation.

The first American troops to land in France were carried in gliders. They carried a Glider Infantry Regiment with 15 troops in each glider. Others gliders carried a jeep, artillery pieces, gasoline, ammunition and food. The pilots landed the gliders behind enemy lines completing their mission and returned to England as best they could. They did not join with the Infantry. They earned the silver wings of a pilot with “G” after they completed the first mission.



He remembers one suicide mission he flew by himself. No sense losing two pilots. In the Allied “Race to the Rhine” River, his glider carried an explosive package; land mines. And he flew into Graves, Holland. He wore his Class A uniform under his flight uniform and after landing, he went on “leave” to Amsterdam returning only after General Eisenhower issued an order for all Glider Pilots to return to England.

Silver Wings a Pilot
with “G” (Glider Pilot)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Phil D’Agastino, Principal of Costa Mesa High School invited our members as guests to the annual football game “Battle of the Bell” to be held at Estancia High School on Veterans Day. Attendees should arrive not later than 6:00 p.m.

Ray Wong and **Scott Williams** were *commended* again for their effects on scheduling and preparing programs for FCOC. They are responsible for setting up the audio visual equipment for each monthly program and assisting the speaker with pictures and DVD’s.

Bette Bell, FCOC presented the September monthly report of deposits and expenses.

There are many books of interest on military subjects that can be checked out for free. Thanks to **Mona Hill** also! She has a great library that she has developed for our members.

Fred Whitaker distributed a format requesting that members indicate when, where and how many speaking dates each member had performed as well as the number in attendance. It is necessary for us to maintain these numbers for our corporate files. FCOC will use these numbers to establish what we can do to spread the words through “*Living History*” and “*Freedom is Not Free.*” This helps us to record that we are performing as a Public Benefit, Non-Profit Corporation.

(Minutes of the Meeting prepared by Tim Richards)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Hammett".

Jack Hammett Chairman

The next FCOC Meeting is **December 14th**