



**The 307th Bombardment Group (HV) Association, Inc.
The Long Rangers**

Hello Everyone

IMPORTANT REUNION NEWS REMINDER

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

WE JUST FOUND THIS OUT!!!!



We have been advised that Washington's Tomb be undergoing work from July 11th through September 9th, and the Sarcophagi will have a built-up cover during this time, so we had to remove to Wreathlaying Ceremony from your reservation. We apologize for the inconvenience.

We are encouraging everyone to sign up as soon as possible. The Staybridge Hotel is quickly running out of rooms and the only rooms that will remain will be at the other hotel, Holiday Inn Express. Both hotels are great but the Holiday Inn Express is about 6 miles away from the Staybridge hotel. There is a FREE shuttle bus that runs between the two hotels.

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Historian's Corner

June 16, 2022

A must read for all of us whose 307th BG veteran served late in '44 or '4.



I recently had the privilege of attending the birthday party of Sgt. Eugene “Nelson” Eddleton, 6th Infantry Division, who turned 100 years old on June 6th, the anniversary of D-Day. During WWII, Nelson was on New Guinea in the Spring and Summer of 1944. This was a busy time in the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA). Relatedly, the historical significance of hundreds of combat missions, campaigns, and accomplishments was often not known, not fully understood or even lost to the ages. Today, I will tell you about just one.

In June and July of 1944, Sgt. Eddleton's 6th Infantry Division captured Northwest New Guinea. This included Maffin Bay. Noemfoor Island was located in the middle of this bay with its previously held Japanese airbase. Now in American hands, this airbase, named Kornasoren Air Base, became the most forward deployed heavy bomber airbase in the SWPA enabling our long-range, 307th BG, B-24 Bombers to begin the campaign to destroy the Japanese held oil installations on Borneo. Like the Doolittle raid, the 307th BG, B-24's would be stripped of non-essential parts to decrease their weight. A full rack of bombs would be replaced with a fuel cell and our gunner's ammunition would be decreased by 50% to enable the four raids (9/30, 10/3, 10/10 and 10/14/44) necessary to destroy the oil installations at Balikpapan, Borneo, the “Ploesti of the Pacific”. Balikpapan was the Japanese's most heavily defended target in the SWPA. Its destruction was essential as estimates upward of 70% of Japanese oil, aviation fuel and lubricants were sourced in Borneo. The 307th BG's combat missions to this target were of 17 to 18 hours in duration, the equivalent of flying from San Francisco to Hartford, Connecticut. In the European Theater of Operations (ETO), this would have been the equivalent of flying from our bases in England to St. Petersburg, Russia and back.

The 307th BG's 1st combat mission to Balikpapan on September 30, 1944, was a surprise to the Japanese as well as the American military planners who did not believe it was possible. The 307th BG's 2nd raid, and subsequent raids, to Balikpapan on October 3, 1944, was expected by the Japanese who had further reinforced this target with additional anti-aircraft guns and squadrons of Japanese fighters. On this day, twenty-four 307th BG, B-24 Bomber's would take off from Kornasoren Air Base and two turned back for mechanical

problems. Of the twenty-two that reached Balikpapan, only one returned directly to Kornasoren Air Base. One that was not shot down over the target ditched in the ocean, others landed or crashed on various islands, none of which had runways either unobstructed or long enough for heavy bombers. Sixty-two 307th BG aviators were killed in action, four were eventually known to have become Japanese POW's and scores were wounded. It is for this combat mission that the 307th BG was awarded their 2nd Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC).

After replacement crews and bombers were secured, the final two combat missions to destroy this target were conducted on October 10th and 14th 1944. This was a prelude to the invasion of the Philippines which began in the following weeks. So why should this be important to you if your beloved 307th BG veteran returned home after serving from late 1944 until the end of WWII? Here's why – If not for Sgt. Eddleton's and his 6th Infantry's capture of Noemfoor Island when they did so, enabling the 307th BG's costly but successful raids on Balikpapan, the destruction of this target would have been left to my father and any of your 307th BG veterans who served from late '44 through 1945. In this event, in all likelihood, many if not most of them would not have survived WWII and so many of us, our siblings, our children and grandchildren would never have been.

Blue Skies,
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