



# 307th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV) ASSOCIATION

## "THE LONG RANGERS"

*Japan surrendered page 7  
Sept 2 1945*

## Newsletter 1995~2



September 5, 1995



### QUOTES OF NOTE

"People who quietly do their jobs, tend their children, run the farms, fix shoes, cut hair, and teach children are the glue that holds the world together."

- Martin Luther

"Good nature is worth more than knowledge, more than money, more than honor, to persons who possess it, and certainly to everybody who dwells with them in so far as mere happiness is concerned."

- Harriet Beecher Stowe

"A gem cannot be polished without friction, nor a man perfected without trials."

- Confucius

"Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night."

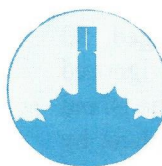
- Edgar Allan Poe

"Be ruled by time, the wisest counselor of all."

- Plutarch

"One room that is never filled is the room for improvement."

- Ruth MacKay



### NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

In another part of this Newsletter, Florian Lanning will give you information about the 1996 Reunion. I am sure that all of us are looking forward to it.

In the last Newsletter I informed you that the Vice President, Mark Rifkin, had passed away. I am pleased to report that Ed Hicklin (370th) has agreed to serve as our Vice President.

For those interested, the 13th Air Force Association meeting is scheduled for Colorado Springs beginning October 4, 1995. If you are interested in attending additional information can be obtained by contacting Lucian Doyle. His address is 215 Outter Loop Dr., Louisville, KY 40214, and his phone number is (502) 366-4446. The 13th Association is still working on a meeting in 1996 of all units of the 13th Air Force. A committee with Phil Dyer as chairman is shooting for the fall of 1996 with Louisville as a possible site.

Do not forget, if you have a location for the 1998 reunion you would like to promote, get in touch with Florian Lanning. He is serving as Chairman of the location committee as well as host of the 1996 reunion in San Diego. He is doing a great job.

Sam Britt  
President

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## FROM YOUR HISTORIANS

### Chaplain Lertis R. Ellett

We had always hoped to locate Lertis Ellett, original Chaplain of the 307th Bomb Group. However, we are saddened to learn that Chaplain Ellett died September 11, 1978, according to word received recently from Chuck Godfirnon. We have no particulars. Ellett

served the 307th from Ephrata until about the time of the move to Munda when he became chaplain of the 13th Bomber Command. Frank Dennis then took over as 307th Chaplain through the remainder of WW II. Chaplain Ellett remained in service following the war and retired from the USAF as a full Colonel. He then served as minister of the Lawndale Church of Christ on W. 147th St. in Los Angeles.



*Chaplain Lertis R. Ellett*

### More about the 13th Emergency Rescue Group

In response to our Newsletter 94-2 request for comments from members with first hand knowledge of the work of the men who crewed the PBYs of the 13th Emergency Rescue Group, we have received a ditching report plus additional comments from Richard E. Dixon. Dick was engineer on the Etheridge crew of the 370th which ditched on May 3, 1945 near the Togian Islands in the Bay of Tomini in the Celebes. All eleven crew members escaped with relatively minor cuts and bruises. Morotai had responded to their radio call for help with word that a Catalina would pick them up. Dixon's letter fills us in on the incident:

"The story really begins in the month of April 1945 when the Etheridge crew flew seven missions, among them one to Balikpapan on April 16th which is relevant to this letter. On April 15 two crews, including ours, were alerted for a special mission. Our intelligence

officers could give us no information other than that we would be briefed when we arrived at the air strip at 0330 the following morning.

"When we arrived at the strip we were met by Australian Intelligence officers and our briefing consisted of being told that a group of Australians had been landed on Borneo, north of Balikpapan, from a submarine. They also informed us that they had no contact for several days. We were told that our planes had no bombs, but instead had extra ammunition for the guns and carried emergency supplies to be dropped in case the missing men were located. Our two-plane flight was to proceed to just north of Balikpapan and fly search paths at 4000 feet altitude. We were sworn to secrecy and could not even tell our own intelligence officers the details of the mission, since the Australian landing was a reconnaissance for the Australian invasion of Borneo in July 1945.

"The mission was flown, logging 11 hours, 30 minutes. No sightings were made or signals seen. No opposition from Japanese forces was encountered although we were briefly in sight of Balikpapan.

"This brings me to our rescue by the 13th Emergency Rescue Group. After the crew escaped and everyone was accounted for, the plane was still afloat so we were able to salvage jungle kits, first aid kits, blood plasma and other items. I think the majority of the salvage was done by Lt. Thomas Helms and me. One item that I salvaged was the CO2 fire extinguisher. On sighting the Dumbo I immediately pulled the trigger on the extinguisher and was gratified to see a large white cloud drift across the water. I like to think that the white cloud helped the crew of the Catalina spot us. The sea was dead calm and the Catalina had no trouble landing. We were in the water near a large island but the Catalina refused to come any closer than 200 to 300 yards of the seaward side of the wreck. As a result all of the downed crew were obliged to paddle out to the rescue plane. I entered the plane through the left waist blister and had to crawl over a crewman manning a charged 50 caliber machine gun. He ignored me but kept watch toward the island and I was hauled into the plane by the men inside. I was bruised and



## Another "Letter to the Editor" from a 307th Member

Fiftieth Anniversary recognition of the end of the Pacific War has prompted still another "Long Ranger" to dash off a letter to his local newspaper. George McGill sends the following with the comment: "...thought you might be interested in the attached. I wrote it because all I was reading about the 50th Anniversary was about those 'other guys'. The Arizona Daily Star published it." We don't have a clipping of the letter as it appeared in the paper so we will print the text as George sent it to the Editor of his local paper:

*"Intrinsically, Corregidor is but a barren war torn rock, hallowed, as so many places, by death and disaster. Yet it symbolizes within itself that priceless, deathless thing, the honor of a nation. Until we lift our flag from its dust, we stand unredeemed before mankind. Until we claim again the ghastly remnants of its last garrison, we can but stand humble supplicants before Almighty God. There lies our Holy Grail."*

**General Douglas MacArthur**  
**Australia, 1942**

"February 16th (15th, Tucson time) is such an important date for it will mark the 50th Anniversary of the recapture of Corregidor, that small speck of rock which guards Manila Bay. It was from this point three years earlier that MacArthur had boarded a P.T. boat, escaped the Japanese and fled to Australia virtually in shame.

"After the terrible beating suffered by our troops in the vicinity of Manila, it was a great day in history for those under MacArthur's

command to be a part of the recapture of the strategic and symbolic tiny island.

"Late in January (*Ed. Note: January 23, 1945, to be exact*), flying from Morotai, roughly 1000 miles to the south, B-24s of General Wurtsmith's 307th Bomb Group, the Long Rangers, began pounding Corregidor almost daily with 100 tons of bombs, stepping it up to twice that in early February. The total was 3128 tons of bombs, the largest concentration dropped on any invasion target in the entire war in the Pacific. (*Ed. Note: Technically, Gen. Streett was still commander of the 13th AAF. Gen Wurtsmith did not take over until January 30, 1945.*)

"Early on D-Day morning a group of cruisers and destroyers opened up with their guns and blasted away for almost an hour. Then a flight of B-24s dropped their fragmentation bombs followed by groups of B-25s and A-20s flying low altitude bombing and strafing runs. All this preceded lines of C-47s carrying the troops of the 503rd Parachute Regiment.

"The show went on this beautiful and sunny day as the swarms of chutes opened over the island and we watched with pride. We had returned."

Our thanks to George McGill and Howard Beade for taking the time to help set the record straight. Even today, histories of WW II "damn the 13th with faint praise" while giving the "other guys", though they are certainly deserving of honors enough on their own, unfair credit for having done it almost single handed. It will probably always be thus, but a word now and then from those of us who were there can certainly help take away the sting.

## Long Rangers on National TV

Here is a satisfying postscript to the story of a 307th combat loss. The story of the June 13, 1945 mission to Balikpapan has been told before (Newsletters (90-3, 91-1 and 92-1) In a nutshell the incident revolves around the 370th crew of Urban Dohogne whose B-24 came off the target that day with serious AA damage and soon lost all but one engine. Dohogne headed for Tawitawi about 500 miles north, escorted by Edgar Gibson, his squadron leader, whose B-24 was also heavily damaged. When still 150 miles from Tawitawi and 80 miles off the coast of Borneo, the Dohogne crew bailed out as the last engine sputtered to a stop. Dohogne himself was trapped in the falling plane until thrown free with barely time for his chute to open. His injuries qualified him for a Purple Heart which, incidently, was not awarded until 1991.

John Reeves, 424th, on a single plane convoy cover mission, heard the MAYDAY calls sent out by Gibson. Quickly refueling at Tawitawi, Reeves noticed Navy PBM patrol planes moored in the harbor and arranged for one of them to try to locate and pick up the downed men. Radar fixes from Tarakan pinpointed Gibson's location as he circled the eleven mile long queue of men floating in the shark infested ocean. This fix helped Reeves locate the downed men even though he did not arrive on the scene until some time after low fuel had forced Gibson to reluctantly depart. The PBM arrived, and



guided by Reeves, picked up seven of the nine crewmen from the ocean. Two of the crew, despite extensive search were never found.

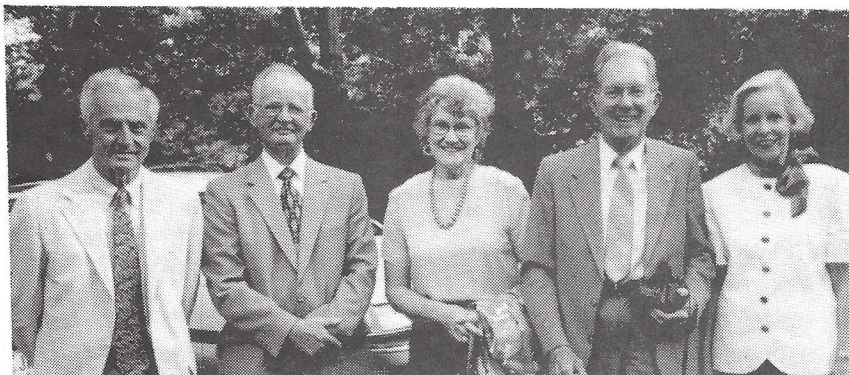
On June 13, 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of that mission,

seven 307th men from the three crews involved in the incident met in Nashville to celebrate the rescue and the fifty years since that day. Attending from the Dohogne crew: pilot Urban Dohogne, co-pilot Tom Haslam,

bombardier Bert Austin and flight engineer/gunner Clark Pardee; from the Gibson crew: bombardier Bob DeRosa and navigator Douglas Campbell. John Reeves represented his crew. The crew of the rescue PBM could not be located for the reunion.



**RESCUED:** Clark Pardee, engineer; Marie Austin; Tom Haslam, co-pilot; Jean Dohogne; Bert Austin, bombardier; Urban Dohogne, pilot; Mary Pardee.



**RESCUERS:** Bob DeRosa, bombardier, and Doug Campbell, navigator, of the Gibson crew; John Reeves representing his crew with his wife Tudy and, far right, Mary Pardee.



**CBS CREW:** Richard Threlkeld, reporter; Helen Young, producer; Reggie Huff, camera; J.W. Wolmack, sound technician.

Kate Austin Holfeltz, Bert Austin's daughter, has always been fascinated by her father's service stories, especially the one about his rescue at sea. Learning of the reunion plans Kate wrote a letter to Eric Ober, President of CBS News, telling of the coming event. Knowing a good story when he saw one Ober sent commentator Richard Threlkeld and a CBS camera crew to cover the Nashville reunion.

On June 16, 1995, the four minute **Eye on America** segment of the **Dan Rather CBS Evening News** was devoted to the story of the rescue, the men involved and their families. Falling on Father's Day, the program downplayed the wartime drama of the rescue and instead stressed the families that would never have been had the fathers and grandfathers not been saved through the quiet heroics of all the participants. But, in Richard Threlkeld's closing words: "...like millions of other veterans they came home and raised their families and paid their taxes and voted their consciences and helped keep America safe and free. Maybe they should hand out medals for that."

There was no time to alert anyone of the CBS coverage but we hope many of you chanced to catch this excellent TV show.



## CAN YOU HELP LOCATE:

### John Ackerman

We have received a letter from VETS Finders/Seekers asking help in locating **John Ackermann**, gunner with the 371st. Unable to locate him through their databases, they hope that someone in our Association may be able to help. The original request was made to VETS by "Long Ranger" Tom Tishoff. At this moment we don't remember if we have already made this request but if anyone can give Tom any information about where he might locate John Ackermann, please write him at this address:

**Tom Tishoff**  
9722 Gemini Drive  
San Antonio, TX 78217

### Information about Archie Dunn

A letter from his sister asks information about 370th S/Sgt. Archie M. Dunn who was lost over Balikpapan on 10-3-44. Radio operator on the Kelley crew of the 370th, Dunn was flying the 10-3 mission with the Gage crew, apparently because he had specialized knowledge of the radar carried by the plane flown by Gage that day. The Gage B-24 was one of seven lost over Balikpapan that day. If you knew Archie Dunn of the 370th Kelley crew or can add anything to the story his sister would like to hear from you.

**Mrs. Verna Capito,**  
115 Hilltop Drive  
Fairfield Bay, AR 72088

### Robert Sheets

We had a phone call from Charles Twitty, radio operator and nose gunner on the Winningham crew in the 424th, seeking information on the whereabouts of Robert Sheets, who was a photographer in the 424th. It is difficult to find information on anyone after the passage of 50 years and very difficult to locate a photographer who usually flew with no specific crew. We hope that some of you who were photographers may have kept in contact with Sheets. If you can help, please contact:

**Charles Twitty**  
5 East Darrah Lane  
Laurenceville, NJ 08648

## World War II Japanese Surrender Document

From the Newsletter of the 307th Bomb Wing Association (B-47/KC-135)

### INSTRUMENT OF SURRENDER

**W**e, acting by command of and in behalf of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, hereby accept the provisions set forth in the declaration issued by the heads of the Governments of the United States, China and Great Britain on 26 July 1945, at Potsdam, and subsequently adhered to by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which four powers are hereafter referred to as the Allied Powers.

We hereby proclaim the unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers of the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters and of all Japanese armed forces and all armed forces under Japanese control wherever situated.

We hereby command all Japanese forces wherever situated and the Japanese people to cease hostilities forthwith, to preserve and save from damage all ships, aircraft, and military and civil property and to comply with all requirements which may be imposed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or by agencies of the Japanese Government of his direction.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to issue at once orders to the Commanders of all Japanese forces and all forces under Japanese control wherever situated to surrender unconditionally themselves and all forces under their control.

We hereby command all civil, military and naval officials to obey and enforce all proclamations, orders and directives deemed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to be proper to effectuate this surrender and issued by him or under his authority and we direct all such officials to remain at their posts and to continue to perform their non-combatant duties unless specifically relieved by him or under his authority.

We hereby undertake for the Emperor, the Japanese Government and their successors to carry out the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration in good faith, and to issue whatever orders and take whatever action may be required by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or by any other designated representative of the Allied Powers for the purpose of giving effect to that Declaration.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters at once to liberate all allied prisoners of war and civilian internees now under Japanese control and to provide for their protection, care, maintenance and immediate transportation to places as directed.

The authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate those terms of surrender.

Signed at TOKYO BAY, JAPAN at 0904 7  
on the SECOND day of SEPTEMBER 1945

蔺 光 榮  
By Command and in behalf of the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese Government.

海軍大臣 嶋田繁太郎  
By Command and in behalf of the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters.

Accepted at TOKYO BAY, JAPAN at 0905 7  
on the SECOND day of SEPTEMBER 1945  
for the United States, Republic of China, United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and in the interests of the other United Nations at war with Japan.

Douglas MacArthur  
Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers

徐 永昌  
Republic of China Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
United States Representative

James D. H. H. H.  
United Kingdom Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Commonwealth of Australia Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Dominion of Canada Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Provisional Government of the French Republic Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Kingdom of the Netherlands Representative

W. H. B. D. H. H. H.  
Dominion of New Zealand Representative



REUNION NUMBER 11, SAN DIEGO  
OCTOBER 2 - 5, 1996

Less than a half mile from the blue Pacific seashore on Bahia Point in San Diego's Mission Bay, rests the Bahia Resort. The Resort is approximately 83% surrounded by Mission Bay waters, as part of the world's largest aquatic park.

This semi-tropical atmosphere, along with San Diego's natural beauty and a near perfect climate, holds promise for a very memorable No. 11 307th Reunion!

To further enhance the San Diego Reunion and give you the pleasure of selecting and enjoying what you choose to do in San Diego; a maximum of 1 or 2 tours, planned by the 307th site committee, is contemplated.

The Bahia Resort will provide Reunion rates for members, for a reasonable number of contiguous days before or after, or both, outside the Reunion period of Oct. 2 through 5, 1996. Time for your plans!! A multitude of attractions and tours are available.

START THINKING AND PLANNING 307th REUNION, SAN DIEGO, OCTOBER 1996!!

F.E. Lanning  
Site Chairman

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REUNION NUMBER 12, 1998

A site selection plan for 1998 was established at St. Louis, to provide an advance opportunity for members to submit their choice prior to the San Diego Reunion, Oct. 1996.

Your response to the above opportunity will provide a number 1, 2, and 3 site candidate list, in order, by majority approval.

A Site Selection Committee comprised of Flor Lanning, Ben Waldo and Herb Wilson was appointed by Sam Britt. Their objective is to insure that the proposed top candidates are considered in advance, to meet 307th Reunion requirements before the final vote takes place from the floor, during the San Diego Reunion business meeting.

While developing the candidate list, the committee will consult with the potential three cities Reunion and Visitors Bureaus, to determine their ability to satisfactorily meet our requirements. Our '90, '92, and '94 Reunions have averaged 500-600 attendance.

Please clip, complete and return by mail the "No. 12 307th Reunion Site" ballot provided, by Dec. 1, 1995.

Please understand that your submitting the city of your choice should be based on a sincere possibility of your attending Reunion Number 12.

F. E. Lanning  
1998 Site Chairman

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NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

As usual we do get some great notes from 307th Members. Here's one you might like.

"As I read your April 12th Newsletter with Jack Sloan's great diary piece, the years slipped away and I was a teenage B-24 Flight Engineer again on Morotai with Glen Miller's "String of Pearls" being played on the tent radio by Tokyo Rose!

Then I came to Jack talking about his crew and read with amazed eyes "William Ward, from Montclair, New Jersey was Top Turret Gunner".

I went running to my wife yelling "Look! Look! Here's all about Bill Ward that I grew up with in Montclair and his B-24 crew!"

Thank you Jack for writing and for the printing of the story. I'm looking forward to the next installment in the Sept. Newsletter.

Enclosed is a picture of Bill Ward and I on Morotai. Bill is the one of the left with the clean pants. We discovered each other one evening at the "Long Ranger Music Hall" and the old million-miles-from-home feeling faded a little.

Do you know where Bill is now Jack?

Best regards  
Roger T. Ellis





Bill Ward and Roger Ellis

\* \* \* \* \*

# "BOOKER - FORTUNATO B-24 CREW

Excerpts from Jack Sloan's diary - continued

"I can't remember what crew we replaced, but we sure inherited a nice tent. I bought a special cot. It had all the canvas removed and wide strips of rubber cut from some large innertube, woven and attached to the cot frame. This was like my bed at home, the best \$35. investment I ever made. We later scavenged a large piece of plywood and made a round table, cut a hole in the middle for the center tent pole, covered the table with a blanket, and spent many an evening playing cards or writing letters home there. All of us chipped in and bought a radio from some group that was going home. Every time a crew got ready to return to the States it was like having a garage sale. About this time we

latched onto a parachute. This was good insulation from the heat of the day. After all, we were only 2 to 2½ degrees from the Equator. We suspended the parachute about 3 inches below the tent ceiling. You'd be surprised, it did make the tent cooler. Once the parachute was up, we discovered we had a little mascot. Each night we could see something moving on the top of the parachute. One night we saw him/her. It was a little Chameleon about 4 inches long. Can't remember what we named it. About the radio we bought, every Saturday night we would listen to Tokyo Rose. It was okay if you just listened to the records. She played a lot of Miller recordings that brought back memories for me. You didn't listen to her chatter because she would remind you that it was Saturday night and she wondered where your wife or girlfriend was tonight, maybe out with your best friend? She was entertaining.

During the two weeks we had to get acclimated, we found the mess hall, showers, Operations, Intelligence, the PX, and we met with members of other crews and sat around and talked with them.

Our first mission was on 1-29-45 to Cavite on Canacao Point in Manila Bay. We bombed from 14,000' and carried five 1000# bombs. Our plane was number 1544, and we flew B-2 position. I'm sure everyone on the crew was apprehensive as the plane rolled down the steel matted runway on our first takeoff. After our lift off and the gear came up, you could almost "hear" a collective sigh of relief. We didn't know what to expect over the target. Would there be Ack-Ack? What about interception?

The pilot told all gunners to go to their positions and get ready to test fire their guns. We began to circle, and almost before we knew what was going on, we were in Squadron Formation, then Group Formation, and on our way to the target. I keep looking for enemy fighters and Ack-Ack, but saw neither. Suddenly, the plane jumped up, the wing tips were moving, and we heard "Bombs Away!" We made a sharp turn and were on our way home. After a while we left our turrets and had the first of 38 flight lunches. Guess what? The 38th lunch was just like the first! A loaf of bread, a tin of Spam, fruit cocktail, and gook juice. Al, Fred, Ward, Pressey



and I were back in the Waist on the way home. Booker put "Big Bird" down like a hand going into a glove - real smooth.

What a happy trip going back to debriefing knowing that the first mission was finished, and hoping that all the rest would be exactly as this one.

With two days off before our next mission, we rested and wrote letters. I'm not sure when we started getting mail, seemed like it was about six weeks before the mail caught up with us. Received quite a bunch the first time.

We each received a double shot of combat whiskey after each mission, (had to go to the dispensary to get it). Fred and I were in line with our canteen cups, (this was after our first mission to Cavite) the Aid poured our allotted amount into our cups, and Fred and I played our John Wayne bit to the hilt. We toasted each other, bumped our canteen cups together and sorta swaggered a bit (like we just got off a big cattle roundup). Tipped those canteen cups, and it was "Bottoms Up!" Both of us went cough, cough, gag, spit, gag, and spit some more. God, it was horrible, just like you would imagine varnish remover would taste. Right then and there we made a vow that combat booze would never again touch these lips. We went out and found an empty Four Roses whiskey bottle, rinsed it out a little, being careful not to disturb the label, because we had plans for this baby. We'd put our double shots in the bottle, hide it from Andy Walker, and then sell this sucker to some unsuspecting Infantry guy for a few Yankee Dollars!

Our next mission on 2-1-45 was again to Cavite. This time we hit the old Pan-Am Seaplane Base. This was the base Pan-Am Clippers left from, pre WWII. Again, no Ack-Ack or fighters. Mission #2 completed and our double shots went into the bottle!

On the 4th of February, we got our first real look at Corregidor. We bombed the gun batteries on the rock. No Ack-Ack, no fighters -- booze in the bottle.

About this time, quite by accident, I discovered a good way to relax. Took a one man raft over to the other side of the island. There was a nice, quiet beach,

with no one around. Pushed the raft out upside down, crawled on, and paddled out about 150 yards. There was a drop off of about twelve to fifteen feet and a small coral reef. Suddenly, a school of small, brightly colored fish came to feed. While watching them another school of different colored ones moved in. All in all, I think there were three or four different species that came to feed while I was there. Time passed quickly. I used to go over there at least once a week to watch "My Fish". This was my introduction to salt water fish.

After two days off, we were scheduled for Sepinggan Air Drome in Borneo. This was just six miles north of Balikpapan oil refinery, referred to as the "Ploesti of the Pacific".

The schedule for the next day's mission was usually posted in late afternoon, along with the target. We would go over to Operations around 5 o'clock to see if we were one of the lucky six crews for next day's mission. Since we were a new crew, we didn't know much about the targets or what to expect. It didn't take long for us to find out, as there were other crew members also checking, and they told us real quick that we could expect heavy Ack-Ack and fighters. Needless to say we didn't have a real sound sleep that night. Wake up was usually around 3:30 or 4:00 a.m. We got dressed and went to the mess hall for breakfast. "How do you like your powdered eggs this morning, Corporal?" And black coffee, Yuk! I always had cream and sugar!

Trucks took us to the flight line where we put our gear aboard, did some final checking and went back outside for one last cigarette before take off. Booker's yell "All Aboard" was just as if he were the conductor on the "Orient Express." We boarded through the camera hatch and the bomb bay. The engines started one by one, and we pulled out onto the taxi strip and started bouncing down to take off position. Book ran up #1, #2, #3, and #4, hauled them back, and turned onto the runway to take off position. The brakes locked and up went all four engines until we thought the fuselage was going to separate from the gear. All at once the brakes were released, and we started



picking up speed. As I was sitting back in the Waist with my back against the Aft Bulkhead, many things went through my mind, especially that special prayer on every take off. Finally, we could feel the weight of the plane get off the gear, and in a moment we were airborne and the gear came up. It was another successful take off.

Everything was normal to the Rendezvous Point, we formed up in Squadron, then into the Group Box. The closer we got to the target, the tighter the Squadron Formation got. All of a sudden, we started to see black puffs of smoke and then an occasional purple burst. This was an altitude marker, the enemy wanting to find out whether they were above or below the Formation. The next black puff was above us, the next one below us. Look out for the next one! While we were worrying about flak, the voice of the Top Turret Gunner, Bill Ward, rang in our ears, "Fighters at 10 o'clock." I turned the turret and picked them up coming head on, 1,500 yards, 1,000 yards. I opened fire, squeezed off a few rounds, let up and fired again. They were close enough that I could see something fly off the front of the plane. In an instant two fighters went over the Formation and two dove under. Al called "Bombs Away", the plane jumped up and we made our turn for home. After a while, we crawled out of the turrets, and headed for yet another flight lunch. Ugh! After the wonderful gourmet lunch, we headed for the Waist area, we talked about our baptism that day.

After landing, we headed back to debriefing. In the course of interrogation, I told the Intelligence Officer I thought I got a hit on a fighter. "How so?" he asked? I told him that I squeezed off a few and I saw something flying off his aircraft. The de-briefing Officer said, "Did it ever occur to you that he was shooting at you and what you saw were shell cases being expended?" I answered, dumfoundedly, "He wouldn't dare!" Fred and I poured two more doubles in the bottle.

The next three missions were the gun batteries at Corregidor on 2/9, 2/12, and 2/14. After 47 years, I'm still not certain

about the date of the re-invasion of Corregidor. In my diary this is what I wrote: "When we got over the target, we had to circle because the Navy was shelling Corregidor." When they were through, they backed off and we bombed. We moved out, but still circled, as Booker told us to watch the Paratroopers drop. I've read the invasion was on 2/16/45, however, on 2/16/45, we did not fly, according to the micro-film reel A0592.

We closed February with a mission on 2/19 to Mira A/D, and Tawao on 2/25. Both missions were routine. More booze in the bottle.

March started with a bang. On 3/2 we hit Sepinggan A.D again. Four fighters came up to greet us, and we had some inaccurate flak. This was without a doubt the easiest mission we had on Sepinggan, overall.

The mission on 3/5 was a short one of 5:25 to Licanan, where we hit the dispersal area with 260# Frags.

On 3/9 the target was the shore defenses at Zamboanga. On the bombing run a B-24 from the 5th Group came in below and at right angles to our formation, and was hit with a bomb and crashed. No one knew where it came from. Fred saw this happen from the Tail Turret.

Our mission on 3/13 to Clinan Town was another short one. We hit the personnel area with 260# Frags.

We had five days off after having flown twelve missions since the first of February. I made a couple of trips over to the other side of the island to see my fish. How relaxing these visits were! Just like getting your batteries charged. On one of my treks I found some small (about one inch long) peppers, red and green. Picked a handful of each and took them back to the tent. Crushed them, put them in a bottle, and went down to the mess hall to borrow some vinegar (just like going to the neighbors and borrowing a cup of sugar), which I added to the bottle. Since there was no catsup to put on the powdered eggs or Spam, I used my pepper and vinegar sauce. At least it changed the taste a bit. Our Mess Sergeant tried to disguise the Spam



by cutting it into different shapes - round, square, rectangular, and julienne. Since everyone played in his food, instead of eating, we put his jigsaw puzzle back together and it came out as before---a rectangular piece of Spam. We were no dummies.

One afternoon, after not having fresh provisions for some time, word spread through our area that there would be fried chicken for our evening meal. You never saw such a line! Guys that hadn't eaten an evening meal at the mess hall in months were there with their shiny mess kits. The line started to move, and I'll bet it wasn't five or six minutes, when the guys started coming out of the mess hall, dumping the contents of their mess kits in the G.I. cans, and bitching their heads off about the (expletive deleted) chicken. Seems like the C-47 that brought the chicken in from Australia had landed at 3:00 a.m., and wasn't unloaded until 12:00 noon. Consequently, the chicken "sorta" got a little wormy. They fried it and when the first few guys cut through the skin, well....it kinda moved, and so did the guys. They moved right out to the garbage cans, the rest of us moved to the PX where we had a couple of waxy Babe Ruth candy bars for our evening meal. I'm sure if we could have found out who was responsible for this fiasco, we would have taken them on a mission to Borneo, with an open camera hatch.

About this time we discovered Australian beer. It came in green or brown quart bottles, and the price was \$3.00 a quart. A guy in the next tent made a cooler. He dug a hole in the coral, lined it with some insulation, confiscated a compressor from some unknown source, and became a professional beer cooler. For every five bottles of beer we took to him to cool, he kept one and sold it for \$6.00 a quart. I'm sure he went home with many Guilders in his duffle bag. One of our ground crew guys was very good at drawing and painting. His thing was painting A-2 leather jackets for combat crews. He would put your Sqdn. insignia and the 13th Air Force logo on the front of your jacket for a mere \$35.00. Other ground personnel were making P-38's

out of 30 and 50 caliber bullets. These babies were highly polished brass and copper with a brass wing and were mounted on a brass base. They sold for a piddling \$70.00. If Neiman-Marcus could have had those in their Christmas catalog, these guys would never have gotten our B-24's off the ground.

About 3:00 or 4:00 we were awakened by a blood-curdling scream in our tent. We thought a Jap had come down out of the hills and was slitting Sheldon's (Radio Operator) throat. Someone jumped out of his mosquito netting without getting all entangled in same and turned on the light. There was Sheldon, his bedding rolled up in his arms, heading for the tent opening. He threw his bedding to the ground and started jumping on it. Now, Sheldon was from Oklahoma and we thought, maybe, his real name was "Eagle Fly Farther" and this was some kind of Indian ritual that only occurred at 3:00 a.m. on the night of a full moon in the tropics. Alas, it was not to be, 'cause in the morning we found a four inch scorpion trampled to death outside where "Eagle Fly Farther" was doing his dance earlier. We tried to calm Sheldon down, but he insisted that something was still in bed with him and crawling over his body. We tried to convince him it was Betty Grable but he just didn't buy it.

On 3/4 it was back to business as usual and wouldn't you know, we got Sepinggan again. We dropped seven 1000# bombs on the A/D and man, they really threw the kitchen sink at us that day. There was Ack-Ack all over and we were really getting bounced around. This was the closest yet! We must have had an eleventh person aboard that day.

The mission to Liloan Town on 3/22 was downright boring. This was Bookers last mission as our pilot. He was promoted to Assistant Operations Officer. I hadn't seen any pilot in our outfit that cared for his crew as much as Book did. He was very deserving of the promotion. He truly has been our inspirational leader.





Steve Fortunato will be our new pilot. He's had an excellent teacher and I'm sure after some missions under his belt, we will gain confidence in him as we did Book.

On 3/26 we covered the invasion of Cebu City. This was one of the prettiest cities we had flown over - very colorful. When we returned from the mission -- more booze in the bottle.

3/28 found us over the A/D at Oelin, Borneo. This was our next to longest mission, at 12:50. It also was our first encounter with phosphorous bombs dropped from enemy fighters. Four fighters came in dead on the nose, two went above the formation and two below. But, before they did they dropped their phosphorous bombs. The theory behind the bombs was, when the bombs exploded they looked like a giant octopus with a good sized hunk of phosphorous at the end of each tentacle. When a plane would fly through this the phosphorous would adhere to the plane's surface and burn a hole through the metal starting a fire. Hopefully, it was supposed to stick to the wing, burn into the fuel tanks and ignite them causing an explosion and blowing the airplane out of the sky. Believe me, flying through the octopi or octopopussies was no fun. I had my turret cranked as far right and left as I could go trying to check the wing surfaces for pieces of the burning phosphorous. Obviously, none stuck.

Earlier Fred L. had gone down to Intelligence and asked how many planes had been lost to phosphorous bombs being dropped on the Formation. They said, "none". When we got back after the missions I said something to Fred about flying through those bombs and that I had swung the turret around to see whether any pieces had stuck to the wings. I had never heard anything about phosphorous bombs. He said he had and told me about his trip to Intelligence. I asked him why he hadn't said anything about the bomb, his answer "Well, we never lost any planes, so why bother".

On one of our missions in March, can't remember which one but, when we got to the flight line I noticed the plane had a Consolidated Nose Turret instead of my usual

Emerson Electric. I didn't think anymore about it as I had been checked out in Consolidated some time ago. We took off and after a while Booker told all Gunners to get into the turrets to test fire the guns. I went up front, opened the doors to the turret, crawled in. I had my usual gear on -- chute harness, Mae West and flak suit. I didn't have the flak suit strap hooked up nor did I close the turret door when I first got in thinking I would do it later. I reached down to open the hydraulic valve, and Bingo!! The turret immediately swung to the left. Something else I hadn't done, I hadn't plugged in the intercom. I hadn't closed the turret doors, the turret had swung 90° to the left, my flak suit strap was banging against the side of the fuselage, and I wasn't on intercom. I couldn't hear Booker calling me to see if I was okay! It finally dawned on me to get hooked up to the radio and just as I did, I heard Book tell Al to check and see if I had blown out of the airplane.

We had 7 days off between our last mission in March until we flew again on 4/6 to Jolo. On my days off I caught up on sack time, wrote a lot of letters and went over to see my salt water fish.

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Jack Sloan's diary will be continued in the December 1995 Newsletter.

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#### "VETS" - Finders/Seekers

We recently received a request from VETS for any information on the following individual.

LAZARUS, Stanley  
Army Air Force from 1944-1945  
Flight Officer-Bombardier  
307th Bomb Grp, 371st Sq/Clark Field  
Stationed at New Guinea, Morotai, and  
Phillipines in 1945

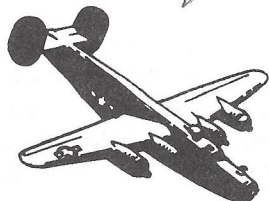
Any information you can provide about this individual to the Seeker below would be greatly appreciated.

John Gamba  
2504 NW 98 Lane  
Coral Springs, FL 33065

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*Taps*



*Japs Surrendered  
Sept 2-1945  
Page 17*

## THE LAST FLIGHT

As sorrow quietly slips away,  
It's yesterdays' memories  
of the day to day  
That find the place  
that's set apart,  
Where love lives on  
within the heart.

Following is a list of names of 307th  
Members who have taken their "Last  
Flight."

Bartolomucci, Orlando	08-17-94
Dugan, Harry J.	12-03-93
Helms, Fred J.	04-28-95
Johnson, John	03-28-95
Jones, Robert F.	06-19-95
Kuhns, Samuel H.	04-08-95
Monell, Charles W.	05-18-95
Plummer, Harry	12-18-94
Ptak, John	07-26-95
Svejnoha, Frank	date unknown
Williams, Lloyd G.	03-94

Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Five has  
taken quite a toll on the Men of the 307th.

The death of Bob Jones was quite a  
loss to the 307th Assn. Bob served as  
President of the Assn. 1986-1987. At the  
1980 reunion in Oklahoma City Bob took  
on the task of locating 307th men. At  
that time we had 150 names and thanks  
to Bob's efforts that list grew to 600 names  
in two years. Quite a feat. Those of us  
who attended the St. Louis reunion will  
long remember the work Bob and Sara did  
on the Memorabilia Room and the "Welcome -  
Hospitality" party they hosted.

Bob was born Dec. 17, 1919 and died  
June 19, 1995. He served 25 years in the  
Air Force, retiring in 1967 with his last  
duty being Commander of Communications  
at the Air Force Finance and Accounting  
Center in Denver.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to all  
the families of these 307th members.

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## ROSTER UPDATE

Trying to keep the roster current is  
a never ending task. Seems we are a  
group of nomads - you cannot imagine how  
many times we have address changes.

If you have made a change of address,  
telephone number, etc., please send us  
that information as soon as possible.

Send the information to:

Cena Marsh  
307th Bomb Group Assn.  
262 East Valley View Drive  
Preston, Idaho 83263

You help in insuring that the addresses  
we have are current and correct will be  
appreciated.

- Cena Marsh

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Sam Britt  
Ed Hicklin  
Jim Kendall  
Harry Sterkel  
John Reeves  
Cena Marsh  
Anita Sporn

President  
Vice-President  
Historian  
Asst-Historian  
Asst-Historian  
Sec/Treasurer  
Parliamentarian

