



**307th  
BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV) ASSOCIATION  
"THE LONG RANGERS"**

**NEWSLETTER NO. 93-1**

April 15, 1993

QUOTES OF NOTE

*"We know the truth, not only by the reason, but also by the heart."*

- Blaise Pascal

*"To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end to life."*

- Robert Louis Stevenson

*"Many people succeed when others do not believe in them. Rarely does a person succeed when he does not believe in himself."*

- Dr. Herb True

*"Lady Godiva became the first streaker when she got on a high horse about taxes."*

- Frank Dickson

*"Success is a ladder which cannot be climbed with your hands in your pockets."*

- Stanley Link

*"It is not doing what you like, but in liking what you do that is the secret of happiness."*

- James Barrie

*"The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving."*

- Oliver Wendall Holmes

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have heard a number of times that the older you get the faster time flies. I must be getting old, as it seems like it was only three or four months ago that we were in Dayton, and here we are just a year away from our next reunion.

Bob and Sara Jones stopped by on their way back from Florida. They tell me that they have a good crew in Dave and Jime' Owens, and have recruited William and Ellie Gerhardt (371st) on the Reunion Committee to serve as co-chairman. Their choice has met with Board approval.

We are planning on meeting with the Reunion Committee in Saint Louis very shortly to see if we can help in any way. One thing that everyone can do to help is to: register early, indicate the activities you would like to participate in, but do register if you plan on attending. Refunds can be made up to the cut-off date, if you are unable to attend.

I have asked some of the members to serve on a Nominating committee. If you would like to serve on that Committee or if you have nominations for that Committee would you please write to me at the address below.

**REUNION HEADQUARTERS OF 307th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV)**

1923 Atkin Ave. Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Telephone: home (801) 466-5805 office (801) 594-6300



Ken Meyers  
314 Grandview Drive  
Murfreesboro, TN 37130-2138  
Phone (615) 890-3194

We are including a separate sheet with this newsletter that requests the members send in their preference for intertainment, type of food, etc. at the Saint Louis reunion. We also plan to use this survey to come up with an estimated attendance at the reunion. Your help will be appreciated.

Ken Meyers  
President

\* \* \* \* \*

### NOTES FROM YOUR HISTORIANS

#### NOSE ART CARVINGS

A note from Alan C. Guild brought comments on the Bill Adams' 307th "nose art" carvings raffled off during the Dayton reunion dinner-dance. Al was fortunate enough to win TWO of the Adams carvings, those representing nose art of SKY TRAMP and MY HEART BELONGS TO DADDY". Al is very happy to own the carvings, but wonders if they wouldn't be even more appreciated by someone more closely associated with the B-24s that carried the nose art. Al comments:

"My primary purpose in writing this letter is to try to find the crew or crews that flew "Sky Tramp" or "My Heart Belongs to Daddy". I was lucky enough to win two nose art carvings and since I did not fly either plane, I would like to know if the crew or crews that did fly them might be interested. I have no idea what the tail numbers might have been. So if you can help me in this area I would appreciate any information you might have."

Ground or flight crew members for whom either carving would hold special meaning may write Al at this address:

Alan C. Guild  
Guild Adjustment Co.  
Bowman Field  
Louisville, KY 40205

#### ANY INFO ON S/SGT JAMES W. STROPE?

Newsletter 90-3 carried a request from Mr. Leonard A. Courtney, Jr. for information regarding his uncle, S/Sgt. James W. Strobe. Strobe was a member of the crew of 1st Lt. James R. Cason which on Feb. 21, 1943, was assigned to the 372nd in the Hawaiian Islands. The crew flew with the 372nd until transferred to the 11th Bomb Group sometime in May of 1943. They were shot down during a July 24, 1943 strike on Wake Island while flying B-24 No. 073, CABIN IN THE SKY.

Neither Mr. Courtney's request for information in Newsletter 90-3 (December, 1990) nor his stack of printed requests displayed in the Dayton Rendezvous tent brought any responses. Perhaps the only 372nd people who might have remembered the Cason crew were transferred with them to the 7th AAF at the time the 371st and 372nd ground echelons moved out to rejoin the rest of the 307th in the 13th Air Force. Most 371st and 372nd flight crews and aircraft remained in Hawaii and were transferred to the 11th Bomb Group of the 7th AAF.

Mr. Courtney would be happy to hear from anyone who knew his uncle, James W. Strobe, or the Cason crew. He would like copies of any orders you might have that mention Jim Strobe -- travel orders, awards orders, anything. Prints of snapshots of Strobe, the Cason crew and 372nd Hawaiian campsites would be greatly appreciated. For some reason three original members left the Cason crew before their final mission. Mr. Courtney would like to locate co-pilot Donald S. Bloch, radio operator Howard O'Brien and Gunner Richard R. Streitmatter.

It's possible that no one in our Ass'n. has any information but I thought it worth one more try. If you can help Mr. Courtney, write him at this address:

Mr. Leonard A. Courtney, Jr.  
8 East Washington Street  
West Chester, Pa 19380

Phone (215) 692-4402

\* \* \* \* \*



## INFORMATION ON ON LT. JOSEPH HAYDEN?

Mr. Frank Hayden wrote to ask if his brother, Joe Hayden, who was killed during WWII while flying a 13th Air Force B-24 over Cebu Island, might have been in the 307th. Frank had nothing else to go on except that two planes had gone down at the same time. His father apparently learned the particulars of Joe's loss but, grief-stricken, was never able to tell the rest of the family. We were able to tell Mr. Hayden that his brother, Joe Hayden, had been in the 307th--co-pilot on the 372nd crew of James M. York, On 12-2-44, flying in formation in heavy weather, the York crew and a 424th B-24 flown by Jack Mitchell collided in heavy weather as our squadron formations approached their tertiary target of Dumaquette on Negros Island in the Central Philippines. Both planes carried frag bombs. There were no survivors. We were able to supply Mr. Hayden a mission report and copies of pages from Sam Britt's book, all concerning his brother's final mission. Frank asks for mail from anyone in our Association who knew Joe Hayden and the 372nd James York crew or has knowledge of the loss of the York and/or Mitchell crews. We would especially like prints of snapshots of Joe and his crew. If you can help, Frank's address is:

Mr. Frank Hayden  
Box 36  
Watertown, MN 55388

\* \* \* \* \*

## DID YOU KNOW T/SGT. RAYMOND MORRISSEY?

Still another request for information on the military life of former "Long Ranger." Mr. Ralph Rogers seeks information from anyone who knew his late father-in-law, Raymond Morrissey who he believes was in the 307th. Morrissey, a former T/Sgt. and radio operator, died in the late 1970's, long before his daughter became interested in learning of his wartime service. As often happens, her interest arose after it was too late to ask questions. Somehow she has reason to believe that Morrissey

joined the 372nd in Ephrata. With few clues to go on we have been unable to find anything on Morrissey in our files. It seems that he would have been one of the original 372nd flight crews. Sioux City AAF Special Order #67 dated October 19, 1942 lists all of those original crews. However, every copy of that Special Order that we have seen is missing page No. 7 which lists five 371st crews and two from the 372nd. Gumperson's Law implies that the name we are looking for will be on the page we don't have. Does anyone remember Ray Mossissey? Ralph Rogers and his wife, Morrissey's daughter, will appreciate anything you can tell them. If you can help, please write them at the following address.

Mr. Ralph Rogers  
830 Shagbark Trail  
Medina, OH 44246

\* \* \* \* \*

## INFORMATION ON CLARENCE R. NICHOLS?

Marty Sporn has forwarded a request he received from Elizabeth J. Meadows who seeks information about her father, Clarence R. Nichols. Mrs. Meadows writes:

"I was given your name by a gentleman at Wright Pat AFB, who stated I could possibly gain information about my father from you.

My father was Clarence R. Nichols. I know he was in the Hq & Hq Sq, 13th Bomber Command, but don't know which bomber group. He was a flight maintenance gunner. I have a photo of him and nine other men in front of what I believe is a B24J, and I can make out two names on their jackets, Barton and Landers. The number on the side of the plane is 999.

My father died when I was 13 years old and I didn't ask about his military life until now. I am very interested in finding out about his service years in the Army Air Corps.



If you have any information that would help me, please contact me at the address below. If you need more information please let me know. Thank you for any help you can give me."

We have not yet written Mrs. Meadows to learn what documentation she has to place her father in Hq & Hq Sqdn. of the 13th Bomber Command. Perhaps Nichols was at some time moved from a squadron to group Hq & Hq Sqdn. or transferred from the 307th to Hq & Hq of the 13th Bomber Command. The job of "flight maintenance gunner" seems unlikely while attached to any Hq & Hq squadron. If you knew Clarence Nichols, please write Mrs. Meadows at the address below:

Elizabeth J. Meadows  
5079 Cashion Drive  
Hilliard, Ohio 43026  
Phone (614) 777-9606

\* \* \* \* \*

#### GUMPERSON'S LAW

We mentioned Gumperson's Law a couple of paragraphs above and thought that in the interest of making your life complete we should define the law.

Gumperson's Law: The probability of an occurrence is always in inverse proportion to its desirability.

This is apparently a refinement of the familiar Murphy's Law which states "If anything can go wrong, it will" or another, originator unknown, which says "If you're not worried, you obviously don't understand the situation."

So much for culture and education.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### UNIDENTIFIED INSIGNIA

Pat Dunstan of Ephrata, Washington, is actively engaged in writing a history of the Ephrata Airport. She writes:

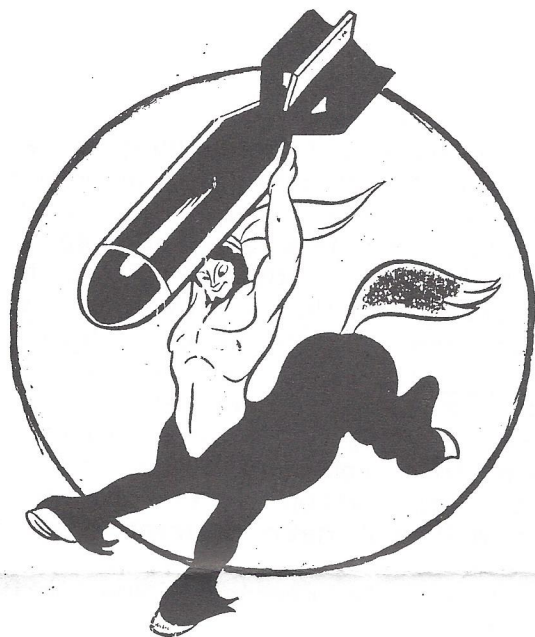


371st (?) FROM PAT DUNSTON

"As a matter of some small curiosity, I have a copy of a page showing the various insignia for the 307th which also lists two "unofficial designs", one of which is for the 371st Squadron, done by Disney in June 1943, showing a "Centaur Holding Aloft a Bomb". (Ed. Note: We could call it a "Devil" or "Demon" rather than a Centaur.) A patch of this design, having been sewed on to something, was found in the history files of the Ephrata Municipal Airport. Probably found by one of the maintenance men. I am enclosing a tracing of the patch for it does not photocopy well. Do you have any more information on it? Perhaps you could circulate the question among the original Ephrata men in your Ass'n."

We have never seen a patch such as Pat has located. Several years ago Marty Sporn contacted the Disney people who sent him prints of the only proposed 307th insignia still in their files, one each for the 371st and 372nd. Their proposal for the 371st showed, in full body, a Disney Centaur (probably from the Disney movie "Fantasia") and, for the 372nd, round insignia with a pose very similar to that on Pat's triangular shaped patch but with Pluto in place of the Devil character. We have no evidence that any of the three insignia were ever adopted by either squadron, though





371st

© WALT DISNEY



372nd

© WALT DISNEY

Pat's patch had been sewn onto something, perhaps a jacket. Can any of you "early Ephrata" members fill us in on these early insignia proposals? Do you remember if any of these were manufactured and used on A-2 jackets? Do you have snapshots of such "early" patches in use? Please send whatever information you may have to Jim Kendall at the address given below.

Jim Kendall  
2350 Derby  
Birmingham, MI 48009  
Phone (313) 649-2388

\*\*\*\*\*

## ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED PATCH



Speaking of unidentified jacket patches, Jim Kelly found the one pictured here at a military collector's show. This shield-shaped patch refers to both the 7th and 13th Air Forces. We have never seen it before but feel that it has to have come from one of the three heavy bomb groups which served with both of those Air Forces.

The B-17 equipped 11th Bomb Group was sent by the 7th AAF to the South Pacific in July 1942 and was immediately involved in the Guadalcanal campaign. At first under the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the group was stationed in New Caledonia and the Fiji Islands before moving to Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides in November. One squadron of B-17s from the 5th Bomb Group, 7th AAF, joined the 11th at Espiritu Santo in September, followed by the rest of the group in November. The two groups continued operations in the South Pacific and were assigned to the 13th AAF when it was activated on 13 Jan. 1943. Two months later the 11th returned to the 7th AAF in Hawaii.

\*\*\*\*\*



After little more than three months in the 7th AAF, half of the 307th Bomb Group, two squadrons of B-24s, were assigned in February, 1943 to the new 13th AAF. Two 307th squadrons remained in Hawaii with the 7th Air Force for almost six months before rejoining the Group in the South Pacific.

It seems unlikely that the 11th Bomb Group was in the 13th AAF long enough to form any strong bond with the organization. The same is probably true of 307th feelings toward the 7th AAF, judging from several negative comments regarding the use of the partly eclipsed 7th AAF insignia on the cover of our recent Reunion Books. The 5th Bomb Group, stationed in Hawaii for years, was part of the 7th AAF for almost a year before being transferred to the 13th. Also, the shield shape of the patch is similar to the tail markings carried by the 5th Group B-24s. Our hunch is that Jim Kelly has a vintage 5th Bomb Group patch. Can anyone give us some "true facts" on this patch?

\*\*\*\*\*

## SECRET MISSION

Walt Benedetti asks your help in finding information about a special mission he remembers flying. As a 424th photographer, Walt flew with many different crews. Upon completion of his combat tour he received no official listing of his missions. He has only his personal handwritten log listing date, pilot and flight time, except for the mission in question, which seems to have been highly classified. Special pre and post mission briefings were held for the crews, all of whom were sworn to secrecy. The mission was flown during May of 1945 by a 424th crew. Walt was so impressed by the punishment promised for failure to comply with the secrecy requirements that he did not record date, crew, pilot, flight time or target in his log. He has spent several years in a fruitless search for information. Many letters to our membership have thus far failed to turn up anyone else who was on the flight. Our microfilms covering the 424th list no such mission. The

period of secrecy expired long ago and Walt would like to contact anyone involved in the mission to try to figure out what it was all about. Walt flew as photographer, possibly, he thinks, with one of the following 424th crews: Henry crew, Merritt crew, Peterson crew, Rohr crew, Vanciel crew or Winningham crew. He wants to contact members of these crews and anyone else who can supply some information. Even knowing that your crew was not involved will help him narrow his search. Sounds as though Walt will have a great story to tell if he can ever get a handle on it. If he has not already contacted you, write Walt at this address:

Mr. Walt Benedetti  
201 S. Lafayette Street  
Denver, CO 80209

\*\*\*\*\*

## B-24 NOSE TURRET COMMENTS

We received several letters regarding Al Freauff's story in the last Newsletter about his part in moving the tail turret from the tail to the nose of our early B-24s. Unfortunately we have temporarily misplaced all letters on that subject but that of Russ Ratliff, the most recent arrival. So much for our failsafe filing system. We'll find the missing letters and run them next time. Russ writes:

"I would like to add my two cents worth in an attempt to answer the question "Who first moved the B-24D tail turret to the nose?". My answer is that I don't know who did it but agree with Al Freauff's story on one point -- it was done at Hickam. Al said he thought B-24D "Thumper" was first. However, he does not offer a date, only that the 372nd sent their planes to Hickam for this modification, a few at a time, along about the last of May or the first part of June of 1943."

(Ed. Note: This was our comment, not Ed's, and reads "307th" rather than "372nd". All 307th planes, a few at a time, made the trip to Hickam for the modification. This fact was taken from official 307th records.)



To continue Russ Ratliff's comments:

"It has always been my claim that we, Capt. Ulmer Newman's second crew, had the first B-24 with a nose turret -- I still think so. By March 23, 1943 the 370th was down to 3 airplanes having lost two because of weather and three or four because of a bomb drop by "Charlie" on Henderson. Our first replacement arrived, I think, on the sixth or seventh of April. It was "Old 266", brand new and it had the first nose turret and Sperry ball turret that any of us had ever seen. Also, she had the first paddle props we had seen."

"Col. Matheny wanted to fly and check out this strange B-24. Capt. Newman got the crew together, climbed into the right seat with Col. Matheny on the left and we went up to about 27,000 feet. It seems that Col. Matheny was satisfied with its performance and did not ground it. And so it was that on April 26, 1943 -- "266" went on her first bombing mission -- with a nose turret. Dates are from my Form 5."

It seems to us that Russ Ratliff's memories may complement rather than dispute those of Al Freauff in Newsletter 92-3. Although Al provided no dates, certain facts in his story lead us to believe he left for Cadet training in mid-April of 1943. This would have been months after he remembers beginning the planning and weeks or months after actual modifications were begun at Hickam Field. It is likely that more than one aircraft was modified at the same time and that the 307th, deeply involved in Solomons combat, would have received one of the first of the modified B-24s. "Old 266" apparently the first such 307th B-24, arrived in early April. Does anyone know if "Thumper" stayed with the 307th or went to the 11th along with most 371st and 372nd flight crews and aircraft?

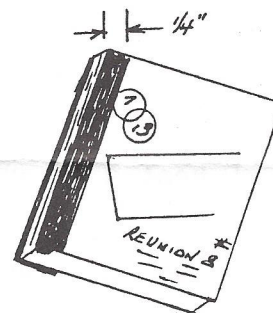
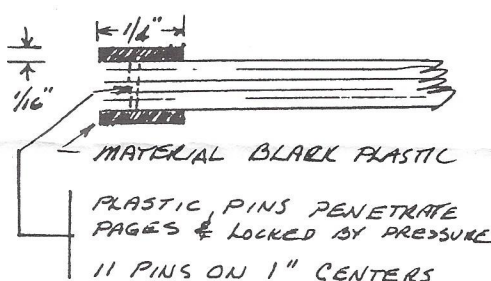
Many units and individuals feel justified, even after 50 years, in claiming the distinction of having been first to move that B-24 turret. The fact may be that hasty wartime records were too sketchy to prove or disprove any claims of credit. Al and Russ very likely saw different facets of the same project.

\*\*\*\*\*

## REPAIR OF REUNION BOOK NO. 8

As most of you know, our printer did a very poor job of printing and binding the Las Vegas Reunion book (No. 8). Most, if not all, of the books fell apart with very little handling. We have suggested to those who asked how to salvage their books that they have a printer cut off the backbone, three hole punch the covers and pages and keep the book in a three-hole binder. Now Florian Lanning writes to suggest another solution to the problem:

"Regarding the binding failure by the printer of Reunion Book - a facsimile printing shop in my neighborhood proposed a remedy costing about \$3.25. I had them repair my book and it proved to be an excellent repair. The process is called VELOBIND. The spine or backbone of the book is minimally trimmed and two 8 1/2" x 1/4" x 1/16" plastic strips, held together by 11 plastic pins which penetrate the bound edge of the book, complete the repair. The book does not open as flatly as before but no printing is lost and it presents no problem in perusing the contents. The repair looks like this."



If you are interested, check one of your local quick printers to see if they have this or a similar fix that will repair your book.

\*\*\*\*\*





If you are able to respond to any of the above requests for information, please let your Historian's know of your reply. Also, we invite any comments or additional information you have on the material printed here. Write to:

Jim Kendall  
2350 Derby  
Birmingham, MI 48009

\* \* \* \* \*

Time has run out and we must fold it up for this issue of the Newsletter. Keep your cards and letters coming.

Your Historians  
Jim Kendall  
John Reeves  
Harry Sterkel

\* \* \* \* \*

#### NOTES FROM 307th MEMBERS

The following copy is from the "Logbook" pages of John May's 27th mission. John's letter reads:

"Enclosed copy of logbook pages of my 27th mission. I sent one to Consolidated Vultee last year when a question was raised as to the punishment a B-24 could take and stay airborne. Five hours after the attack it landed at Moratai, never to fly again.

I kept a log on each mission, #1 on 6-21-44, Koli Field, Guadalcanal to 4-13-45 from Moratai. The group lived on 5 different islands during that time."

Dec. 6, 1944 - Moratai, Dutch East Indies  
#27 - TARGET - Bacalod Airdrome, Negros, P.I.

"Mission rated as excellent with over 70% of the group's bombs in the assigned target area. Bomb load was 6000# of 500# ers, 2700 gallons of gas. First mission as assigned Group Leader. Major Casper flew as co-pilot and Lt. Aldridge, Squadron Bombar-dier, replaced Joe. Good rendezvous with

other 3 squadrons and P-38 fighter cover. Left on course with good formation at exact prescribed time. Good weather over target and damn good bomb run. Just as we were breaking away after dropping bombs, three Zeros sneaked in and tried to knock out the lead ship - US! A fourth dove at our tail missing us and the ship directly in back of us by only a few feet. Two 20 MM's crashed through the flight deck one bursting on Houchins armor plated turret the other passing inches over Herb's head, finally hitting the aux hydraulic pump and taking it right out. Both missed my head by about two feet. I never saw planes come in so close and shooting so much. Carson in the tail turret was hit in the head and thigh by 7.7's. Head wound was bad but he will be alright. Stuck to his guns until it was all over, plenty of courage. We knew we were badly shot up but not the extent until we got on the ground. Final summary of damage: 9 - 20 MM's shells through the ship; 2 in the flight deck, 2 in right wing tip tank - starting a fire but burned itself out, 2 in left wing, one of which was in the wing tip tank starting a fire that burned itself out, 1 in fuselage by waist - cut elevation cable in half, 1 in left rudder - knocked out elev. AFCE, 1 in horizontal stabilizer. Over 40 to 50 holes from 7.7's (30 cal.) and 50 calibers, including #4 engine, a prop. It was such a fast surprise attack that we hardly shot at them. P-38's chased and claimed one. Herb and Dutch gave excellent first aid to Carson. We were the only ship hit in the entire group and set a new record for damage at that. Service group says it will take 3 to 4 weeks to fix ship #417. Time logged on mission 10:10.

John May"

Note: If there is incorrect spelling of any of the names of the crew -- or airplane parts -- blame it on my not being able to interpret John's handwriting.

Cena

\* \* \* \* \*



Joe Warfield would appreciate some help on the following:

"Would appreciate information - knowledge of and how to contact reunion association of 343rd, SAC B-29 Bomb Group. If you can help please write to:

Joe Warfield  
3554 Camille Dr.  
Toledo, OH 43614  
or call (FL) 813-869-8852"

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DIARY OF LT. VERNON A. MRAK

This diary was sent to me via Ira Anderson, who had received it from Bill Holston who had received the original photocopy from Lt. Vernon A. Mrak. I think the following pages will be self-explanatory.

"Following pages are photo copies of a diary which was kept by Lt. Vernon A. Mrak of Rock Springs, Wyoming. It covers his briefing notes and details of missions which we flew against the Japanese, most of which were flown in the Dutch East Indies. We as a crew are deeply indebted to Lt. Mrak for his sense of historical significance during this time of our lives. I have attempted to copy the details on the typewriter exactly as they appear in the diary, and, in parenthesis, have added some details from my own faulty memory. He, I, and the majority of the crew were together on these flights with some exceptions.

I flew a practice bombing mission to Rabaul from Nadzab, New Guinea, which apparently he did not fly. He apparently flew with other crews on a mission or two and so did I. About a week after the war was over, I went to Clark AFB as an instructor navigator at 13th AF Headquarters. From there I flew with a captain on several flights ferrying troops to Okinawa and Ie Shima. Then, when The Squadron moved to Clark Field, I rejoined the crew. He noted one patrol mission to China after that time. At about that time, I flew my last mission. It was a patrol mission to "French Indo-China" along the coast from Qui Non

southward past Cam Hanh Bay, with a new crew just in from the States. My experiences on that trip convinced me that with the war having ended I had no further interest in flying without Steve or Vernon at the controls. A few days later the pilot of a crew without a navigator asked me to fly back to the States with them, and I jumped at the chance. I left Clark AFB 26 October 1945. After spending two weeks on Guam we landed at Mather AFB 11 November 1945."

Bill Holston

#### Batteries

- 1 - 2F4 - 6 v
- 2 - B30 - 45 v

#### Tubes

- 2 - 35 Z 5 G. T.

Please return to Lt. Vernon A. Mrak  
370th B.S., Tent 16-C (Charlie)

1583 Capt. Warren Holts

Capt. Duram S-2  
6:45 a.m. Briefing

J.M.S.T.

Jap Merchant Ship Tow  
Lab Village  
D. Rusbucket

4720 0910

B. Pipdream

Playmate 36

Brook Point

Jessilton A R P L

June 9th - Saturday

Ship 364-M (Ship referred to B-24 Bomber)

First Pilot - Gibson

Time: 12:10 2 N (Two hrs night time)

Brunei Bay

Bombs 30 - 100 G.P.  
Alt 9500 - 162 M/H

Primary - Labaon - Dry Run

Secondary - Brookton



The One that was bombed - No flak or enemy interception  
(I remember this one very well. It covered warehouses along a dock area of Brunei Bay. I could see the buildings flying apart like matchsticks.)

June 12 T  
A2 Wilcoxon

TARAKAN  
Java - Singaradia  
s.B. - Siamok  
N.B. - Sirieigan (?blotched)

(Catalina Flying Boat Rescue Ships were designated as "Playmate")

Voice Call ALL MSQ 11  
32939 D-Channel

Cat Call "Playmate 42"  
Bombs Away 11:45

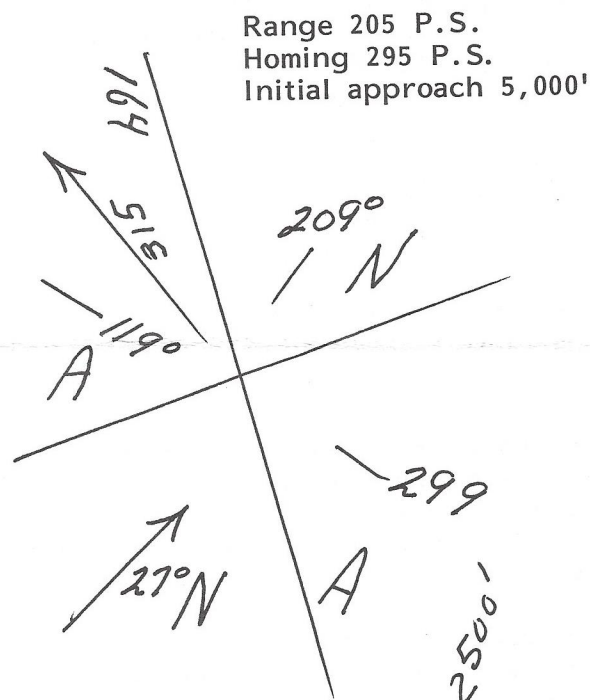
I went back to bomb bays to watch them drop and hit. Concussion was rather violent at flight altitude 5500'. Bombs fell on Jap gun implacements which were hindering Aussie advances. Had lunch and are now on the long trek back to the Tonapah Club. No flak, no enemy interc.  
(This was the one where Bob pinpointed the 500# bomb hit on the Aussie Smoke Shell and blew up the whole mountain! No wonder there was a violent concussion!)

330 P  
330 CP  
130 PI  
130 CPI

(It seems that I remember flying a practice bombing mission from Nadzab, New Guinea, to Rabaul. I definitely remember bombing Rabaul, so maybe I flew with another crew on that mission. Over the years I have counted it as my No. 1 mission, and perhaps Vernon wasn't along. Perhaps no one from our crew was along except me. I don't remember the details. W.O. Holston)



(Radio frequencies and approach grid, probably for Morotai Island.)



(Notes regarding rescue operations)

Sub Voice Frequency  
Baler 4475  
DOG  
C.W.  
13 AF MAIN RECO  
Copper SUB CALL  
VIDIO (HELP SUBS)  
BOXCAR Our Call  
Goodyear Raft

Yellow Jack - Mae West  
Davy Jones - Man without vest  
Evergreen - Sea Marker

VICTO R NINE ZERO ONE SEVEN FOX  
GEORGE (V9017FG)

18 June Monday #3

Balikpapan Guns (Implacements)  
Attack 1000 Ship 463  
20 - 250# G.P. Bombs  
2700 Gals.  
0405 T.O.

Cape Garan 10,000' (Rendevous point)  
10° L = 17° On Bomb Run 165 (I.A.S.)  
13,000' (Bombing altitude)  
Playmate 630 - 10 miles east of Balikpapan Harbor



I've never sweat out a trip as I did this one today. Gas load: 2700. It took 1825 to get the bombs to the target. Left target with 875 to get home with. We came back in super auto lean - 1700 rpm, and IAS of 135-40. Hit a terrific storm covering the Celebes. We were all prepared to abandon ship. Should have, considering the landing I made. (I bet it wasn't that bad a landing.!) )

(Special Note: Bud Morgan was measuring the fuel every 30 minutes and I was computing fuel consumption. Each time he measured it, he and I both knew that we could not make it. I recall that we did dump some ammo overboard, and that we were ready to bail out all the way home. In my conversation with the radio operator in July 1986, he reminded me that three of the four engines cut out on the landing roll, from lack of fuel.)

Time total 1150  
CPN 1:00; PN 1:00  
P 4:55; CP 4:55

\*\*\*\*Crew next door was shot down over Balikpapan. Two men were lost.

#### 21 June - Thursday #4

Balikpapan - 20 250# G.P.  
0406 Cape Karang, 10,500' Rendezvous  
Bomb Run 14°  
12100 - 160 (IAS)  
Sapinquin - Secondary  
Playmate 41  
Leave target "C" Channel  
Mangar - Tirtuary  
#646 - We had a darn good day today.  
Bombed Balikpapan again.

\*\*\*\*(This could also have been the time when, on a very rare occasion, the pilot and co-pilot successfully ditched a B-24, then were killed when the Cat hit a wave on takeoff.)

Cloud coverage obscured target causing 100% miss. Squadron joined formation at northern tip of Halmaheras on way back to Morotai and made formation landing. We came skimming over runway at 100 ft. and 200 miles indicated, then chandelled to traffic altitude. I was flying plane and made landing.

Total time: 1100 hours

Japs bombed us on the night of the 24th.

Co-pilot three tents down from us blew his head off with his 45 Colt.

#### 25 June - Monday Mission #5

30 - 260# Fragmentation bombs  
Rendezvous 730  
T.O. 0206  
Cape BAGO assemble at 7500'  
Leopard Two Fox  
165 M/H - 110 Ft. B.I.

(?) of 500 Ft. (Probably "Interval")  
Prior to I.P.

246° Mag bomb Run  
Bomb Alt 6500  
Playmate 41

DO NOT DROP AFTER 0800!!

3000 Ft. at (?MEJO)

(C) Channel  
RAMBLER

Bombs away 0804

100% Hit today's target. Was covering a group of Navy Demolition Squads who were swimming to the beach to knock out underwater landing obstacles. Our attack was coordinated with the demolition men as they swam to shore. They were to get to shore 11 minutes after bombs away. Fleet was off shore blasting hell out of Jap gun positions while we bombed same. 0830 on our way home with 1200 gals. left. Area directly over target was clear but huge cumulonimbus prevailed in immediate vicinity. No flack or interception -- so far!

(This is the one that was lead by our group commander, and we got a Presidential Unit Citation for destroying the obstacles offshore from Balikpapan.)

#### 26 June - Tuesday #6

Radar strike on Balikpapan T.O. 2015  
12,000 ft  
Varmint Two - Radio Call  
Call Magpie before bombing run on Channel B. 30 100# G.P., 3100 gals.  
Drop every 45 min. 0100 - 0145 - 0230.  
West bound 8,000' even. East bound odd altitude.



T.O. Time 2017 actual. Power 2700 - 54"  
 Trip to target was uneventful  
 First bombs - 10 away at 0110  
 2nd bombs - 14 away at 0145  
 3rd bombs - 6 away at 0227  
 Our target was the oil dump area west of  
 Signal Hill at Balikpapan.

After dropping our bombs we circled area  
 for 30 min. watching the fires. I counted  
 21 individual fires, four of which were huge  
 oil fires. I called Magpie and asked for  
 permission to bomb. Their (Magpie) radar  
 picked us up at least 60 miles from target.

(An interesting sidelight is, Mickey Dorman  
 wasn't able to pick up the target on his  
 radar screen -- in fact I don't remember  
 that he ever did. Unfortunately neither  
 Bob nor I had much confidence in his bomb-  
 ing accuracy or navigation ability. Bob  
 finally spotted a small flame in his Norden  
 sight and bombed the small flame with the  
 first 10 bombs, which set the first huge  
 oil fire. From there it was easy. I also  
 recall that in typical Holston fashion I  
 thought that the only way I could see the  
 bombs leave the bomb bay was to turn the  
 light on. Bob shouted, "Turn the light  
 out, do you want us to be lit up like a  
 Christmas Tree?")

During our trip back we hit very turbu-  
 lent heavy clouds. We landed at 0745. Full  
 moon during entire trip. No flak or inter-  
 ception, although we did see Jap heavy  
 guns in operation. Apparently were firing  
 at fleet anchored off Balikpapan Harbor.

Total flight time 1130  
 PN CPN P C  
 445 445 100 100

Bob Harder and his crew disappeared today  
 down off Makassar Town. Were attacked  
 by Jap fighters. Bob went in to strafe  
 the town and was never heard from again.

(I believe that he had been ordered not  
 to strafe with the B-24, but he was obsess-  
 ed with the loss of his older brother in  
 Europe.)

NOTE: To be continued in Sept. News-  
 letter.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ANOTHER MYSTERY PATCH!!

Several members have written for in-  
 formation on the patch shown below. It  
 is a "Krazy Kat" dressed up as a cowboy  
 and riding a bomb. One of our members,  
 Sheridan Ostrander was given the patch  
 when he joined the 372nd Squadron. It  
 is shown on the inside cover of the book  
 "We'll Say Goodby", but that is about the  
 only place we find a copy of it. Where  
 did it come from? Who designed it? If  
 anyone knows the answer, please let Jim  
 Kendall know.



\* \* \* \* \*

## CADET CLASS 42-B ASSOCIATION

A recent letter from W.H. Edwards  
 requests the following information:

"Our association is searching for and at-  
 tempting to determine the current status  
 of all members of pilot class 42-B. As the  
 editor of our newsletter and primary sleuth,  
 I am looking for a list of members or a list  
 of combat crew members of the 307th Bomb  
 Group that were assigned to the unit during  
 World War II."

If any of you 307th members attended  
 Pilot Class 42-B, please contact Mr.  
 Edwards.

W.H. Edwards  
 Cadet Class 42-B Assoc.  
 P.O. Box 1272  
 Litchfield Park, AZ 85340  
 (602) 935-3538

\* \* \* \* \*



Richard D. Wiley - 371st

Our 91-1 Newsletter covered a request from Mr. Thomas Wiley for any information we might be able to furnish him about his brother, Lt. Richard D. Wiley, 371st.

The following letter was sent to Mr. Wiley from William Blair. We thought you might be interested in reading it.

"I was a pilot in the 371st Sq., 307th Gp, 13 AF from July 1944 to July 1945 flying B-24s. Hopefully I can shed some light on the ditching of Lt. Wiley's plane on July 15, 1944 after a mission to Yap.

My crew went over as replacements at the same time as Kizer's crew. My first mission was to Yap also. I was a 1st pilot and the routine was to fly as co-pilot with an experienced crew 1 or 2 times before they turned you loose with your own crew.

The mission to Yap was one hell of a way to learn that this was real serious business.

We were in formation approaching the target and Japanese fighters were giving us fits. I swear some of them came so close you could see the rivets on the skin of the planes.

On the bomb run one plane in our squadron was hit. It was in the first flight. Flames came from one engine well past the tail. The crew cut the fuel and feathered the prop. The fire went out and the plane was able to hold a fair place in formation. We got away from the target area and our squadron leader assigned our plane to escort the cripple (Kizer's plane) back to base.

It was a long way home with only 3 engines. The kids in the cripple worked hard to lighten the load. Guns, ammo, everything but emergency gear was thrown overboard. I'm sure they even dropped the belly turret like an egg.

They flew a long way and then a second engine failed. We had turned on the IFF and our radio operator tried to inform home base of our location. Finally the third engine failed. All this time they were slowly losing altitude. Now with only one engine they knew what had to happen.

We stayed behind them as they approached the water. We were at 200-300 feet and watched as the plane hit the water. One wing folded back like the wing of a big bird. By the time we passed over them the plane had stopped. The fuselage was broken open and those who were able were coming out any way they could.

Our plan was to fly straight ahead a minute or two then return over the plane in the water at low altitude. The crew members in the back of our plane had gathered together a radio, food, rafts, etc. to be dropped when we pressed the button in the pilot's cockpit which rang a bell or buzzer near the waist windows.

The emergency supplies almost hit some of the survivors in the water. We made one more pass over them and observed some inflating rafts. We then headed for home base.

On subsequent missions to Yap when our planes were headed home, the planes would spread out and look for survivors in the general area where the plane ditched.

As I recall, it was 10 days to 2 weeks later that Lt. Wiley and others were spotted and rescued by a Catalina Flying boat or a submarine.

I remember going to see Lt. Wiley in the hospital. He was so sunburned he looked like he had been baked in an oven.

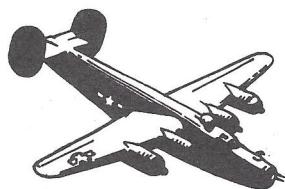
Lt. Wiley was later assigned to fly on the Fat Cat, a C-47 that flew to Sidney, Australia to supply us with produce, meat, etc.

The members of my crew all finished their tour and returned home safe. Lt. Dover, Co-pilot; Lt. McLennon, Navigator; Lt. Mitchell, Bombardier; Sgt. Hoffman, Radio Operator; Sgt. Klug, Crew Chief-Engineer; Martin, Fourth, Foshang, and Fournier, Gunners."

William Blair

\* \* \* \* \*





## THE LAST FLIGHT

### *Our Last Goodbye*

*In parting sorrow  
We say our last goodbye  
And close our eyes  
To hide the solemn tears  
And Whisper words  
Meant to comfort  
We bow our heads  
Our final farewell  
And send him to a better place  
Where all is well  
All is well.*

*by - Rebecca Glaser*

### *In Memory of her Grandfather*

\* \* \* \* \*

*The months always bring more notices  
of the loss of a 307th member. Once again  
we honor and say goodbye to "Old Friends".*

<i>Davis, David J.</i>	<i>7-19-91</i>
<i>Dinwiddie, Gerald</i>	<i>12-21-89</i>
<i>Rees, Clifford</i>	<i>6-10-92</i>
<i>Roden, James R.</i>	<i>1-2-92</i>
<i>Rogers, Raymond</i>	<i>date unknown</i>
<i>Tidestrand, Gunnar</i>	<i>11-25-92</i>

*Our sympathy to the families of these  
men.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## WORLD WAR II IN RESTROSPECT

*From front page headlines of the Stars and  
Stripes.*

**May 9, 1942**

*Madagascar Gives up to Allies  
Corregidor Surrenders to Japan  
L. Gen. Wainwright Stays with Troops  
U.S. to pay men every two weeks*

**June 6, 1942**

*Big Raids on Nazis by the RAF  
Jap Planes Bomb Alaska  
New "V" Mail Will speed Up Service*

**June 13, 1942**

*U.S. Planes Stop Japs at Midway  
Pay Boost is Passed in Congress  
Potato Crop Needs Labor  
U.S. Navy Joins British Home Fleet*

**December 9, 1942**

*First Army strikes at two cities in  
Tunisia  
Jap losses Double U.S. sunk warships*

**December 30, 1942**

*Rickenbacker tells story of rescue  
8th Army occupies Syrte  
"White Christmas" biggest Irving Berlin  
hit ever*

**Jan. 1, 1943**

*Two-to-Four-Year War in Pacific is  
Predicted*

**March 2, 1943**

*Rationing begins in America, 125 million  
register  
Japs Strengthen Island Positions*

\* \* \* \* \*

## MEMBERSHIP CARDS

*Enclosed please find new "Membership"  
card for all 307th Members who are up-  
to-date on their Association dues.*

*The Board is hoping, by issuing a  
permanent, new, laminated "Membership  
Card", we will be able to lower the over-  
all cost of the card.*

*In the future, cards will be re-issued  
only if the original card has been damaged  
or lost.*

*- Cena Marsh*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ken Meyers - President  
Sam Britt - Vice-President  
Jim Kendall - Historian  
Harry Sterkel - Historian  
John Reeves - Historian  
Cena Marsh - Sec/Treas*